DELAWARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

Agenda
119 Henderson Ct., Delaware, Ohio 43015
August 19, 2026
5:30 PM

Virtual Meeting available at: *https://www.gotomeet.me/DCTConferenceRoom with Access Code: 938-603-205*
Or by phone at: 1 (646) 749-3122 with Access Code: 938-603-205

1) **Pledge**

2) **Roll Call – 5:30 PM** (26-08-01)

3) **Consent Agenda** (26-08-02)
   a) Agenda for the August 19, 2026;
   b) Approval of the record of the July 15, 2026 Board Meeting;

4) **Recognition—**Mr. Robert Anderson

5) **Presentation by Burges & Burges**

6) **New Business:**
   a) Consideration of Resolution No. 26-08-03—Authorizing the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority to assume the engagement of Isaac Wiles Burkholder & Miller LLC for legal services.
   b) Consideration of Resolution No. 26-08-04— Adopting the Operating Guidance, Administrative Policies, Financial Systems, Procurement Policies, and Personnel Policies of the Delaware County Transit Board for use by the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority.

7) **Open Comment**

Adjourn – Next scheduled meeting on August 28, 2026 @ 2:00 PM

RESOLUTION 26-08-01

In the matter of attendance Roll Call for the regular meeting of the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority Board:

Roll Call for board members for the regular meeting of Delaware County Regional Transit Authority Board was as follows:

PRESENT	NAME	COMMENT
	President Bruce Luecke	
	Mr. Ben Turner	
	Mr. Forest Wilson	
	Mr. Todd Miller	
	Mrs. Darlene Magold	
	Mrs. Jill Love	
	Mrs. Sarah Huffman	

_____

President

RESOLUTION 26-08-02

In the matter of approving the Consent Agenda for August 19, 2026 consisting of:

a.) Approval of the Agenda for August 19, 2026;

b.) Approval of the record of the July 15, 2026 Board Meeting;

_____

President

Certificate of Appreciation

PRESENTED TO

Mr. Robert Anderson

In recognition and sincere appreciation for your outstanding leadership, direct advocacy, and steadfast support of transit and mobility options throughout Delaware County.

Presented this 19th day of August, 2026, in Delaware, Ohio.

DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT

Andy Volenik
Executive Director

Bruce Luecke
Board Chairman

DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT

Delaware County Transit

2026 In-Depth Interviews

DRAFT (Aug 13, 2026)

BURGES & BURGES
STRATEGISTS

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Overview & Methodology

Methodology and Process:

- Burges & Burges Strategists **conducted confidential, in-depth interviews** with leaders across Delaware County throughout **July 22-Aug 4, 2026**. DCT provided an initial outreach/contact via email to legitimate process.
- Interviews were pre-scheduled. Each lasted **~20-45 minute**s via telephone.
- Interviewees were guided with open-ended questions, drafted by Burges & Burges and edited and supplemented with input from DCT Executive Director.
- All participants were repeatedly assured of confidentiality of their responses.
- Initiated contact with **74 potential** interview targets to validate process.
- Included in the completed **34 In-Depth Interviews** are the following sectors: **civic/non-profit (12), elected officials (8), appointed/local government (4) business/chamber (5), housing (3), education (1), parks & rec (1).**

- **Purpose**: Understand perceptions of DCT from a “grass-tops” cohort

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Participant Sampling

...*A Caveat Before The Findings*

- Fundamentally, **these are community leaders**, who are *definitionally* **NOT** a representative sample of residents.
- These leaders repeatedly pointed out this difference, themselves.
- Consider this a portrait of ***informed* opinions** of Delaware County broadly, Delaware County Transit specifically, and the contours of the county-at-large more broadly.
- The more 'representative' and statistically accurate view of the full community was well-captured in the EMC Research survey and process in January 2026.

Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio
Bridges Community Action Partnership
City of Delaware
City of Powell (x2)
Del-Mor Dwellings
Delaware Area Career Center
Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce
Delaware County **Engineer's Office**
Delaware County **Auditor's Office**
Delaware County **Board of Realtors**
Delaware County **Clerk of Courts**
Delaware County **Family & Children First Council**
Delaware County **Foundation**
Delaware County **Job and Family Services (x2)**
Delaware County **Prosecutor's Office**
Delaware County **Regional Planning Commission**
Delaware County **Sheriff's Office**
Delaware County **Treasurer's Office**
Family Promise of Delaware County
Greater Powell Area Chamber of Commerce (x2)
HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties
People In Need, Inc. of Delaware County
Preservation Parks of Delaware County
SourcePoint
Stockhands Horses for Healing
TAG Community Living
United Way of Delaware County
Village of Ashley
Village of Galena
Westerville Area Chamber of Commerce
YMCA of Central Ohio

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Headline Findings

Key Themes:

1. **GROWTH** is the key lens thru which leaders see almost everything… as a strength, weakness, and challenge.
2. DCT is **decently recognized** and **well-regarded… but thinly understood** even among community leaders.
3. Most see transit service as **“for someone else”**
4. **Sales tax is interpreted as the most workable** local funding option in Delaware County due to tax-sensitivity.
5. The November 2026 ballot will be crowded, especially for County issues; **county/local issues battling for ‘oxygen’**.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
County Direction: Growth

- **Nearly-universal:** Delaware County is undergoing a phase of rapid growth, development, and change… while already a fundamentally strong, educated, affluent county.

- **Pressures** on the County most named: **traffic and road conditions** *(Route 23 above all)*, **housing affordability**, general **cost of living**.

- A recurring **psychographic split** between the North/South of the County, surfaced in many aspects of the conversation.
  - Results in differing needs and attitudes toward public services of all types *(schools, transit, development, etc.)*

- One of the **"Healthiest and Wealthiest"** counties in Ohio.

- Transit relevance: not a social service, but a **growth management** tool.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Awareness & Impression of DCT

- DCT is **well-recognized** as an organization, and ***overall*** **impression is positive**. Much recognition of the DCT 'vans' on the road.

- However, **participant understanding thins quickly when you ask any specifics** on the services DCT offers and their personal experience with system. Very few personally use DCT services.

- Those more **familiar** with DCT **admire the on-demand, ride-when-needed model** *("a public-sector Uber")*

- **FLEX vs. Demand Response**: **Often confused** which service is which, even among otherwise knowledgeable and engaged leaders.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Who DCT "Serves"

- A consistent picture of who makes up *"the (current) DCT rider"*:
  - **Seniors.**
  - **People with Disabilities**
  - **Lower-Income Residents**
  - **People/Families without a Personal Vehicle.**

- A recurring perception that **transit is "for someone else".** Directly stated by several, implied by many more.

- **Delaware City seen as THE well-served community**; the growth corridors and rural north seen as underserved overall. Low familiarity with the expansions of FLEX to Galena/Sunbury.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Transit Need in Growing County

- **A clear majority agreed that a growing county needs more transit services and options, not less.**

- Best framed as **‘managing growth’** that is coming to the county regardless of our actions… **transit itself not causing** or inventing the population growth.

- Many tie county needs to **workforce access**. Employers who can’t fill open jobs if potential employees can’t reach them.

- Transit still ranks **as mid-to-low as a *public* priority**, as Delaware County generally a car-oriented, affluent county.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Attitudes Toward Sales Tax Model

- **Sales tax is seen as more viable locally** than either a property tax or an income tax.

- *Key Rationales:* Tied to sales and consumption, not income or unrecognized property value gains... Includes out-of-county, non-resident spending.

- This is a **genuinely tax-sensitive county**. The *"overtaxed"* sentiment is very real and extremely top-of-mind.

- The **May Board of DD levy failure** *(49.2% to 50.7%)* was repeatedly cited as a cautionary tale. There are **no "safe bets"** anymore.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Questions & Concerns Shared

- Even these high-information, high-civic participation, well-connected to the community participants **found it difficult to translate a 0.2% sales tax into an estimate** of how much it will cost their family annually.

- They expect that residents will overestimate the cost, perhaps to a 10x degree… ***0.2% vs. 2%*** are hugely different, but on a quick read, people don't always get it.

- Sales taxes are often understood and **framed as 'regressive taxation'** in nature, falling harder on lower-income households.

- The ballot issue is a 'continuing' levy, which never returns to the voters for renewal. Concerns surrounding ***"forever tax"*** rhetoric.

- Believe it is widely **unknown to residents** that DCT currently **has no dedicated local funding source**.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
November 2026 Ballot Landscape

- Leaders **describe a crowded November 2026 ballot**, with several competing local ballot requests.
  - **US Senate, US House, Governor/State Offices, OH Supreme Court, County Commissioner, State Senate/Representative, Local Courts**
  - **Delaware Area Career Center** *(Renew & Reduce 1.7 -> 0.75 Mills)*
  - **Board of Developmental Disabilities** *(Additional 1.8 Mills)*
  - **Delaware-Morrow Mental Health Board** *(Renewal + 0.5 Mills)*
  - Schools: *Delaware, Olentangy, Buckey Valley all appear to have **declined** pursuing issues in November 2026.*

- Some expectation among community leaders that residents are drawn to **prioritize human-services related issues** ahead of transit.

- ***Burges Note:*** RTAs are *usually* considered to be in the **"Schools & Other Districts"** category for ballot ordering, and in 2026 this would place it *after* "School" issue (DACC), but *ahead* of the "County" issues (Board of DD & MH Board). Boards of Election have wide leeway to determine ordering and may have established order prior to today.

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
Trusted Messengers & Voices

- Participants see **RIDERS** as the most credible messengers, **by far**. Community leaders believe that county residents will seek to understand DCT thru riders telling their stories.

- **Employers**, especially those who do or would rely on transit offerings to meet their workforce needs / get people to the job.

- **Peers and neighbors** are more trusted than “officials”.
  - Trust in institutions of all sorts is highly strained right now, regardless of the wonderful job they may do.

- Other recurring, named key validators:
  - **SourcePoint**, **Economic Development experts, Chambers of Commerce**, **Local Churches & Faith Communities.**

INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
IDI Research Conclusions

- The shared language across every sector on almost every question is **managing county growth** *(and related growth-induced headaches)*.

- Central challenge is a **pairing of shallow awareness + perception that transit is "for someone else"**.

- DCT has an important **informational role to fulfill**, and community leader interviews confirm much to be conveyed… Community Need, Household Cost, System Efficiency & Impact, and Long-Range Vision.

- Residents **seen as open to considering a sales tax mechanism**, but it must be contextualized into more 'digestible' and understandable frameworks and formats. Imperative to convey this request is not a property tax and is paid in significant portion by non-county residents.

Delaware County Regional Transit Authority (DCRTA) Frequently Asked Questions

Last Edited: August 14, 2026

What is this 'transit tax' on the November 3, 2026 ballot?

Voters in Delaware County will be asked whether to approve a **0.2% sales and use tax** to support their local public transit system. The entire county will vote on this, except for portions of the cities of Columbus, Dublin, and Westerville, which currently pay a 1.0% sales tax to COTA.

Is this a property tax?

No, this is specifically NOT a property tax. Many community residents are feeling the burden of rising property taxes, but transit agencies across Ohio are funded with sales tax revenues, not property taxes. This will only apply to purchases subject to Ohio sales tax.

How much will this cost my household?

The sales tax would be **0.20 cents on a taxable $100 purchase**, or about $1 on a taxable $500 purchase. For example, if you make a purchase of $98.75 before tax at a retailer, your final bill will go from $105.66 without the transit tax to $105.85 with it.

How do other counties fund their transit systems? How would this rate compare?

Ohio has 11 major transit systems, and they're all funded through the county sales tax. **This 0.2% request** would be the **second-lowest** in the entire State. The major urban areas (*Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Akron, Toledo)* have 0.5% to 1.0% sales taxes for transit, while smaller cities and suburban counties tend to use 0.25% to 0.5% rates.

Who will pay this tax, if passed?

Since this is paid at the cash register, every household will pay a slightly different total over the course of a year. However, because many people in the region travel to Delaware County to make purchases, out-of-county shoppers will pay a significant portion of this tax.

Does this apply to all purchased goods?

No, the tax will apply only to purchases already subject to Ohio sales tax**. Many day-to-day expenses, like groceries, gasoline, utilities, prescription drugs, medical equipment,** and many business and charity expenses, are exempt from sales tax.

Why is the request for a 'continuing' period of time?

Currently, DCRTA does not receive any dedicated local funding for transit. This sales tax would establish a stable, predictable baseline of local support that allows us to grow our services wisely, efficiently, and in line with the growth of the county.

What transit services does DCT currently offer?

We currently provide two major services: FLEX and Demand Response. **FLEX** is our same-day, curb-to-curb, *Uber-like* service primarily in the City of Delaware and Sunbury/Galena. **Demand Response** is a pre-scheduled, door-to-door service that runs countywide and offers transportation for many older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans, students, employees, and the general public.

Does DCT intend to offer fixed-route, "big bus" service, as it used to?
That is not in our game plan, and we do not think that model fits the needs of Delaware County or its residents. DCT previously offered this service in preceding decades, but our riders and residents have been clear that it's not the right fit for our community.

How would revenue from the proposed tax be used?
Revenue generated by the proposed tax would be used for public transportation across Delaware County. Based on our current service plan, we expect to:

- Expand FLEX service in the City of Delaware to 7 days per week.
- Expand FLEX microtransit throughout Orange Township.
- Establish microtransit service in Powell and Liberty Township.
- Purchase and maintain our fleet of van-style transit vehicles.
- Launch same-day Demand Response service, countywide.
- Find smart connections in the transit service areas in southern Delaware County.
- Plan future commuter or express transportation service as the county grows.
- Investigate expansion of our transit facility, or development of a satellite facility in southern Delaware County.

These would not all happen right away. Service improvements will be implemented in phases based on demand, funding availability, staffing, vehicle availability, operational planning, and DCRTA Board approval.

How is Delaware County Transit currently funded?
Current operations are supported through federal and state grants, passenger fares, contracts, and local partnerships. Some grant and contract funds are restricted to specific programs or purposes. Passenger fares cover only a portion of the cost of providing public transportation.

Is the Delaware County Transit system used frequently?
DCT has been growing almost as fast as Delaware County! Last year, Delaware County Transit provided over 200,000 passenger trips *(+174% since 2021),* and we project that will grow to 225,000 trips this year. Last December, we ranked **THIRD in the United States for Ridership Growth** among communities our size.

What happens if the proposed tax is not approved?
DCRTA would operate as best we could with existing revenue from grants, contracts, fares, and partnerships. We would not be able to undertake the planned service expansions above, and would likely need to reduce our staff and offerings within a year.

What are the Election Details?
Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, and early voting begins on October 6. For any questions related to voter registration, polling locations, absentee voting, and official election information, visit the Delaware County Board of Elections. The official ballot language is also available through the Delaware County Board of Elections.

DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT

SUMMER & FALL 2026 MESSAGING

Delaware County Transit is Safe, Flexible, and Reliable.

- We offer two main services: **FLEX** and **Demand Response**.
  - **FLEX** is for the everyday, curb-to-curb rides in Delaware City and the Sunbury and Galena areas. This operates similar to Uber or Lyft, with app-based scheduling.
  - **Demand Response** is a pre-scheduled, door-to-door service available across the County. It is designed for those who can't drive, and we offer help on and off the vehicle, too – which is very popular with our Seniors and Disabled riders.
- DCT prioritizes the safety of our riders, and those we share the streets with. Our drivers are professionals, our vehicles are the right fit, and both have excellent safety records.
- DCT services and vehicles help alleviate the strain on our local roads and infrastructure. Every DCT van you see is a few less cars in our streets and intersections.

DCT Moves Seniors, Workers & Shoppers to More Places.

- Transit connects residents to what matters! Whether you need to get to work, the store, a doctor, schools or training, or the movie theatre… DCT will get you there.
- 60% of our Demand Response rides go straight to doctors or medical appointments.
- Local transit is a boon for jobs and workforce development. The State of Ohio helped fund our microtransit options and upgraded vehicles to specifically link Delaware County workers to jobs.
- DCT has been able to scale-up our services using on-demand technology and service options, meaning we can offer coverage to the entire county, when old-fashioned "fixed route" bus service couldn't.

DCT has Boomed, and Delivers Value for Every Dollar.

- DCT offered over 200,000 rides last year, a record for us! This is up 29% since 2024, despite a limited budget that stretches every dollar. We've had great success pivoting away from the "big bus" fixed-route model that didn't fit with Delaware County.
- DCT was ranked 3rd Nationally for Ridership Growth *(among communities our size)*, the only Ohio transit agency to make the list.
- We have doubled our ridership since the pandemic, while most transit agencies have struggled to reach their pre-pandemic rider numbers.
- DCT is a smart, plan-driven agency. We took a long, community-focused look at the system before expanding our services in 2024, and those expansions have paid off with big ridership increases and more demand for service.

RESOLUTION 26-08-03

A Resolution Authorizing the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority to Assume the Engagement of Isaac Wiles Burkholder & Miller LLC For Legal Services

WHEREAS, the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority ("DCRTA") was created pursuant to Chapter 306 of the Ohio Revised Code to provide public transportation services within Delaware County; and

WHEREAS, prior to the creation of DCRTA, the Delaware County Transit Board ("DCTB") engaged Isaac Wiles Burkholder & Miller LLC to provide legal counsel and related legal services to the organization; and

WHEREAS, DCRTA is in the process of assuming the governance, operations, assets, obligations, and responsibilities associated with public transit services previously administered by DCTB; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees finds that continuity of legal representation is in the best interest of DCRTA to ensure uninterrupted legal counsel during the transition period and thereafter; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to authorize DCRTA to assume the existing engagement of Isaac Wiles Burkholder & Miller LLC under substantially the same terms and conditions, subject to any modifications agreed upon by the parties.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Delaware County Regional Transit Authority hereby assumes the engagement of Isaac Wiles Burkholder & Miller LLC as legal counsel for DCRTA, effective immediately upon adoption of this Resolution. The Executive Director is authorized to take all actions necessary to implement this Resolution and to ensure an orderly transition of legal services from DCTB to DCRTA.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority at a meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 2026.

_____

Bruce Luecke, President

RESOLUTION 26-08-04

A Resolution Adopting the Operating Guidance, Administrative Policies, Financial Systems, Procurement Policies, and Personnel Policies of the Delaware County Transit Board for use by the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority.

WHEREAS, the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority ("DCRTA") was created pursuant to Chapter 306 of the Ohio Revised Code to provide public transportation services within Delaware County; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware County Transit Board ("DCTB") has established operating guidance, financial systems, procurement policies, personnel policies, ethical standards, safety practices, and administrative procedures that have supported the delivery of public transportation services; and

WHEREAS, DCRTA is in the process of assuming responsibility for the governance, administration, operations, assets, contracts, and obligations associated with public transportation services within Delaware County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees finds it to be in the best interest of DCRTA to adopt these existing policies, procedures, and administrative practices, together with any amendments thereto made during the transition period, in order to provide continuity of operations, ensure uninterrupted public services, and maintain compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations until such time as they may be amended or replaced by action of the Board.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority that:

Section 1. Adoption of Operating Guidance
The Delaware County Regional Transit Authority hereby adopts and shall continue to follow the operating guidance, administrative procedures, and operational practices previously established by the Delaware County Transit Board, including those relating to:

- Safety management;
- Ethical conduct;
- Compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- Risk management;
- Internal controls; and
- General operating procedures.

Section 2. Adoption of Financial Systems
DCRTA adopts the financial management and accounting systems currently utilized by the Delaware County Transit Board, including all accounting practices, financial controls, budgeting procedures, banking relationships, auditing practices, and reporting processes, subject to any future modifications approved by the Board.

Section 3. Adoption of Procurement Policies
DCRTA adopts the procurement policies, purchasing procedures, contracting requirements, competitive bidding practices, and purchasing authority currently utilized by the Delaware County Transit Board, including all applicable federal and state procurement requirements.

Section 4. Adoption of Personnel Policies
DCRTA adopts the personnel policies, employee handbook, employment practices, compensation administration, benefits administration, disciplinary procedures, leave policies, workplace conduct standards, and related human resource policies currently in effect for the Delaware County Transit Board, subject to future amendment by the Board.

Section 5. Continuity of Compliance
The Board affirms its commitment that DCRTA shall continue to conduct its affairs in accordance with all applicable:

- Ohio Revised Code provisions;
- Federal Transit Administration requirements;
- Applicable federal and state employment laws;
- Public records and open meetings laws;
- Ethics laws;
- Safety regulations; and
- All other applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Section 6. Authority of the Executive Director
The Executive Director is authorized to implement this Resolution and to take all actions necessary to ensure the orderly continuation of operations, including the execution of administrative documents necessary to transition these policies and procedures to DCRTA.

Section 7. Transitional Incorporation of Amendments
Until the transfer of transit operations from the Delaware County Transit Board to the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority, any amendment, revision, replacement, or repeal of the operating guidance, administrative procedures, financial systems, procurement policies, personnel policies, manuals, or other administrative practices lawfully adopted by the Delaware County Transit Board shall automatically be incorporated into and deemed adopted by the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority unless the Board of Trustees of the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority affirmatively provides otherwise by resolution.

Section 8. Effective Transition
To the extent permitted by law, this Resolution shall apply immediately but become effective on December 29, 2026, the date on which DCRTA assumes operational responsibility for public transportation services from the Delaware County Transit Board.

Section 9. Future Revisions
All policies, procedures, manuals, and administrative practices adopted by this Resolution shall remain in effect unless modified or repealed by subsequent action of the Board of Trustees.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of the Delaware County Regional Transit Authority at a meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 2026.

_____
Bruce Luecke, President