

To the editor:

The Public Transit Committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) supports TARTA's proposal to eliminate the current TARTA property levy and replace it with a sales tax. The sales tax structure would more efficiently fund our transit system and would also return funding to TARTA community members for roadway repairs. Because transit has an essential role in economic development, more stable funding is needed to provide key services for seniors, students, working families, and people with disabilities.

More effective funding would improve this essential service. Additional and more frequent transit routes would be added in all of Lucas County and Rossford. Extended service hours would serve second and third shift workers, TARPS and Call-a-Ride service could be extended to the entire county in addition to its current service area. These changes would increase economic development in our region by connecting more individuals to jobs and improve the quality of life. Critical planning through *Move Toledo* - TARTA's Vision and Strategic Plan for the Future (www.movetoledo.com) outlines the steps to improve our transit service.

Public transit is a smart investment. According to the American Public Transit Association, every dollar invested in public transit generates four dollars in economic returns. Transportation investments revitalize cities and connect people to economic opportunities. It is vital for our region to invest in its future by supporting accessible, affordable, and sustainable transportation options.

Switching to a sales tax would allow the community to invest more money in transit while removing the burden on property owners and would allow the expansion of transit services throughout Lucas County and Rossford. Currently, TARTA is the only transit system out of the ten largest in Ohio using a property tax. Enacting a sales tax would lower property taxes in TARTA's current service area, while funding public transit more effectively.

The members of the TMACOG Public Transit Committee support TARTA's Lucas County Sales Tax proposal to fairly and efficiently fund our regional transit service.

Shelley Papenfuse/Chair
Public Transit Committee/TMACOG