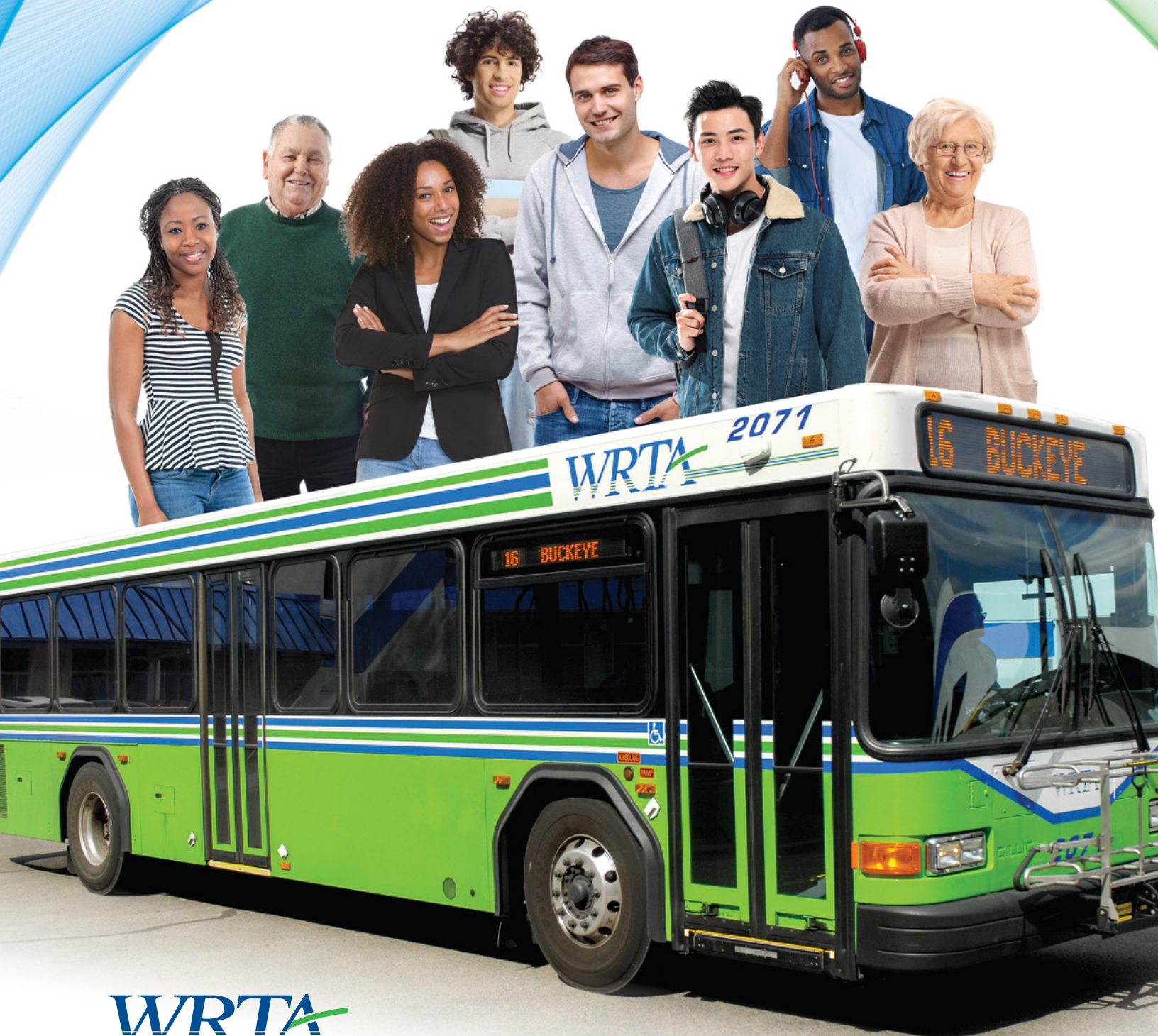


# *Giving The Valley a Lift*



**WRTA**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

# A Letter from our Executive Director

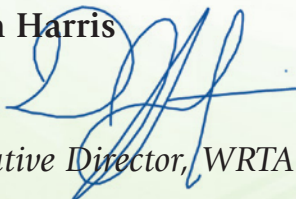
*This is the first-ever WRTA ANNUAL REPORT. Whether you are a rider, resident, or community leader, you are a stakeholder in the Western Reserve Transit Authority. You deserve to be informed about the exciting growth and evolution of public transportation in your hometown.*

*Our primary duty is the safe, convenient, and timely transportation of Valley residents. Six days each week, we provide up to 7,000 rides for your friends and neighbors going to and from work, needed shopping trips, and healthcare appointments.*

*With a fleet of 56 large buses and 23 transport vehicles, we pick up and bring riders to 500 bus stops, downtown Federal Station, and destinations all over the county. We have many types of services and accommodate many special needs. As we head toward a zero-emission future, we've become involved in testing no-emission and autonomous vehicles and begun the process of reducing our carbon footprint with solar projects.*

*Thank you for your support.*

**Dean Harris**



*Executive Director, WRTA*



**WRTA  
BY THE  
NUMBERS**

**93,442**

HOURS IN SERVICE

**1,473,583**

MILES TRAVELED

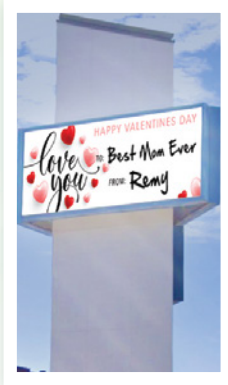
**1,708,629**

PASSENGER TRIPS

**WRTA**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

# 2023 PROJECTS



## VALLEY VALENTINES CAMPAIGN

Ohio Loves Transit Day falls on the same week as Valentine's Day and for the third year in a row, WRTA celebrated by asking Valley residents and riders "Who Do You Love?" with the annual Valley Valentines campaign. This campaign allowed those in the community to declare their love to someone special in their life.

Out of 140 submissions, 12 lucky lovers were chosen to have their Valley Valentine message displayed on WRTA's giant digital display at Federal Station, on social media, and TV spots.



## WRTA RECEIVES APTA AWARD

WRTA's Holiday Lights Campaign won First Place in a nationwide public transit competition for community educational initiatives. WRTA's Holiday Lights Campaign competed with entries from all over the U.S. in the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) annual marketing and communications awards competition. APTA members include more than 320 public transit agencies, including New York MTA, the nation's largest transit system.



## GIVE LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS A LIFT CAMPAIGN

WRTA launched its second Give Local Small Business a Lift Campaign in 2023 — spotlighting and promoting small businesses in the Valley during National Small Business Week and beyond.

Out of nearly 90 submissions, 12 businesses that exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic of the valley were chosen as winners. The winners were honored and presented with awards at a special kick-off event in April. Two winners were also picked in a drawing to receive a \$3,000 TV Advertising Package donated by WKBN TV and a \$4,000 Social Media package donated by a division of Farris Marketing.

### 2023 featured small businesses:

1. Cal-Ohio Lube Products
2. Heroes and Tiaras
3. EndTime Grafix
4. Pop! Art Books Culture
5. J&J Complete Lawn Care
6. YoGo Bikeshare
7. Sunstone Garden LLC
8. Overall Paint Co.
9. A Fresh Wind Catering
10. Aisle One Mobile Market



11. Sweet Grace Anna's Fancy Cakes & Bakery
12. Unique Locs & Natural Hair Boutique, LLC

### Event Co-Chairs:

Teresa Miller, Executive Director, Valley Economic Development Partners

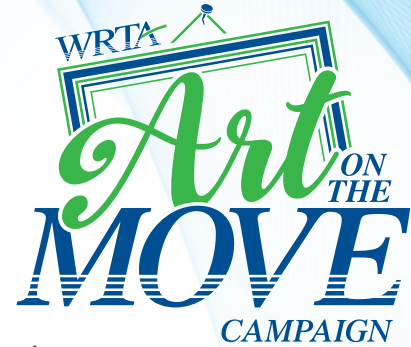
Anthony Trevena, Executive Director, Western Reserve Port Authority

David Wilaj, Director, Mahoning Valley Logistics Council



## ART ON THE MOVE CAMPAIGN

The Mahoning Valley is home to art that inspires us and its talented artists are an important part of the essence of our community. This year, WRTA produced a new campaign — Art on the Move — to recognize the talent of local creators and spotlight their artwork.



Artists were asked to submit artwork featuring positive depictions of public transportation in the Valley. Nine entries were chosen. The artists were honored at a kick-off event at Southern Park Mall with an award ceremony where their artwork was also displayed as a mural on one of WRTA's large buses. The winners also received \$100 gift cards.

### 2023 Art on the Move winners:

1. Michael Flood
2. Laura Marciella
3. Nicholas Begnaud
4. Gabriel Pagan
5. Daniel Madeline
6. Leah Sydney
7. Kendra Blake
8. Ron Moore
9. Gary Balog



### Event Co-Chairs:

Joyce Mistovich, Director of Education, The Butler Institute of American Art

Kevin Willis, Principal Architect, Strollo Architects

Patrick McGlone, Mural Artist/Owner, The Overall Paint Co.

## ON DEMAND APP LAUNCHES

WRTA is always innovating and finding new ways to make riding as easy and convenient as possible. This past year, the On Demand app was launched as a new way to schedule rides for curb-to-curb late-night service. Riders can download the app to book trips on demand or schedule it for later, Monday-Friday from 9:15 PM – Midnight. Riders can also use the On Demand app to track their ride in real-time.





### 2023 WEBSITE UPDATES

Improvements were made to the WRTA website to better serve riders and the community. New sections on the home page were added to highlight ongoing projects, such as Zero-Emissions Future, Autonomous Vehicles Project, and Community Connections. In addition, WRTA added a new feature to enhance ADA accessibility using AI, machine learning, and computer vision.

### HOLIDAY LIGHTS CAMPAIGN

For the fourth year in a row, WRTA kicked off the holiday season with the annual Holiday Lights Campaign. This campaign put the spotlight on organizations that Light Up the Valley all year long by doing exceptional and beneficial work in the Valley. Twelve non-profit organizations were chosen out of the 90 submissions and were honored at a special kick-off event in November where they received awards. Two winners were also picked in a drawing to receive a \$3,000 TV Advertising Package donated by WKBN TV and a \$4,000 Social Media package donated by a division of Farris Marketing.



**Event Co-Chairs:**  
**Vince Brancaccio,**  
 CEO, Help Network of NEO  
**Barb Ewing,**  
 CEO, Youngstown Business Incubator  
**Shari Harrell,**  
 President, Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley

**The featured organizations included:**

- 1. Action Mahoning Valley Mobile Truck
- 2. AMYA Marie Foundation
- 3. Dorothy Day House
- 4. Healthy Hearts & Paws
- 5. National Alliance for Mental Illness
- 6. MOAB House
- 7. Persayus Way Project
- 8. Senior Support Action Group
- 9. Angels for Animals
- 10. Sleep in Heavenly Peace
- 11. Thrive Mahoning Valley
- 12. Veteran’s Outreach

## WRTA AWARDED \$8.5 MILLION IN GRANTS

Thanks to the bipartisan support of the United States Senator Sherrod Brown and Rep. Bill Johnson and local community leaders, WRTA was awarded three federal grants, totaling nearly \$8.5 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The three grants include a \$4,313,552 Buses and Bus Facilities grant to construct and improve the WRTA bus maintenance and operations facility — commonly called a “bus barn.”

A second award of \$2,940,480 comes from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with the Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Transportation Discretionary Grant fund. It is to complete the engineering and final design of the reconstruction of the Federal Street station. The money also would be used to turn it into a mixed-use, transit-oriented facility that includes a new sheltered passenger terminal, parking garage, electric vehicle charging stations, and other amenities.

*It's important to note the support of the community in securing the RAISE grant. Community organizations, government officials, and leaders sent letters of support for this project.*

The third grant is \$1,208,632 for WRTA to replace older buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. WRTA will use much of the money to replace its gas-powered fleet of 47 large buses and about 25 smaller ones with low-emission and no-emission buses. WRTA has a goal of going all-electric by 2040 and will begin converting its bus fleet to electric in 2026.

**\$2,940,480**

COMPLETE THE ENGINEERING AND FINAL DESIGN OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF FEDERAL STREET STATION.

**\$4,313,552**

CONSTRUCT AND IMPROVE THE WRTA BUS MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FACILITY

**\$1,208,632**

REPLACE THE OLDER BUSES WITH ZERO-EMISSION AND LOW-EMISSION MODELS

**8.5  
MILLION  
IN GRANTS**

## WRTA RECEIVED A BBB TORCH AWARD

WRTA received a 2023 Torch Award for Marketplace Trust presented by the Better Business Bureau (BBB). WRTA attended the awards ceremony in May, celebrating BBB-accredited businesses and leaders that exemplify BBB Standards for Trust.



WRTA Executive Director,  
Dean Harris at the Awards Ceremony

# UPCOMING PROJECTS

Western Reserve Transit Authority is Always Moving Forward – searching for public transit concepts that work best for Valley residents. One concept being explored is adapting self-driving technology to serve the needs of our riders. WRTA has secured several grants, partnering with several leading companies in the field and testing new concepts over the coming months.



*proposed Autonomous vehicle mock-up*

## AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES PROJECT — AV1

The first WRTA autonomous vehicle project, AV1, is funded by the Enhancing Life with Automated Transportation for Everyone (ELATE) grant. The AV1 is the first of its kind, a zero-emission autonomous transit vehicle that will be tested over a one-year demonstration period in Youngstown. The goal is to test the AV technology to see how it integrates in transit.

AV1 will provide service between WRTA's Federal Transit Station and Mercy Health Hospital along Fifth Ave. connecting Youngstown State University to Downtown and the hospital.

This project is projected to launch in 2024.

## AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES PROJECT — AV2

WRTA will provide technical assistance for a second autonomous vehicle project — AV2, in collaboration with the Eastgate Regional Council of Government and the City of Youngstown. The project is funded by the Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant.

AV2 is part of the SMART2 Corridor project to redevelop critical transportation infrastructure with a new multi-modal network in Youngstown's downtown and central business district.

The expected launch date for AV2 is late 2024.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

*Thank You*  
*for your interest and support*



**Western Reserve Transit Authority**

For questions or more information:

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**[wrtaonline.com](http://wrtaonline.com)**