

Director's Notes

March 2025

1 Increase Education & Advocacy

Merchandising

Staff are working to identify a revenue positive distribution solution, investigating local partnerships and other e-commerce solutions.

County Commission

Mr. Dutkevicz was able to hold initial one-on-one meetings with Commissioners Dixon and Rogers in December. Mr. Dutkevicz is still following up with Commissioner Carpenter.

2 Enhance Revenues

Funding Education

Staff have begun to engage with community groups and other stakeholders to present on the services provided by BCRTA and the short-term financial outlook of the agency.

3 Engage Entrepreneurial Disruptive Tech

SMART Grant

BCRTA, in cooperation with the Stark County Regional Transit Authority (SARTA), Western Reserve Transit Authority (WRTA), and NEORide has been awarded a SMART grant provided by USDOT.

BCRTA vehicles are slated to have their autonomous equipment installed in the next few months. Staff are awaiting direction vehicle shipping and engineering info from the upfitter and vehicle manufacturer.

The primary goal of this proposed demonstration project is to evaluate the effectiveness of and enhanced transit fleet safety from integrating advanced vehicle safety technologies on to vehicles in transit fleets; preventing death and injuries by reducing the number of accidents and the serious nature of those that cannot be avoided. This project utilizes two SMART grant technology areas - Connected Vehicles and Systems Integration - and addresses the need for collision avoidance on transit vehicles by retrofitting up to 3 vehicles (Ford e450 and Gillig 35' platforms) within each transit partner's current operating fleet vehicles with the TONY/MAX advanced vehicle safety system package. This system will enable collision avoidance that can also support bus yard management and includes data logging and telematics features that will allow the project team to collect data that will be shared following a Data Management Plan developed in accordance with the Public Access Plan and as provided in the FY23 SMART Grant NOFO.

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4 Leverage Regional Partners

Middletown

Mr. Dutkevicz presented at Middletown City Council once again on March 4. Adoption of an MOU to transition grantee status from the City to the BCRTA was placed on the legislative agenda for a first reading and will receive a second reading and vote on March 18. If the legislation to execute the MOU is adopted, it would become effective 30 days later. Staff are preparing for a possible transition of responsibilities beginning in April.

Paratransit Coordination

BCRTA is working closely with NEORide, SORTA, and TANK to pilot a regional one-seat ride program for eligible ADA riders. SORTA has agreed to fund the pilot to help riders cross borders in the tri-state area without changing buses or booking multiple rides. The pilot is expected to launch in May. SORTA received a grant award to help fund operations as part of the Ohio Workforce Mobility Grant, although staffing has been an issue for METRO.

5 Lead Workforce Development

Autonomous Shuttle

Staff are investigating the possibility of bringing an autonomous shuttle to the area in Fall 2025. The first pilot would focus on work with persistent staffing shortages, such as late-night SafeRide services within the City of Oxford and on the Miami University Campus. Obtaining an autonomous vehicle may also lead to workforce opportunities for training on autonomous tech and vehicle systems.

The project would be completely reliant on discretionary grant funds. Staff applied to ODOT to fund this project as part of the 2026 Ohio Transit Preservation Partnership program. Announcements are expected in March 2025, although no date has been announced at this time.

6 Adapt to Market Demand

Chestnut Street Multimodal Station

Chestnut Street Station continues to move forward. The building is "dried in" for the winter. Drywall is well underway, masonry walls are completed, and overhead doors are all installed. Staff are working with Graybach and Bowen to identify an opening date in Fall of 2025.

Information, updates and pictures are available at <https://www.butlercountyrta.com/projects/oxford-multimodal-facility/>

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GDRTA Bus Lease

Given the continued increased demand for BGo services and the surge in hiring, operations staff has found themselves in the unfamiliar position of having more drivers available than vehicles. As part of a short-term solution to meet service needs, Greater Dayton RTA has agreed to lease contingency vehicles to the BCRTA for a very low cost. A lease agreement was finalized and executed this month. Vehicles should arrive before month end and be placed in service by April 30.

State of Good Repair

Moser Court Improvements & Space Planning

BCRTA was successful in obtaining \$2.5M to realize the Fuel Alternative, Security, Storage, Training (FASST) project to finish the Moser Court parking expansion plan. Staff are working to finalize A&E plans to let a bid for construction in late March. Hamilton Planning Commission has recommended approval of the plan to City Council who will consider by end of March. Administrative staff will be leaving Moser Court in March and April to make way for the expanded training center and space for the operations team. The transition is likely to last through fall while phased moves take place within the building and light renovations, such as painting and furniture reconfigurations, take place.

Coming Up

Board Portal

Staff have completed implementation of the new BCRTA Board portal using software from OnBoard. Invitations to the system for trustees have been sent. Training will be provided upon request for trustees. Staff find the system exceptionally easy and intuitive to use and have needed very little training. Trustees that would prefer may still receive a PDF packet via download.

2023 Annual Report

Copies are available on the BCRTA website and from Shawn Cowan.

Employee Appreciation Event

The annual employee appreciation was Sunday, February 23 at 12:00pm. Attendance was excellent and BCRTA was pleased to recognize many dedicated staff and partners.

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Upcoming Procurements >\$25,000

Item	Procuring Agency	Estimated Spend	Estimated Term	Reason for Purchase
Moser Court Parking Lot Construction	BCRTA	3.5M	Task	New
Chestnut Station FF&E	BCRTA	475K	Task	New
Chestnut Station Bus Wash	BCRTA	1.3M	Task	New
Small Bus Tires	BCRTA	180K	5	Replacement
Large Bus Tires	BCRTA	180K	5	Replacement
HRIS Software	BCRTA	350K	5	Replacement
Uniforms & Supplies	BCRTA	250K	5 years	Replacement
Non-Revenue Vehicles (4)	BCRTA	200K	Task	Replacement