Transit Service Profile

The History of public transit in Cleveland through 2017 can be found at http://www.riderta.com/history and current activities are posted through social media:

Since 2018, the Authority has:

2018

- Celebrated MetroHealth Line's 1 millionth rider less than a year of opening
- Celebrated HealthLine's 10th anniversary and generated $9.5 billion in economic development along Euclid Corridor
- Celebrated Red Line's 50th anniversary to Cleveland Hopkins International Airport – the first in the world to offer direct public transit rail service between a city's Downtown district and an international airport

2019

- India L. Birdsong Terry hired as CEO/General Manager
- Received APTA Gold Award for Bus Safety
- Completed upgrades to East 105-Qunicy Red Line Station
- Hosted Major League Baseball All Star Game and Tall Ships Festival
- Completed a $6.4 million track upgrade to the Red Line in May, extending between the West Park Station and the Airport Tunnel, including 3.6 miles of railroad track, replacing 12,275 timber cross ties, improving track drainage, adding signal improvements, and repairing the platform at Puritas Station
- Created a corrective action plan was implemented for the S-Curve Retaining Wall, installing 75 steel beam frames along the 300-foot long wall
- Completed five studies ("pillar studies") to provide a comprehensive examination of RTA's operations and impact on the Greater Cleveland and Cuyahoga County community, which provided information used for the new Strategic Plan in 2020

2020

- Received COVID-19 Coronavirus A Relief Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act dollars for operating expenses, which allowed RTA to continue 87% of service during global pandemic and return to 97% of pre-COVID service level by the end of 2020
- Provided free WIFI accessible on vehicles and at stations for the general public
- Installed new radio equipment on all vehicles (buses and trains)
- Provided free rides for election day to support access to those limited by the pandemic supported by a grant
- Developed a new ten-year Strategic Plan

2021

- Implemented of NextGen system redesign
- Issued RFP for purchase of new Rail Cars
- Received TRAC Funds, ODOT awarded GCRTA $4.2M for light rail rehabilitation
- Received the APTA 2021 Rail COVID-19 Gold Award for Heavy Rail
- Received a First Place Award for Marketing in the 2021 Annual APTA AdWheel Awards, "Greater Cleveland RTA's "Holiday Trains" Social Media: Best Marketing and Communications to Support Ridership or Sales
- Initiatied a Vaccination Incentive Program to encourage its employees to get vaccinated

- Received additional Emergency relief funds to assist with operating expenses and decreased passenger revenue under Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSA) and American Rescue Plan Act

2022

- Introduced a new HealthLine fleet
- Signed the Hispanic Promise
- Provided free All-Star Trolley service to support the All-Star games
- Received $81 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act- $20.3 million annually over the next four years
- Joined the APTA Racial Equality Commitment Pilot Program
- Launched a new mobile ticketing app – Transit with EZfare
- Launched Transit Ambassador and Crisis Intervention Specialists Programs
- Created a Civilian Oversight Committee for independent review and investigation of public complaints of alleged misconduct regarding its Transit Police Department
- Received remaining funds from American Rescue Plan Act
- Introduced Positive Impact Bus Operator Mentoring Program
- Received one of seven 2022 Awards of Excellence in Government Finance from GFOA
- Installed validators on fixed route buses for validation of mobile fares
- Received notice of $8 million in funding for station improvements
- Received $3.5 million award from ODOT's Urban Transit Program for six 40-foot CNG buses

2023

- Launched Microtransit workforce connector programs in Solon, Ohio and the Aerozone Region
- Selected Siemens Mobility Incorporated as the vendor to replace their aging rail fleet
- Approved the selection of Siemens Mobility Inc. and initiated the process to purchase 24 Siemen Model S200 rail cars.
- Hosted Senator Sherrod Brown and FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez and other local leaders at their Rail Equipment Building for a special announcement
- Received a $130 million grant to GCRTA for the Rail Car Replacement Program, presented by Senator Sherrod Brown and FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez
- Collaborated with Akron METRO on new fixed-route bus services from GCRTA's Southgate Transit Center
- Re-opened the Waterfront Line for Cleveland Browns home football games
- Announced the newly created Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Increased the hourly pay rate for student operators
- Awarded a $3.2 million grant from Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to purchase six new compressed natural gas buses
- Received the Distinguished National Budget Presentation Award from The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
- Hosted Touch-a-Truck event in Downtown Cleveland Public Square
- Announced the return of their Civilian Oversight Committee (COC) with new elected members
- Awarded a $12.6 million grant from ODOT for use towards their Rail Car Replacement Program
- Increased the hourly pay rates for full and part-time Operators
- Welcomed the winter holidays with their month of merry cheer
- Created and launched EngageRTA, a new online tool on their website that receives and processes requests submitted from members of the communities served by GCRTA

2024

- Received the Healthy Business Council of Ohio Gold Level Award for healthy Worksite Practices.
- Coordinated an Inter-agency program to effectively manage three major events in one weekend: the Solar Eclipse, the Guardians Home Opener, and the NCAA Women's Division Basketball Finals.
- Coordinated an Inter-agency program to effectively manage the APTA 2024 Rail Conference.

- Recognized the Transit Police Department for community Policing as the Agency of the Month, March 2024.
- Continued the Positive Impact Mentoring Program that received great results; leaders participate in a number of podcasts about the program.
- Launched a webpage for the Railcar Replacement Project.
- Exercised an option to purchase 6 additional rail cars, bringing the total number of cars on order to 30.
- Completed the preliminary design review for the new vehicles.
- Recruited two Grade 5 Trainers to assist with the extra training to ensure that all employees are prepared for the transition.
- Opened the Transit Ambassador Office at the Louis Stokes/Windemere Rapid Station.
- Provided a tour for Senator Jerry Cirino.
- Hosted the annual Rail Rodeo and Family Fun Day.
- Hosted a Siemens Commissioning Team Lead to tour the Delivery Switch at the Port of Cleveland the Brookpark Rail Shop.
- Relaunched Adopt-A-shelter Program.
- Toured the 50th anniversary reconditioned bus.
- Held Mechanic & Operator Hiring Events.
- Launched the Ride Free Day on Election Day, Roll to the Polls..
- Held and Employee Banquet & Veterans Celebration.
- Hired our first, Senior Director of Customer Experience & Performance Management.
- Celebrated 50 years of serving Cuyahoga County on December 30, 2024.

Grant Awards:

- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) - Ohio Transit Partnership Program (OTP2) - $9.1 million for transit projects to purchase two new railcars and LED signage at GCRTA Healthline Stations.
- ODOT – Ohio Environmental Protection Agency - awarded approximately $2.3M for the Diesel Emission Reduction Grant (DERG).
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)- awarded a grant for $700,000 to support TOD along the proposed Lorain Corridor.
- FTA's Low or No Emission Grant award $10.6M to purchase new electric vehicles buses and install charging stations.
- ODOT – Urban Transit Program (UTP)- awarded $4.2M to purchase 40' CNG Buses.
- FTA's All Station Accessibility Program awarded $16.0M for Blue Line Light Rail ADA Station Rehabilitation Project.

Cuyahoga County Profile (2023)[1]			
		Number	Change from prior year
Population	2023 Population	1,233,088	-16,299
	% Change from last Decennial (2020)		-1.3%
	Projected 2030 Population (change from 2020)	1,154,210	-8.7%
	Land Area (sq. miles)	457.2	0
	% Female	52.1 %	-0.1 %
	Persons per Sq. Mile	2,697	-29
Race & Ethnicity	% White	63.7 %	
	% Black	31.9 %	
	% Hispanic/Latino	7.2 %	
	% Asian/Pacific Islander	4.3 %	
	% American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.2 %	
	% Other	6.4 %	
Housing	Avg. persons per Household	2.21	-0.03
	# Housing Units	615,825	709
	Occupied Housing Units	555,988	1,006
	% Resident Home Ownership	61.4 %	1.8 %
	Housing Median Value (owner-occupied)	$197,900	$11,500
Income	Median Household Income	$61,862	$1,126
	% Population under Federal poverty line	15.7 %	-0.7 %
Largest Cities (population)[2]	Cleveland City (county seat)	362,670	(9,943)
	Parma City	78,952	(2,194)
	Lakewood City	50,229	(713)
	Euclid City	48,991	(701)
	Strongsville City	46,022	(469)
	Cleveland Heights City	44,694	(618)
	Westlake City	34,228	(256)
	North Olmsted City	32,031	(411)
	North Royalton City	31,013	(309)
	Garfield Heights City	29,369	(412)
Land Usage[3]	Developed/Urbanized	77.0 %	
	Bare/Mines	0.2 %	
	Forest	18.8 %	
	Pasture	1.4 %	
	Cropland	0.1 %	
	Wetlands	1.1 %	
	Open Water	0.4 %	

Figure 17

[1] 2023 American Community Survey 1-year average unless otherwise indicated.
[2] 2023 American Community Survey 5-year average vs. 2020 census data
[3] Last updated 2021

County Profile			
		Number	Change from prior year
Education Resources[4]	School Districts	31	
	Public Schools	281	
	Non-Public Schools	152	
	4-Year Public Universities	1	
	2-Year Public Colleges	3	
	Private Universities & Colleges[5]	4	
	Public Libraries	9	
	Branch Libraries	67	
Means of Transportation to Work[6]	Drive Alone	71.0 %	0.7%
	Carpool	7.8 %	1.4 %
	Public Transportation	3.3 %	0.6 %
	Walk	2.6 %	(0.3%)
	Other	1.6 %	0.1 %
	Work from Home	13.7 %	(2.4%)
Travel Time to Work[7]	Less than 15 minutes	25.4 %	-0.1 %
	15 to 29 minutes	45.7%	1.5 %
	30 to 44 minutes	20.2 %	2.3 %
	45 to 59 minutes	5.0 %	0.7 %
	60 minutes or more	3.6 %	%
Major Employers[8]	Cleveland Clinic Health Foundation	Healthcare provider	
	University Hospitals Health System	Healthcare provider	
	Group Management Services	Staffing and employment services firm	
	Minute Men Cos.	Staffing and employment services firm	
	U.S. Office of Personal Management	Federal government	
	Walmart	Operator of retail supercenters	
	Progressive Corp.	Insurance company	
	Amazon	Online retailer	
	Giant Eagle, Inc.	Multi-format food, fuel & pharmacy retailer	
	Accurate Staffing	Employment agency offering staffing and recruiting	
	State of Ohio	State government	
	Cuyahoga County	County government	
	The Metrohealth System	Healthcare provider	
	City of Cleveland	Municipal government	
	Summa Health	Healthcare provider	

Figure 18

[4] 2023 data https://oeds.ode.state.oh.us/DataExtract
[5] Excludes Notre Dame College which closed in 2024
[6] 2020 census
[7] 2020 census
[8] Cuyahoga County 2022 Annual Information Statement – major employers in northeast Ohio with operations in Cuyahoga County

Demographics of Riders compared to General Population[9]

Figure 19

[9] Cuyahoga County General Population data from American Community Survey 2023 – 1-year estimate; Rider data from RTA 2024 Customer Experience Survey Wave 3; excludes riders under age 15

Trends of Northeast Ohio compared to the State and National Averages

Cleveland's population has experienced fluctuations in recent years. As of 2022, the city's population was estimated at 361,607, ranking it 45th among the 50 largest U.S. cities. In 2023, estimates indicated a slight decline to 362,656 residents, a decrease of just 0.04% from 2022. Notably, 2024 marked the first year in a while that the city's population increased, albeit modestly by 1,016 residents.

Regarding unemployment, the Cleveland-Elyria metropolitan area saw significant improvements in 2024. In December 2024, the unemployment rate was 3.5%, down from 4.0% in September 2024. This trend reflects a broader recovery from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with unemployment rates returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Population - Urban Centers

Year	Cleveland	Akron	Cincinnati	Columbus	Dayton	Toledo
1900	381,768	42,728	325,902	125,560	85,333	131,822
2000	478,403	217,074	331,285	711,470	166,179	313,619
2010	431,363	207,216	333,013	769,360	141,527	316,238
2020	372,624	190,469	309,317	905,748	137,644	270,871
2023 ACS est.	362,670	188,692	311,112	886,365	135,507	265,306

Figure 21

Unemployment Rates - History

Year	National Avg.	Ohio	Cuyahoga County
2014	6.2	5.8	5.3
2015	5.3	5.0	4.4
2016	4.9	5.0	5.8
2017	4.4	5.0	4.7
2018	3.9	4.5	4.3
2019	3.7	4.2	3.9
2020	8.1	8.2	8.3
2021	5.4	5.1	4.9
2022	3.6	4.0	4.9
2023	3.8	3.8	3.2
2024 est.	4.1	4.4	3.5

Source – National & State – Bureau of Labor Statistics; County – Federal Reserve Economic Data

Figure 20

County Population Changes

County	2023	2010	Diff.	%
Ashtabula	96,845	101,490	-4,476	-4.41%
Cuyahoga	1,233,088	1,280,115	-30,728	-2.40%
Geauga	95,407	93,409	2,060	2.21%
Lake	231,640	230,050	1,792	0.78%
Lorain	317,910	301,371	14,897	4.94%
Medina	184,042	172,333	11,179	6.49%
Portage	162,665	161,425	320	0.20%
Summit	535,733	541,778	-5,896	

Figure 22

Source: US Census Bureau

NATIONAL TRANSIT TRENDS

The National Transit Database (https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd) was established by US Congress to be the Nation's primary source of information and statistics on the transit system of the United States. Recipients of grants from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required by statute to submit data to the NTD. The NTD is used to help meet the needs of individual public transportation systems, the US Government, State, and Local governments, and the public for information on which to base public transportation service planning.

Below is a comparison of total Cost per Unlinked Passenger Trip for Bus, Rapid Bus, Heavy Rail, and Light Rail. As the number of trips declined following COVID-19, the cost of providing each trip increased.

National Transit Database statistics are always behind two calendar years for final reporting purposes. For example, 2023 NTD data was not available until the end of the 2024 calendar year.

Cost of providing each Unlinked Passenger Trip Nationally (by mode):

	Bus	BRT*	Heavy Rail	Light Rail
2010	$3.53	$0.00	$1.79	$3.28
2011	$3.58	$3.43	$1.83	$3.21
2012	$3.59	$2.27	$1.87	$3.31
2013	$3.64	$2.11	$1.91	$3.46
2014	$3.83	$2.18	$1.96	$3.61
2015	$4.03	$2.41	$2.05	$3.82
2016	$4.34	$2.72	$2.18	$4.05
2017	$4.71	$3.05	$2.28	$4.30
2018	$4.92	$3.53	$2.44	$4.78
2019	$5.27	$3.35	$2.46	$5.14
2020	$7.45	$5.04	$5.12	$7.44
2021	$10.42	$7.37	$5.83	$13.46
2022	$10.50	$7.50	$5.90	$13.60
2023	$10.60	$7.60	$6.00	$13.70

Figure 23

Total Unlinked Passenger Trips Nationally (in millions):[10]

Figure 24

[10] Source: National Transit Summaries and Trends 2023

The 9 Largest Agencies in Ohio as of 2023 – NTD data listed below:

Agency	Service Area (sq. mi)	Population	Mode	Unlinked Passenger Trips	Annual Passenger Miles	Vehicle Revenue Miles	Vehicles in Max Service	Vehicles Available for Max Service	Spare Ratio (%)
Akron (Metro)	420	541,879	DR	194,028	1,122,313	1,553,501	78	115	47.4%
			Bus	4,130,646	17,054,610	3,801,252	97	139	43.3%
Canton (SARTA)	581	375,586	DR	149,421	1,258,635	1,351,674	30	35	16.7%
			Bus	1,238,137	8,874,894	2,310,460	36	38	5.6%
Cincinnati (SORTA)	289	744,901	DR/PT	181,712	1,864,365	1,377,484	40	56	40.0%
			Bus	12,902,123	68,980,553	10,760,020	252	279	10.7%
Cleveland (GCRTA)	458	1,264,817	DR and DR/PT	603,394	5,259,433	4,567,633	129	165	27.9%
			HR	3,472,342	24,757,798	2,302,596	16	39	143.8%
			LR	662,113	3,151,808	476,284	8	28	250.0%
			Bus	15,963,454	64,887,266	13,181,735	220	314	42.7%
			RB	1,714,067	4,782,247	416,508	7	16	128.6%
Columbus (COTA)	336	1,413,382	DR/PT	397,584	3,151,021	3,716,975	84	110	56.6%
			Bus	11,128,906	48,130,550	9,692,809	189	296	31.0%
Dayton (GDRTA)	274	559,062	DR	191,185	1,664,570	1,619,622	54	73	35.2%
			Bus	5,954,305	38,567,303	4,961,102	76	140	84.2%
			TB	432,688	2,002,628	218,669	4	45	45.0%
Lake County (Laketran)	627	326,867	CB	59,168	1,282,395	365,995	13	20	53.8%
			DR	252,387	2,247,914	2,162,208	71	117	64.8%
			Bus	317,087	3,192,438	1,121,998	18	28	55.6%
Toledo (TARTA)	237	399,700	DR & DR/PT	226,874	1,419,004	1,384,056	74	78	5.4%
			VP	27,560	1,762,898	240,783	13	13	0.0%
			Bus	1,636,674	10,795,727	2,283,160	43	63	46.5%
Youngstown	331	426,657	DR	42,060	263,697	335,196	13	24	84.6%
			Bus	1,973,021	6,607,577	1,473,583	40	56	40.0%

Bus - Fixed Route Bus
DR - Demand Response
DR/PT - Demand Response - Purchased Transportation
TB - Trolley Bus
LR - Light Rail
HR - Heavy Rail
RB - Rapid Transit Bus
DR/TX - Demand Response - Taxi
VP - Vanpool

Figure 25

2023 Annual Agency Profile - The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (NTD ID 50015)

Mailing Address: 1240 W 6TH ST
CLEVELAND, OH

Website: http://www.riderta.com/

Geographic Coverage

Primary Urbanized Area	Cleveland, OH
Square Miles	714
Population	1,712,178
Other Areas Served:	Ohio Non-UZA
Service Area Population	1,264,817
Service Area Sq. Miles	458

Service Consumed

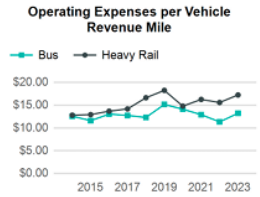
Annual Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT)	102,838,552
Annual Unlinked Trips (UPT)	22,415,370
Average Weekday UPT	72,314
Average Saturday UPT	36,741
Average Sunday UPT	38,566

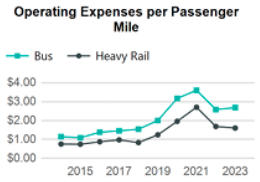
Assets

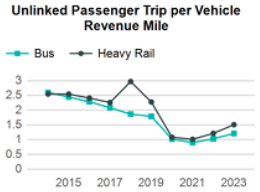
Revenue Vehicles	524
Service Vehicles	234
Facilities	145
Lane Miles	17.3
Track Miles	85.69

Service Supplied

Annual Vehicle/Passenger Car Revenue Miles (VRM)	20,944,756
Annual Vehicle/Passenger Car Revenue Hours (VRH)	1,565,468
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service (VOMS)	380
Vehicles Available for Maximum Service (VAMS)	562







Modal Characteristics

Mode	Directly Operated VOMS	Purchased Transportation VOMS	Annual Passenger Miles Traveled	Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Fixed Guideway Directional Route Miles
Bus	220	0	64,887,266	15,963,454	13,181,735	1,049,697	0.00
Bus Rapid Transit	7	0	4,782,247	1,714,067	416,508	47,659	14.10
Demand Response	59	70	5,259,433	603,394	4,567,633	311,573	0.00
Heavy Rail	16	0	24,757,798	3,472,342	2,302,596	123,971	38.10
Light Rail	8	0	3,151,808	662,113	476,284	32,568	30.40
Total	310	70	102,838,552	22,415,370	20,944,756	1,565,468	82.60

Metrics

Mode	Service Efficiency: OE per VRM	Service Efficiency: OE per VRH	Service Effectiveness: UPT per VRM	Service Effectiveness: UPT per VRH	Service Effectiveness: OE per PMT	Service Effectiveness: OE per UPT
Bus	$13.23	$166.09	1.2	15.2	$2.69	$10.92
Bus Rapid Transit	$11.07	$96.77	4.1	36.0	$0.96	$2.69
Demand Response	$11.46	$167.97	0.1	1.9	$9.95	$86.73
Heavy Rail	$17.25	$320.42	1.5	28.0	$1.60	$11.44
Light Rail	$27.26	$398.72	1.4	20.3	$4.12	$19.61
Total	$13.56	$181.42	1.1	14.3	$2.76	$12.67

2023 Funding Breakdown

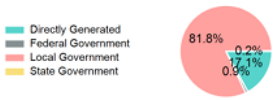
Summary of Operating Expenses (OE)

Labor	$212,896,608	75.0%
Materials and Supplies	$24,849,313	8.7%
Purchased Transportation	$10,280,173	3.6%
Other Operating Expenses	$35,974,857	12.7%
Total Operating Expenses	**$284,000,951**	**100.0%**
Reconciling OE Cash Expenditures	*$50,944,014*	

Sources of Operating Funds Expended

Directly Generated	$50,534,321
Federal Government	$2,603,352
Local Government	$242,201,399
State Government	$677,088
Total Operating Funds Expended	**$296,016,160**

Operating Funding Sources



Sources of Capital Funds Expended

Directly Generated	$0
Federal Government	$37,778,748
Local Government	$22,661,886
State Government	$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	**$60,440,634**

Capital Funding Sources

Operating Expense Detail

Mode	Operating Expenses	Fare Revenues
Bus	$174,345,569	$21,588,683
Bus Rapid Transit	$4,611,862	$1,712,290
Demand Response	$52,335,249	$1,427,538
Heavy Rail	$39,722,855	$4,045,712
Light Rail	$12,985,416	$1,040,707
Total	$284,000,951	$29,814,930

Uses of Capital

Mode	Revenue Vehicles	Systems and Guideway	Facilities and Stations	Other
Bus	$21,083,066	$2,215,376	$2,373,236	$1,270,101
Bus Rapid Transit	$175,249	$0	$0	$0
Demand Response	$108,756	$0	$0	$0
Heavy Rail	$13,004,846	$6,987,637	$674,158	$0
Light Rail	$0	$12,418,995	$129,214	$0
Total	$34,371,917	$21,622,008	$3,176,608	$1,270,101

2023 Asset Management

Transit Asset Management (TAM) Tier Tier I (Rail)

TAM Sponsor NTD ID

Metrics

Mode	Vehicles Operated in Max. Service	Vehicles Available for Max. Service	%Spare Vehicles	Avg. Fleet Age (yrs)
Bus	220	314	42.7%	5.5
Bus Rapid Transit	7	16	128.6%	2.0
Demand Response	129	165	27.9%	5.1
Heavy Rail	16	39	143.8%	39.0
Light Rail	8	28	250.0%	42.0

BUDGET MANAGEMENT PROCESS

For the Authority, the fiscal and calendar years coincide. The operating budget process begins in June with the development of the Tax Budget, and in August with the development of the Capital and Operating Budgets. The Authority prepares a Tax Budget as required by the Ohio Revised Code for being a political subdivision of the State of Ohio. The Tax Budget presents the projection of revenues and estimate of expenses for the next fiscal year. The Tax Budget is presented to the Board of Trustees in July and submitted to the County Budget Office in the same month.

The Capital Budget and the Tax Budget are essential components of the base level appropriations assumed for the succeeding budget cycle. The development of the tax budget begins the annual budget process for both operating and capital.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provides a five-year plan to provide for the purchase, maintenance, and improvement of the Authority's capital assets. The CIP cycle begins in August, 14 months prior to the October start of the federal fiscal year and 17 months prior to the January start of the Authority's fiscal year. For example, the CIP cycle starts with departments submitting capital requests in September 2024 that would be programmed for the CIP budget in fiscal year 2026.

Process:

- September through November – **Departments** submit capital requests.
- February - Capital Program Working Group (**CPWG**) reviews and ranks requests using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) asset management standards. CPWG consists of department representatives, project managers, and assigned staff from Office of Management & Budget (OMB).
- March to April - the Capital Program Oversight Committee (**CPOC**) reviews each of the recommended projects, aligns funding, and identifies the priority projects to be implemented in the five-year capital plan. The CPOC consists of General Manager/CEO, Deputy General Managers and members of OMB.
- May - the 5-year CIP Resolution is presented to the **Board of Trustees** at a public hearing during a committee meeting. The first year of the five-year CIP budget is approved by Resolution by the Board of Trustees.
- June – the 5-year CIP is submitted to the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinator Agency (**NOACA**), Northeast Ohio's Metropolitan Planning Office (MPO). NOACA reviews the 5-year CIP over a 5-month process then submits the five-year CIP to the Ohio Department of Transportation (**ODOT**) and the Federal Transportation Administration (**FTA**) for submission in the next federal fiscal year, beginning the following October.

14 Month CIP Timeline Highlights from Project Origination to Project Funding

OPERATING BUDGET

The Operating Budget provides annual funding for the daily operating activities of the Authority.

- The Operating Budget cycle begins in June with the creation of the **Tax Budget**. The Tax Budget is developed to project the next fiscal year revenues and estimated expenses. The Tax Budget is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in July accompanying a public hearing. Once approved, the Authority submits a copy of the Tax Budget to the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer and the State Auditor.
- OMB staff, using the Tax Budget as a guide, adjusts the budget starting in August for any non-recurring costs, contracts, binding commitments, or inflation to develop the **Base Budget**, which serves as the starting point for the following year's operating budget creation. The Base Budget consists of budgets from each of the Departments. The Department directors and managers review their base budgets and submit requests for adjustments. New requests are submitted based on the Strategic Plan and feedback provided through quarterly customers surveys and semiannual community surveys. Discussions are held in mid-September between OMB and the Departments to finalize the budget, which includes staffing level, commitments, recurring costs, and recommended initiatives under the direction of the General Manager/CEO.
- The finalized **General Manager/CEO's Recommended Budget** is the refined Base Budgets and negotiated adjustments. It satisfies the Authority's financial policies and supports the Authority's mission and strategic plan success outcomes. The General Manager/CEO's Recommended Budget along with the service levels for the next fiscal year is presented to the Executive Management Team (EMT) in October and then presented to the Board of Trustees in November and December. Public hearings are held in November and December.
- The review process culminates in the formal adoption of a budget resolution by the **Board of Trustees** at the December Board Meeting. Upon approval, OMB loads the operating budget for the new fiscal year.

12 Month Operating Budget Highlights from Tax Budget to BOT Approval

BUDGET MONITORING AND CONTROL

OMB monitors all revenues and expenses monthly. The Authority focuses largely on the top two outside revenue sources that support the Operating Expenditures (Passenger Fares and Sales and Use Tax) and the significant three expenditures (Salaries/Overtime, Payroll Taxes/Fringe Benefits, and Services/Materials & Supplies). Quarterly financial reports inform the General Manager/CEO and the Board of Trustees (BOT) of how revenues and expenses are performing compared to the budget throughout the year. These reports are used to determine whether transfers and/or adjustments are needed to realign the current year budget. Interdepartmental transfers are the main method of adjusting the Operating Budget. The BOT's General Manager/CEO has the authority to transfer appropriations within and between departments, which are reported monthly to the BOT. An increase to the overall budget appropriation, if needed, requires BOT approval.

The General Manager/CEO has the authority to upgrade or reclassify staff positions. Positions may be reallocated between departments and divisions, providing the overall staffing level remains at the level approved by the BOT for the budgeted year. This allows flexibility in making staff decisions. If an increase in budgeted positions is needed during the year, prior approval by the BOT would be required.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR

January

- Finalize Previous Fiscal Year-end
- Encumbrance Roll
- New Fiscal Year begins Prepare Budget Book

February

- Capital Program Working Group (CPWG) Meetings- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

March

- Capital Program Oversight Committe (CPOC) Meetings: CIP

April

- Finalize 1st Qtr Projections
- Legal Notice: CIP & Public Hearing

May

- 5-year CIP Presentation to BOT
- Tax Budget Extension, if needed

June

- Legal Notice: Tax Budget & Hearing

July

- Finalize 2nd Qtr Projections
- Tax Budget presentation to BOT and BOT Approval
- Submit Tax Budget to Cuyahoga County Fiscal Office

August

- Upcoming FY Operating Budget Planning Kickoff
- Future FY + 1 CIP Planning Kickoff

September

- Next FY CIP: Departments Submit requests through Apex
- RTA Service Plan Due
- Next FY Base Budget Due
- Present next FY Base Budget to CEO and EMT

October

- Finalize 3rd Qtr Projections
- Present Next FY recommended budget to CEO and EMT
- Load next FY CIP
- Finalize Budget Transmittal Letter

November

- Future FY + 1 CIP projects due
- Upcoming FY Budget 1st presentation to BOT and public hearing
- Presentation to BOT on next FY service plan

December

- Next FY Budget 2nd presentation to BOT and public hearing
- DGM review of upcoming CIP projects and approval
- Next FY Budget approved by BOT
- Load Next FY Budget
- Inventory Roll
- Prepare for year-end encumbrance roll

Strategic Plan

GCRTA's Strategic Plan was approved by the BOT in 2020. It establishes a 10-year framework for the future of the Authority. It is a compilation of key highlights and technical information that encompasses five pillar studies (defined in the chart below) that informed the Plan's development and direction. The Authority's Strategic Plan is used to develop the TRACTION Scorecards for each division and the Authority as a whole. The Authority uses the TRACTION Scorecards to identify performance metrics and goals to improve GCRTA in identified success outcomes.

RTA is customer-focused and community-engaged to drive the region forward. This undertaking encapsulates RTA's need to focus on service to customers, while considering larger societal conversations across the region.

The CEO initiated a process to establish a clear vision and definition for the success of the Authority. The process engaged a consultant to collaborate with the Executive Management Team to redefine the Mission, Vision, and Success Outcomes for GCRTA and to develop TRACTION, a program to develop and track strategies to improve performance. An update to TRACTION is presented to the Board of Trustees quarterly. Tactics, daily, weekly, and monthly metrics aligned to the Strategic Plan, are reported monthly.

Pillar Study	**Result**
Economic Impact	Concluded that RTA has a massive economic impact on the Region and State.
Rail Car	Showed immediate need for procuring new heavy and light rail car fleets that have exceeded their 30-year useful life
Fare Equity	Recommended a variety of ways to promote equity and enhance customer experience regarding fare payments. These recommendations were incorporated into the plan. 2021 implemented All Day pass fare reduction from $5.50 to $5.00
System Redesign	Comprehensive review and redesign of the RTA bus route system. The NextGen redesign was implemented in June 2021.
Financial and Economic Forecast & Operational Review	Identified benchmarks, risks, issues, efficiencies, performance indicators, and revenue sources

Various public involvement opportunities occurred and led to the creation of seven key strategic initiatives that highlight prioritized Plan recommendations and provide a framework for the future.

1. Improve where and when buses travel
2. Improve how streets function (prioritizing transit in street design)
3. Improve how customers pay
4. Improve passenger safety and comfort
5. Engage with emerging technology, data, and new mobility
6. Address funding challenges
7. Partner to support vibrant communities and access to job centers

These seven initiatives provide a framework for the future to provide a guide for enhancing the customer experience and pursuing capital improvements through the year 2030.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission: Connecting the Community

Vision: Leading the delivery of safe and creative mobility solutions and community connections

Values:

Diversity & Inclusion: The inclusion of individuals representing more than one: gender, race, sex, national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, sexual orientation. Better insights and business decisions can be achieved because of the inclusion of team members with varied experiences, ideas, cultures, and perspectives.
Ethics and Integrity: We are dedicated to the highest ethical standards, including uncompromising honesty and integrity in our daily activities.
Fiscal Responsibility: We are committed to managing every taxpayer and customer-generated dollar as if it were coming from our own pocket.
Innovation: Boldly trailblazing on the leading edge of transit industry innovations in equipment, technology, employee development and learning, partnerships, and overall operational impacts.
Respect: We will treat all members of the RTA family, our customers and the public with dignity and respect.
Responsibility and Accountability: Every individual is accountable. Meeting our individual responsibilities will ensure that collectively, RTA is a high-performing organization. We will meet all regulations and commitments and continually strive to improve.
Safety: The safety of our passengers, our employees and the public is always our top priority.
Service Excellence: We will provide safe, clean, reliable, on-time, courteous service that our customers and the community will view as outstanding.
Teamwork: We believe in teamwork and will foster a spirit of cooperative effort within RTA and with our partners.

Performance Management

TRACTION was deployed in 2022 as an update to the TransitStat performance management program that began in 2007. TRACTION utilizes Scorecards to identify performance metrics and goals to improve GCRTA in identified **success outcomes**. TRACTION Scorecards track data monthly and quarterly at the organization, division, and department levels. These are derived from the Authority's strategic plan, mission and vision, and customer, community, and employee survey data obtained throughout the year.

SUCCESS OUTCOMES

Customer Experience

- Net Promotor Score
- Overall Customer Satisfaction
- On-Time Performance - Impression
- On-Time Performance - Actual
- Personal Safety/Security- Perception
- Vehicle Cleanliness - Perception

Financial Health

- Competitive Capital Grants
- Transfer from Revenue Stabilization
- General Fund Transfer to Capital / Rolling Stock Reserve Fund

Community Impact

- Perceived Value – Personal Relevance
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) on RTA properties
- Economy: Ratio of Private Sector Investment to Major Capital Investment
- Equity: Capital Dollars Invested in Environmental Justice Zones / Communities
- Environment: Emissions Reduction

Employee Investment

- Vacancy Fill Rate: Operators (Bus, Paratransit, Rail), Mechanics, Transit Police
- Cultivate Internal Talent Pipeline
- Agencywide Retention Rate
- Vacancy Fill Rate: Non-Bargaining

Performance metrics are reviewed along with the next fiscal year's performance goals and updated as needed starting at the organization level, then filtered down to the division and department levels. Each scorecard can be found in the Division pages of the Department Budget section. Each metric is linked to a different information system that provides updates throughout the year. The current information systems utilized are:

- Customer survey- conducted once per quarter
- Community survey- conducted twice per year
- Employee Survey- conducted once per year
- Financial Data- tracked and provided by the Finance division
- Performance Data- tracked and provided by the division

The three most important goals identified through the 2024 TRACTION process were 1) reduce the operator, mechanic, and transit police vacancies, 2) improve the perception of personal security while waiting/on a bus/train, and 3) increase the vacancy fill rate for non-bargaining positions. Highlights from 2024 TRACTION include a redesign of the TRACTION website, ETC Institute conducts quarterly customer surveys (four times per year), semi-annual community surveys, and annual employee surveys, which will continue in 2025; Non-bargaining employee performance appraisals were updated to include TRACTION scorecards and GCRTA values; and a Seat Replacement Project – replaced all heavy rail seats with vinyl seats to improve cleanliness in response to customer feedback through TRACTION surveys. TRACTION has increased communication, accountability, and interaction between the CEO, DGM's, Directors, and other senior-level leaders.

In addition to the Scorecards there are individual tactics. A tactic is defined at the beginning and reported monthly throughout the fiscal year. A tactic is an individually focused project or activity tracked monthly that will have a noticeable, measurable impact on success outcomes. GCRTA conducts performance management forums on the Success Outcomes on a quarterly basis. With the identified information systems, GCRTA is able to

rely on regularly updated data (through information systems) to move forward in connection with the strategic plan.

Throughout 2025, TRACTION will be continually rolled out to all levels within the Authority to connect the community through customer experience and performance monitoring, analysis, and management. GCRTA will be incorporating The Scorecard performance methodology to individual employee evaluations in an effort to build ownership at the employee level and move the organization to deliver its mission.

The organizational scorecard is revised from year to year to adapt to evolving challenges. The Organizational Scorecard 2024 results and 2025 goals are shown below.

TRACTION

Organizational Scorecard

Success Outcomes	Metric	Definition	FY2024 Performance Goals	FY 2024 Actual Results	FY2025 Performance Goals	Objective	Information System
Customer Experience	Net Promoter Score	% Promoters minus % Detractors. On a 0-10 scale of how likely to recommend GCRTA; Promoters are 9-10 and Detractors are 0-6.	21	42	29	↑	Customer Survey
	Overall Customer Satisfaction	The % of customers who are satisfied or very satisfied with GCRTA	66%	74%	74%	↑	Customer Survey
	Personal Safety/Security - Perception	The average % of customer who agree or strongly agree that they feel safe on board the vehicle and safe while waiting for the vehicle	65%	66%	68%	↑	Customer Survey
	On-Time Performance - Impression	The % of customers who agree or strongly agree that service is on time	72%	72%	76%	↑	Customer Survey
	On-Time Performance - Actual	The % of actual on-time performance	85%	82%	83%	↑	Performance Data
	Vehicle Cleanliness - Perception	The % of customer who agree or strongly agree that the vehicles are clean	56%	53%	59%	↑	Customer Survey
Community Impact	Perceived Value - Personal Relevance	% of the community who believe GCRTA brings value to them	54%	58%	62%	↑	Community Survey
	Transit Oriented Development (TOD) on RTA properties	The number of TOD projects taken through contract with a development partner and securing Board approval authorizing the development partner to proceed within calendar year 2025	NA	NA	4	↑	Performance Data
	Economy: Ratio of Private Sector Investment to Major Capital Investment	The construction value ratio of development within 1/4 mile of active and recently completed (3yr completion) major capital projects (budget > $1 M)	7	7.74	7	↑	Performance Data
	Equity: Capital Dollars Invested in Environmental Justice Zones/Communities	The % of major projects awarded (>1 million) within EJ communities	77%	54%	80%	↑	Performance Data
	Environment: Emissions Reduction	% Reduction of Type I and II emissions per passenger-mile traveled on RTA	8%	13%	8%	↑	Performance Data
Employee Investment	Vacancy fill rate : Operators (Bus, Paratransit, Rail), Mechanics, Transit Police	The % of positions filled for Operators, Mechanics, Transit Police (RTA budget to actual Report)	95%	90%	95%	↑	Performance Data
	Cultivate Internal Talent Pipeline	Increase the percent of internal promotions (compared to external hires) 5% compared to 2024.	36%	31%	36%	↑	Performance Data
	Agencywide Retention Rate	% of employees retained by quarter for agency. % of mission critical employees retained for Operators, Mechanics, & Transit Police.	90%	97%	90%	↑	Performance Data
	Vacancy fill rate: Non-Bargaining	The % of positions filled for non-bargained positions (RTA budget to actual Report)	95%	95%	95%	↑	Performance Data
Financial Health	Competitive Capital Grants	Competitive Capital Grant dollars awarded in calendar year	$35,000,000	$60,847,694	$35,000,000	↑	Oracle / TrAMS
	Transfer from Revenue Stabilization Fund	Under $40M. *Metric requires comparison between revenues/expenses, 2024 Y/E accounting may influence the goal*	NA	$30,000,000	$40,000,000	↓	Oracle
	General Fund Transfer to Capital / Rolling Stock Reserve Fund	Transfer to capital and reserve funds (Rolling Stock) above Board Policy	$ 10,000,000	$ 11,644,837	$10,000,000	↑	Oracle

Glossary

Please visit http://www.riderta.com/budget/2025 for a complete glossary

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