
**For Immediate Release
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COTA and Via Partner to Provide Innovative On-Demand Service in Central Ohio Communities

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A first-of-its kind mobility solution is transforming public transit in parts of Columbus, Gahanna and New Albany. The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) is partnering with Via, a public mobility solutions innovator, to provide the only full-time on-demand bus service in the United States. In the first three weeks of service, COTA//Plus Bus On-Demand customers averaged 13-minute wait times to be transported to any transit stop within their defined zone, including John Glenn International Airport, during regular service hours, seven days a week.

“As Central Ohio gets back to work, COTA is not just resuming some of our suspended service; we are reimagining it,” said COTA Chief Innovation Officer, Sophia Mohr. “Through our partnership with Via, COTA//Plus Bus On-Demand is providing residents of Northeast Franklin County with service that meets their immediate and specific needs. We are excited to explore how other neighborhoods can benefit from this innovative solution and connect more people to our transit system.”

“Dynamic, on-demand transit is a powerful tool to expand access to professional, economic and social opportunities for communities in the Columbus region,” said Via CEO and Co-Founder, Daniel Ramot. “We are proud to work with COTA to introduce an innovative transit solution, powered by technology, that complements and extends the existing public transit infrastructure, and meet the needs of residents with increased efficiency, affordability and convenience.”

COTA//Plus Bus On-Demand transports multiple customers who hail a transit vehicle at the nearest transit stop through the [COTA//Plus app](#). Northeast Franklin County customers formerly relied on three fixed route lines – 25, 35 and 45 – which were suspended in May due to low ridership, as many were working remotely or furloughed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wait times between transit vehicles on those lines ranged from 30 minutes to 45 minutes to rush hour-only service. COTA//Plus Bus On-Demand responds to customers within 15 minutes.

To ensure social distancing, COTA On-Demand transit vehicles are limited to 10 customers, while larger fixed-route vehicles are limited to 20 customers. Passengers and operators are required to wear masks while on board any COTA transit vehicle. COTA has an extensive [cleaning and sanitization protocols](#), including sanitizing all transit vehicles from three to five times a day, [treating all surfaces with an antimicrobial solution](#), and doubling the sanitization of 118 transit shelters.

The service is COTA’s second on-demand venture with Via following the launch of the COTA Plus microtransit network in 2019.

About COTA

COTA is the recipient of the 2018 and 2020 American Public Transportation Association's Outstanding Public Transportation Award and provides 19 million passenger trips in Central Ohio each year. As the region's mobility solutions provider, COTA is driven each day to solve the mobility needs of the community by utilizing technology and data, establishing community partnerships and applying sustainability principles that provide equitable access to jobs, healthcare and education.

About Via

Founded in 2012, [Via](#) pioneered the TransitTech category by using new technologies to power public mobility systems, optimizing networks of dynamic shuttles, buses, wheelchair accessible vehicles, school buses, and autonomous vehicles around the globe. Building the world's most efficient, equitable, and sustainable transportation network for all riders — including those with limited mobility, those without smartphones, and unbanked populations — Via works with its partners to lower the cost of public transit and provide accessible options that rival the convenience of a personal car at a much reduced environmental impact. At the intersection of transportation and technology, Via is a visionary market leader that combines software innovation with sophisticated service design and operational expertise to fundamentally improve the way the world moves, with 150 global partners on six continents, and counting.