



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
 Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority
 Office of the Governor



CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2023

Special Message from the Special Assistant for Public Transportation

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) under the CNMI Office of the Governor is pleased to present the accomplishments throughout the year. We, at COTA, continue to strive to provide the community with the most affordable and safest mode of public transportation in our community. COTA continues to find effective ways on how to improve and expand our services by ensuring that the goals and objectives of the program is upheld at its highest standards for the betterment of our Commonwealth.

Please visit our website at www.ctacnmi.com or give us a call at (670) 236-2682 to learn more about our public transportation services. Thank you.

COTA will continue *“Driving You Forward”*



Alfreda Camacho Maratita
 Special Assistant for Public Transportation

What is COTA?

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) was established by CNMI Public Law 17-43 on May 27, 2011. COTA is responsible for the development and establishment of a public transportation system in the Commonwealth.

COTA is administered by a Special Assistant for Public Transportation who is appointed by the Governor and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

COTA has a six-member Commonwealth Public Transportation Advisory Board established by Public Law 18-51.

Mission Statement

COTA shall provide the citizens of our communities with a dependable, reliable, safe and cost-effective public transit system in order to reduce energy consumption, strengthen cultural values, and contribute economic development for the residents of the Commonwealth.



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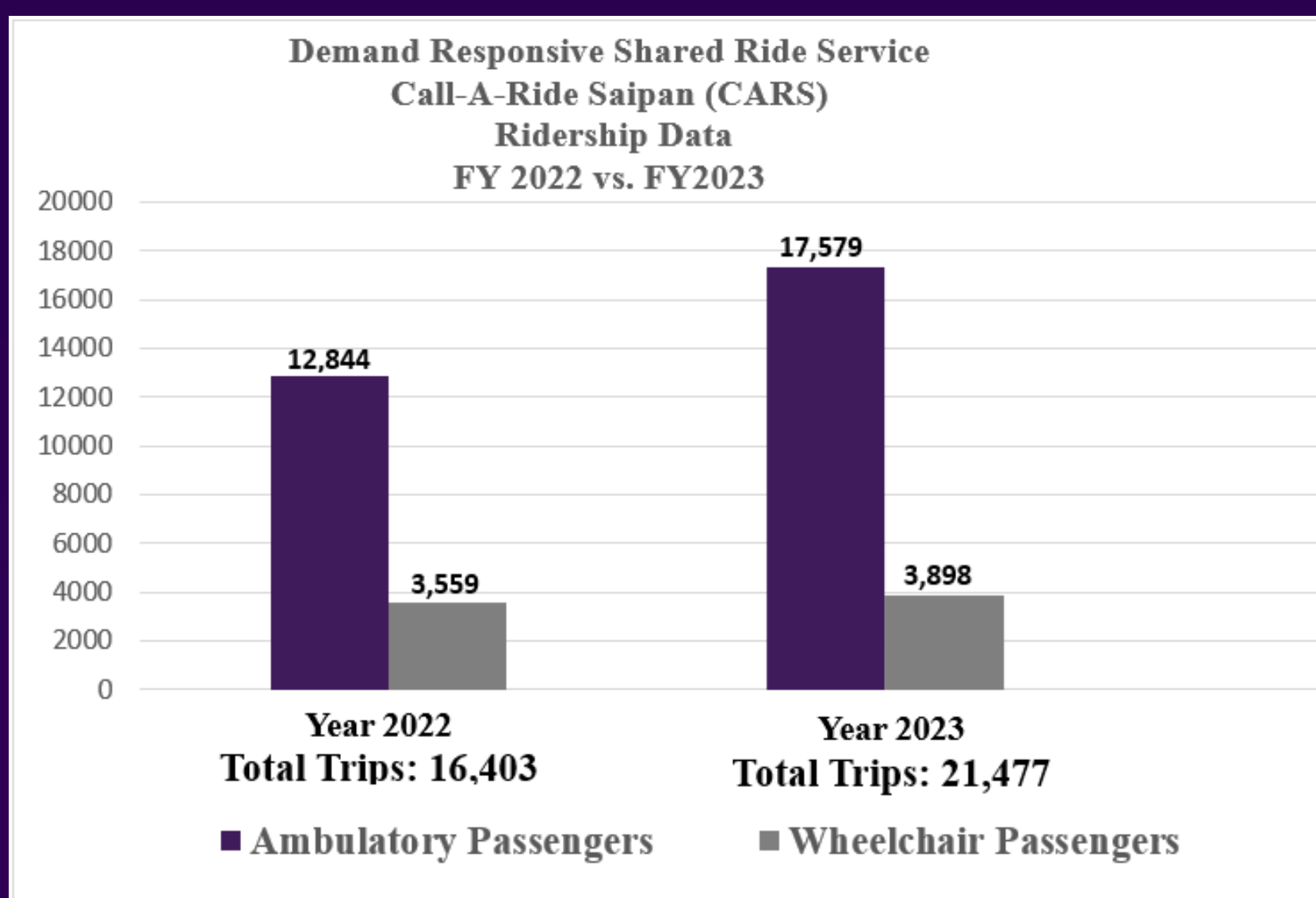
Performance and Progress

Demand Responsive Shared Rider Service, Call-A-Ride Saipan (CARS)

COTA's Call-A-Ride Saipan (CARS) Demand Responsive Shared Ride Service provides accessible transportation to persons with disabilities, senior citizens (ages 55 and above) and to the general public.

The bar graph on the right shows the significant increase of 30.93% in ridership for FY2023 which shows the growing need for public transportation on the island of Saipan.

CARS is a reservation based, curb-to-curb, and door to door service that is offered to anyone on the island. All riders must call one (1) to two (2) days in advance for reservations.

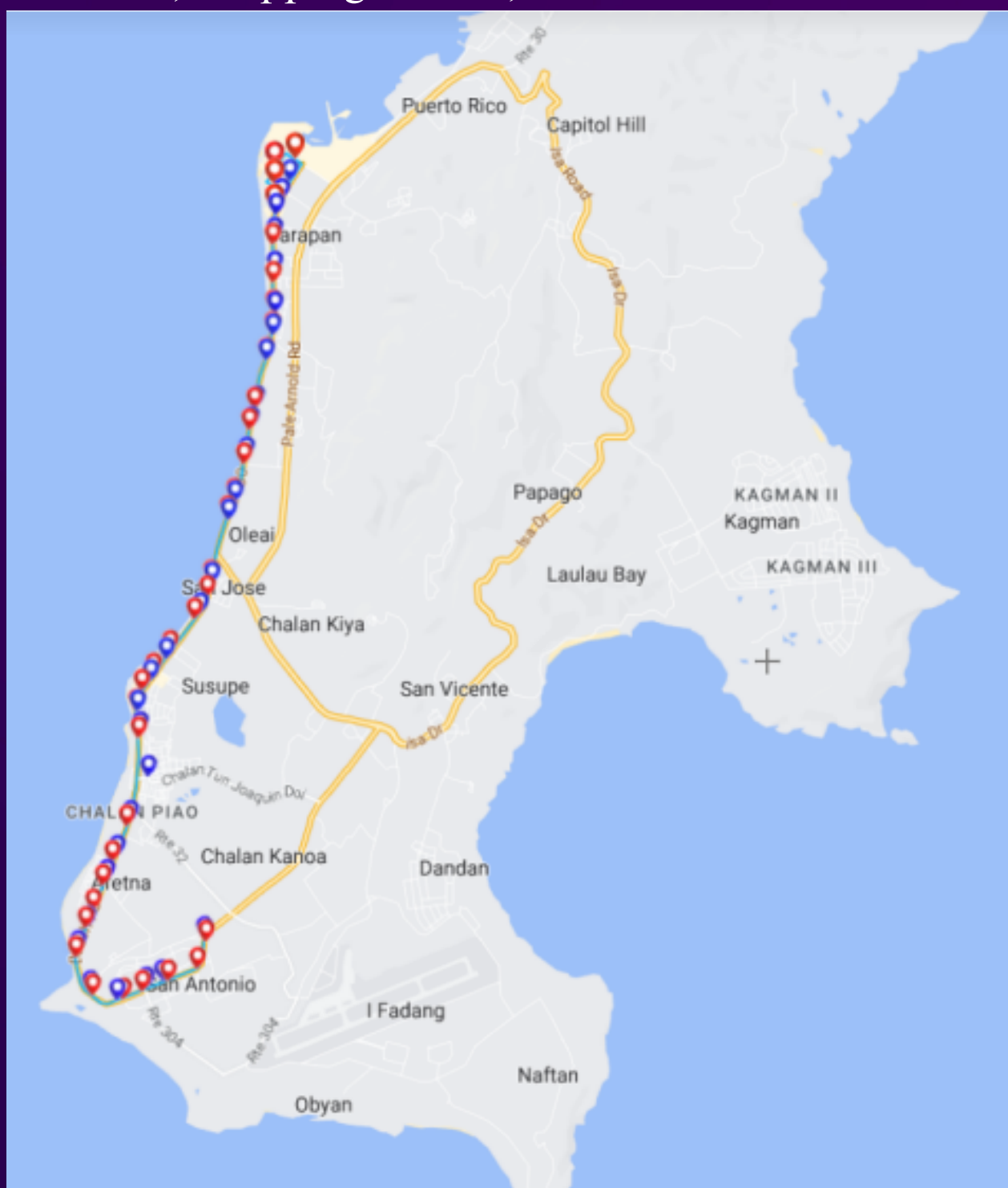


There is a 30.93% increase in ridership for FY2023.

Fixed Route

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) Fixed Route service conveniently provides transportation to the general public throughout the island using a set schedule and established routes with fixed bus stops. COTA's Fixed Route system is currently under assessment as some bus stops have been uprooted due to the ongoing construction works along Beach Road, Saipan.

COTA is working on starting the first route called the "Blue Line" which will service from the Garapan area through Beach Road and will end at Tottotville, Koblerville and back. This route will allow the community including tourist to have easier access to hotels, restaurants, shopping centers, etc.



Grants

Competitive Grants:		Award:
1	CNMI Public Transit System Expansion	\$ 6,387,346.00
2	Emergency Relief Grant	\$ 351,000.00
3	Low or No Emission Electric Bus	\$ 300,000.00
4	Ferry Feasibility Study and Transportation Master Plan	\$ 800,000.00
Total:		\$ 9,911,991.00
Formula Grants:		Award:
1	FY2020 Section 5339 & FY2021 Consolidated Section 5310, 5311, and 5339	\$ 2,373,872.00
FY23 Marianas Earmarks:		Award:
1	Bus Stop Shelters	\$ 4,500,000.00
2	Bus Transfer Stations	\$ 900,000.00
3	Covered Bus Parking	\$ 3,000,000.00
Total:		\$ 8,400,000.00

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

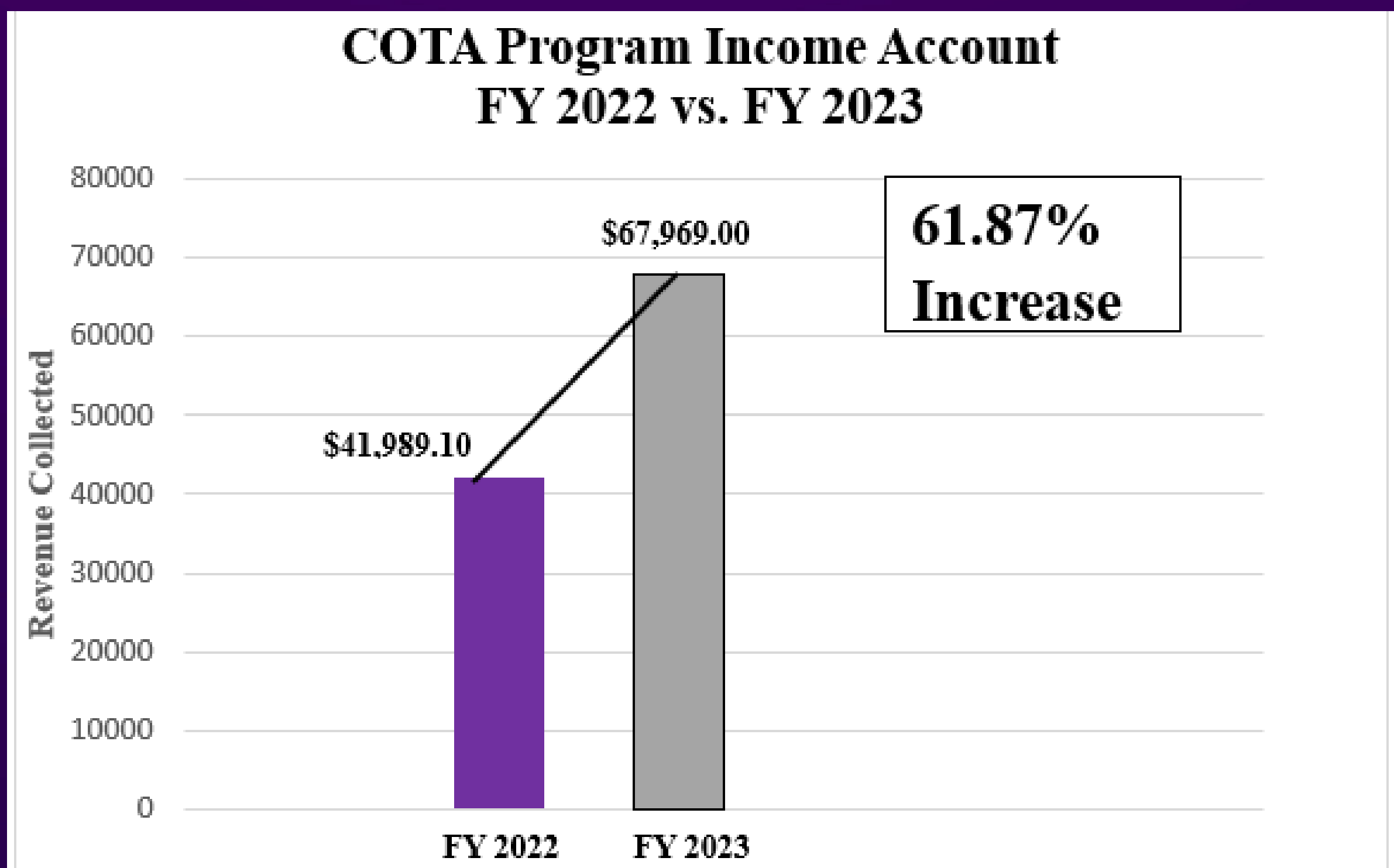
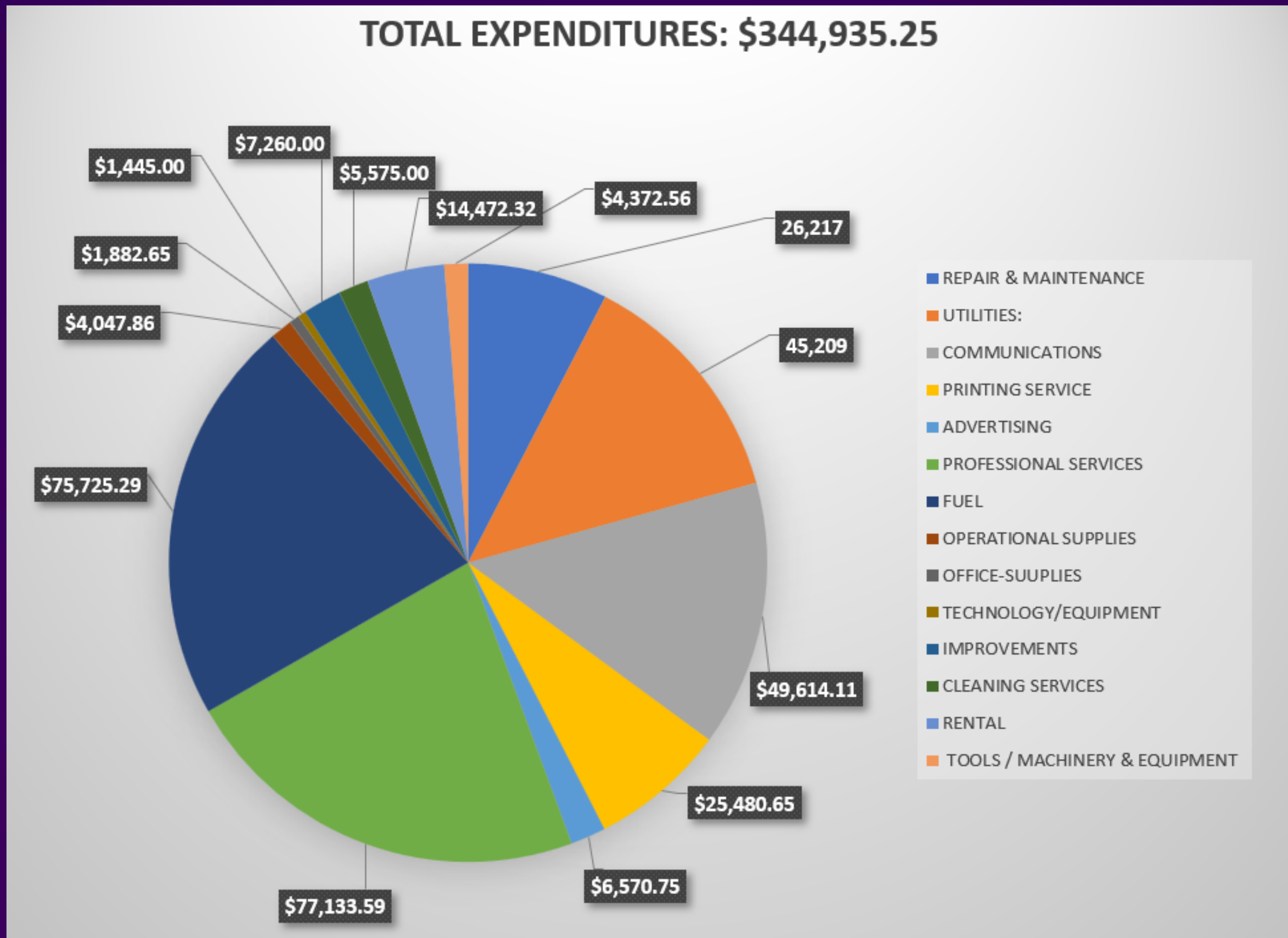
- On October 2022, COTA employees underwent the Certified for PASS (Passenger Assistance, Safety and Sensitivity) Training.
- On December 2022, COTA provided 300 student vouchers to the Northern Marianas College (NMC), Northern Marianas Technical Institute (NMTI), and CNMI Public School System (PSS).
- Successfully procured ten (10) new ADA accessible transit buses through a competitive federal grant for 1.9 million dollars to support its fixed-route service. All 10 buses were delivered on June 2023.
- On August 28, 2023 to August 30, 2023, COTA participated in the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) Korea Roadshow.
- On September 2023, COTA was awarded 2.3 million dollars through the Federal Transit Administration for the overall operating assistance and program administration to continue to expand its public transportation services in the CNMI.
- On September 28-29, 2023, COTA held its Annual Professional Development Day. This training included overviews of all policies and procedures for each section within the program.

Revenue And Expenses

COTA's revenue includes federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Transit Administration and the farebox collection received from the community and partnering agencies utilizing public transportation. Agencies and establishments such as Commonwealth Health Care Corporation, Center for Living Independent, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

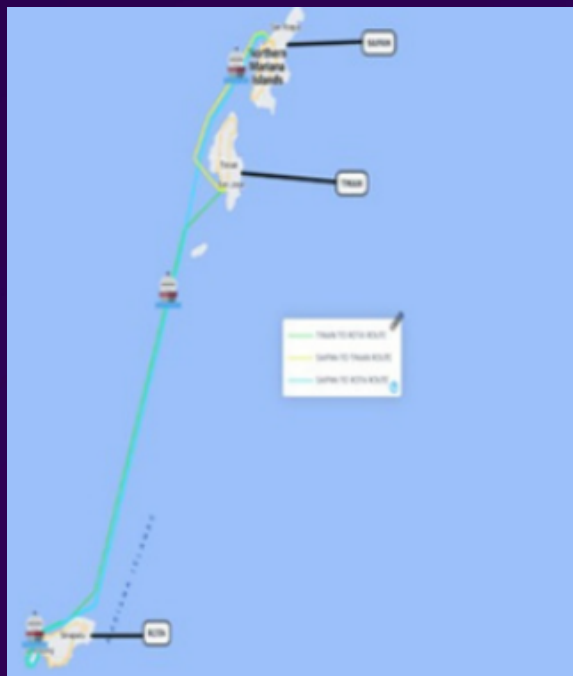
The total expenditures for FY 2023 amounted to \$344,935.25 to support COTA's program administration and operating assistance. Please refer to the pie chart below for reference.

In addition, COTA's program income account had a significant increase of 61.87% revenue collected in the amount of \$67,969.00 for FY 2023 vs. FY 2022 which was at \$41,989.10. Please refer to the bar graph below for reference.



Looking Forward

Ferry Feasibility Study and Transportation Masterplan



COTA was awarded **\$800,000.00** through U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA): Areas of Persistent Poverty Program to conduct an independent ferry feasibility study and transportation masterplan for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

COTA will begin working on the solicitation process in FY 2024.

Bus Transfer Stations



COTA was awarded **\$900,000.00** through the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Act for Bus Transfer Stations at the proposed locations:

- Garapan, Saipan
- Northern Marianas College
- Kagman Mobil Station

These transfer stations are solely for the Fixed Route Service that connects different bus routes together.

Solar Covered Parking

COTA was awarded **\$3.0 million** through the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Act for bus covered parking at COTA's newly built Administrative Building and Maintenance Facility in Lower Base, Saipan



Contact Information

COTA Administrative Building and Maintenance Facility

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Find us on
Facebook

Facebook.COTASaipan

Acquisition of Ten (10) ADA Accessible Buses

On June 2023, the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) received ten (10) ADA Accessible Transit Buses to support the upcoming Fixed Route Service on the island of Saipan. COTA anticipates to launch its Fixed Route Service in FY2024.



Bus Shelters

COTA was awarded **\$4.5 million** through the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Act for the 187 Bus Shelters for the re-launch of the Fixed Route system in Saipan, CNMI.

COTA is working closely with the Department of Public Works regarding the possible placements of these shelters along Beach Road.



Electric Vehicles

COTA was awarded **\$2,373,645.00** through the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Low or No Emission Grant Program for the acquisition of electric vehicles for the CNMI.

COTA is currently working closely with the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Energy Task Force, and other government entities to discuss the acquisition of electric vehicles and charging stations on the island of Saipan. The publication and solicitation is anticipated to start in FY 2024.

