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Committee Meetings

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Agency: [Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority](#)

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Summary

- The Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring Committee approved [request for proposal \(RFP\)](#) purchases that address revenue collection and maintenance of automated doors. Discussion surrounding each measure also offered some insight into internal RTA practices: RTA Director of Revenue Collection Allen Polly said agency staff count collected fare revenue at the agency's West 6th Street headquarters on a daily basis and compare those totals to the reports from Brink's, the vendor that handles the physical collection.
- RTA is set to have added 60 rail cars to its rapid transit system since the start of 2023, at a grand total of \$329.4 million. A committee advanced a proposal to increase the 2025 capital budget to eventually accommodate buying a dozen cars this year at \$6 million a piece. The \$72 million they would collectively add to the budget represents a 39% increase over RTA's 2025 capital improvement budget. The RTA board has previously approved the purchase of 48 rail cars.
- "Sixty cars sounds like a lot to us here in Cleveland," said RTA CEO India Birdsong Terry. "But it's a drop in the bucket when you are in an international market, when you're looking at the likes of New York City and L.A. and Chicago, who have hundreds of rail cars."
- A committee approved RTA's 2026-2030 Capital Improvement. The plan needs approval of the full Board of Trustees and then the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA).

Follow-Up Questions

- Beyond expected inflation, what's the reason for the absence of new building projects in the Capital Improvement Plan, especially as the rapid station on West 117th Street [lingers in repair purgatory](#)?
- At what frequency is it recommended that transit agencies replace their railcars?

Prior to 2023, when was the last time the RTA purchased railcars on a large scale?

- How does RTA track daily cash revenues against long-term passes when determining and reporting revenue?

Notes

To assist in legislative research and planning initiatives, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's (RTA) 10-member Board of Trustees has convened the Board Governance Committee; the Audit, Safety Compliance & Real Estate Committee (audit committee); External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee; Operational Planning & Infrastructure (operational committee); and Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring (organizational committee).

Board President and Bay Village Mayor Paul Koomar is currently responsible for appointing members of each committee, all of whom are also RTA board members. The board is able to form ad hoc committees as it sees fit.

Of the agency's five standing committees, only the organizational, operational and audit committees took part in the May 6 committee meeting, as alluded to in the [meeting's agenda](#).

Board Member [Emily Pacetti](#) was not present due to illness, but roll call during the first standing committee (organizational) established the following participants, all of whom are RTA Board of Trustees members (members specific to this committee in bold):

- RTA Board of Trustees **[Vice President Lauren Welch](#)** (interim director of Communications at Say Yes Cleveland)
- Parma Heights Mayor [Marie Gallo](#)
- Cleveland Foundation Program Director [Stephen Love](#)
- Assembly for the Arts Chief Community Officer **[Deidre McPherson](#)**
- The Fund for Our Economic Future Senior Director **[Jeffrey Sleasman](#)**
- Shaker Heights Mayor [David Weiss](#)

The Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring Committee started by approving the minutes for its March 18 meeting, which received the [Documenters treatment](#) and is available entirely [on YouTube](#).

The group then discussed a resolution that would approve a potential five-year contract (covering two one-year options) not to exceed \$1.68 million for Brink's, Inc. to handle daily revenue collection and processing services. RTA Director of Revenue Collection Allen

Polly explained that the contractor would be responsible for using an armored vehicle and armed personnel to collect cash revenue fare retrieved from RTA riders via cashboxes and standing kiosks before bringing it to the agency's main office.

Brinks, with an office on Superior Avenue just over a mile drive from RTA's main office on West 6th Street, was selected as the only bidder. Brink's was likely the sole full bidder, Polly mused, due to the contract's preference for trucks with lift gates.

Rosalind Robinson, contract administrator with RTA, said Brink's has experience contracting with Cuyahoga County as well as the Ohio Turnpike. Robinson said staff recommends proceeding with a three-year contract with two one-year options.

The committee advanced this to the full board for its consideration at a future meeting.

The group then heard and approved recommendations from RTA Manager of Rail Facilities and Janitorial Jason Rosenlieb and from Contract Administrator Scott Lawson to have Trinity Door Systems handle repairs on the rapid stations' various automatic pedestrian doors via a possible five-year \$512,000 contract (including two one-year options). Of the 11 repair vendors who expressed interest, Lawson recommended Trinity as the sole full bidder on the contract, also calling attention to its 30-year lifespan, 24/7 emergency services, and national certifications. Trinity completed work on sliding doors at RTA's Tower City Station in 2017.

Next came the operational committee's business, starting with RTA Engineer Project Manager Kathleen McGervey and Contract Administrator Jenn Martin recommending the agency grant Northeast Ohio Trenching Services additional time on an ongoing \$347,000 [trunk line resignaling project](#) to install bungalow foundations. The beside-track steel structures that house train relays and processors will support Green Line and Blue Line track between East 79th Street and Shaker Square for an additional \$124,540, to be completed this summer. Approved unanimously for the full board's consideration.



McGervey and RTA Contract Administrator Jonathan Laule then presented their recommendation to spend about \$261,000 on a change order to purchase lineal cable as part of the now-\$2.8 million [Brookpark Yard Tracks improvements](#) that started in 2024. The attending committee members approved it unanimously.

RTA Manager of Budget Eric Vukmanic recommended the board consider a \$72 million bump to RTA's 2025 capital improvement plan budget to eventually buy a dozen new railcars to replace the network's old models. The cars would be bought using federal grants and local sales tax revenue, swelling the agency's 2025 capital improvement budget to \$253.7 million. These specific car models can be used with multiple track types, in line with cars RTA has purchased in years past, and the members' unanimous vote will place the resolution to increase the budget before the full Board of Trustees at its May 20 session.

"With all of the inflation going on and all the changes, we want to make sure that we secure the funding and the amounts that we have within contract," Terry told attendees. "We do understand that we're not the only ones that are buying rail cars, as well. It's a very competitive market."

Budgetary discussions continued with a presentation on the transportation system's 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which is separated into an RTA Capital Fund for purchasing non-revenue vehicles and maintaining assets and a Development Fund

consisting of grant money or local contributions. If approved at the board's May 20 meeting, administrative staff will submit it to the [Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency](#) for final review, according to Vukmanic.

The four-year, \$602.8 million budget starts with \$167.8 million in 2026, gradually petering out yearly to \$79.7 million to be spent in 2030, though \$242 million worth of federal funding for projects remains unidentified as of Vukmanic's May 6 presentation. *[Editor's note: RTA Engineering and Project Manager Michael Schipper said the \$242 million is about where they were last year.]*

Schipper highlighted planned projects such as bus and railcar replacements as well as work on the Tower City terminals, reconstruction of the Van Aken and East 79th Street stations, fixes to various parts of the light rail track and further work at bus garages and bridges.

Grants Management Administrator Mary Flannery then discussed the funding plan in support of the multiyear budget, comprising funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation, both federal highway administrations, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and local sales tax revenue and funds partly matched through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The agency netted a total of \$60.1 million in competitive grant awards in 2024 and is seeking \$65.3 million in 2025.

Ongoing inflation reduced the number of budget items that RTA officials ultimately included in the budget, Schipper explained. "Because it's a rolling, five-year program, it does give us the ability to adjust year by year." With no public comment requests having been received on the budget as proposed and a unanimous vote by the committee meeting attendees, the BOT will vote on the budget on May 20.

The audit committee took over for the third portion of the meeting, first unanimously approving the minutes of its April 1 meeting before hearing from RTA Property Manager Jim Reed about a three-and-a-half-year right-of-entry permit to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District to build access roads as part of its project to hollow land for a new sewer near [Kingsbury Run](#). The access roads will appear near the intersection of Kinsman Road and the Opportunity Corridor and lead to various work sites. With the committee granting unanimous approval to advance the proposal, the RTA committee meetings adjourned, and the room fell silent until the [audit committee meeting](#) on May 13.

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