



Strategic Plan | 2011-2015



Dear COMTO Members,

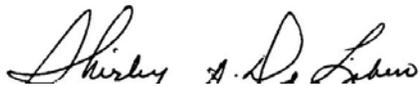
It is with great pleasure that we present the *2011 - 2015 Strategic Plan* for the Conference Of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO). The goals and objectives outlined in the plan are a direct result of COMTO's commitment to meeting the dynamic needs of its members while embracing the history and legacy of COMTO. The strategic plan is the roadmap that will help us to execute the mission of the organization – to ensure a level playing field and maximum participation in the transportation industry for minority individuals, businesses and communities of color. It is also the vehicle we will use to raise the bar of excellence as we continue to work together to advance the industry.

We would like to thank our members for your participation in the planning process. In particular, we would like to thank those who responded to the national survey and participated in focus groups and one-on-one interviews. With your valuable input, we have developed an aggressive and comprehensive plan to meet the organization's goals over the next five years.

We are very excited about the future of COMTO and the impact we will continue to make on behalf of minorities in the transportation industry.

Thank you again for your continued commitment and support.

Sincerely,



Shirley A. DeLibero
Chairman of the Board



Julie A. Cunningham
President/CEO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMTO’s Storied History	4
Vision, Mission, Core Values	4
Strategic Planning Process	5
Performance Measurements.....	5
Continuing Mission	6
Strategic Plan: Key Objectives	8
Strategic Plan: Key Actions.....	10
Goal 1: Historically Underutilized Businesses: Become Key Resource Center	10
Goal 2: Chapter Growth and Development	11
Goal 3: Membership Growth and Retention	12
Goal 4: Professional Development and Training	13
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)	14

A Special Thank You to all COMTO members who participated in:

- Membership Survey
- Focus Groups and
- Interviews

Special thanks to:
MaryAnn Collier
Dr. Roslyn Simon
Colonel James Paige

Your Contributions Were Invaluable!

THE CONFERENCE OF MINORITY TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS COMTO's STORIED HISTORY

In 1971, on the campus of Howard University in Washington, DC, the Conference Of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) was created as the organization to provide a networking forum for senior level minority professionals in the transportation industry. COMTO was established to address the inequities of a rapidly expanding industry within which its minority workers and leaders were not provided equal access to employment, promotion and contract opportunities. It was recognized from the beginning that COMTO was positioning itself for a long and arduous, but rewarding, history.

Today, COMTO remains the nation's only multimodal advocacy organization for minority professionals and businesses in the transportation industry. COMTO is poised to approach its fourth decade in a strong position with 39 chapters nationwide. Enriched by its broad and growing membership, members include individuals, transit and other modal agencies, large and small corporations, small and historically underutilized businesses, state departments of transportation, academic institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and other non-profit organizations.

Since its inception, COMTO has continued to evolve to become the premier organization for the training, education and professional development of minority transportation professionals. COMTO is in a unique position to be involved and speak on behalf of minority professionals and businesses on the cutting edge transportation issues that are sweeping the nation.

Vision

To see the diverse faces of America equally reflected in all levels of the transportation industry.

Mission

To ensure a level playing field and maximum participation in the transportation industry for minority individuals, businesses and communities of color, through advocacy, information sharing, training, and educational and professional development.

Core Values

COMTO's core values are embodied in how we conduct business and how we interact with our stakeholders, including our members, customers, partners and supporters. We affirm, and are committed to, the following core values:

- Advocacy • Diversity • Excellence • Inclusion • Innovation • Integrity • Service

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Charged with updating the COMTO Strategic Plan for 2011-2015, the COMTO Strategic Planning Committee guided the yearlong strategic planning process. Assistance was provided by SIMON & SIMON Research and Associates, Inc. and PTG Consulting Group.

The strategic planning approach undertaken was to develop an inclusive, collaborative planning process that represented all segments of the membership. The guiding principle of the approach was listening at all levels of the membership. The goal was to develop an authentic strategic plan that would not only be embraced by the membership, but would also engage the membership in the responsibility and accountability of its implementation. To this end, the strategic planning process encompassed three components: 1) a membership survey; 2) a strategic planning focus group session; and 3) individual interviews.

These methodologies were guided by the following questions:

- Are the COMTO Core Values still relevant?
- What are our visions and goals for the next five years?
- What are our specific strategic directions? Where should we focus our energies and resources?
- What are the COMTO distinctive strengths? What makes COMTO stand out from peer organizations?
- What are the most important actions/things that need to be done for COMTO to rise to the next level/stature?
- What is possible for the future of COMTO?
- What are the most challenging issues facing COMTO over the next five years?
- What is the role of the local chapters in addressing these issues and achieving these goals?

From the input received, a draft plan was developed for review by the staff, strategic planning committee and leadership team. The revised draft will be available on the COMTO website for review and comment. Ultimately, the final plan will be shaped by broad input from all segments of the COMTO membership.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

The COMTO Strategic Plan provides the roadmap that will lead our organization over the next five years, 2011-2015. Our plan sets broad goals that must be *revisited* and *assessed* on an annual basis to determine goal achievement. Performance measures will be developed to determine the level of success in achieving the 2011-2015 strategic goals.

CONTINUING MISSION

COMTO is an organization with a rich history of advocacy, networking, education and professional development training. It is supplemented by a strong and growing multi-state infrastructure of chapters whose members support the COMTO values of inclusion, disadvantaged business equity, the sharing of intellectual capital, and a focused compassion for diversity in multimodal transportation. COMTO's objectives include:

- building public/ private partnerships to support multimodal transportation
- training and preparing today's leaders for the transportation challenges of tomorrow, and
- serving as an active voice for historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) seeking equal access in procurement opportunities in the transportation industry

This Strategic Plan calls for COMTO to reach new and higher levels within the multimodal transportation industry by ramping up its current activities in addition to developing new ones. The plan follows up on COMTO's increasing national presence with the objective of creating a greater sphere of influence so COMTO's voice is not only heard, it "resonates."

Advocacy

COMTO's high visibility on Capitol Hill makes the association a significant player and allows it to render specific input on transportation structure, financing and policy. Retaining the strong state chapter presence will be crucial to COMTO's ability to "direct its footprint on the Hill" in the coming years. COMTO's legacy as a resource for minority professionals and HUBs continues to reinforce its image as a national advocate.

Relational Capital (Networking)

COMTO has proven its ability to interact with senior leaders directing multimodal transportation agencies and services. This is one of the primary reasons minority representation has increased at every level within the transportation industry, both public and private sectors. These strategies have created relationships and viable networks for COMTO's members that otherwise would not be available through individual's means. In the future, attention will be given to:

- strengthening the networks
- marketing the value of political processes
- increasing community outreach efforts throughout every level of the COMTO organization.

These types of strategic networking will keep the face of COMTO visible and help COMTO grow in prominence and membership.

Funding

One of the unique aspects of the COMTO organization is its ability to facilitate relationships and partnerships with other industry associations and to also hold them accountable for assisting COMTO in achieving its mission and values. COMTO's leadership continues to excel in this arena. Such a focused vision can be expanded into the development of future revenue streams for:

- research capabilities
- membership growth
- program initiation

The Years Ahead: 2011-2015

As America's landscape changes, COMTO continues to thrive and increase in national stature. COMTO has been the voice of minority transportation professionals and businesses on Capitol Hill, in federal agencies, state departments of transportation, public and private corporations, and organizations nationwide. COMTO continues to raise awareness of relevant transportation issues and their impact on minority professionals, businesses, and communities throughout the nation and the world. The challenge for COMTO is to not only maintain its nationally recognized stature, but to advance to even higher levels of success. In order to facilitate

this advancement, the rigorous, yearlong strategic planning process was undertaken as a vital tool in charting the future direction of the organization. Current trends, organizational issues and membership concerns help to identify COMTO's areas of emphasis for the next five years. Issues such as the changing U.S. demographics, HUB growth, the need for increased collaboration among the DOT modes, and the growth and development of the local chapters have significance for COMTO because of the implications for minority transportation professionals and businesses.

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2011-2015

Key Objectives

The following goals, objectives and action items emerged from the strategic planning process, and an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Although the 2011-2015 strategic plan identifies new areas of emphasis, COMTO's core functions and existing programs remain a priority. By intention, the newly identified goals are not mutually exclusive, but are in tandem with previous strategic goals. This strategic plan is our roadmap for the future. It will provide guidance and direction to the organization and serve as a tool for the Board to ensure that COMTO fulfills its mission. This plan is a dynamic tool that will create a framework within which strategic priorities can be established and provide a coherent focus for program implementation throughout 2011-2015. As COMTO evolves and grows, so will the plan.

Goal 1: Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs/DBEs): Become Key Resource Center

COMTO's advocacy has shaped policy and increased procurement opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses. Part of COMTO's future lies in widening its decision-making platforms through strong relationships and communications with regulatory agencies and congressional representatives on behalf of minority businesses. With the continued membership growth of HUBs, one of COMTO's future considerations may lie in the development of national policy and technical assistance to increase the capacity of minority businesses nationwide. COMTO could position itself to act as a clearinghouse for this activity establishing standards to be met by all HUBs and broadening opportunities for firms to achieve certification and equalization to revenue-generating strategies.

Goal 2: Chapter Growth and Development

On the chapter level, a natural by-product of the shift in demography can be the increased capacity and expansion of the state chapter infrastructure. COMTO's state chapter infrastructure is a pathway to partnership with state, county and local officials as well as the private sector. Together these entities can engage with COMTO to determine strategic priorities for multimodal transportation services in America.

Goal 3: Membership Growth and Retention

Changing demographics and uneven participation by all transportation modes is driving the need to grow the membership. Here's why:

Changing Demographics

According to U.S. Census data (2009), one in every three Americans is a member of a minority group. Representing 15 percent of the population, Hispanic Americans now comprise the largest minority group; African-Americans at 13 percent, followed by Asian-Americans at 5 percent, and Native Americans and Hawaiians collectively represent 1 percent of the U.S. population. By 2050, minorities will comprise 54 percent of the U.S. population.

Other than African-Americans, minority groups account for approximately 13 percent of the COMTO membership. The COMTO survey results indicate that 5.7 percent of COMTO members are Hispanic, 2.9 percent are Asian or Pacific Islanders, and 4 percent identified as Other. The demographics of the transportation professional community are also changing. With the ongoing and increasing retirement of baby boomers, "the old guard" has created unprecedented gaps in leadership roles across the transportation industry. According to the COMTO survey results, 54 percent of COMTO members are Baby Boomers. Millennials, a new, younger, more diverse workforce, represents one of the largest population segments in the workplace, but a smaller segment of COMTO membership.

Multi-Modal Focus

According to the survey results, the majority (64%) of COMTO members are employed in public transit. Collectively, membership from other transportation modes (aviation, highways, passenger rail, freight rail, and maritime) is approximately 8 percent (7.9%). Eighty-two percent (82%) of all survey respondents agreed that COMTO should expand its constituency by soliciting or recruiting members from other transportation sectors. As COMTO expands its membership to include other modes of transportation and other sectors, it will also need to expand program offerings to address the unique issues and concerns of non-public transit members.

Minority Professional Recruitment and Development

These demographic shifts - the baby boomer retirement and emergence of the new workforce - present COMTO with a grand opportunity to grow its membership, respond to the needs of a younger, more diverse workforce, and groom leaders to reflect, in a positive way, the changing landscape. By building leadership capacity, COMTO can continue to be utilized as *the* resource for identifying minority management professionals for career paths and leadership positions throughout the transportation industry.

Goal 4: Professional Development and Training

COMTO's platform objectives have always created professional development opportunities for its members. Its conferences and workshops provide training, networking and mentoring for attendees. Over the years, the conference has taken on an individual prominence. The energy poured into these kinds of professional development events allows participants to be viewed as viable candidates for Board appointments and leadership roles within the industry. This has been a traditional strength of the association. It is imperative that COMTO members continue to be utilized to fill existing and future positions.

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2011-2015

Key Actions

Goal 1: HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES (HUBS/DBEs): BECOME KEY RESOURCE CENTER

Objective: Promote, Expand Opportunities For and Advocate on Behalf of COMTO HUB/DBEs

Actions:

1. Promote COMTO HUBs by Educating Corporate, State and Federal Decision-makers
 - Develop strategies to educate top executives in corporations and large companies (primes) to enhance their understanding of the capacity and value of partnering with COMTO HUBs
 - Develop strategies to educate high-ranking federal, state, and local officials to enhance their understanding of the capacity and value of partnering with COMTO HUBs
 - Develop and implement strategies to market COMTO HUBs and to increase its visibility
 - Convene a national DBE forum or roundtable
2. Support Legislation and Other Policies that Protect and Advance HUBs
 - Play a leadership role in HUB/DBE national level policy discussions
 - Research, monitor and track DBE/HUB policy and legislation at the federal and state levels
 - Advocate for uniform, national DBE policies and certification
 - Develop strategies and resources to assist local chapters to advocate for DBE/HUB legislation at the state level
3. Enhance the Capacity and Effectiveness of HUBs
 - Develop a HUB clearinghouse to increase HUB access to information and funding opportunities and to serve as a national information resource
 - Develop and implement a HUB mentoring program
 - Develop and implement strategies to enhance HUB access to federal funding and other revenue generating opportunities
 - Conduct research to identify and disseminate best practices

Goal 2: CHAPTER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Enhance the Capacity and Increase the Effectiveness of the Local Chapters

Actions:

1. Strengthen and Develop New Chapters
 - Develop and launch a 40th chapter to commemorate COMTO's 40th anniversary
 - Update the COMTO New Chapter Orientation, including "How to " templates
 - Develop and implement new chapter mentoring program
 - Enhance the involvement of national staff and Board members in on-site new chapter development
2. Improve Information Flow from National to Local Chapters
 - Expand the use of technology to disseminate information
 - Expand video-conferencing and webinar capability
 - Strengthen internal communications from national to the local chapters
 - Develop strategies to share information on a regular basis
3. Develop Chapter Resources and Tools
 - Add a membership development staff person at the national office
 - Update the chapter development manual
 - Enhance guidance and develop new tools and resources to assist with chapter development
 - Provide a national chapter development training session
4. Identify and Promote Chapter Strengths and Talent Pool
 - Identify, disseminate and utilize chapter strengths
 - Develop a chapter-to-chapter network
 - Develop and disseminate chapter "success stories"
 - Actively engage chapter members in national committees, conferences and other activities

Goal 3: MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND RETENTION

Objective: Expand and Increase the Diversity of COMTO Membership

Actions:

1. Enhance COMTO ROI and Relevance to Attract New Members
 - Develop and provide information on the benefits and relevance of COMTO membership
 - Develop and implement a national marketing membership campaign
2. Increase Multi-Modal Membership Participation
 - Develop and implement outreach activities to aviation, maritime, highway, motor coach/tour, passenger rail agencies and associations to increase the representation of transportation modes
3. Increase Participation of State DOTs and Local Entities
 - Develop strategies to engage and increase the participation of state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations and other local transportation agencies
4. Increase Minority Participation
 - Develop and implement outreach strategies to Hispanic, Asian, Native American and other ethnic/racial group associations to increase the diversity of COMTO membership
5. Recruit and Promote Greater Involvement of Younger Professionals
 - Develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain young transportation professionals
 - Engage young professional members to actively participate in national committees, conferences and other COMTO activities
 - Use social networking strategies to reach out to young transportation professionals to increase their membership
6. Increase International Participation
 - Develop strategies and outreach to the international transportation Community

Goal 4: PROFESIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Objective: Expand and Increase Career Development and Leadership Opportunities for COMTO Members

Actions:

1. Expand Training Opportunities
 - Increase training opportunities for transportation professionals
 - Increase the use of technology to expand training opportunities
 - Improve instructional technology capability
2. Develop Career Development Programs
 - Develop and provide career development training
 - Conduct research and disseminate best practices in succession planning
 - Conduct and disseminate best practices in workforce development
 - Develop programs and activities that introduce transportation as a career
3. Develop Mechanisms to Train Members for Leadership Opportunities in the Transportation Industry
 - Establish a COMTO Executive Leadership Institute
 - Create a Peer Mentorship Program for Leaders
 - Expand professional development leadership activities
 - Survey the transportation industry to identify the number of minorities in executive leadership positions
4. Attract New Transportation Professionals through Training
 - Partner with colleges and universities to develop and sponsor transportation training activities
 - Develop training to introduce transportation as a career

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Strengths

- A strong, national chapter infrastructure
- An established and growing constituency
- Strong participation by the public transportation industry
- Strong public/private partnerships
- Increased national visibility
- Strong training, networking and information-sharing activities

Weaknesses

- Underrepresentation of other U.S. DOT agencies and modes
- Underrepresentation of Hispanics, Asians, and other cultural and ethnic minority groups
- Increasing retirement of baby boomer membership
- Limited national staff
- Lack of direct, timely communication from nation to chapters
- Lack of ability to transfer knowledge quickly to chapters

Opportunities

- Increased use of information technology for training and information dissemination
- Growing interest in African countries in establishing COMTO chapters
- Broaden constituencies and increase financial support
- Availability of federal government funding through grant and proposal submission opportunities

Threats

- Cut backs in funding
- Financial support

**Conference Of Minority Transportation Officials
2025 M Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
202.367.1181 | fax 202.367.2181**

www.comto.org