

The TARTA logo is displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font against a blue background. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The background of the entire page is a blue-tinted photograph of a cityscape with a suspension bridge and a river, overlaid with a large, stylized graphic of interlocking circles in orange, yellow, and dark blue.

SOUTH &

77N

2023

REPORT TO
THE COMMUNITY



WELCOME

Our work in public transit is never finished. 2023 was one of the most active years in TARTA's 52-year history, but as we reflect on the service expansion and improvements that marked recent years, we understand how much more there is still to do to make the ride better for the thousands of people who depend on TARTA every day.

TARTA's launch of fixed-route, paratransit and TARTA Flex on-demand services in Oregon in January was only the most recent example of data-driven improvements put in place in recent years. TARTA's work to modernize its facilities and vehicles also continues, resulting in more efficient and higher-quality services that customers notice on their everyday commute.

Now, the TARTA Board and employees look forward to what's next.

Most of the improvements of the last few years have come directly from customer feedback, and we are still listening. Last year saw the formation of TARTA's Customer Advisory Committee (CAC). Composed of volunteers current and past ridership, this group will help provide TARTA's leadership with insights on the customer experience, with the goal of improving services for the entire community.

We are well on our way to fulfilling the promise we made to voters to provide service to all of

Lucas County, and one of the next steps is finding ways to make those services easier to use. We continue to incorporate feedback from as many sources as we can to make this happen.

Public transportation can change lives by connecting people to essential destinations. Our mission statement of Empowering People to Make Connections means even more to us now that we can connect customers to even more opportunities for employment, entertainment and everything else this great area has to offer.

TARTA's growth isn't finished. As pleased as we are with where the last couple of years have taken us, we're eager to show northwest Ohio what's next. We look forward to continuing to work with our incredible team members, community leaders, customers and businesses to build a public transportation system we can all rely on.

Laura Koprowski, *TARTA CEO*

Mary Morrison,
TARTA Board of Trustees President

LEADERSHIP TEAM

TARTA continues to modernize its services and build a reliable transit system that works for northwest Ohioans under the leadership of an experienced team of transit professionals in the office and a dedicated team of community leaders on the Board of Trustees.



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▲ **Mary Morrison**
Board President



TARTA IS ON ITS WAY TO **ZERO**

In late 2023, TARPS took the delivery of the first of 6 expected electric plug-in paratransit vehicles. These vans represent the first steps in TARTA Zero, the Authority's push for an entire fleet of zero-emission vehicles by 2040.

Also in late 2023, TARTA received a competitive grant for more than \$9 million through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for eight electric or zero-emission full-sized buses and six electric chargers. Combined with another grant from Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), this award will help a total of nine full-sized zero-emission vehicles hit the streets of Lucas County in mid 2026.

The grant also includes funds to develop a training program for both drivers and mechanics.

The first of the electric plug-in paratransit vehicles was showcased at Next Is Now, an event hosted by TARTA for community leaders who had helped with or provided input during TARTA's redesign and expansion. More than 240 attendees at the Glass City Center received a detailed look at what's next in TARTA's evolution and were able to tour the newest vehicles in the fleet.

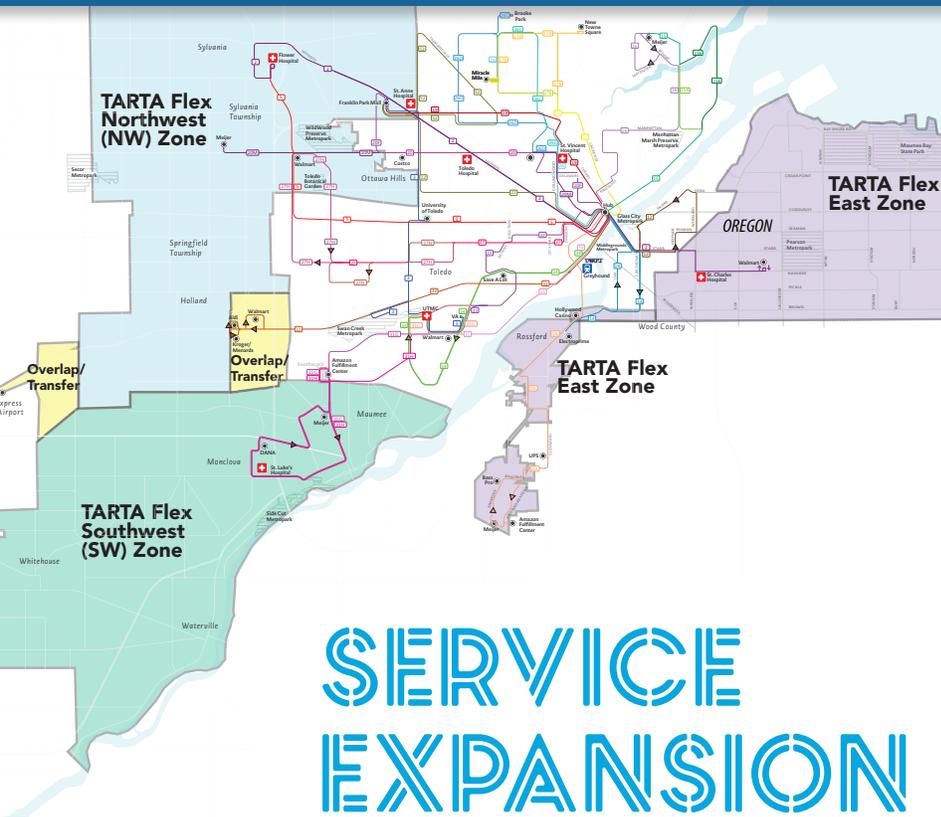
For TARTA, putting zero-emission vehicles on the road is an extension of looking out for the health of the community it is so proud to serve. Electric buses are increasingly available from a wide variety of manufacturers and offer lower fuel costs, reduced maintenance requirements and the elimination of emissions. Combined, these things lead to a smoother, quieter, more efficient ride that benefits the health of the community as a whole.

PARTNERSHIPS

TARTA continues to reach out to the community it services through partnerships with area organizations. In 2023, this meant new efforts to help area youths reach their destinations, an event honoring the mother of the civil rights movement and the expansion of an outreach program.

- With the help of a \$50,000 donation from the Greater Toledo Community Foundation and a \$25,000 donation from the City of Toledo, TARTA teamed with area school systems to launch the Youth Summer Blast Pass program. More than 2,000 youths between the ages of 6 and 19 picked up a pass, which allowed the pass holder to travel free on fixed-route, paratransit and Flex services for all of June, July and August.
- In conjunction with the Toledo NAACP, TARTA celebrated Rosa Parks Day with the unveiling of a mural to the civil rights icon on the wall of TARTA's Transit Hub. The event was followed with a trip on historic Route 5 to the African American Legacy Project.
- The Hub of Hope program continued to put customers in touch with community resources. The Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Anthem Medicaid, Mercy Health, Owens Community College, Lucas County Job & Family Services, Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio, CareSource and Cherry Street Mission Workforce Development visited TARTA's Transit Hub in 2023.
- For the third year in a row as part of Hub of Hope, TARTA hosted Share the Warmth, which collected donations of winter wear from team members and community members to distribute to customers in need at the Transit Hub. In addition to donations from TARTA, Share the Warmth distributed coats, hats, scarves and other items collected by Lutheran Social Services of Northwest Ohio, the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments and Destination Toledo.





SERVICE EXPANSION

Improving public transit in northwest Ohio meant turning down a different road and approaching things differently than the TARTA of decades past. As service changes related to the TARTA Next redesign and expansion hit the road in 2023, customers were able to get a look at TARTA's expansive new route network and how those new destinations can connect people to what's important.

In January of 2024, TARTA debuted fixed-route, TARTA Flex and paratransit services in the city of Oregon. Route 2 was extended to Oregon to give customers a no-transfer ride to stops up and down Monroe Street, including the Toledo Museum of Art, Franklin Park Mall and Flower Hospital.

TARPS paratransit service is now available to anyone living within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a TARTA bus stop, including those on Seaman Road and Navarre Avenue in Oregon.

The entire city of Oregon is in the east TARTA Flex zone, giving residents the option to request an on-demand ride or schedule one in a fully-accessible vehicle to anywhere in Oregon or Rossford for \$3 each way.

In March of 2023, TARTA launched fixed-route and TARPS service in Holland and Springfield Township, and also debuted Route 33, which increased service in the Junction, Uptown and South Toledo neighborhoods. The road to these service changes was paved through TARTA Next community engagement, where customers who used the system were able to tell TARTA personnel exactly where and when they traveled and where more service was necessary.

Be on the lookout for more service changes and additional customer amenities related to TARTA Next in the near future.



FLEX

TARTA Flex is making it easier for people to connect to their community and customers have noticed.

In its first year of operation, the TARTA Flex on-demand rideshare service drew double the ridership as the Call-A-Ride system it replaced. Built to connect suburban customers to fixed-route service and Lucas County and Rossford customers with destinations in their zones, this service quickly became popular, creating the need for TARTA to secure eight more new minivans to double the capacity of the service.

For \$3 each way, TARTA Flex provides point-to-point service anywhere within one of three transit zones in wheelchair-accessible minivans. As of early 2024, Flex zones include:

Northwest: Airport, Franklin Park Mall, Holland, Ottawa Hills, Springfield Township, Sylvania, Sylvania Township

Southwest: Airport, Maumee, Monclova Township, Springfield Township, Spring Meadows Place, Waterville, Whitehouse

East: Rossford, Oregon

Paratransit-eligible customers and customers age 65 and older are eligible to use Flex anywhere in TARTA's service area, as long as either the pick-up or the drop-off point is located in a Flex zone.

TARTA looks forward to building this service in the future and continuing to use it to greatly increase the number of northwest Ohioans for whom public transportation is a viable option.

TARTA BY THE NUMBERS

OUR FLEET

- 68** Buses
- 38** Paratransit
- 9** Cutaways
- 16** Microtransit Minivans

TOTAL TRIPS PERFORMED (2023)

- 1,655,837** Fixed Route
- 191,043** Paratransit
- 27,643** TARTA Flex

OUR TEAM

255 Employees
158 Operators

ON-TIME PICKUP

70.52% Fixed-Route
92.13% TARPS

MOST POPULAR FIXED-ROUTES (WITH 2023 TRIP NUMBERS)

31	UTMC or Maumee via Glendale	160,789
2	Flower Hospital via Toledo Hospital	156,815
5	Flower Hospital/Walmart via Dorr	156,146
19	Franklin Park Mall via Cherry/Sylvania	134,555
14	Hollywood Casino/East Broadway	97,899
32	Holland/Spring Meadows via South/Airport	92,948
22	Franklin Park Mall/UT Campus/Bancroft	85,016
10L	Rossford Meijer/Amazon via Hollywood Casino	84,513
17	Miracle Mile/LeGrange/Bennett or Eleanor	83,311
15	Meijer Alexis via Suder or Summit	81,364

NEW AT TARTA

The additional destinations for fixed-route, paratransit and on-demand trips weren't the only new thing about TARTA in 2023.

TARTA's fleet continues to get younger and more efficient. In addition to new plug-in electric paratransit vans and eight new TARTA Flex vehicles, TARTA is expecting delivery in early 2024 of four new 30-foot diesel buses and a new tow truck. All told, TARTA has secured funding for or added 40 vehicles to its fleet in the last two years, in addition to replacing many vehicles that were beyond their useful life.

With a growing system came the need for a growing workforce, and TARTA responded with a hiring push that culminated in five operator graduations, including two of the largest classes in TARTA history.

For the first time in years, nearly every TARTA fixed-route and paratransit vehicle has been equipped with security cameras, serving as both an added security measure for Team TARTA members and as a protection against false claims. TARTA is working to make the technology available on all of its vehicles.

New passenger information screens on fixed-route vehicles inform customers of approaching bus stops and other key information and happenings at TARTA. Other customer-friendly additions in 2023 included real-time bus information available through the Transit app and the installation of newly-designed bus stops and shelters, which will continue throughout 2024.





LITE FUNDING

Local Investment in Transit Enhancements (LITE) funding—approved by Lucas County and Rossford voters as part of the change in TARTA’s funding structure in 2021—allows local communities to make improvements that make traveling easier on both transit users and drivers alike.

In the short time that this funding has been available, northwest Ohio communities have used these funds to upgrade benches, crosswalks, sidewalks and so much more.

The City of Toledo receives \$300,000 per year in LITE funding, while Maumee, Ottawa Hills, Rossford, Sylvania, Sylvania Township and Waterville receive \$90,000 each year. Projects commuters might notice as a result of these funds include:

- **Toledo:** New benches and trash cans at stops with high daily ridership
- **Rossford:** Updated traffic signals, crosswalks and sidewalks
- **Maumee:** Uptown streetscape project
- **Sylvania Township:** Resurfacing and enhanced ADA connectivity (project starts July 2024)
- **Sylvania:** Bridge replacement and elongation of turn lane
- **Ottawa Hills:** Resurfacing and sidewalk addition
- **Waterville:** Resurfacing and ADA cutout upgrades (construction begins February 2024)



WORTH RECOGNIZING

TARTA’s innovation and drive for customer service did not go unnoticed in 2023, with a number of team members being honored. These included:

- Operators Adena Spaythe and Thomas Starkey and Transportation Supervisor Frank Duffy, who were named ERRO Golden Recognition award winners after being nominated by other Team TARTA members
- Mechanic Virgil Wise was recognized with the Ohio Public Transit Association’s Milestone Award for his 37 years of expertise and service
- CEO Laura Koprowski, who was named a winner of Leadership Ohio’s Visionary Award
- TARTA Board of Trustees President Mary Morrison was appointed to the American Public Transit Association’s APTA Transit Board Members committee, giving TARTA a voice on the national stage.
- TARTA leaders presented the development of the TARTA Flex microtransit program on the national and state levels and hosted several transit teams from outside Toledo to guide in the development of their own microtransit programs.





COMMUNITY

Team TARTA members continue to go above and beyond to make their presence felt at community events in Toledo. In 2023, TARTA personnel:

- Served as the Transportation Sponsor for Toledo Jeep Fest and took more than 400 passengers from Franklin Park Mall and Oregon’s Starr Elementary directly to the parade and back via the Jeep Fest Express.
- Fielded the largest team for Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in TARTA history, with more than 20 representatives walking or running in honor of breast cancer victims and survivors.
- Collected and properly disposed of 82 bags of trash as part of Keep Toledo/Lucas County Beautiful’s Litter League.
- Participated in several area parades including the African American Festival, Toledo Pride, the Rossford Halloween Parade, The Blade Holiday Parade and the Maumee Holiday Light Parade.
- Continued to partner with community groups to raise awareness of human trafficking by placing notices on information screens on all fixed-route buses.
- Supported business expos presented by the Maumee and Sylvania Chambers of Commerce, the Toledo NAACP’s Freedom Fund dinner and the United Pastors of Social Empowerment’s Social Impact Awards.
- Hosted events at senior centers in Maumee and Oregon and open house events in Oregon to introduce TARTA services to new customers.
- Ramped up TARTA’s Special Event Transportation service. The return of the Muddy Shuttle was added to transport attendees to and from special events such as The Jeep Fest Express, Glass City Marathon, toledo’s Fourth of July Events, Oregon’s Boomfest and the Glass City JazzFest.
- Took voters to the polls for free on election day as part of Voter Ready with TARTA.



ERRO

Launched in 2023, the ERRO (Employee Recognition, Retention and Outreach) Initiative is a team of passionate employees representing multiple departments who are tasked to identify, develop, coordinate and maintain recognition, retention and outreach programs and events. This team works actively to gather new concepts, ideas and feedback from team members.

In a busy first year, ERRO:

- Outlined opportunities for increasing employee engagement
- Launched the Golden Recognition Award program, which honors Team TARTA members who have gone above and beyond for customers
- Hosted the Fall Kick-Off event at the Central Avenue garage and a Wellness Fair at TARPS, providing employees with free services from vendors in the fields of food service, education, meditation, health and more

TARTA can’t wait to see what’s in store for ERRO going forward!



TARTA

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