

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

2024 Revised Revenue And Capital Budget Request

WHEREAS, the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) staff had prepared a 2024 balanced budget with sales tax of \$19,688,368 and Fares of \$1,776,200; and

WHEREAS, SARTA staff has prepared a revision to the 2024 Revenue projections with; and

	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Revise</u>	<u>Total Reduced</u>
Sales Tax	\$19,688,368	\$18,693,857	\$994,511
Fares	\$1,776,200	\$1,700,000	\$76,200
Operating	\$5,406,814	\$3,111,609	<u>\$2,295,205</u>
Total Revenue Reduction			\$3,365,914

WHEREAS, staff has prepared a revision to the 2024 Capital Budget projects with updated local share with; and

	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Revised</u>	<u>Total Increase</u>
Local Share	\$2,409,573	\$3,214,251	\$804,678

WHEREAS, to operate within budget into 2024, funds must be approved for expenditure and fiscal responsibility mandates to operate within projected revenues; and

WHEREAS, to effectively manage said budget, the Executive Director/CEO will require the Authority to move funding between line items for effective management of the Agency;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees, that the 2024 Revised Revenue Budget are hereby adopted; and the Executive Director/CEO shall have the authority to move line-item amounts within the established total budget.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary-Treasurer

### 2024 Revenue Budget Request (Revised)

SARTA REVENUES	2023	2023	2024	2024 Requested	Variance
Revenues	YTD	Budget	Original Request	Budget	
FARES	1,141,013	1,399,000	1,776,200	1,700,000	(76,200)
PROGRAM INCOME	31,719	97,400	77,500	77,500	-
INTEREST INCOME	104,748	40,000	210,000	210,000	-
NON TRANSPORTATION REVENUE	682,246	165,500	340,325	340,325	-
AUX TRANSPORTATION REVENUE	16	2,000	2,000	2,000	-
SALES TAX REVENUE	13,757,975	18,623,995	19,688,368	18,693,857	(994,511)
STATE OPERATING GRANTS	1,005,425	876,847	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
STATE CAPITAL GRANTS*	483,685	127,476	827,101	827,101	-
FCG - PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE	35,840	1,675,088	5,443,101	5,443,101	-
FG - PLANNING	87,811	181,416	53,271	53,271	-
FG - 5310 ENHANCED MOBILITY**	379,042	552,431	651,777	651,777	-
FEDERAL GRANTS OTHER/ SUBGRANTEE**	854,084	1,126,837	878,217	878,217	-
FEDERAL CAPITAL GRANTS*	6,317,526	18,246,879	11,178,335	11,178,335	-
FEDERAL GRANTS	6,405,002	12,164,149	5,406,814	3,111,609	(2,295,205)
<b>REVENUE BUDGET</b>	<b>24,484,921</b>	<b>36,904,663</b>	<b>36,527,573</b>	<b>33,161,657</b>	<b>(3,365,916)</b>
<b>Local Share needed for 2024</b>		3,493,729	2,409,573	3,214,251	804,678
		33,410,934	34,118,000	29,947,406	(4,170,594)



Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Budget Request- Original  
Capital Projects 2024

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Budget Request- Revised  
Capital Projects 2024

	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Operating Grants</i>				
<i>Total Operating Grants</i>	<b>\$17,571,302</b>	<b>\$12,928,185</b>	<b>\$4,643,117</b>	
<i>Capital Bus Projects</i>				
<i>Total Capital Bus Projects</i>	<b>\$1,876,594</b>	<b>\$1,501,275</b>		<b>\$375,319</b>
<i>Other Capital Projects</i>				
<i>Total Other Capital Projects</i>	<b>\$6,498,102</b>	<b>\$5,582,620</b>		<b>\$915,482</b>
Construction Projects				
<i>Total Construction Projects</i>	<b>\$6,040,312</b>	<b>\$4,921,540</b>		<b>\$1,118,772</b>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$14,415,008</b>	<b>\$12,005,435</b>		<b>\$2,409,573</b>
Other Local Subgrantee-Pass Thru Projects			Pass Through Expenses	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Subgrantee-Pass Thru Projects</i>	<b>\$1,505,634</b>	<b>\$1,505,634</b>	<b>\$1,505,634</b>	
	Total Budgeted Grants	Federal/State Share	SARTA Shae & Expense Offset	Local Share
<b>Project Totals-2024</b>	<b>\$33,491,944</b>	<b>\$26,439,255</b>	<b>\$6,148,751</b>	<b>\$2,409,573</b>

	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Operating Grants</i>				
<i>Total Operating Grants</i>	<b>\$9,693,595</b>	<b>\$7,151,717</b>	<b>\$2,541,878</b>	
<i>Capital Bus Projects</i>				
<i>Total Capital Bus Projects</i>	<b>\$9,618,388</b>	<b>\$7,820,315</b>		<b>\$1,798,073</b>
<i>Other Capital Projects</i>				
<i>Total Other Capital Projects</i>	<b>\$2,334,789</b>	<b>\$1,883,988</b>		<b>\$450,800</b>
Construction Projects				
<i>Total Construction Projects</i>	<b>\$5,572,442</b>	<b>\$4,619,895</b>		<b>\$952,517</b>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	<b>\$17,525,619</b>	<b>\$14,324,199</b>		<b>\$3,201,390</b>
Other Local Subgrantee-Pass Thru Projects			Pass Through Expenses	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Subgrantee-Pass Thru Projects</i>	<b>\$673,939</b>	<b>\$661,078</b>	<b>\$661,078</b>	<b>\$12,861</b>
	Total Budgeted Grants	Federal/State Share	SARTA Shae & Expense Offset	Local Share
<b>Project Totals-2024</b>	<b>\$27,893,153</b>	<b>\$22,136,994</b>	<b>\$3,202,956</b>	<b>\$3,214,251</b>

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

**A Resolution For Operating And Capital Budget For January & February of 2025**

WHEREAS, the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) staff has prepared the budget for the first 60 days of 2025 with net revenues of four million, seven hundred twenty-four thousand, nine hundred eighty-six dollars (\$4,724,986), with a one hundred eighty-one thousand dollars (\$181,000) local share requirement and expenditures of five million, two hundred thousand dollars (\$5,200,000); and

WHEREAS, SARTA staff has prepared the following capital budget for 60 days of 2025 local match funds of one hundred eighty-one thousand dollars (\$181,000); and

<u>Year</u>	<u>Project Cost</u>	<u>Federal Share</u>	<u>Local Share</u>
Jan & Feb 2025	\$2,620,402	\$1,853,986	\$181,000

WHEREAS, in order to operate through February 2025, funds must be approved for expenditure and fiscal responsibility mandates operating within projected revenues; and

WHEREAS, in order to effectively manage said budget, the Executive Director/CEO will require the authority to move funding between line items for effective management of the Agency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority that the 2025 Operating And Capital Budgets are hereby adopted, and the Executive Director/CEO shall have the authority to move line-item amounts within the established total budget.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary-Treasurer



Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
 Capital Budget Request Jan & Feb 2025  
 Capital Projects Jan & Feb 2025

<i>Operating Grants</i>	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Operating Grants</i>	\$1,795,402	\$1,209,986	\$585,416	
<i>Capital Bus Projects</i>	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Capital Bus Projects</i>	\$0	\$0		\$0
<i>Other Capital Projects</i>	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Local Share
<i>Total Other Capital Projects</i>	\$155,000	\$124,000		\$31,000
<i>Construction Projects</i>	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	SARTA Wages/Expenses Share	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Construction Projects</i>	\$400,000	\$320,000		\$80,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	\$555,000	\$444,000		\$111,000
<i>Other Local Subgrantee-Pass Thru Projects</i>	Total Budgeted Cost	Federal/State Share	Pass Through Expenses	SARTA Capital Local Share
<i>Total Subgrantee-Pass Thru/ Local match Projects</i>	\$270,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$70,000
	Total Budgeted Grants	Federal/State Share	SARTA Share & Expense Offset	Local Share
<b>Project Totals Jan-Feb 2025</b>	<b>\$2,620,402</b>	<b>\$1,853,986</b>	<b>\$585,416</b>	<b>\$181,000</b>



Stark Area Regional Transit  
 Authority Operating Budget  
 Request Jan & Feb 2025

SALES TAX	2,935,000	
FARE REVENUE	250,000	
CONTRACT REVENUE	35,000	
PROGRAM INCOME	45,000	
INTEREST INCOME	25,000	
NON-TRANSPORTATION REVENUE	25,000	
PASS-THRU GRANTS	200,000	
OPERATING GRANTS	377,226	
PM GRANTS	832,760	
		4,724,986
EXPECTED EXPENSES	(5,200,000)	
LOCAL SHARE	(181,000)	
		(5,381,000)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		<u>(656,014)</u>



**STARK AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

1600 Gateway Blvd. SE, Canton, Ohio 44707

P: 330.477.2782 | 800.379.3661 | TTY: 800.750.0750 | F: 330.454.5476

SARTAonline.com

## MEMO

To: Kirt Conrad

From: Clayton Popik, Director of Development & Special Projects

Subject: Summary for Proline Restructure Public Hearings

Date: Revised: December 6, 2024 (Update Comment Log)  
Original: November 25, 2024

SARTA held public hearings on November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the implementation of a restructure to Proline Services where trips would be scheduled based on ADA and non-ADA designations and where those service areas would occur based on guidance provided from the Federal Transit Administration on services provided per the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). Along with attending these meetings, a special page and submission form was established on the SARTA website. We have received comments from 65 individuals in addition to the 76 people who attended the four meetings. These submissions and attendees were a mix of riders, parents of riders, or educational and service program advocates. These comments are summarized in a spreadsheet attached to this memo along with Facebook comments and full meeting notes.

From this comment period, several impacts were identified. For those whose regular trips fell out of the ADA zones, it was found that work, school, and medical were some of the more frequent reasons for travelling with Proline. Residents who lived a greater distance from the Fixed Route corridors wondered how they were going to get into town to make their appointments. Others used Proline to maintain access to their community outside of their own home. Areas of impact to note based on these hearings were Canal Fulton, Hartville, Waynesburg, Minerva, and the communities southwest of Navarre/Massillon.

Many hoped we had taken more time to plan a replacement service. It was explained that it is SARTA's hope to have a service in place by February to handle the non-ADA rides. There was great confusion over the idea of ADA vs. non-ADA rides and what that means to the disabled community. Explanations were given as to what the FTA expects of transit authorities when it comes to delivering ADA Paratransit Service and that SARTA has gone above and beyond to do so at the countywide level which has created a hard to manage unsustainable service. Questions were asked as to what other services were looked at other than Proline and participants were reminded of the 5 Fixed Routes up for elimination by February too.

Others asked what this means for SARTA's overall budgeting and the upcoming levy. It was explained that no matter what services were on the table or when cuts needed made, discussion on the levy is not a productive way to address the situation at hand. Some said they would not vote for the levy if their services would be cut off with no viable means of transportation in the affected areas. They felt they would have no reason to contribute. This also led into conversations about capital vs. operating funds which were explained at a very high level.

**From:** [Clayton Popik](#)  
**To:** [E-Team](#)  
**Subject:** RE: First 2 Public Hearing Summary & Comment Log  
**Date:** Saturday, November 23, 2024 11:24:13 AM  
**Attachments:** [Proline Client Online Comment Log.xlsx](#)

---

Attached is the updated comment log as of this morning. We heard from many more people yesterday. The mood of the meetings was upsetting, and if I can be frank heart breaking and troubling when listening to the direct impact this will have. It has been a long two days. Some themes are below. I will plan to have more of a report next week when I can get notes from Tim and Ebony.

1. Explanation of Operations vs. Capital money because we were called out for the two new buildings and other infrastructure we have built over the last three years.  
Explanation of lack of operating dollars in Ohio.
2. Asked about any alternatives. Explained Fixed Route cuts and other cuts mentioned in the Repository article.
3. There are numerous essential life trip purposes – medical, work, social, school, independence, etc.
4. Life skills are taught by the schools – teach the students now on Proline so they can use it as they become functioning adults.
5. Independence for those who cannot travel in a regular automobile.
6. Weak communication for this highly important topic. Short notice. Some only found out Friday morning and happened to get to the meeting on time. This has led to a high level of distrust throughout these meetings making the overall message of ADA vs. non-ADA difficult to convey.
7. How will the service gaps be filled? Asked if SARTA Connect could be utilized more in these rural areas for non-ADA trips or feeder service into the Transit Centers.
8. Have we looked at our own efficiencies enough? Mother described two vehicles arriving to her home to take her sons to Idea House. Another gentleman described him and another gentleman in his neighborhood being sent two different buses to go to the same job. Another rider was on the bus much longer than he felt he should have. We can look into the actual trip time. I was asked if we have looked into our ability to use smaller vehicles.
9. Fare issues came up a lot. Many are willing to pay more. What would the additional \$0.75 look like across the total ridership of the service. They would prefer this to having no service at all. Two riders explained that there seems to be an issue at the fare box. One parent said their son's Scorecard has much more money left on it than necessary. They estimate he is only charged about 30% of what he should be. Another rider said somedays the farebox tells him to pay \$2.25 and other days it tells him the fare is \$1.50. May have the amounts wrong but he clearly stated he is being charged different amounts.
10. Numerous people claim they will be at the December 11<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. Many wanted to see board members at these meetings. Many wanted to see other staff members there to discuss their questions fuller. Especially as it pertains the urgency of the budget shortfalls for 2024 and 2025. I did my best to explain this but only know as much as what was already explained in the repository.
11. Alliance meeting demonstrated the impacts of the greater rural part of the county. There is a lack of private providers in this area where service outside of Proline is little to none.
12. Could we start a Mobility Management program for helping search for other providers



and what their specialties are that can assist when we do not have capacity or cannot transport a specific person due to their needs?

13. Can we wait for better weather and/or the end of the school year so that school can have more time to adjust to this.
14. A lot of people are upset that we would make a decision so quickly with no plan to put in place other than to cut off so many people.
15. The levy came up. More people saying that they feel they would have no need to contribute to levy funds if their service is being taken away from them.

**Clayton Popik** | Director of Development and Special Projects

Phone: 330-477-2782 x503 | Mobile: 330-312-3648

---

**From:** Clayton Popik <cpopik@sartaonline.com>

**Sent:** Friday, November 22, 2024 11:04 AM

**To:** E-Team <ETeam@sartaonline.com>

**Subject:** First 2 Public Hearing Summary & Comment Log

Attached is the comment log as of this morning. We have received 47 submissions. Most center around loss of jobs, isolation of those who have no other transportation options, loss of life skills, and so on.

Yesterday's first two public hearings had the following themes:

1. Communities with high disabled population, but no fixed route.
2. How is this decision equitable for communities that will be cut off from service when they contribute to the sales tax SARTA operates from?
3. People are planning to quit their jobs as of 2/10/25.
4. Communication of these meetings and the service proposals was little to none. Word of mouth was the most common method people know anything was happening. Led to conversation of why SARTA is "trying to pull one over on the citizens?"
5. Why are we removing service without an alternative plan in place for those affected?
6. Could we add pop-ups to the website to alert people to important news such as this?
7. Can we add a definitions page to the website?
8. Can fares be raised?
9. Why was nobody prepared to speak on the budget? How did this money suddenly go missing? Can we attend the board meetings to ask about finances?
10. Why would we make such a drastic decision this close to a levy renewal?

Ebony took notes so we will have a more thorough report coming next week.

**Clayton Popik** | Director of Development and Special Projects

Phone: [330-477-2782](tel:330-477-2782) x503 | Mobile: [330-312-3648](tel:330-312-3648)

Impacts and Suggestions First Meeting- Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> 9:30am-10:30am

**Riders mostly people affecting being outside of the ADA service**

**Hartville-Pegasus Farms and GentleBrook, Canal Fulton, DD Board, Schools (Idea House) and Waynesburg**

- Many are inclined to pay more. By increasing fare would be a better option for them then to just eliminate NON-ADA Service as a whole. While one person asked if a Fare change would be possible, or would it make any difference to how the service will run.
- One person was there on behalf of her daughter and that she travels to Pegasus Farms in Hartville from Canton and is looking to move up to Hartville. So, she will be completely out of the ADA Service Area.
- One suggested that she would like to see a map that is created to hone in on routes that could show the general public how to access fixed routes <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> to determined if their trip would be with in ADA guidelines.
- Sippo Lake was explained how it was covered in the core service area.
- One asked if Core service and Polygon were that same thing.
- One asked if a page could be created Transit Terminology Lingo to eliminate confusion and be better understood by the average person.
- One person asked why certain parts of Navarre would still be serviced while that would be a smaller population compared to Hartville and Canal Fulton combined.
- One person asked why do we exist? What is our purpose?
- One person asked Paratransit was. They were confused when they heard Proline and Paratransit together, not realizing that it is the same thing.
- One person asked about our Funding Sources and who what legislatives would they need to contact.
- One person said that he lives in Canal Fulton and stated that his Koala Kruiser trip was \$50 or more to and from home, vs having SARTA costing \$2.25 each way.
- One person asked if this was going to be permanent, eliminating county wide service or is there a possibility of charging more for non-ADA trips.
- One suggested to add a pop-up links on the website on the home page so people will be notified of any changes that will affect riders and our services.

Impacts and Suggestions 2nd Meeting- Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> 12:30pm-1:30pm

### **Riders mostly people affecting being outside of the ADA service**

#### **Hartville -Gentle Brook, Pegasus Farm, riders fromMinerva**

- One person asked if fare is going to go up \$3.50 if the fare is outside of the ADA service area
- Director Bill Green of Stark DD Board was upset and wanted to know why they weren't notified by a call or email of the changes that were going to affect their clients and families if their clients.
- Some people asked about Budget challenges and Clayton refocus the meeting back to the topic at hand.
- One person said this public meeting was the first chance for riders and families affected by the change to provide input.
- One person said how could the board let this happen.
- Are there any other alternatives besides cutting 5 routes and countywide service.
- One person was there on the behalf of her daughter and her daughter lives in Minerva and works in Minerva. And from now until Feb. she will not say anything to her daughter, because with her disability it would provide anxiety due to change and she will be devastated on not being able to be independent while using our service.
- A Goodwill employee states that she works with clients that depend on SARTA's Proline services and work with many other partnering agencies and organization that their clients will be affected as well. And without this service they will lose their jobs.
- Director of Stark DD Bill Green wants SARTA to consider extending the service through the school year for students.

Impact and Suggestion- Massillon Transit Center 1:30-2:30PM

**Riders mostly people affecting being outside of the ADA service**

**Students from Ideal House, Fairless HS and other going to work and doctor's appointment.**

- One asked if this will go into effect on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> then why would want to hear from them and that Proline should be more important than hydrogen buses. He doesn't have any one in his family with a disability that uses the service so if we move forward and abandon the proline service that he will never support a SARTA renewal ever again. He was also appalled that Kirt or someone from the Board was not present with everything happening so fast.
- Another father that has a son that goes to Idea House, said that he would pay \$5.00 a ride for his son to get back and forth for his son to use the service because his son needs this service. To get him back and forth to Idea House 4 days without the service his wife would either have to quit her job and stay home take him back and forth to school or pay \$800 dollars a month to send him to school in a uber. He also said that him being the point of contact for his son, that he was never notified and that he found out from another parent.
- One asked will there be an easier way for people that use the service on their own to see if a proline will be in the ADA service area.
- Susan Hanna, an educator from Fairless HS spoke on behalf of her students that has multi-disabilities. She also provided a list of comments from her students and what the service meant to them. In Nov. alone her students took 38 rides to their jobs and that they were luck to have SARTA for them to be able to get there. Their students depend on the service and while getting real life job training.
- One mother stated that SARTA is the only way for her 2 boys to get to Idea House. She also raised the question on why sometimes 2 different vehicles come to pick them up from home.
- One asked are there any other alternatives.
- One man was there with his son and asked if we were going to make it more direct. His son goes to Costco mostly going to Canal Fulton while using Proline and that we spent 120 miles driving out of the way.
- One woman that uses Proline who is partially paralyzed those lives in Canal Fulton asked why it is categorized as ADA per ride and not ADA per person.
- One man states that his son uses Proline for work and why didn't anyone know about it, why wasn't it on the radio, or in the paper. The people that have the service weren't notified by text or email. And that we could have put info on our buses. Clayton and Latrice explained that it was posted to our website and that we put legal notices in the paper and contacted multiple news outlets.
- One mother stated that SARTA is the only way for her 2 boys to get to Idea House. She also raised the question of why they would get picked up on 2 different vehicles and taking to the

same place. And how would they get their kids back and forth from school without changing their work schedules.

- There was poor communication how this came out to the public.
- Lisa from Stark DD says going forward with communication as to what's going to happen, we can rely on our Community Partners like The DD Board, Education Service Center. We can work together to let everyone know what is going on.
- One man that works with Kids with Developmental Disabilities asked how did we prioritize making this cuts over everything else. Clayton talked about the 5 late night loops that are looking to be eliminated and that Proline was never touched before and needs of Proline and what Proline could be doing differently.
- One woman asked about raising the price and Clayton explained that with ADA trips, SARTA couldn't charge no more then \$2.00 and that with Non-ADA a fare increase could be looked at.

### **Riders mostly people affecting being outside of the ADA service**

- Is SARTA going to assist with mobility management
- With the rural areas in Alliance, cabs and uber won't even come out there to pick them up.
- One woman states that depending on the disability, that some people can't be left alone to wait to catch the bus, so how will that work when they would have to go to a stop to wait for the bus.
- One woman was there with her daughter and wanted to know how it was going to affect her. Where they live would be outside of ADA service after Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>.
- One woman said that the riders love their independence and the socialization, so their quality of life will be affected.
- One asked that if the fare structure would change, could this affect the passes that they currently receive.
- One driver asked if SARTA could reached out to Some of these other transportation providers to see if they could assist with rides. (Mobility Management)
- One asked if we could run vans instead of buses unless some has a mobility device.
- The next board meeting was a huge topic and if it was public for people to attend and also if the decision would be at that board meeting.

## Summary

What we gathered from these 4 meetings is the concerns eliminating service outside of the ADA service area, where families and educators noted the impact on individuals with disabilities who rely on this service for independence, education, employment, and socialization. Riders in areas like Hartville, Canal Fulton, Fairless, Minerva many other hot spots expressed concerns about losing access to transportation due to being outside ADA service zones. We have seen across the board that it would be beneficial to everyone by increasing fare and implementing a new fare structure for non-ADA trips as an alternative to service elimination. Communication is also playing a huge factor on how SARTA communicated this not only to the clients that this affecting but to the public, calling for improved outreach, clearer information, and collaboration with community partners. The community also expressed their concerns on why our CEO or someone from the Board was not present in these meetings and asked if the public is welcomed to attend the upcoming board meetings.

## SARTA Services Public Meeting Notes:

### Meeting #1 – Library

- Most of the questions focused on Minerva and Hartville regarding leaving people outside of the zone to fend for themselves when it comes to getting transportation.
- Since we do not have a plan as far as non-ADA trips go, there was contention that non-ADA trips do not exist in entirety for SARTA after February 10<sup>th</sup>.
- There were a few people that said when they called into CSR's that they were told that they (the CSR) could not provide information as far as the client's rides go and if they fall within the ADA zone.
- People asked if there was a way for them to look up themselves if rides fell within the zone to which we relayed to them their best bet was to call but they could use PinPoint to get an estimate or at least see how close the nearest route was to their location.
- Had to explain multiple times that the ¾ mile radius was not walking distance or driving distance but "as the crow flies" which makes google maps not the best way to determine trip eligibility.
- People were willing to pay more to maintain their transportation

### Meeting #2 – Library

- Again, questions on Hartville, Pegasus farms.
- People were willing to pay more for trips if it meant having them.
- Stark Board of DD alluded to poor communication on the changes and that if we had worked together to inform them before the news hit the paper or social media channels, they would have been willing to work with their families and clients and calm the situation.
  - Said that the "relationship" between the two agencies has been hindered due to the lack of communication and consideration to inform them of changes.
- Other individuals asked why the Stark DD wasn't included on a "committee" to make the decision.
- Some alluded to bringing in legislative or legal action related to contacting Governor, Mayor, city council and suing SARTA for discrimination of a protected group.
- Many individuals implied that they would vote "no" on any upcoming levy for SARTA should the changes take place.
- Questions on the budget arose and two individuals in the audience asked why no one was there from the Board or that could answer questions on the budget.

### Meeting #3 – Massillon Transit Center

- Probably the more hostile of the meetings.
- Again, topic of levy, voting no, and budget arose and why no one was there to answer for them.
- Asked if anyone on the Board had any “skin in the game” and knew what or how their decision was going to affect those with disabilities.
- Main topics were Idea House and how kids were going to get to their school after this change.
- Canal Fulton was the main outlier city affected.
- Explanation of ¾ mile “as the crow flies” was repeated on several occasions.
- Again, people asked why the rash and rushed decision and why no one was considered when it came to any possible solutions.
- Topic of inefficiencies in current model of transportation:
  - Travelling out of their way to get to their destination
    - One gentleman said “over 120 miles” cumulative from reviewing trips
    - Another said that two buses are sent to the same address to pick up their two sons’ minutes apart
- Suggested cutting fixed routes instead due to “empty buses” on the regular.

### Meeting #4 – Alliance Transit Center

- More calm meeting.
- People were concerned about living outside of the area and having no other transportation options
  - No uber/lyft
  - No taxi
- Many concerns rose due to lack of routes that extend to the outskirts/rural areas of Stark County
- Proposed working through contracts with other agencies to at least coordinate transportation into the zones for those that have no other means
- Asked if it was a “done-deal” and if they were wasting their time or if anyone would hear their concerns
- Multiple questions were asked to Clayton about eligibility of trips
- Clayton was also asked how this change doesn’t violate any ADA rules as far as reducing access to transportation for a protected group



Overall:

- Many people said they would vote against any upcoming levy
- Most thought someone from the Board or someone that could answer budget questions should have been in attendance
- Concerns about being stranded at home due to limited transportation options
- Main areas of concern:
  - Minerva
  - Hartville
  - Idea House
  - Canal Fulton
  - Louisville (outskirts)
- Many said communication could have been better
  - They only knew because their driver, boss, work, co-worker, friend said something
  - Suggested individual emails, letters, texts, etc.
- Most were willing to pay more to maintain transportation option
- More training/education needs to be done on the ¾ mile radius and how that affects trips
  - Multiple instances of confusion as it relates to:
    - Not being able to travel more than ¾ mile from their home
    - The ¾ miles being from a bus stop and not the bus route as a whole
- People were concerned about keeping jobs, going places, social interactions and how this change would eliminate or remove an aspect of quality of life and independence.
- Meeting attendees were concerned with THEIR transportation and made suggestions related to cutting fixed routes, voting “no” on a levy, and other options that would affect others but allow them to keep their current method of transportation. Threatening and bullying tactic that in the long run would only diminish the transportation for the county.
- Most attendees implied they would be attending the December Board Meeting to make their voices heard.

Impact	Proline Suggestion	Additional Suggestions	In	Out	Mixed	Internal Comments
Cannot access fixed route. Needs to get to Idea House	Eliminate empty buses. Study cost of fixed route. Patrons need specilized service. Stop building fancy buildings. Put funds into Proline.	N/A		X		Idea House
Negatively impact Fairless students and others with disabilities. Seems discriminatory.	N/A	N/A				
Have not used Late Nigh buses in awhile. Will affect others who work nights. Hard to find a job on a bus route. Risk of losing jobs. Uber/Lyft unaffordable. These are convenient routes.	Thinks Proline is great. Helps a lot.	Bring back Sunday routes. Expand current routes. People can't apply for jobs because buses don't go there. Start losing riders and costing money. Don't think they are thinking of downfalls of taking away services.				Fixed Route
Change will impact thousands. Big bus not in Waynesburg, Minerva, Plain, Magnolia. Lose jobs. Those that cannot drive. Nursing homes.	Voting no on this. Takes Proline. Sister goes all the way to North Canton for work. Saying no to this. If my vote counts and I am sure I can get people autographed to vote on this.	If I get a protest assigned, I bet I can get 1000 autographs. It impacts everybody who takes Proline. People that live further out that don't have that opportunity needs Proline that can come get them. I don't care if you change prices, but people have passes.				

Students receive training on this service in school to learn how to use it going into adulthood. Allows us to provide supported experiences for our students as they access the community for job training and leisure activities. Restricting the service will limit ability to become familiar with the service reducing opportunities to access their community.	Analyze high use times to allow resources to be streamlined during periods of high volume. Require more notice for scheduled rides so resources could be dedicated to advance requests.	Thank you for commitment to community and further considering how best to maintain this valuable service.				
Son to North Canton Marc's for work.	Is fixed route feasible?	N/A	X			6 mos. appears all in zone.
Appreciates service with 2 sons with Autism. Have learned to navigate to and from work/school at Idea House.	Hope we can come together as a community to get this resolved. So many rely on it.	What can we do to help?		X		Idea House
Hoping changes can make service better for working class. Lives in Belden area. Service has seen reductions. Plans to walk up to 3 miles for work and wait an hour if he misses the bus. Passed without pick up and must run to another stop if bus runs early.	Proline should be available if a rider has to walk over a 1/2 mile to a bus stop. More shelters or protected/covered areas to wait are needed.	Wants to thank SARTA. Hopes we can improve service for Stark County. Used the Akron Loop for training. Saved on parking fees and dealing with traffic. Used to use service to get to work. Changed jobs and now the service is limited for him.				Fixed Route.
3 adult sons with autism. Proline has been stable in lives. Travel to and from work. Other providers cannot always keep drivers. Proline was always a good fall back.	SARTA does not understand those with disabilities. Did we talk with DD Board? Their staff should sit on our committee. They could have had good ideas. People with DD cannot use fixed route. Cannot be left alone.	Wants meeting at Stark DD. She will be at Thursday meeting. Lisa Parammore will attend on Friday. Our yes votes for the levy will go away.		X		Lives outside of zone.

Changes will affect my family members and friends.	Are these routes not being used? Can rates be raised to keep the above ADA requirements?	Proline is lifeline for many people.				Not in Trapeze
Intervention Specialist. Negative impact. Depend on transportation to get to various locations. Disheartening.	Consider continuing Proline. Crucial to getting them out and about where they can be helpful citizens.	Heard this from Susan Hanna. Please contact her with any questions/thoughts/suggestions and know how beneficial this is to students. Thank you for consideration.				
Proline to work. Home appears just outside cutoff. Proline only option. Other providers never workout because of schedule.	Too shocked to provide comment. Something needs to change.	Hope something revised to this shocking news an change for the good for all riders with disabilities.	X			6 mos. Appears all in zone.
Discontinuation of Proline will be detrimental to those in our community. Medical and community activity needs. Friend who relies on Proline for work and enjoys the service. Classrooms use Proline to teach students how to use it for future endeavors. Please do not discontinue.	Other NEMT programs are not as reliable as SARTA.	Do not eliminate Proline services!				
Daughter uses Proline to get to and from class, work, and volunteering. Knows decisions are not made easily. Adults with disabilities use this to maintain independence. If there is a way to keep it, please try to keep it.	N/A	N/A				Daughter's name?

Educator. Concerned with impact to EC program. Proline transports students for life skill learning. Grocery, hygien, budgeting. Hurts my heart. Loss of opportunities. Consider those who would be stuck at home without SARTA support.	As long as the entire community has the access they need, all is well. But please consider the educational opportunities this is used for.	N/A				
Use late night routes. Does not like discontinuation.	N/A	N/A				Fixed Route
I work in a classroom which utilizes SARTA frequently. Changes to Proline would be detrimental to our program. Use to teach independent living skills to our students. Without it, we would be unable to do so. Absolute disservice to our special needs students.	Proline has been fantastic for our class over the years. I would not change anything about it. It is a system that has been proven successful.	N/A				
Uses Proline to get to his job of 15 years in Hartville 5 days a week.	Proline should be maintained as is.	N/A		X		Lives in zone. Works in Hartville.
Son works at Twisted Olive. Does not have ability to drive. He has a chance to be independent and part of the community.	Love the service as is. Keep the existing routes.	Don't cut services. Cut expenses. Start at top and work down. Drivers are the true heroes.				Based on Twisted Olive search and not knowing client name, only other person riding there lives within the zone but Twisted Olive is out.
Similar sentiments as James. Also commented son attends college. Working parents. Saddened. Not feasible to access Fixed Route. Will have to consider the burden of expensive alternative transportation.	There should be improved grants for outside service providers in order for them to possibly hire and retain employees who would provide transportation.	N/A				Based on Twisted Olive search and not knowing client name, only other person riding there lives within the zone but Twisted Olive is out.

<p>Sounds like overreach to a simple need for all those with challenges in transportation needs. Create a common sense solution to the issue of transportation. Think about his in your own mind the way you would like to have transportation to and from if you needed to. Those who need this service already have enough to go through. provide what is necessary and guide the plan accordingly.</p>	<p>Simply provide these services and guide and common sense plan.</p>	<p>Please stop trying to fix what is not broken. Make solutions that will solve the issues needed to have a safe and effective life. See if your plans make things better for those you are paid to help. Does this truly make a difference? Will this improve the quality of life for others? Cane there be a solutions instead of more suffering? Provide and guide a better plan.</p>				<p>Not in Trapeze.</p>
---	---	--	--	--	--	------------------------

<p>Deeply concerned over impact to members in community who rely on WC accessible transportation. Assertion that approval of ride when requested does not reflect realities of riders. 3-5 day scheduling is not on-demand. Individuals face barriers. Caregivers must schedule rides throughout week. Barely accomodates essential needs of its users today and does not foster independence or spontaneity. Scaling back will exacerbate these challenges potentially leaving most vulnerable members of community without reliable access to empmployment, medical care, and other critical resources. Transportation is not about point A/B but connection, opportunity, and dignity. Urge SARTA to prioritize innovative, inclusive solutions that truly meet the needs of all community members.</p>	<p>Tiered scheduling/Priority - maybe use AI: 1. Essential medical, work, school, day programs. 2. Grocery, Shopping, Social, Less time sensitive needs. 3. non-urgen leisure trips. Off peak scheduling. Riders indicate nature of trip when booking, with tiers designed to accomodate priorities. Higher tiers guaranteed with shorter notice. Lower teirs would be grouped with others for efficiency. Subscription for frequent users: Consistent routes for work, school, day programs. Streamlined scheduling where riders book recuring trips and do not need to schedule. Clustered rides where vehicles occupancy is maximized for those going to shared locations. Optimize vehicles. Use AI? Analyze data to find underutilized vehicles on fixed routes and</p>	<p>There would be more waived funded riders if there was a more flexible option available. So when developing changes, please do not only think about who you currently serve, but the community as a whole.</p>				<p>This person described how demand response works and what we are trying to stand up.</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

redeploy them for paratransit. Right size fleet. Match vehicle type to demand. Smaller, fuel efficient vehicles for less productive fixed routes and bigger on busy routes. Zonal coverage. Assign to zones for paratransit to minimize travel distance. Look at inefficiencies of route design, fleet, and scheduling. No reason to send two vehicles for two people travelling to the same destination. Must be technology available. Disabled rely on this. Uber/Lyft cannot accomodate WC.



<p>Intervention Specialist working with students with cognitive disabilities. Our students use the Proline services to get to work and medical appointments. Most students cannot read. Unable to read a bus schedule. Cannot wait safely at a bus stop. Could wander off or get into traffic. Would not know where bus stop is.</p>	<p>Maybe as an alternative, SARTA could offer to let one chaperone (personal care provider) per paid rider with special needs ride free of charge. This person could assist the rider with special needs to and from their destination. Also, maybe SARTA could offer to pick-up riders at their door who do not live close to a fixed route stop. We have students who live in the country. In the Fairless and Tuslaw school districts who do not live close to bus stops, but do live in the county.</p>	<p>Not having SARTA Proline available anymore will be detrimental to our Stark County ESC classrooms that take students to weekly job sites to teach them job skills to aid in their future employment opportunities. SARTA will lose the money that the ESC is currently paying SARTA for our student riders. it would be helpful if SARTA would still allow bus pick-ups at our high schools for weekly scheduled job site trips.</p>				
<p>Niece uses Proline. Cannot believe people with disabilities are being cutoff to save money. Disrespectful. Feels we are changing our reputation since this level of service has been provided since 1990. Cannot drive nor live totally independently. Will not be able to keep her job. Asks to consider this population before making this decision.</p>	<p>Cuts should come from another area and not the people who use Proline to work, grocery shop, be out in the community.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				<p>Client name?</p>

<p>Son rides Proline. Polygon is confusing. Is home in 3/4 mile? Are his drop-offs - North Canton YMCA, Aultman, Massillon Rec Center, Silo Arts?</p>	<p>Worried about ability keep job if pickup/dropoffs do not fall in acceptable parameters. Affecting his ability to be independent.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>Son's name? Appears to ride within ADA zones.</p>
<p>Students with disabilities use Proline services to travel throughout the community to work and learn. Even as adults, my students in the far reaches of Stark County will be cut off from employment. Will not be able to productive member of society.</p>	<p>3/4 mile will cripple the productivity of residents with disabilities in the rural communities. Okay with rides not always being available and even more limited windows and longer rides. But no access will further isolate these community members.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				
<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Will I be affected by this? Does not understand.</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>6 mos. Appears all in zone. Very few trips.</p>
<p>Job training teacher whose students benefit from Proline. Many only able to work because of it. Transportation is a great barrier for those with disabilities.</p>	<p>Keep Proline available. Committee to help make sustainable. Allocate resources to Proline. Full size empty buses. Never seen a full bus.</p>	<p>Service is more important than people realize. Get people involved that care. Raise prices. May pay a little more but \$2.25 seems too low.</p>				<p>Not in Trapeze</p>

<p>Adult daughter with special needs. Uses Proline for work, doctor appointments, visiting family. Loss of independence. Lives in the Minerva area. Has a waiver. Not easy finding other providers. Board of DD should have been consulted so they could be part of the solution. This decision is disrespectful to those who do not have a choice but to use this system. Taking advantage of them when those in charge understand the magnitude of the decision being made is unthinkable.</p>	<p>Did not have a lot of time to think on this to have a solution to propose. Meet with independent providers and DD board. Figure a way to not be totally dependent on sales tax. Grants or congress to get funding to help with the disabled.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				<p>Met at Library. Submitted four times.</p>
<p>Adult daughter uses this service for work, appointments, shopping, and visiting people. Means to be indepeneding and making decisions on what she likes to do.</p>	<p>The fact that the board would target the disabled is unthinkable. No other county does this is no reason this is a good idea. Clients do not understand the impacts. This group was targeted. No other cutbacks tried first. Why weren't fares increased? Why weren't low producing routes cut? Hopes everyone will reconsider.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				<p>Submitted twice.</p>

<p>Proline is what my 9-12 students with handicaps depend on for work, medical, independence, recreation, and access to the community. Without Proline, these individuals live outside 3/4 mile and not eligible. Discussed Repository article and students were angry and distressed. Unable to access transportation other than Proline. Comments from students were: lose jobs, groceries, exposure to the outside world, frustration, offended, not fair, nice drivers, safe drivers, ease of use, driver assistance, stressful, can't get anywhere without Proline. Used Proline for years. Rich and rigorous vocational program that has taught many life skills by using Proline. Riding with a reputable company. Cares about clients. Proline is all they have.</p>	<p>Change in fare? Fixed incomes, but may be able to pay a higher fare. What was the reason for the drop in revenue? Solution to that problem? Other dollars available for Proline? How was Massillon built when this money is not available? Could that have waited? Could the admin expansion have waited? Where did this money come from? Is the money within SARTA appropriated fairly?</p>	<p>Thinks it is a shame that while other areas of SARTA are expanding, people with disabilities are being left out of the loop. SARTA has always been good to us. Why aren't people with disabilities being kept a priority? Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>				
<p>Students would be affected. Ride Proline for work, life skills trainings, school. Hope much consideration will be given to this and help to find other transportation options.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>				
<p>Idea House in Canal Fulton. Do not provide transportation for students. Proline is only way based on work schedules.</p>	<p>Does not agree with discontinuation of service. Horrible decision. Does not have ability to know where he is to navigate fixed routes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>Idea House</p>

<p>Idea House in Canal Fulton. Do not provide transportation for students. Proline is only way based on work schedules.</p>	<p>Does not agree with discontinuation of service. Horrible decision. Does not have ability to know where he is to navigate fixed routes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>Idea House</p>
<p>Success Express rider. Will lose job and ability to provide for family. Make the 118 serve these areas since it goes to Navarre anyway. Not every trip needed. Key points during the day to make it serve what the 157 went to. Late night loops are pointless with three of them. Find key places people go to and simply the three into one. May need two buses but that still saves instead of three buses.</p>	<p>Not many know about it. Most think it is for disabled people so maybe put out more information about who can use the service.</p>	<p>Knows SARTA is trying to be environmentally friendly but Hydrogen is expensive. Maybe go electric like Akron Metro. See if that becomes cost effective. With cutting service, it is going to push people to buy cars and eventually phase SARTA out.</p>				<p>Fixed Route</p>
<p>Wheelchair. Works Giant Eagle on Strip. Church at Faith Family. Does not want to be left stranded in house.</p>	<p>Don't change anything.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>6 mos. Appears all in zone.</p>
<p>Regular travel unaffected. Sometimes there is a need to travel outside of the service area and cannot drive. This would be impacted.</p>	<p>Could there be differing rates for non-ADA rides? Could have its own effect but at least the service would be there.</p>	<p>Looking forward to more information.</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>6 mos. Appears all in zone.</p>
<p>Teach of individuals with disabilities. Proline valuable part of life skills. Independence and confidence. Navigate their communities. Elementary school and older.</p>	<p>Proline is essential piece to allow community members including those with disabilities access their communities.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				

Could not get to work.	Charge more for non-ADA trips.	N/A		X		Home is 2 mi. from Fixed Route.
Why would you take the late night bus away? People work and get home. This really for people that works at night. We already don't have a bus on Sunday. It's wrong.	Stop taking the bus from us.	Not happy.				Fixed Route.
Trips to pain management.	N/A	N/A	X			6 mos. appears all in zone.
People affected are handicap disabled. Cannot use fixed route due to lack of availability. Does not want to lose Proline. Quitting jobs. Lives in Waynesburg. Job and medical concerns.	Does not want to lose SARTA altogether. Please make exceptions for those like her and her sister in areas where there are no fixed routes.	N/A		X		Waynesburg - no fixed routes.
N/A	Thoughts are about Proline. Keep Proline. Gets people to work. People who are disabled that can't take the big bus. No buses in Waynesburg/Minerva. People close to the transit centers can take the big bus. SARTA would be responsible for everyone losing their jobs.	Bus driver told my sister to take Uber to work. We priced Uber. More expensive than Proline. \$35 per trip. She does not make that much. I am the voice of everybody. Cannot attend meeting.		X		Repeat comment.
Waiting 45 mins for FR.	More on-demand service.	N/A				Not in Trapeze
Intervention Specialist at Glen Oak. Teaches use of Fixed Route for navigating community. Shame to discontinue routes that have been available for many years. Helps instill job skills needed for employment.	N/A	N/A				Fixed Route.

Work Trip	Wants to keep job.	N/A		X		Work is 1 mile from 45 Route. Submitted twice.
Asking if his trips will be impacted.	N/A	N/A				6 mos. appears all in zone.
Has concerns over getting to and from dialysis. Cannot believe we would do this this close to a levy.	N/A	N/A	X			6 mos. appears all in zone. Voicemail.
Proline helps citizens be independent in their community. Ridership is high according to SARTA. Proline is needed.	Limiting to 3/4 mile will be difficult. Already removed some fixed routes. Reduces available services for those who live near already eliminated fixed routes.	Hope to see a reconsideration to allow those with disabilities to continue working and remain independent in their community.				Not in Trapeze
Work and voluteers with disabled. Changes would hurt those vulnerable and isolated.	Those that need services through Board of DD more likely to use this service more than anything. Needs are day services, around the clock care, depend on rides to work and family visits. Proline gives them access and piece of mind so they do not have to be taken advantage of by a ride share service.	Please continue to work with the Board of DD on a better solution. Contact resources at state level to see what other funding can be utilized.				
Works late. Discontinuing 151 is not wise.	N/A	N/A				Fixed Route
Daughter will need to rely on others.	Has to be a way to keep such a service. Disservice to DD community. Very dispair treatment. Buses look empty.	N/A				Daughter's name?


Every school with ESC is using Proline. All grade levels. Getting to jobs, shopping, practices, museums, parks. Need more than 500 characters.	Raise fares. Hire drivers. Book further out than 3-days. Levy. Don't do this to the disabled. Be sign of hope for them. Son attends Fairless and this service has been a blessing.	Impacts disabled. Implore SARTA to figure something else out. Proline is one of few services like this in Ohio as we stated. Don't know how people sleep at night. Admin should ride these routes. See those affecting.		X		
Way too confusing. Depends on service for doctors, pharmacy, etc. New criteria disqualifies her.	Worried doctors not in criteria to schedule ride. Folks in Canal Fulton and Navarre? Disabled was to serve all of Stark County. Thinks excluding folks away from Fixed Route will violate ADA. Open to lawsuits. Need to lower fare to that of Fixed Route fare. Will lose riders.	Leave services alone. Thinks if we do not serve all ADA riders, we will lose her as a rider.	X			6 mos. Appears all in zone.
New to Proline. Confusion over what 3/4 mile means. Could not make it to a meeting.	N/A	N/A		X		Voicemail. Canal Fulton resident.
Would impact significantly. New guidelines are not very far. Limits work and doctor appointments. Heavy restrictions on restricted life.	Do we have doctors less than a mile from home?	More realistic range needs resolved.	X			6 mos. Appears all in zone. Thinks 3/4 mile is how far she can go from home.
Teacher of children with disabilities. Finds this decision loathsome and heartless. Saving money at the expense of our most needy neighbors is heartless and cruel.	Feels that SARTA should prioritize the needs of the neediest and consider cost saving measures secondary to the lives and well-being of our residents.	Maybe the cuts could come at the administrative level.				





<p>Friend who is blind would be inhibited from being able to get themselves and their children to medical, grocery, pharmacy, social appointments.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>				<p>Client name?</p>
<p>Stark County resident. Appalled to hear about the scaling back of Proline. Lifeline for residents eligible for ADA.</p>						
<p>Executive Director of Pegasus Farm, discontinuation of Proline will impact adult day vocational program and the participants. One staff member also utilizes Proline. Will have difficulty getting to and from work. Equestrian therapy attendees use Proline to get to and from lessons. These users already face enough challenges now transportation will be another.</p>	<p>Dedicated buses, vans, staff. Understands need to increase the amount of time to schedule.</p>	<p>N/A</p>		<p>X</p>		
<p>N/A</p>	<p>This is absolutely ridiculous. Only transporting within a 3/4 mile area for people is going to ruin independence for so many people.</p>	<p>You should be ashamed of yourselves for making these changes to SARTA. People with disabilities deserve better.</p>				
<p>Fairless educator. Rely on Proline. Help students with independence and life skills training. Affects all people with disabilities. Fixed route does not come into this area. Has an adult son with autism in Canal Fulton. Worries about him on Fixed Route where his condition may cause him to upset someone. Cannot afford Uber.</p>	<p>Ride share is not an option. Needs to be a safe service in place. Work with Board of DD to find resources to help cover cost. Taking this away will isolate so many people in the community.</p>	<p>N/A</p>				<p>Believe we spoke after the Massillon meeting.</p>


Unable to go to YMCA or other places.	Keep Proline Bus	N/A		X		5 trips in 6 mos.
About a mile from closest line. Not safe to walk Applegrove in either direction. How am I supposed to get to work and appointments downtown? Been riding Proline for 23/24 years.	Why are we proposing this now? Could this have been done in little increments over the last few years and not all at once?	N/A			X	Home is 1 mi. from Fixed Route.
Use proline for medical, shopping, entertainment. Life will stop without Proline. No family or friends to help with rides. Cannot access fixed route bus stops.	Does not know.	N/A	X			6 mos. appears all in zone.


## Public Meeting Comments via Social Media


 **Linda K Moledor**  
Thank you Sarta for sharing information with us!!!  
1w Like Reply Hide


 **Angie Tricky Chi**  
I like to know what kind of changes and how it can affect me riding the busses  
1w Like Reply Hide Edited


 **Author**  
SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Angie Tricky Chi we provided a link to our website that has more details and a form, where you can submit your questions and feedback.  
<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>

 **SARTAONLINE.COM**  
Proline Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
1w Like Reply Remove Preview

 **Angie Tricky Chi**  
SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority I still after reading it don't understand what going to happen your going to exclude places to take proline riders? Unless it's by a busstop that's way I took it  
1w Like Reply Hide

 **Author**  
SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Angie Tricky Chi we want to gather as many questions and feedback as possible and want to make sure your questions are addressed. Please submit your questions here: <https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>

 **SARTAONLINE.COM**  
Proline Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
1w Like Reply Remove Preview

 **Ciara Clay**  
So are you saying I won't be able to go wherever in Stark county after February and my rides will be limited?  
1w Like Reply Hide

1w Like Reply Hide



Author

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Ciara Clay, we value your feedback and want to ensure all your questions are addressed. If you'd like, please share your all of your questions and feedback to the form on the meeting page in advance to ensure they are answered:  
<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



SARTAONLINE.COM

Proline Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority



1w Like Reply Remove Preview Edited



Charles Kimble

Ciara Clay, what I was told from a customer service representative is that effective February 10, 2025, Proline will only pick up and drop you off from destinations that are within 3 1/4 miles of a fixed-route bus stop. So, it is no longer anywhere in Stark County.

1w Like Reply Hide



Jessy Lee Simons

The fact you got federal grants and tax Levy from us and you still shutdown routes that are needed by people that work midnights to pay there bills and rent is wrong I have seen multiple people use the 152 and 151 to get to and from work and now your leaving them in the dark SHAME ON SARTA Cleveland 19 News Fox 8 News WKYC Channel 3 - Cleveland News 5 Cleveland

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



### SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority



Published by SARTAonline

November 15 at 7:00 PM · 🌐

ATTENTION RIDERS: SARTA will be holding four public meetings on Thursday, November 21, 2024 and Friday, November 22, 2024 to announce the upcoming discontinuation of countywide Paratransit service and restructuring to the new Proline service, effective February 10, 2025.

Join us at these meetings to learn more about these changes and share your feedback on our website:

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>

Your input is invaluable as we move forward with...

See more

Edit

Boost post

👍 4

💬 1 📤 1



Most relevant ▾



Joseph R Lee

The website made mention of now all the 150 routes are on the chopping block... what is with the sudden need to reduce service? I think we all know they were low performing routes, but to just take away services for 2000 rides (based on the current board report) which breaks down to about 120 rides per service day... I know 120 rides based on cost per hour probably is expensive... Just really weird all these talks are popping up

👍 Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Comment as SARTA - Stark Area Regio...



## SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority's Post



Linda K Moledor

Thank you Sarta for sharing information with us!!!

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

I like to know what kind of changes and how it can affect me riding the busses

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide Edited



Author

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Angie Tricky Chi we provided a link to our website that has more details and a form, where you can submit your questions and feedback.

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



SARTAONLINE.COM

Proline Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

4d Like Reply [Remove Preview](#)



Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority I still after reading it don't understand what going to happen your going to exclude places to take proline riders? Unless it's by a busstop that's way I took it

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Author

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Angie Tricky Chi we want to gather as many questions and feedback as possible and want to make sure your questions are addressed. Please submit your questions here: <https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



SARTAONLINE.COM

Proline Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

4d Like Reply [Remove Preview](#)



Ciara Clay

So are you saying I won't be able to go wherever in Stark county after February and my rides will be limited?

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Author

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Ciara Clay, we value your feedback and want to ensure all your questions are addressed. If you'd like, please share your all of your questions and feedback to the form on the meeting page in advance to ensure they are answered:

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>

All comments ▾



**Ashley Smith**

So many people are upset.

No more sarta connect. I'm still surprised. But then what was the point of having this in service?? Wasn't even up long taking away so much stuff. This is ridiculous. I honestly can't wait for a car. I can't depend on sarta anymore. Sarta is giving me a headache

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Elaina Chaffey**  
**Angie Gillono**

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Tiernyn Robbins**

Coming from someone who lives on their own and takes care of themselves, the late night route is the only reason I am able to get 40 hours a week at my job and do well. Without this bus, my hours will be cut due to availability and seniority. And I know it's not just me. There's so many people that take the night routes due to their work schedules. And we're all getting screwed over. This isn't fair!

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Kristine Mccord Sweely**

This is crazy they need to stop changing these Bus routes it's hurting lot of us using the business they are hurting us people not helping us people

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Carla Stringfield Shirosky**

I use the late night 151 to get home from work.....Massillon to canton.

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

**Angie Tricky Chi**

**Carla Stringfield Shirosky** they are hurting people not helping people

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Joseph R Lee**

Your own ridership numbers show, thousands of rides will go unanswered each month with this rash and sudden decision. And the fact the sarta has remained silent and has not answered any of these post makes a person wonder....and secondly the fact you have operators showing there concern for these rash decisions should say something for them. One is that the care about there riders and there fellow coworkers. Sarta use to be a transit powerhouse ...now it seems like it's the columbus bkue jackets of transit. Sad sad day in stark county



**Joseph R Lee**

And then they hide this in the board minuetts and I dont think they even said anything about this is this post either

below is a copy of page 24 of the most recent board packet... pay close attention to the wording under the box...



**Lisa Gass Parramore**

Joseph R Lee wow. End of the year.



**Timothy Young**

Joseph R Lee the best part is, SARTA deliberately limited this program to only include Massillon as "on demand" and Brewster as "schedule only" yet did next to zero marketing for the program. It grew more by word of mouth than any other way.



**Joseph R Lee**

A lot of workers at the Amazon Facility had high hopes for that program and its success. It would have saved those workers who knows how much money as most of them now rely on Uber to get to work before 6 and 7 am cause the 111 doesnt get there till after there start times. This whole thing is just handle very poorly and rotten.



**Timothy Young**

Joseph R Lee I have been stressing the importance of opening the Canton Market since September and it has been pushed back multiple times at the demand of SARTA





**Timothy Young**

**Joseph R Lee** sadly, much of the "problems" that is being stated about the changes to the proline system could be remedied by keeping and improving the connect system.

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Joseph R Lee**

it had potential to be transformative for tons of folks

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

**Patti Hanson**

Can the meetings be on Facebook live so more people can watch? The meeting times are when a lot of people are at work 😞

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

11



**Christine Pecic**

**Patti Hanson** exactly!

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Reply to Patti Hanson



**Christine Pecic**

I only heard about it because the driver told me! And I'll be at work!

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Christine Pecic**

Turn on GPS for pro line so I'm not standing there freezing for 30 mins!

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Holly Stutzman**

**Christine Pecic** turn on pinpoint and do you ride proline

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Christine Pecic**

**Holly Stutzman** how do I turn on pinpoint? Yes I take pro line! And where the bus picks me up at work is across the parking lot so I'd rather see when the bus is there and go out when it is close like I used to do before the GPS broke! Now I'm stuck having to go outside and stand there in the dark in the cold by myself!

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Reply to Holly Stutzman





Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi  
Judith Oddi you are right

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide Edited



Kevin Jordan

I wanna know how this is going to affect me!!!! I've been using this service for 20+ years. I use proline for work and church and wherever else I need to go. This a big mistake. a BIG mistake.

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Lisa Mitzel

They are definitely going to hurt a lot of people and I ride the bus back and forth to work everyday and I ride proline

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

Stacy Mccord

Everyone that rides the bus need to go they talking about taking the night bus away we can't let this happen bc ppl work 😞

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Anthony Lorenz

I guess so

1d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Tamara Long

How are people supposed to get to work that rely on the success express and the late night loops?

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

Jack H Underwood

It would be nice if they would tell us Operators what is going instead of learning about it on line, they've not said one word to us!!!

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Adam Chandler

I know it's going to hurt me I ride the late night every night

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Top fan

Jack H Underwood

Wow

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide





Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

Jack H Underwood 🙄🙄🙄 is really Hitting the fan it's going to hurt everyone 🙄

6d Like Reply Send message Hide



Reply to Jack H Underwood



Jessy Lee Simons

Why is my question

6d Like Reply Send message Hide



Top fan

Lee Brunckhart

I am very baffled. The Biden Administration has pumped a historic \$30.4 BILLION into public transportation. And with Trump's win, 70% of economists are favoring a stock market boom in 2025. If the economy is doing so well and it has a positive outlook, why all the cuts?

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/.../biden-harris...>

6d Like Reply Send message Hide

4



Andy Ray

Lee Brunckhart I'm sure if you look into the leadership of the city's who allow this to happen you will find a pattern. We all know why there doing this canton has enough money to waste of the hall of fame. Worthless art projects through out the city. Round abouts. But now the people must be punished for for voting red

5d Like Reply Send message Hide



Valerie Lynn Stephens

After receiving a rather generous grant this year? Hmmmnnnn...🙄

5d Like Reply Send message Hide



Jessy Lee Simons

Valerie Lynn Stephens yup sounds like the federal government should audit SARTA it sounds like someone is stealing money and "cooking the books" if you will

4d Like Reply Send message Hide



Valerie Lynn Stephens

Jessy Lee Simons 100

4d Like Reply Send message Hide

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Quintina White**  
too cool...

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Jessy Lee Simons**

The fact you you got federal grants and tax Levy from us and you still shutdown routes that are needed by people that work midnights to pay there bills and rent is wrong I have seen multiple people use the 152 and 151 to get to and from work and now your leaving them in the dark SHAME ON SARTA Cleveland 19 News Fox 8 News WKYC Channel 3 - Cleveland News 5 Cleveland

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Chris Wagoner**

So we hired people just lay them off? I'm confused

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide 3 🤔👍



Top fan

**Marilyn Addleman**

Chris Wagoner you and alot more of us are with you!

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide 2 👍



**Mary Kiser**

Chris Wagoner I'm praying that's not going to happen but will admit I'm nervous

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Chris Wagoner**

Mary Kiser if it does I'm sorry idk what else to say, hell they way iys sounding we may all be out of a job

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Mary Kiser**

Chris Wagoner it isn't sounding good. Really stinks bc I love the job.

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Chris Wagoner**

Mary Kiser I know so do I and I will say if it does happen us people that have been there a while will be pissed if this happens for you guys we will miss you because you all have become part of the 1880 sarta family never forget the change you have made In people's lives Including your co workers let's just pray things aren't what they seem

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide


2 



**Joseph R Lee**  
Thats nuts

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



 Top fan  
**Kathy Romanotto**  
Pathetic

6d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide 



SARTA to Scale back Service for Proline 11/20



**SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority**

Published by Ebony Fontes

· November 20 at 9:52 AM · 🌐

We want to keep our riders informed about proposed upcoming changes to our services. Your feedback is valuable to us, so please continue to submit your questions and comments to our Public Meeting Form.



SARTAONLINE.COM

**SARTA TO SCALE BACK SERVICE FOR PROLINE RIDERS WITH DISABILITIES - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority**

[See insights and ads](#)

**Boost post**

👍👎👤 9

6 comments 6 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

All comments ▼



Author

**SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority**

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



Author

SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



SARTAONLINE.COM

SARTA Services Public Meeting - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority



5d Like Reply Remove Preview



Jessy Lee Simons

The fact you you got federal grants and tax Levy from us and you still shutdown routes that are needed by people that work midnights to pay there bills and rent is wrong I have seen multiple people use the 152 and 151 to get to and from work and now your leaving them in the dark SHAME ON SARTA Cleveland 19 News Fox 8 News WKYC Channel 3 - Cleveland News 5 Cleveland

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Joseph R Lee

Was there a misprint in the article... The FTA website says something about not being able to charge more than double the one-way fixed route ride...? If I misread something I do apologize, just trying to make sure I understand all this... (referring to the 3.50 in the article). Again my apologies if I misread something.

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Janis Williams

I love how you want the riders feedback as I just learned about this today on my way to work. Half of us are still processing that this is real and finding out from our bosses how this will effect our jobs and you are only excepting feedback till tomorrow. You just put this on your own page Monday so how do expect people to attend with a short notice you don't along with the short feedback window you don't. This way you can go back and say look it's not going to effect anyone or only a few people. Hundreds are about to be effected.

5d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

3



Riehl-Smith Lucinda

Why even have an service at all when you expect people with disabilities to walk 1/2 to 3/4 mile to an bus stop in all types of weather

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

4



Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

Riehl-Smith Lucinda and not all stops are chair accessible and wheelchairs can't go through snow to the stops

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Immediate release from the Board of Trustees 11/20/2024



**SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority**

Published by Ebony Fontes

November 20 at 3:13 PM

**ATTENTION: Immediate release from SARTA's Board of Trustees.**

For Immediate Release  
Wednesday, November 20, 2024  
Contact: Kirt Conrad, 330-477-2782

***Stark Area Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees issues statement regarding system's budget, service reductions, layoffs***

Over the past week, the members of SARTA's Board of Trustees were informed that revenue generated by the system's .25% sales tax would fall \$1 million below the amount projected in the 2024 budget and projecting an additional \$1 million shortfall in 2025.

To address the situation while maintaining the highest possible level of transit service, SARTA is taking these actions:

- Instituting a hiring freeze
- Eliminating all discretionary spending
- Implementing a long-planned restructuring of ProLine, SARTA's ADA paratransit service,
- Discontinue five routes
  - Late-Night Loops – Rt. 151, 152, 153
  - Success-Express – Rt. 157
  - Community Circulator – Rt. 158
- Preparing to layoff as many as 30 employees in February 2025
- Discussing additional reductions/revisions to transit service

While SARTA is fiscally stable and has \$6 million in its reserve fund, we obviously cannot afford to continue to spend more than we collect. That is why we are taking immediate action to deal with the budgetary challenges we now face and will carefully plan for a future that may well include reductions in state and federal support for public transportation. It is important to note that the Board and SARTA's entire staff remain totally committed to providing the safe, affordable transit service the residents of Stark County want, need, and deserve.

Trustees and CEO Kirt Conrad will discuss this situation during SARTA's regular Board meeting which will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at 5:00 PM at SARTA's main office which is located at 1600 Gateway Boulevard SE in Canton, Ohio. Additional details and an update will be issued following the meeting.



👍👍👍 The Rapid and 25 others

14 comments 26 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

All comments ▾



Jessy Lee Simons

Isn't safer for someone that's been at a bar to leave their vehicle at the bar and ride SARTA it seems to me that you don't Care about the safety of the roads anymore and if a drunk driver hits a family and kills them the blood is on your hands Mr CEO

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍



💎 Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

Jessy Lee Simons agree or those that work till late

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍



Reply to Jessy Lee Simons

🗨️ 😊 📷 GIF 🗨️



Jessy Lee Simons

The fact you you got federal grants and tax Levy from us and you still shutdown routes that are needed by people that work midnights to pay there bills and rent is wrong I have seen multiple people use the 152 and 151 to get to and from work and now your leaving them in the dark SHAME ON SARTA **Cleveland 19 News Fox 8 News WKYC Channel 3 - Cleveland News 5 Cleveland**

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide Edited

6 👍❤️



Jessy Lee Simons

Hey SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority in the words of YouTube Star Grim people are pissed and we're people

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍



💎 Top fan

Angie Tricky Chi

Judith here we go some more....this is so sickening and sad 🙄

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍



Jessy Lee Simons

I feel like they are running this like the mob. Someone is taking money and cooking the books maybe someone should look into it

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

2 👍



**Patricia Margret Cannon Grande**

I understand you're going through a financial crisis but I don't think taking away necessary disabled and late night bus services is the answer.

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide Edited

3



**Janis Williams**

As a rider why not raise the rates if even for late night riders I could afford that rather than lift or users \$30 to \$50 for just a 2 mile ride home

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Corey Pucci**

Theres other daytime routes you could eliminate or reduced times to run

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Charleen M. Duffy**

Smdh according to the math they are still a descent amount off, with at least 5mil you can spread it 500k. Tell the bored of trustees to lesson their own salaries and not to pocket money then maybe we all could do better.

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

9



**Shaylla Smith**



4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



**Glenn Edward**

Terrible budgeting. You just hired a bunch of folks. Praying for everyone. What the hell is the .25 tax?

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

3



Joseph R Lee replied · 1 Reply



**Corey Pucci**

Raise the price instead of screwing citizens who rely on the bus to get to work on midnights

4d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide

6

Article the Canton Repository 11/22



## SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Published by Ebony Fontes

· November 22 at 10:13 AM · 🌐

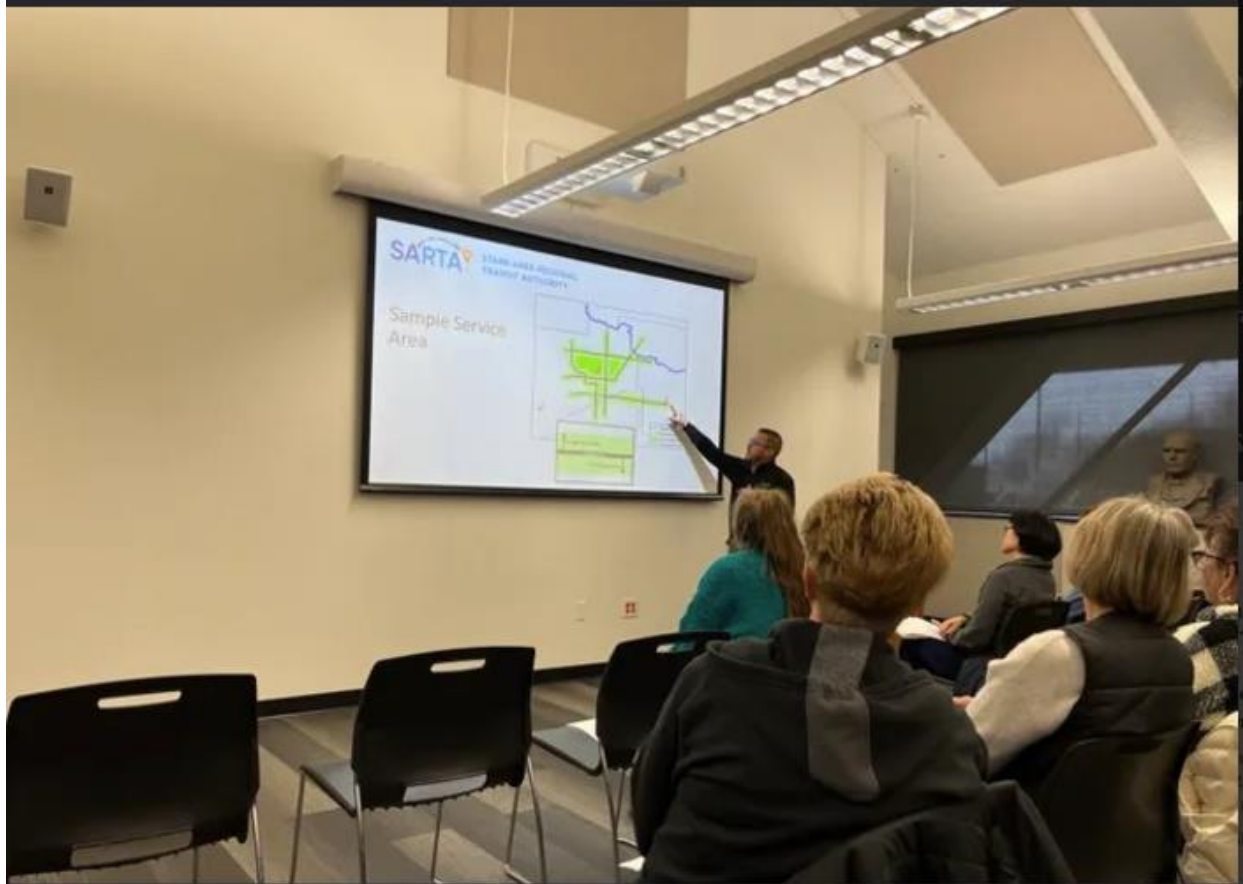
Here is an article from the Canton Repository on the first set of public meetings held at the Stark County Library yesterday,

<https://www.sartaonline.com/riders-families-speak-out.../>

There will be two more public meetings held today from 1:30-2:30pm at our Massillon Transit Center and from 4:30-5:30pm at our Alliance Transit Center.

If you still have questions or concerns, please submit your feedback to our website:

<https://www.sartaonline.com/news.../proline-public-meeting/>



All comments ▾



Elizabeth Smith

Tall are making real hard for workers to get to work now 🙄

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Ciara Clay

Not happy at all... You're gonna make it harder on those who use Sarta proline regularly to be transported!

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Christina Menegay

It like the first message says everybody that rise pro line in manerva. In Waynesburg, there's no big buses that come out the proli'm talking about my behalf of my sister at me. We both write pearl wood to get to our jobs and kids. And we're gonna have to give up. Our independence and figure what to do because there's no bus is out this way we'll just be stuck. Cause nobody drives where we live.

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Claire Williams

If this plan goes through, pro-line service to/from Hartville, Canal Fulton, Minerva will no longer be available.

A 70 y/o amputee from Canal Fulton will have to give up his job in Canton, because there is no bus service, of any kind, in Canal Fulton.

A large group of Pro line users, such as Stark DD clients, will loose transportation! Which means they loose their independence!

It will no longer be Stark Area Regional Transit, it is becoming Canton, Massillon, Alliance Transit.

Please SARTA, come up with plans for the population you are alienating, before you make this change. Because once it is gone, it's gone! That may be being pessimistic, but it's also being realistic.

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Janis Williams

Claire Williams I am so with and sad for all who will lose there jobs along with some who might lose their lives as well all the ones who go to critical doctor appointments or dialysis

2d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



David Kirkman

I believe the late night routes should stay open

3d Like Reply [Send message](#) Hide



Comment as SARTA - Stark Area Regional Transit Authority



Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

**A Resolution To Authorize The Executive Director/CEO To Implement A Restructure Of Proline & Make Fixed Route Cuts To Go Into Effect On Monday, February 10, 2025, And End The SARTA Connect Pilot Effective December 28, 2024**

WHEREAS, SARTA will implement changes to the above-named services and routes in response to current financial constraints by the next sign-up period beginning Monday, February 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, SARTA will scale back the Proline curb-to-curb service used to deliver ADA Complementary Paratransit services and will use the standards described in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which standards defined in the ADA as a service area of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile surrounding all Fixed Routes; and

WHEREAS, a similar curb-to-curb service has been developed to handle non-ADA trips until capacity has been met where service gaps will be created in areas of the county not covered by Fixed Route; and

WHEREAS, cuts to the Fixed Route service will be made in the following eliminated routes:

- 151, 152, 153 – Late Night Loops
- 157 – Success Express
- 158 – Community Circulator; and

WHEREAS, SARTA Connect, a microtransit pilot operated by Via, will end on December 28, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the public has been and will continue to be notified of these changes through public hearings & informational meetings as services continue to be evaluated and developed with comments collected in-person, by phone, and through the internet, where these were compiled and evaluated;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority, that the Executive Director/CEO is authorized to implement a restructure of Proline, make Fixed Route cuts to go into effect on Monday, February 10, 2025, and end the SARTA Connect pilot effective December 28, 2024.

A Resolution To Authorize The Executive Director/CEO To Implement A Restructure Of  
Proline & Make Fixed Route Cuts To Go Into Effect On Monday, February 10, 2025, And  
End The SARTA Connect Pilot Effective December 28, 2024  
Continued

---

Date

---

Board President

---

Secretary-Treasurer

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

**A Resolution To Amend A Memorandum Of Understanding Between Stark Area Regional Transit Authority And NEORide For The Responsibilities Regarding The Strengthening Mobility And Revolutionizing Transportation Grant That Was Passed As Resolution #7 on 3-27-24**

WHEREAS, SARTA is the lead applicant for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation Grant (SMART Grant); and

WHEREAS, Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) agrees to pay NEORide an additional one million, seven hundred sixty-two thousand, three-hundred thirty-three dollars (\$1,762,333) to cover the cost that will be incurred on the Grant from Perrone Robotics and Forward Momentum, as well as additional legal fees. (Perrone-\$1,484,500; Forward Momentum \$269,833; NEORide legal fees \$8,000); and

WHEREAS, NEORide will work cooperatively with SARTA and all other agency partners on project management and completion and other responsibilities as described in the MOU;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority that the Board President has the authority to enter into a MOU with NEORide for SMART Grant Responsibilities and Obligations.

---

Date

---

Board President

---

Secretary-Treasurer

Note: This Amendment allows for the Amendment of the MOU with Neoride to include costs for Perrone, Forward Momentum and additional legal fees on the SMART Grant. The SMART grant is for accident avoidance technology to be studied on Transit buses across three Agencies. Perrone will upfit buses with the autonomous technology. Forward Momentum will handle reporting and data collection. This funding is all Pass-through funding to SARTA on the SMART Grant. It is 100% reimbursable and will not cost SARTA any local Match.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
STARK AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM  
AND  
NEORIDE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made by and between the Stark Area Regional Transit System, 1600 Gateway Blvd. SE, Canton, OH 44707 and NEORide, One Park Centre Drive, Suite 300, Wadsworth, OH 44281.

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this MOU is to establish the respective responsibilities of the parties with regard the Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant awarded by USDOT and to set forth the rights and duties of the parties as a result of that obligation.

1.2 The Stark Area Regional Transit System (SARTA) is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio and is authorized to provide transit service to the citizens of Stark County by Sections 306.01 or 306.30 et seq. of the Ohio Revised Code.

1.3 NEORide is a Council of Governments established by the State of Ohio pursuant to Section 167.01 of the Ohio Revised Code. NEORide consists of over 30 transit agencies in Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, West Virginia, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Arkansas.

SECTION 2: OBLIGATIONS OF THE STARK AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

- 2.1 Agrees to work with USDOT to execute any necessary contracts and provide any necessary reporting.
- 2.2 Agrees to maintain an accurate accounting of all grant funds and make quarterly reports to NEORide for funds expended.
- 2.3 Agrees to sign contracts with additional awarded vendors and sign any necessary contracts as approved by SARTA's legal counsel.
- 2.4 Agrees to pay NEORide \$117,500 for work completed as described in the awarded project and budget narrative attached hereto.

### SECTION 3: OBLIGATIONS OF NEORIDE

- 3.1 Agrees to work cooperatively with SARTA to make information available for all USDOT required reports.
- 3.2 Agrees to work cooperatively with all transit agency partners including SARTA, WRTA and BCRTA to execute the project outlined in the grant application.
- 3.3. Agrees to provide project management and oversight to other named vendors in the grant including the Ohio Transit Risk Pool (OTRP), CALSTART, Perrone, and the Transportation Learning Center.
- 3.4. Agrees to executive tasks outlined in the attached project and budget narrative.

### SECTION 4: TERM; NOTICE

- 4.1 Service will begin upon SARTA's execution of required USDOT contracts. The MOU shall be completed within 18 months.

### SECTION 5: TERMINATION

- 5.1 SARTA or NEORide may terminate this agreement with 60 days' written prior notice without cause.

### SECTION 6: GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 6.1 This MOU constitutes the entire MOU between the parties, and any changes or modifications to this MOU shall be made and agreed to by all parties in writing.
- 6.2 Neither this MOU nor any rights, duties, or obligations described herein shall be assigned by any party hereto without the prior express written consent of the other party.
- 6.3 This MOU shall be construed and interpreted, and the rights of the parties determined in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio. To the extent that the NEORide or SARTA is a party to any litigation arising out of, or relating in any way to, the MOU or the performance thereunder such an action shall be brought only in a court of competent jurisdiction in Stark County, Ohio.

**SECTION 7: SIGNATURES**

7.1 Any person executing this MOU in a representative capacity hereby represents that he/she has been duly authorized by his/her principal to execute this MOU on such principal's behalf.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this MOU as of the day and year last written below.

**RECIPIENT**

**SARTA**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ronald Macala, Board President

**NEORide**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ben Capelle, Board President, NEORide

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ryan Spitzer, Legal Counsel, NEORide

Amendment #1

This section is to amend section 2.4 to include an additional \$1,484,500 to cover costs associated with Perrone Robotics, \$269,833 to cover costs associated with Forward Momentum and \$8,000 to cover any legal fees associated with contracts for NEORide. Perrone and Forward Momentum budgets attached-

Section 3.3 should remove the mention of CALSTART and International Learning Center and replace with Forward Momentum.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this as of the day and year last written below.

**RECIPIENT**

**SARTA**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ronald Macala, Board President

**NEORide**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ben Capelle, Board President, NEORide

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Barbara Rhodes, Fiscal Officer

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ryan Spitzer, Legal Counsel, NEORide

Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

A Resolution Approving The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program

WHEREAS, The Stark Area Regional Transit Authority has updated the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program in accordance with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Transportation Administration (FTA); and

WHEREAS, the threshold requirements are:

- Employs 100 or more transit-related employees, and
- Requests or receives capital or operating assistance in excess of \$1 million in the previous Federal fiscal year, or requests or receives planning assistance in excess of \$250,000 in the previous Federal fiscal year.

WHEREAS, is required to comply with the Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, creed, and religion; and

WHEREAS, all program requirements are met as outlined by The Federal Transportation Administration; and

WHEREAS, the SARTA EEO program is designed to ensure that the workforce is free from harassment and retaliation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) that the EEO program be adopted as attached.

---

Date

---

Board President

---

Secretary-Treasurer

2024-  
2028

EEO Program  
Equal Employment Opportunity



## Contents

SARTA History .....	2
SARTA Mission & Vision.....	2
Mission Statement .....	2
Vision Statement .....	2
SARTA's Governance.....	3
EEO Policy Statement .....	4
Communication .....	6
Internal Dissemination.....	6
External Dissemination .....	6
Policies.....	7
Equal Opportunity and Non-Discriminatory Employment Policy.....	7
Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy .....	8
Responsibilities.....	11
Board of Trustees.....	11
Executive Director/CEO.....	12
Employee Relations & EEO Administrator.....	12
Directors, Managers, & Supervisors .....	13
All Employees.....	13
Utilization Analysis.....	13
Employee Statistics .....	14
Employment Practices .....	17
Recruitment .....	17
Selection .....	18
Testing.....	18
Medical Examinations.....	19
Promotions.....	19
Training and Development.....	20
Compensation.....	20
Benefits.....	21
Corrective Action and Termination Practices.....	21
Employment Barriers and Constraints.....	22
Monitoring and Reporting .....	22
Monitoring .....	22
Reporting.....	23

## SARTA History

Stark County's original Public Transportation system began in 1884 when the City of Canton launched the Canton Street Railway Company. It consisted of five routes powered by horse-drawn carriages that transported riders on a four-foot gauge track. Four years later, the Alliance Street Railway was formed to service the Alliance area and in 1892, Massillon expanded and began to provide Public Transportation with the Canton & Massillon Electric Railway.

Beginning in 1997, the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) as we know it today, began service throughout Stark County. In the years since, SARTA has expanded service to Hartville, Uniontown, Greentown (1998) and Akron (2002). Since 1997, we have opened four Transit Centers; Massillon (first one in 2000 & current one in 2024), Alliance (first one in 2000 & current one in 2007), Cornerstone (2002), and Belden Village (2011).

In the first year of service, SARTA's ridership was 1.1 million. Fast forward to 2014 where SARTA set a new record for ridership, providing 2.8 million rides! One thing that hasn't changed over the years is the popularity of the 102, which was and is still the most widely used route.

More recently, SARTA's Outreach Specialists have trained over 14,000 riders on how to utilize the various services available to Stark County residents. SARTA has also begun looking towards the future in terms of environmental sustainability. In 2009 SARTA began using diesel/electric buses and in 2012 accepted the delivery of 20 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses in an effort to utilize clean fuel transportation. That's not all, in January of 2016, SARTA broke ground for a Hydrogen Fueling Station that will allow SARTA to begin using zero-emission Hydrogen Fuel Cell buses beginning mid-to-late 2017.

## SARTA Mission & Vision

### Mission Statement

SARTA is committed to enhancing the quality of life for our community by providing efficient, affordable and sustainable mobility options for Stark County.

### Vision Statement

To enhance the economic and environmental viability of Stark County by providing mobility access for employment, education, medical care and recreational opportunities.

We will do this by:

- Operating within budget and in a financially responsible manner
- Enhancing quality of life through personal independence
- Offering mobility options to meet the diverse needs of the public



- Creating an environment supporting professional development to ensure a dynamic workforce operating according to the highest ethical standards
- Continuing our efforts to utilize alternative energy sources for our fleet and facilities

#### SARTA's Governance

SARTA's Board of Trustees is comprised of 9 board members who are appointed by the Stark County Commissioners, Mayor of Alliance, Mayor of Canton, Mayor of Massillon and Stark County of Government's (SCOG's).

## EEO Policy Statement

SARTA is committed to our employees and the community we serve. We are intentional in our efforts to maintain a workforce that resembles the community we serve. SARTA prohibits the unlawful exclusion from employment opportunities based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age genetic information, disability, veteran status, or any other protected class.

SARTA's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy applies to all employment practices, including but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, selection for training, promotion, transfer, demotion, layoff, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation.

Every applicant and employee is entitled to file a complaint alleging discrimination. Any complaint made will be investigated. Retaliation against a complainant or any participant involved in the complaint process or proceeding is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

SARTA will make reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees who need them due to a disability, practice of religion, or absent undue hardship.

As Executive Director/CEO of SARTA, I will ensure overall accountability for SARTA's compliance with its EEO Policy and Program. In the event an employee or applicant would like to file a complaint of discrimination or harassment, please do so to:

Lauren Barnes  
Employee Relations & EEO Administrator  
1600 Gateway Blvd SE  
Canton, OH 44707  
(330) 477-2782 ext. 535  
Lbarnes@sartaonline.com

All employees share in the responsibility to ensure that SARTA operates without any form of discrimination or harassment. Directors, Managers, and Supervisors are held to a higher degree of maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment and are trained to ensure compliance.

SARTA's EEO Program is available for review upon request.

I am devoted to uphold a workplace that equally respects all its employees and applicants under the guidelines of our EEO Policy and Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kirt W. Conrad".

Kirt W. Conrad

Executive Director/CEO

## Communication

### Internal Dissemination

Equal Employment Opportunity training is provided to each new employee during the onboarding process, along with the two policies that govern EEO standard of behavior. These policies, Equal Opportunity and Non-Discriminatory Employment Policy and Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy, are provided as part of the Employee Handbook that is given to all employees. Each employee must acknowledge receipt of the policy by signing an acknowledgement of receipt form which is available in the employee's electronic file on our HRIS.

SARTA also provides EEO re-training on a bi-annual basis for all its employees, including management.

Additionally, Federal, State, Local labor law, and EEO materials are conspicuously displayed throughout our main office and all transit centers in employee lounge areas. These materials are also available on our HRIS.

### External Dissemination

SARTA acknowledges its commitment to be an equal opportunity employer with all applicants and potential hires. To ensure every applicant is aware that SARTA is an equal employment opportunity employer, the following statement is placed on our applications and read during all interviews. The disclosure statement is:

SARTA is committed to ensuring the values of equity, diversity, and productivity in the workplace. SARTA is an equal employment opportunity employer and strives to maintain a diverse workforce reflective of the community we serve.

## Policies

SARTA's Board of Trustees adopted two policies to address definitions and procedures relating to Equal Opportunity and Non-Discriminatory Employment and Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination.

### Equal Opportunity and Non-Discriminatory Employment Policy

Effective September 1, 2019

#### **Purpose**

SARTA is an equal employment employer and does not tolerate discrimination against employees or applicants in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law.

#### **Policy**

##### Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of SARTA to make all conditions and privileges of employment without regard to race, color, sex or gender, gender identity, age, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, ancestry, covered veteran status, or status with respect to public assistance or any other characteristic or class protected under federal, state, or local law. This policy applies to all areas of employment including recruiting, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, recall, compensation, leaves of absence, benefits, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

#### **Accommodating Persons with a Disability**

SARTA will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other term conditions, and privileges of employment.

SARTA will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job. A reasonable accommodation will not be granted if it causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace, the threat cannot be eliminated, or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to SARTA. Employees seeking a reasonable accommodation should contact the Director, Human Resources.

#### **Genetic Information Non-Discrimination**

SARTA is committed to complying with the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) and will not discriminate against an employee or applicant because of genetic information.

## **Reporting**

If an employee believes he or she is being subjected to any form of illegal discrimination in violation of this policy, the employee must bring this to the attention of his or her supervisor, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator, or the Director, Human Resources.

## **Discipline**

Any employee who is found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

When a non-employee (customer, vendor, guest, etc.) is found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy in connection with a SARTA employee, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources will advise the person of this policy and take such other action as is appropriate under the circumstance.

## **Non-Retaliation**

No employee filing a complaint or reporting a violation of this policy will be retaliated against for filing of the complaint. It is unlawful for an employer to retaliate against an employee because a charge is filed or because an employee aided in an investigation. If retaliation is suspected or has occurred, an employee should inform the Employee Relations/EEO or the Director, Human Resources.

## **Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy**

Effective September 1, 2019

### **Purpose**

SARTA expects everyone associated with its day to day business operations including employees, customers, vendors, and the public to be treated with fairness, respect and dignity. Any conduct that harasses, illegally discriminates, or treats individuals unfairly due to a protected status, is unacceptable in the workplace or in any work related setting and will not be tolerated.

### **Policy**

It is the policy of SARTA to provide a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. SARTA will not tolerate any discrimination and/or harassment that is based on age, race, sex or gender, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, disability status, covered veteran status, or status with respect to public assistance, and any other characteristics protected under federal, state, or local law. Such conduct is prohibited in any form in the workplace, at work-related functions, or places outside of work that affects the workplace. This policy applies to all SARTA employees, visitors, non-employees, customers, vendors, and persons or entities doing business with SARTA.

## Sexual Harassment

One type of prohibited behavior is sexual harassment. It is the policy of SARTA that all employees should be able to work in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against the law. SARTA is committed to maintaining a work environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment and will not tolerate harassment of its employees by any other employee, customers, vendors, or other non-employees. Any complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated promptly.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of specific conduct that qualify as sexual harassment:

- Threats or insinuations, implicit or explicit, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's retention, evaluation, wages, promotion, duties or any other condition of employment;
- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, contact or propositions;
- Any sexually offensive or abusive physical contact;
- Verbal or written abuse of a sexual nature;
- Unwelcome and graphic verbal comments about an individual's body;
- Unwelcome sexual comments of a provocative or suggestive nature;
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual;
- Sexually oriented jokes or innuendos intended for and/or directed to another employee;
- The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive and offensive objects; calendars, cartoons, posters or pictures;
- Content in letters, notes, facsimiles, emails, pictures, text messages, sms/mms, or any form of media, electronic, social or printed media, that is of a sexual nature, or sexually abusive or sexually harassing;
- Leering, whistling or other sexually suggestive sounds or gestures;
- Continuing to ask an employee to socialize on or off duty when that person has indicated that he or she is not interested.

## **Hostile Work Environment**

Another type of prohibited behavior is creating a hostile work environment. SARTA will provide an environment free of harassment. Such harassment may include any activity that creates fear, intimidates, ostracizes, psychologically or physically threatens, embarrasses, ridicules, or in some other way unreasonably over burdens or precludes an employee from reasonably performing their work.

Employees may not refuse to work with, cooperate with, withhold information from, or otherwise harass, intimidate, demean, or isolate a coworker. It is important for employees to understand that creating a hostile work environment may also leave the initiating employee liable in a civil lawsuit.

## **Reporting**

The nature of harassment often makes it virtually impossible to detect unless persons being harassed or persons witnessing such harassment bring it to the employer's attention. If an employee believes he or she is being subjected to any form of illegal discrimination or harassment, he or she must immediately bring this to the attention of their supervisor, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator, or the Director, Human Resources.

### **Reporting Steps**

- Employees are encouraged to put the alleged harasser on notice by directly telling them that the conduct or comment is unwelcome.
- Employees who feel that they have been discriminated against or harassed, have witnessed discrimination or harassment, or have questions or comments should communicate immediately to either their supervisor, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator, or the Director, Human Resources.
- To aid in an investigation, employees are encouraged to record the time, date, location of, and potential witnesses to any incident that they are reporting.
- In the event an employee receives inappropriate or harassing content via any electronic media, the employee should preserve and report it immediately.
- All supervisors must report such claims immediately to the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources.
- The Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources will conduct all investigations.

## **Investigation**

Reports of violations of this policy shall be made and will be investigated as follows:



An individual may initiate the complaint process by filing a complaint in writing or verbally with either their supervisor, Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources.

- Upon receiving a complaint or being advised that a violation of this policy may be occurring or have occurred, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources will investigate the complaint by interviewing all parties involved and reviewing available evidence.
- If it is determined that harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy has occurred, the Director, Human Resources, the Executive Director/CEO, or the Board President will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based on the severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of the conduct.
- If the investigation is inconclusive or SARTA determines that there has been no violation of the policy, but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, SARTA may recommend appropriate preventative action.
- All investigations will be concluded within 30 days of reporting. Claimants will be informed that an investigation is concluded. However, to protect the rights of all employees, discipline will not be discussed.

### **Discipline**

Any employee who is found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

When a non-employee (customer, vendor, guest, etc.) is found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy in connection with a SARTA employee, the Employee Relations/EEO Administrator or the Director, Human Resources will advise the person of this policy and take such other action as is appropriate under the circumstance.

### **Non-Retaliation**

No employee filing a complaint or reporting a violation of this policy will be retaliated against for filing of the complaint. It is unlawful for an employer to retaliate against an employee because a charge is filed or because an employee aided in an investigation. If retaliation is suspected or has occurred, an employee should inform the Employee Relations/EEO or the Director, Human Resources.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Board of Trustees**

- Adopt policies that are consistent with equal employment opportunity, discrimination, harassment laws and regulations.

- Hold the Executive Director/CEO accountable for organizational achievement of equal opportunity employment.

#### Executive Director/CEO

- Issue procedures that implement SARTA's equal opportunity and Non-Discriminatory Employment and its Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination policies.
- Issue procedures that ensure that SARTA's work atmosphere and delivery of services is free from discrimination, harassment, and inappropriate employment behavior.
- Guarantee management and supervisor accountability for engaging in nondiscriminatory employment practices.
- Authorize hiring methods are uniform with equal opportunity principles.
- Certify consistency of corrective action when discrimination complaints are substantiated by approving correction action.
- Appoint the management of an EEO Officer and ensure direct reporting.

#### Employee Relations & EEO Administrator

- Development and management of EEO Program.
- Assist management in collecting and analyzing employment data, identifying areas of concern, setting goals and timetables, and developing steps to achieve goals.
- Design, implement, and monitor internal audit and reporting systems to measure program effectiveness and determine progress and deficient areas.
- Ensure understanding of SARTA's nondiscrimination policies with all management and employees.
- Concur in the hiring and promotion process.
- Report semi-annual progress of EEO compliance with subrecipients.
- Serve as liaison between SARTA and Federal, State, County, and Local governments; regulatory agencies; and community groups representing minorities, women, persons with disabilities and others.
- Work with Director, Human Resources to review equal employment opportunity practices as it relates to hiring, promotions, and training, complaint procedures, reasonable accommodations, performance evaluations, and grievance procedures.
- Maintain awareness of current EEO laws and regulations and ensure laws and regulations affecting nondiscrimination are disseminated to responsible parties.
- Investigate complaints of EEO discrimination and harassment.
- Provide EEO training for employees and managers.
- Work with Director, Human Resources to advise employees and applicants of available training programs, professional development opportunities, and requirements.
- Audit posting of the EEO policy statement to ensure compliance information is posted and up to date.

### Directors, Managers, & Supervisors

- Participate actively in periodic audits of all aspects of employment to identify and remove barriers obstructing the achievement of specified goals and objectives.
- Hold regular discussions with other managers, supervisors, employees, and affinity groups to ensure agency policies and procedures are being followed.
- In conjunction with Employee Relations & EEO Administrator, maintain and update the personnel database for generating reports required for the nondiscrimination program.
- Cooperate with the Employee Relations & EEO Administrator in review of information and investigation of complaints.
- Encourage employee participation to support the advancement of the EEO Program (professional development, shadowing, mentoring).

### All Employees

- Cooperate with Employee Relations & EEO Administrator in review of information and investigation of complaints.
- Participate actively in periodic audits of all aspects of employment to identify and remove barriers that obstruct the achievement of specified goals and objectives.
- Support the advancement of the EEO Program.
- Apply principles of equal employment opportunity and diversity in day-to-day work and work environment.

### Utilization Analysis

The utilization analysis identifies job categories with underutilized minority and women in the workplace relative to the labor market. The analysis gives the organization direction to establishing a framework of goals and timetables to address and correct employment practices that potentially contribute to the identified underutilization or concentration of minorities and women in the workplace.

## Employee Statistics

This analysis is based on categories and data used in the 2023 EEO-4 report and includes the number of male and female employees. Numbers are based on **\*233** employees.

**Table 1: SARTA Employees by Race and Gender**

Ethnicity	Male	%	Female	%
Hispanic or Latino	2	0.86%	0	0.00%
White	87	37.34%	34	14.59%
Black or African American	58	24.49%	45	19.31%
Asian	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Two or More Races	4	1.17%	3	1.28%

**\*233 includes employment data of full-time employees (195) plus new hires (38).**

It is worth noting that, according to the census, the three (3) largest ethnic groups in Stark County, Ohio:

- White (Non-Hispanic) 87.2%
- Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) 8.2%
- Two+ (Non-Hispanic) 3.2%

The Hispanic or Latino population is reported at 3.1%, showing that there are considerably more White (Non-Hispanic) residents in Stark County than any other race or ethnicity. In 2023, Stark County was the 8<sup>th</sup> largest county in Ohio, with an estimated population of 372,716 and a growth rate of -.6%. It is made up of 51.1% female and 48.9% male, according to the recent United States census data.

**Table 2: Stark County, Ohio Population by Race**

Race	Population	Percentage
White	315,690	84.7%
Black or African American	30,563	8.2%
Two or More Races	11,927	3.2%
Hispanic or Latino	11,554	3.1%
Asian	3,727	1.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,118	0.03%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	373	0.01%

The data reflects that SARTA is unique in that its workforce mirrors the population it serves. However, a further breakdown of employees by Classification, Race, and Gender shown in Table 3 reveals one area that SARTA is disproportionate to the public.

*Table 3: SARTA Employees by Classification, Race, and Gender*

Job Classification	WM	WF	BM	BF	HM	HF	AM	AF	OM	OF	Total
Officials & Administrators	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Professionals	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Technicians	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Protective Service Workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paraprofessionals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative Support	16	6	12	14	0	0	0	0	1	0	49
Skilled Craft Workers	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Service-Maintenance	49	23	45	29	2	0	0	0	3	3	154
<b>Totals</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>*233</b>

*\*233 includes employment data of full-time employees (195) plus new hires (38).*

*Key: WM - White Male, WF-White Female, BM – Black Male, BF – Black Female, HM – Hispanic Male, HF – Hispanic Female, AM – Asian Male, AF – Asian Female, OM – Other Male, OF – Other Female*

### Internal Distribution

SARTA acknowledges its commitment to equal employment with all applicants and potential hires. Our EEO statement is conspicuously placed on our application and read to each candidate interviewed for a position with the agency.

- **Equal Employment Opportunity**

SARTA is committed to ensuring the values of equity, diversity, and productivity in the workplace. SARTA is an equal employment opportunity employer and strives to maintain a diverse workforce reflective of the community we serve.

- **Commitment to Diversity**

SARTA is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the business and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. This commitment is embodied in Company policy and the way we do business at SARTA.

## Underutilization

SARTA is required by law to complete and file a bi-yearly EEO-4 report. The data included within this EEO Program is taken from the agency's EEO-4 submission in July 2019. The conclusion drawn with the data shows that SARTA has decreased the number of employees by twenty-two (22).

The agency is largely made up of employees that fall into the operative category which are Coach Operators. SARTA has no employees within the Protective Service and Paraprofessional job categories. However, the Skilled Craft category made up of Maintenance Technicians is 6% of the workforce and is notably a factor of underutilization. The agency realized that the applicant pool for this category was primarily made up of white males.

SARTA continues to post positions in minority circulars to attract minority candidates and make the community aware of available positions. The agency also made a commitment to implement an apprenticeship for diesel training. The proposal to implement an apprenticeship program for part-time employees on diesel mechanic training was voted down by the union in 2016. Since then, the union has agreed to implement the program in 2020; however, COVID-19 halted efforts to bring in new employees both full and part-time. The agency has reintroduced the possibility of developing an apprenticeship program.

## Goals and Timetables

SARTA is committed employing a workforce that represents the community it serves. In order to continue to attract women and minorities, the Chief Executive Officer will work alongside the Equal Employment Opportunity Administrator to create and implement short and long term goals. This will be done by reviewing recruitment and retention and finding ways to engage the community to apply for positions.

### Goals

- **Short Term 2025:**
  - Attend job/career fairs throughout the county to continue to attract diverse applicants
  - Explore a partnership with local high schools and trade schools to introduce diesel training and employment opportunities to students
  - Decide feasibility for the in-house apprenticeship program for the maintenance technician position. If deemed feasible, develop a timeline for the project.
- **Long Term within 5 years:**
  - Attend job fairs to promote Maintenance Technician positions
  - Bring awareness of the demand and benefits of the maintenance technician field, by recruiting at local high schools.

- If deemed feasible, have apprenticeship program approved, and recruitment process initiated.

## Employment Practices

### Recruitment

SARTA is committed to ensuring the values of equity, diversity, and productivity in the workplace.

When an opening for a position becomes available, SARTA first gives consideration to our existing workforce. The availability of such a position is conveyed to staff through SARTA's internal notification system. The posting is time-bound, allowing any interested employees to express their interest in the role prior to the established deadline. The posting also contains select key responsibilities for the role as well as directs the employees to the complete job description which contains the full list of responsibilities, expected hours of work, qualification and proficiency requirements, wage scale, and SARTA's Equal Employment Opportunity Disclosure Statement of:

SARTA is committed to ensuring the values of equity, diversity, and productivity in the workplace. SARTA is an equal employment opportunity employer and strives to maintain a diverse workforce reflective of the community we serve.

Once the internal posting closes, all interested employees are given consideration for the role. If an internal candidate is not selected for the role, SARTA then proceeds to open the listing up to outside candidates. All openings that are available to outside candidates are posted on SARTA's website. The posting contains the complete job description which contains the full list of key responsibilities, expected hours of work, qualification and proficiency requirements, wage scale, and SARTA's Equal Employment Opportunity Disclosure Statement. All applications submitted through the website are sent to both the Director, Human Resources and the Benefits Manager for consideration.

In addition to advertising on SARTA's website, SARTA has several community partners to broaden our advertising reach. They are Stark County Urban League, R.G. Drage, and the Employment Source. SARTA also utilizes an organization called Start Up Stark to expand our postings reach into the community. Start Up Stark specializes in job posting advertisement and job placement in the Stark County Area. They list SARTA's job postings on both of their community job boards, AkronWorks.com and StarkJobs.com, as well as public job boards such as Indeed, Monster, and ZipRecruiter. Additionally, SARTA also maintains a partnership with Ohio Means Jobs. Ohio Means Jobs is a career counseling center that connects businesses to job seekers and provides career services to all Ohioans.

## Selection

SARTA's selection procedure is designed to ensure non-discrimination in hiring, transfers, and promotions. It is specifically concerned with preventing selections based on stereotypical characterizations, i.e., preference of supervisors, co-workers or clients of SARTA, and other non-merit factors such as age, marital status, veteran status, disability, race, etc.

This procedure operates as follows:

- After conferring with departmental leadership to establish needs for the role, the Benefits Manager goes through the process of advertising for the position. The completion of the application form and the subsequent in-person interview are part of the selection procedure for all applicants.
- All applications and supporting documentation are screened by Benefits Manager. All applicants for employment are considered and placed without regard to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, height, weight, veteran status, or age. The applicants that are deemed to be most adequately suited for the position are asked to submit themselves for an interview.
- Interviews are conducted using a panel comprised of 3-4 employees. One of the individuals on the panel is SARTA's Benefits Manager. Another one of the individuals on the panel is the supervising manager of the department in which the applicant is looking to be placed. The third individual on the interview panel is usually SARTA's Employee Relations & EEO Administrator. SARTA will occasionally utilize a fourth-panel member in certain circumstances. This is often done in roles that require a high degree of specialization where the department supervisor may wish to have a subject matter expert join him/her to help assess the applicant's experience and qualifications.
- Special care is taken to evaluate the skills of the applicant specifically as they relate to the key responsibilities of the role. All interview guides have been designed to evaluate job-related criteria. All applicants are given equal consideration by being asked the same list of questions by the same panel of interviewers.

As the Employee Relations & EEO Administrator sits on the interview panel, he/she is constantly consulted to ascertain that a good faith effort has indeed been made. This is accomplished by them observing the applicant pool and interviewees from which the selection was made, to ensure all decisions are made without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, disability, height, weight, veteran status, age, or religion.

## Testing

SARTA will occasionally use tests as part of the selection process. Tests are designed to assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individual applicants.



### Medical Examinations

Following a conditional offer of employment, all SARTA applicants are required to undergo drug and alcohol screenings, as well as a physical examination designed only to validate that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of the job. The results of these examinations or inquiries will not be used to screen out qualified individuals with disabilities. In addition to the pre-employment physical examination, employees may be subject to additional examinations as required by the Department of Transportation for their specific role. Information obtained in response to such inquiries or examinations will be kept confidential except that (a) Office of Equal Opportunity, Occupational Health, and officials of state or federal agencies investigating compliance will be informed if they request such information and (b) supervisors and managers may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of individuals with disabilities and regarding accommodations.

### Promotions

The promotion of employees is done in accordance with all applicable rules, without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, disability, height, weight, veteran status, age, or religion. Employees may be promoted only after their new-hire probationary period has ended and they are not under a performance improvement plan. Promotions may occur both in the employee's existing department, as well as other departments within the agency.

Promotions may occur when:

- A position opens and SARTA determines that it is in the best interest of the agency to fill it from within.
- An employee has consistently had good performance evaluations, and their manager deems them ready for the next step in their career.

When an individual is under consideration for a promotion, the following criteria are examined:

- Experience in the employee's existing position.
- Relative experience the employee has for the potential new role.
- Personal desire and motivation for an increase in responsibilities.
- Qualifications and skillset that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements for the new position.

In accordance with SARTA's policies and other regulations, promotions will never be made on the grounds of:

- Discrimination

- Fraternization
- Favoritism
- Nepotism
- Subjective opinions that are unable to be supported by performance evaluations or metrics

The procedure that establishes promotions is continuously evaluated to ensure that progression metrics remain relevant.

All employees who are not selected for a promotion, are afforded an opportunity to discuss developmental areas. A plan to assist in those areas may also be established. Any employee that feels he or she has not been accorded fair and impartial treatment regarding employment will be offered an opportunity to discuss this problem with their department's director and/or Human Resources through SARTA's open-door policy.

### Training and Development

SARTA offers a tuition reimbursement program to incentive all employees to further their personal education. This program is available to all employees in accordance with SARTA's Tuition Reimbursement Policy. All decisions are made without regard to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, height, weight, veteran status, or age.

As a part of SARTA's Transportation and Maintenance department, SARTA operates our own in-house training. In-house training provides teaching for new hires and re-training. Additionally, training programs are designed to upgrade the skills of employees so that they can improve performance in their present position. During yearly reviews, each employee and their manager identify training goals for the upcoming year.

### Compensation

All compensation is done in accordance with Ohio and federal law which requires all employers subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act to provide equal pay for men and women performing similar work. SARTA's Human Resources Department is responsible for developing and maintaining compensation scales and developing salary recommendations for new hires, promotions, and other situations as requested by management to help ensure internal pay equity.

Compensation for Union employees is laid out in SARTA and AFSCME Local 1880's Collective Bargaining Agreement. Compensation for all other roles is dictated by SARTA's Salary Range scales with a one exception for the Executive Director/CEO, whose compensation is determined through a negotiation process.

## Benefits

All of SARTA's benefit programs remain available to all employees without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, disability, height, weight, veteran status, age, or religion. SARTA maintains consistent policies to ensure fairness and equity within the organization through the effective, uniform administration of benefits. SARTA is obligated to meet state statutes and federal laws associated with benefit and leave programs such as the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act (Cobra).

SARTA operates a Wellness Reimbursement Program that allows employees to be reimbursed a portion of their health care premiums by attending their routine doctor appointments. There are equal opportunities for individuals of either sex to obtain the maximum reimbursement amount.

PTO is granted to employees in accordance with SARTA's PTO Policy. PTO is accrued at a rate that is determined by the length of employment with the agency.

Human Resources is accountable for collaboratively designing benefit plans which achieve policy and financial objectives, communicating benefit plan provisions and value to employees, educating employees to be wise consumers of health care, administering benefit plans equitably and according to plan documents and regulations, and assessing the budgetary and financial impact of benefit plans.

## Corrective Action and Termination Practices

It is required that all SARTA employees perform their job satisfactorily, as well as comply with all established SARTA Policies and Procedures. Failure to do so may result in corrective action being taken against the employee up to and including termination. Corrective action may take several forms, including but not limited to verbal warnings, written warnings, suspensions, demotion, or termination.

All Administrative Employees are employed at will. SARTA may dismiss any employee at any time with notice or without notice, for any reason not prohibited by law. The reasons for termination may include but are not limited to: misconduct, inefficiency, incompetence, and violation of work rules, lack of job performance, or other reasons determined by SARTA. Employees who are involuntarily terminated will be paid through their termination date and will receive the value of any accrued personal leave.

All Union Employees are employed under the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between SARTA and AFSCME 1818. SARTA will make all corrective action decisions of Union employees in accordance with that agreement. The reasons for corrective action may include but are not limited to: misconduct, inefficiency, incompetence, and violation of work rules, lack of job performance, or other reasons

determined by SARTA. Employees who are involuntarily terminated will be paid through their termination date and will receive the value of any accrued personal leave.

Termination appeal procedures: Any SARTA employee who feels that he or she has been wrongfully terminated has the right to appeal the employment termination decision, either verbally or in writing, to his or her immediate supervisor or Human Resources.

### Employment Barriers and Constraints

As of 2022, the average of unemployment in Stark County is 4.3%. This leads to strong competition for quality applicants. As an organization with a low-moderate turnover rate, the anticipated number of job hires over the next four years is expected to maintain steady with our current trends.

As a smaller government agency, it can be difficult to compete with compensation that larger government agencies and private employers can offer. This has resulted in the loss of talented applicants that met the job position's EEO needs. That being said, we have been successful in recruiting and hiring diverse qualified candidates for all open positions for the last two years.

The one position in which SARTA continues to struggle with hiring diversified candidates is the skilled position of Maintenance Technician. In Northeast Ohio, individuals that operate in a position of the same or similar role as of Maintenance Technician position are occupied by mostly white males. While SARTA has made continuous efforts to broaden our diversity outreach for this position, including partnering with the local vocational career center, R G Drage. We have also partnered with the Greater Stark County Urban League, Start Up Stark, and Ohio Means Jobs and still have a very difficult time developing a diverse applicant pool for this position. We will continue to broaden our efforts in diversifying this position by seeking qualified candidates through both our traditional recruiting means as well as our community partnerships.

### Monitoring and Reporting

#### Monitoring

The Employee Relations & EEO Administrator will:

- Verify hiring and promotion practices are in agreement with terms of this EEO program and applicable Federal, State, and Local laws each time hiring, and promotions are made.
- Monitor trends of discipline, terminations, workforce composition, and salary to ensure actions taken are free from discrimination.
- Discuss each substantiated complaint of discrimination with the Executive Director/CEO and the Director, Human Resources to establish fair corrective action.

- Semi-annually discuss the EEO Program and its implementation of goals and timetables.

### Reporting

Human Resources will provide:

- Comprehensive break-down of SARTA's workforce composition and salary
- Semi-annual reports to the Executive Director and management of:
  - Utilization Report – breakdown of employees by federal job categories, job classification, and protected group status
  - Score Card – demographics of hires on jobs with underutilization
  - Disciplinary Actions – statistical data on disciplinary actions and terminations
  - Transfer and Promotion – statistical data on transfers and promotions
  - Complaint Monitoring – nature of complaints filed, including trends and solutions
  - Applicant Flow – statistical data of applicants by race, sex, and disability
  - Interview Report – statistical data on minorities, women and persons with disabilities interviewed for hire or promotion
- Annual survey on engagement and participation of employees regarding EEO program.