



MEDIA CONTACT  
Frank Hairston  
330-678-7745  
frank@partaonline.org

# PARTA Listens

—input from public comment period leads to adjustment in service reduction

*Kent, OH (1-13-12)*—PARTA will significantly reduce the Ravenna Raven route instead of completely eliminating the route as originally proposed.

PARTA originally planned to completely eliminate the Raven route due to low ridership. The Raven route currently runs from 6:30 AM until 9:00 PM Monday through Friday, with service approximately every 30 minutes. The ridership on the route did not continue to grow after an initial increase in riders during its first year of operation. “We expected to see passenger counts continue to grow as people became aware of the service,” said John Drew, PARTA’s General Manager, “Our projections indicated we would see much higher passenger counts over time, which just did not happen.”

With the low ridership, PARTA proposed ending the service and scheduled two public hearings on the service reduction for this past December. “At PARTA, we always want to use taxpayer’s dollars wisely,” added Drew, “And we are keenly aware of the “empty bus” problem when a route doesn’t have sufficient riders to justify the expense of running it.” PARTA holds public hearings whenever there is a service reduction in the system.

The meetings were held at the ROC on Oakwood Street in Ravenna, and comments were accepted via phone and email through January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012. PARTA staff laid out the rationale for ending the service to a full conference room both nights. After an initial presentation, PARTA staff took questions and comments from those in attendance. “What became clear during the public meetings was that service was still needed along

the west side of Ravenna and to Enterprise Parkway, where Fortis College, Paris Laundry, and the Social Security Administration are located,” said Joseph Yensel, Operations and IT Manager for PARTA. Comments from the attendees included an acknowledgement that there was low ridership at times, but a request that service continue on a limited basis, so that people could still use the route and they depended upon PARTA for transportation to jobs and school. PARTA also received comments over the phone and through email praising the move to eliminate the route to save money.

As a result of the feedback PARTA received both at the public hearings and through phone calls and emails, the Raven Route will still run approximately eight times a day (as opposed to the current twenty-two trips) along the west side. In addition, the Windham/Garrettsville route will also service Enterprise Parkway. “Some of the time saved by reducing the Raven route will be re-directed to more frequent service on the Interurban route,” said Mr. Yensel. The changes will take effect on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. PARTA staff are finalizing the new schedules and route maps, which will be available at PARTA offices and online a week before the effective date. PARTA also took comments on the elimination of transfers on local routes, and will move forward with that change at the same time.

“At PARTA, we feel it is important to listen to the public before making route changes,” said Brian Trautman, Director of Operations, Maintenance, and Facilities, “because, in the end, I think we ended up with a solution that will save the taxpayers’ money while still providing a level of service that is useful to those who need it.”

*PARTA is Portage County’s public transportation provider, with fixed route and door to door service throughout the region. PARTA was founded over 36 years ago and provided 1.6 million passenger trips in 2011. For more information about PARTA, visit [www.partaonline.org](http://www.partaonline.org), or call 330-678-7745*

###