

06- ADMINISTRATION & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

OVERVIEW

The Administration & External Affairs Division is comprised of Americans with Disability Act (ADA), Customer Service, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Equal Opportunity, Government Affairs, Marketing & Communications, and the Public Information Officer. This Division was created from the 2020 Strategic Plan that emphasized Customer Focus and Community Engagement to build brand, ensure RTA is received as a credible and reliable partner, and to expand partnerships.

CONNECTION TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Success Outcomes: **Customer Experience** **Community Impact** **Employee Investment** **Financial Health**

The Mission of the Administration & External Affairs Division is to reposition RTA brand internally and externally to actualize the mission and vision, **Connecting the Community**.

Key strategic initiatives include:

- Advocate public policy and how it translates into grant dollars and improved customer experience.
- Advance our mission with messaging to keep ridership informed for improved customer experience.
- Engage with elected leaders (local, state, and national).
- Be a resource for employees to ensure fairness and equity.
- Educate riders and “choice” riders on the value of public transportation.

Internally, the Division is responsible for ensuring employees feel seen, heard, and valued. New to this Division is the incorporation of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) to build strong inclusive teams to stimulate creativity, innovation, and organizational performance.

Externally, the Division is tasked with being present as an active partner in the economic and workforce ecosystem in Cuyahoga County positioning transit as an anchor for access to employment, education, healthcare, and arts & entertainment.

The Administration & External Affairs Division contributes to the Authority’s four strategic priorities: strengthen customer relationships; enhance the value of RTA’s brand in the community; improve the Authority’s financial sustainability and develop a more productive work environment and culture.

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

External

- Advocacy efforts continued at the national level and the state level including, GM Birdsong Terry testifying at the Congressional Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, testifying at multiple State of Ohio Hearings; providing updates to both City and County Council.
- Testified at TRAC Hearings as a strategy to request funds.
- Planned and executed the first grant award announcement for Rail Car Replacement. Those in attendance included Senator Sherrod Brown, Congresswoman Shontel Brown, FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez, and a host of other state and local dignitaries.
- Hosted the national ATU for a site visit, during Apprenticeship Week, as a site visit for the PIP Program.
- Hosted All Aboard Ohio for a tour and overview of the Rail Car Replacement Program.
- Hosted State Legislators and local (City) legislators for “RTA 101.”
- Marketing Campaigns 2023: HR Recruitment; Holiday Campaign 2023; Transit Ambassador Program, and Microtransit.
- Brand Campaign: Let’s Go Together.

- Touch-a-Truck to Marketing Campaigns 2023.
- Increased the number our community significantly increased our community engagement with the hire of new staff and restructuring. Increased the number of new Commuter Advantage accounts by 6—first new accounts in a number of years. Restructure Marketing (and Communications in partnership with Service Quality) to have parallel lens: Internal, External, and Operational communication. This alignment is working well—presently working on a draft Shut Down Plan.
- Continued to expanded partnerships:
 - ODOT, City of Cleveland, Cleveland Public Library, Cuyahoga Community College, Asia Inc.
 - Greater Cleveland Partnership on coordinated efforts for infrastructure projects.
 - Tri-C and Ohio Means Jobs on recruitment and training programs.
 - Tri-C for the implementation of Training & Development job hub sites.

La Mega Radio as a strategy for targeting marketing in the Spanish-speaking community.

Engaged stakeholders across the agency to create a DEIB strategic plan. Active engagement with APTA as a signatory to the Racial Equity Pilot Program that is being implemented.

DGM Walker Minor selected as Second Vice for the APTA DEI Committee.

Internal

- Inter-departmental planning resulted in the creation of Engage RTA.
- Restructured the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), recruited, and in December, 11 members were welcomed as the new CAC.
- Held a series of “Ted Talk like” sessions across the agency to educate and inform staff.
- Inter-departmental coordination:
 - HR campaigns for: Operators, Mechanics, Transit Police, and Rail
 - Develop a marketing plan (and events) for two Microtransit Programs (Solon and the Aerozone).

2024 PRIORITIES

Customer Experience

- Manage the Authority’s Title VI, Title VII, & ADA programs to ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local laws regarding employment practices, facilities, and services.
- Define opportunities to expand mobility solutions.
- Create and execute media relations plans for customer-focused initiatives/events.
- Increased emphasis on customer service and community focus.

Community Impact

- Participate in APTA Racial Equity Commitment Pilot Program.
- Define and implement the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) plan.
- Market Commuter Advantage to corporations in Cleveland.
- Promote and market 25Connects.
- Partner with Community Development Corporations (CDCs) on transit-oriented development (TOD).
- Expand partners in the region to solidify RTA as an anchor institution in the economic ecosystem.
- Write positive news stories on our infrastructure and operations.
- Evaluate earned media/positive impressions.
- Create marketing plans and event planning for GCRTA’s 50th anniversary (December 2024) and as GCRTA hosts APTA Rail in June 2024.

Employee Investment

- Continue investing in and build a team culture.
- Continuous inter-departmental coordination & integration within Administration & External Affairs Division.
- Work to integrate and align the Employer Resource Groups individually and collectively across GCRTA to increase belonging, education, empowerment, and engagement.

- Elevate internal capability to design and scale brand awareness.
- Work in greater alignment with the Web Team to ensure continuity in communication across all mediums.
- Investigate allegations of discrimination or non-compliance with equal opportunity policies and procedures.
- Support and monitor the Authority’s Affirmative Action Plan quarterly.
- Implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training and education.
- Community engagement and presence at regional events.

Financial Health

- Use advocacy, research, and data as resources to secure rail cars and other rail infrastructure funding.
- Work in greater tandem with Engineering and Planning re: advocacy and program implementation.
- Coordination between social media and legislative priorities.

LIST OF DEPARTMENTS

Department Number	Department Name
53	Customer Service at Tower City Center
	Inter-Governmental Relations
	Marketing & Communications
	Office of Equal Opportunity
	Public Information Officer

The 2024 Organizational Scorecard is shown in the Budget Management section of the Budget Guide. The results of the 2023 Administration and External Affairs Division scorecard are shown below, and the divisions were still developing their 2024 strategic scorecards to support GCRTA’s Strategic Plan as of the writing of this report.



Adm. & External Affairs 2023

Success Outcomes	Metric	Definition	FY2023	Objective	Annual 2023
			Performance Goals		Actual Results
Customer Experience	Customer Satisfaction with Quality of Communication	% of customers who agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with quality of communication	77%	↑	62%
	Customer Impression - Communication of Service Changes	% of customers who agree or strongly agree that GCRTA provides adequate updates on service improvements and changes	70%	↑	61%
	Customer Understanding - Available Routes and Transit Access Points	% of customers who agree or strongly agree that they are confident navigating the system	92%	↑	76%
	Customer Complaint Resolution	% of customers who agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the complaint resolution process	69%	↑	59%
Community Value	Community Perception - Brand	% of community with positive brand recognition of GCRTA	72%	↑	53%
	Community Perception - Access to Service	% of community who agree or strongly agree that service is accessible	72%	↑	49%
	Community Perception - Access to Employment	% of community who agree or strongly agree that GCRTA serves employment centers	51%	↑	38%
	Community Perception - Transit Investment Occurs where Needed	% of community that agree or strongly agree that transit investment occurs where needed	37%	↑	33%
Financial Sustainability	Community Perception of Financial Transparency	% of community members who agree or strongly agree that GCRTA is transparent in its financial reporting	25%	↑	28%
	Operating Budget Used	The % of actual expenses (year to date) vs. annual budget.	25%, 50%, 75%, 100%		91%
Employee Engagement	Percent of Employees who Feel that Leadership is Invested in Keeping them Informed	The % of Agency employees that, as a result of new communications, trust in leadership to share important information	50%	↑	48%
	Division Employees Understand Vision and Direction	The % of Division employees that agree (or strongly agree) that they understand the vision and direction of GCRTA.	72%	↑	69%
	Division Employees Understand How Performance Linked to Organization Success	The % of Division employees that agree (or strongly agree) that they understand how they contribute to organizational success.	88%	↑	85%
	Employee Impression of Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	% employees who answer "yes" that OEO is committed to practicing and training on DEI principles	75%	↑	70%

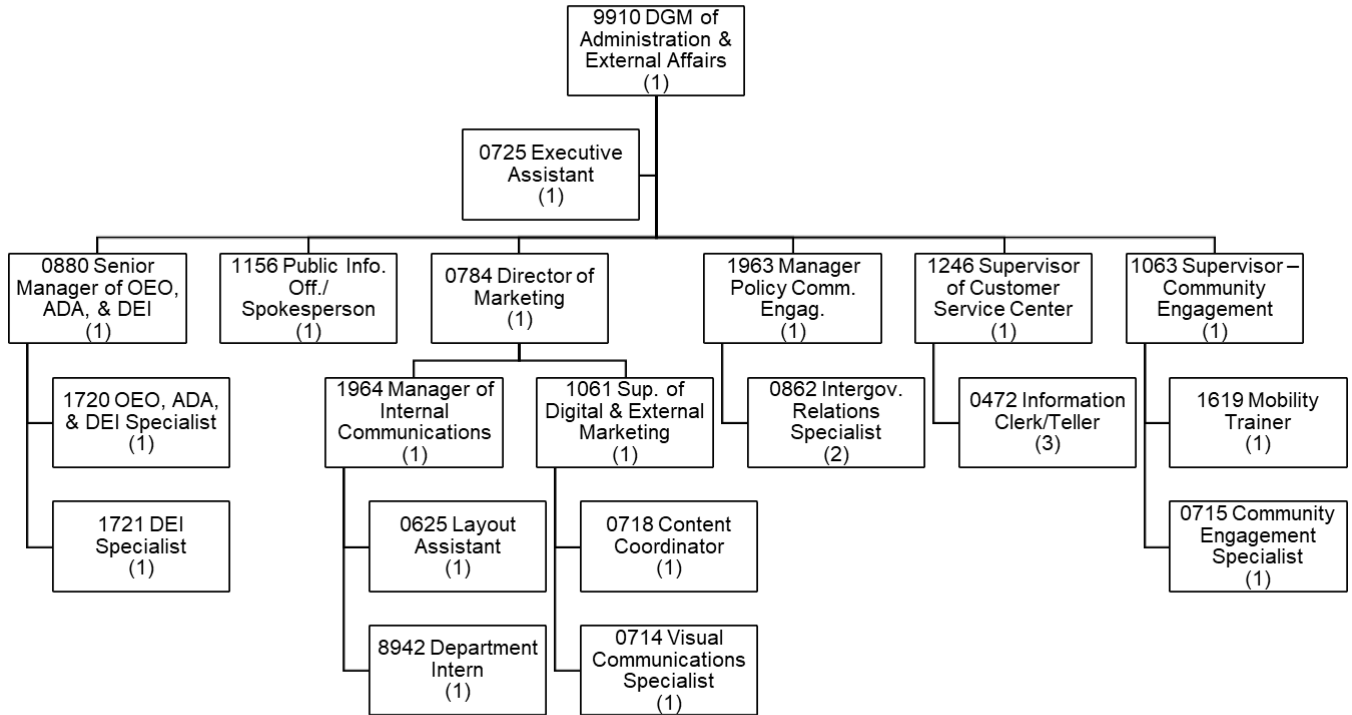
ADMINISTRATION & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BUDGET

Object Class	Description	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024
501300	Salaried Employees Labor	\$1,183,266	\$1,630,935	\$1,855,867
501310	Salaried Employees Overtime	6,636	10,629	4,000
502000	Fringe Benefits	474,343	587,043	578,964
503000	Services	22,336	280,913	385,145
503020	Advertisement Fees	987,977	689,530	876,000
504000	Materials & Supplies	63,725	69,631	112,000
509000	Miscellaneous Expense	50,521	80,778	86,600
509022	Meals/Food/Per Diem	3,710	8,504	7,000
512000	Leases & Rentals	6,047	0	6,000
Total		\$2,798,561	\$3,357,963	\$3,911,576

ADMINISTRATION & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT STAFFING

Grade	Job Name	2022	2023	2024
01	8942.Department Intern	1	1	1
04	0472.Information Clerk/Teller	3	3	3
06	0625.Layout Assistant	1	1	1
25	0716 Market Research Analyst	1	-	-
25	0831 Community Relations Spec.	1	-	-
105	0718.Content Coordinator	1	1	1
106	1619.Mobility Trainer	-	1	1
107	0725.Executive Assistant	1	1	1
107	1246.Supervisor - Customer Service Center	1	1	1
108	0714.Visual Communications Specialist	1	1	1
108	0715.Community Engagement Specialist	1	1	1
109	1721.DEI Program Administrator	1	1	1
109	1720 OEO Program Administrat	1	1	1
110	0862.Intergovernmental Relations Officer	2	2	2
111	1061.Supervisor of Digital & External Marketing	1	1	1
111	1063.Supervisor - Customer Engagement	-	1	1
112	1156.Public Information Officer/Spokesperson	1	1	1
112	1964.Manager of Internal Communications	1	1	1
112	1963.Mgr Policy Comm Engage.	-	1	1
113	0880.Senior Manager of OEO, ADA & DEI	1	1	1
114	0784.Director of Marketing	1	1	1
116	9910.DGM - Administration & External Affairs	1	1	1
Total		22	23	23

ADMINISTRATION & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ORGANIZATION CHART



Total FTE's = 23