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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPTA Applauds OTP2 Grant Recipients, Urges Continued Financial Support for Public Transportation

August 13, 2020 (Columbus, OH) – The Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) congratulates state transit agencies awarded funds through the Ohio Transit Partnership Program (OTP2). The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced more than \$30 million in OTP2 competitive grant awards to 37 Ohio public transit agencies on Wednesday.

“OTP2 dollars provided through the state general fund are extremely important to Ohio’s public transportation systems,” said OPTA President and Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority General Manager Claudia Amrhein. “These grants fund mobility projects providing improved access and quality of life for thousands of Ohioans who depend on public transit daily.”

Projects funded through OTP2 are selected on a competitive basis. Grants pay for rural and urban transit system needs which are divided into two tiers. Tier I projects focus on preservation, with an emphasis on working to maintain, sustain, or keep in a good sound state the transit systems in Ohio. Tier II dollars support regionalization, coordination, technology, service expansion, workforce, and healthcare initiatives.

ODOT allocated \$26.4 million for Tier I projects and \$17.6 million for Tier II projects for state fiscal year 2021 which began on July 1. Demand far exceeded available funds. Fifty-four transit agencies submitted 178 applications totaling more than \$115 million in requests.

“Ohio’s transit systems greatly appreciate the general fund dollars provided by the state legislature in the current budget,” said Amrhein. “However, the demand for these funds clearly demonstrates that even at current funding levels some needs are going unmet. OPTA urges the legislature to ensure the people of Ohio have access to safe, affordable, and dependable public transportation through dedicated funding.”

OPTA is the primary advocate for public transportation in Ohio. The association provides leadership, resources, training, support, technical assistance, media outreach, public engagement, and governmental relations services to public and private transit agencies and businesses across the state.

For more information, contact OPTA Administrator Phyllis VanArsdale at pvanarsdale@ohioneedstransit.org or call 330-595-6919.

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