

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

April 17, 2025

Welcome! Meeting Starts at 9 a.m.

Meeting Agenda: rtachicago.org



1. Call to order

Pledge of allegiance



RTA Board of Directors meeting

- Roll call
- Approval of minutes

4. Public comment



5. Executive Director's report



Legislative update



Today's agenda



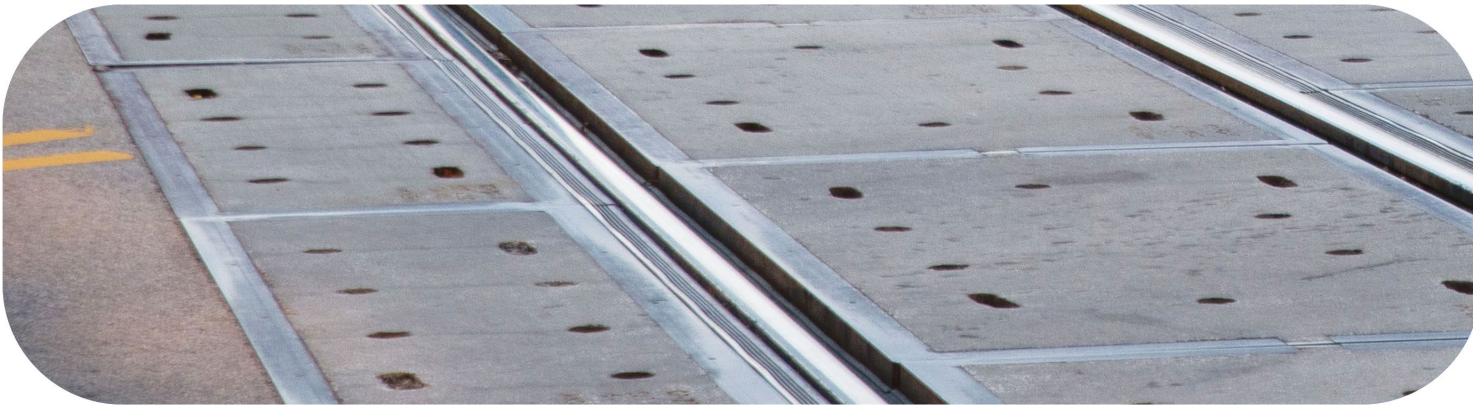
6. Information items

6a. Transit is the Answer update





ENGAGEMENT



Transforming Transit **Summit recap**

- 200 state legislators, transportation leaders, peer agencies, local officials, riders attended
- Key Themes:
 - Potential service improvements with \$1.5B in new operations funding
 - Enhanced regional coordination on service and fares
 - Calls to action to contact your legislators



SaveTransitNow campaign

- Multi-platform, designed to reach majority of registered voters aged 35-64 in six-county region
- Broadcast, cable, streaming, radio, newspaper, billboard, paid social
- Signage on Metra, Pace vehicles and at stations and stops/shelters
- At SaveTransitNow.org users can submit a letter to their legislator asking for \$1.5 billion in funding and a stronger RTA



TV and radio

- Six Broadcast Stations
- Ch2 WBBM, Ch9 WGN, Ch7 WLS, Ch5 WMAQ, Ch32 WFLD, Ch29 WCIU
- Cable: CNN & CNBC
- Streaming, connected TV
- Top 5-6 Radio Stations for Adults 35-64
- Drive time/ Daytime/ Weekend/ Evening
- WBBM, WBEZ, WGN, WDRV, WVAZ, and WGCI

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands holding a small, dark object, possibly a pen or a small tool, in front of a computer monitor. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt. The background is out of focus, showing the edge of the monitor and some light coming from the screen. The text 'Better Than Ever' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a large, bold, yellow font.

**Better
Than
Ever**

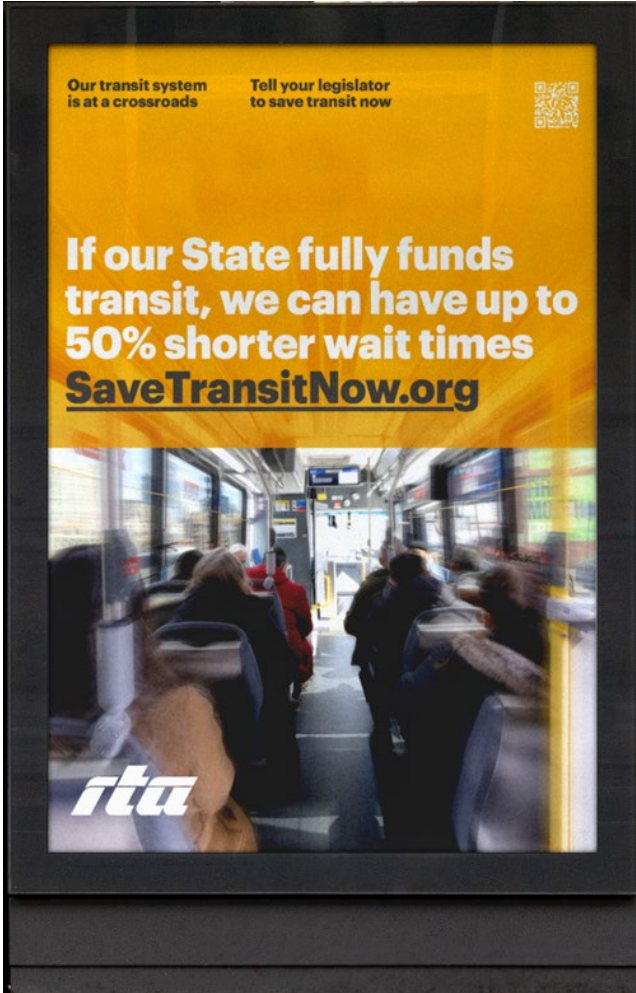
Out of Home: digital billboards

8 Locations

- Kennedy, Eisenhower, Reagan, Dan Ryan, Stevenson, Bishop Ford



Out of Home: stations, shelters, within vehicles



Print, paid social, Spanish available on all media



Dícales a los legisladores estatales que financien el transporte público ahora o **enfrentaremos recortes al servicio del 40%**
[SaveTransitNow.org](https://www.savetransitnow.org)

rta



Save Transit Now

Chicago's transit system is facing a fiscal cliff in 2026 that will mean drastic service cuts across CTA, Metra, and Pace. The RTA is advocating for additional funding to ensure our transit system can not only survive, but thrive. We need your help.



What is at stake for Chicago's transit system

Without a funding solution by the end of the Illinois General Assembly's spring session, the Chicago region's transit system will be decimated—leaving one in five workers in the City of Chicago without the use of transit for their daily commute; ending all weekend bus service for Pace customers; eliminating early morning and late evening service for Metra; wiping out nearly 3,000 transit jobs; and dealing a devastating blow to the regional economy.

☒ Email

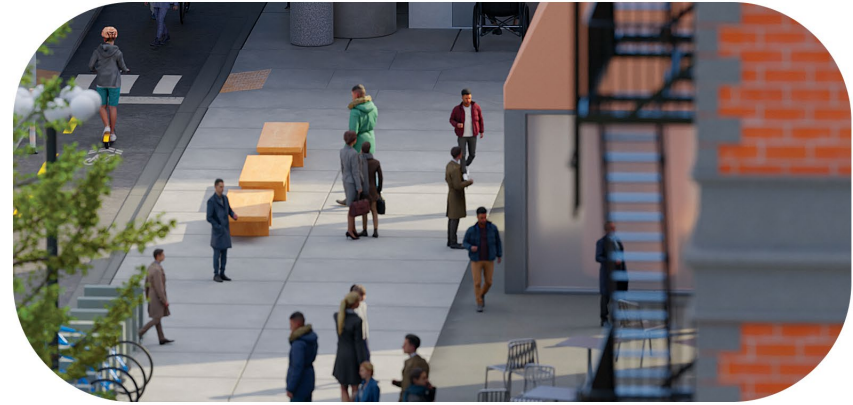
Write your legislator today

Public transit in the Chicago region is facing a fiscal cliff that could lead to drastic service cuts in 2026. We need your help. Write your legislator and ask them to Save Transit Now. Español sigue abajo.

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *



PROJECT UPDATE



Quarterly Panel survey – Winter 2025

- Responses from 1,486 regional transit users
 - Panel response
- Survey was live from March 3rd to 17th
- Quarterly surveys include:
 - Questions on customer satisfaction, public safety, and service quality
 - Special topics
- This survey was available in English
- Results are weighted by modal ridership

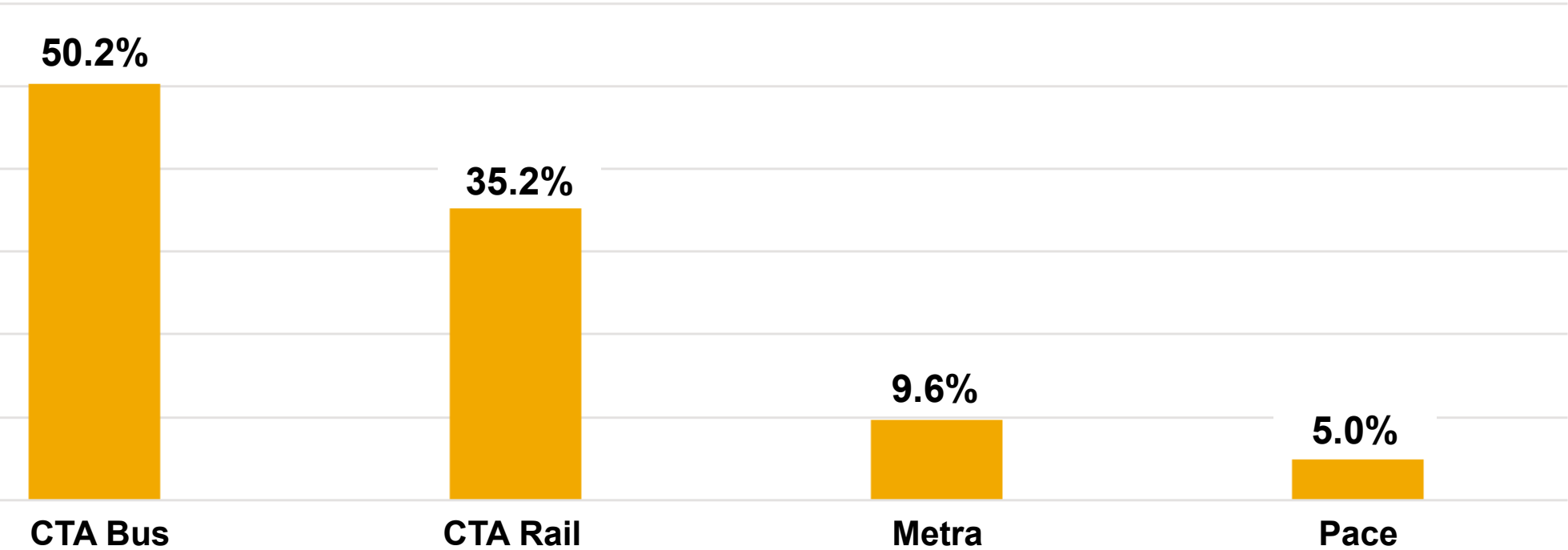
Summary

- Regional Riders have high satisfaction as service improves and more riders return
- Public safety is a concern for riders – both due to perception and experience on the system
- Speed, frequency, and reliability are most important to riders and also score the highest in service quality satisfaction levels
- Regional riders want to see more funding for transit to increase service and add new services to the regional system
 - They rank reforms lower in priority than additional transit funding

Regional rider

For the last 3 months, what was your primary mode (mode traveled for the farthest distance) for your typical trip?

Weighted by 2024 Ridership Statistics

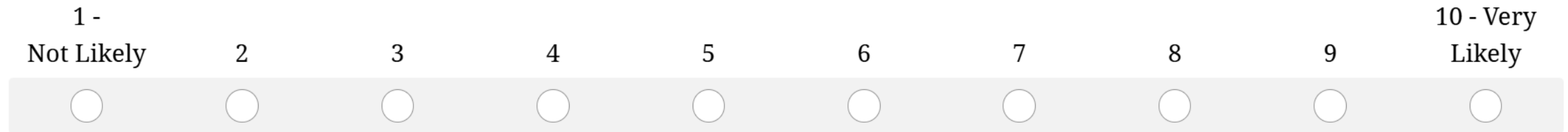


n = 1,450



Customer satisfaction

Respondents asked to rate their satisfaction on a ten-point scale

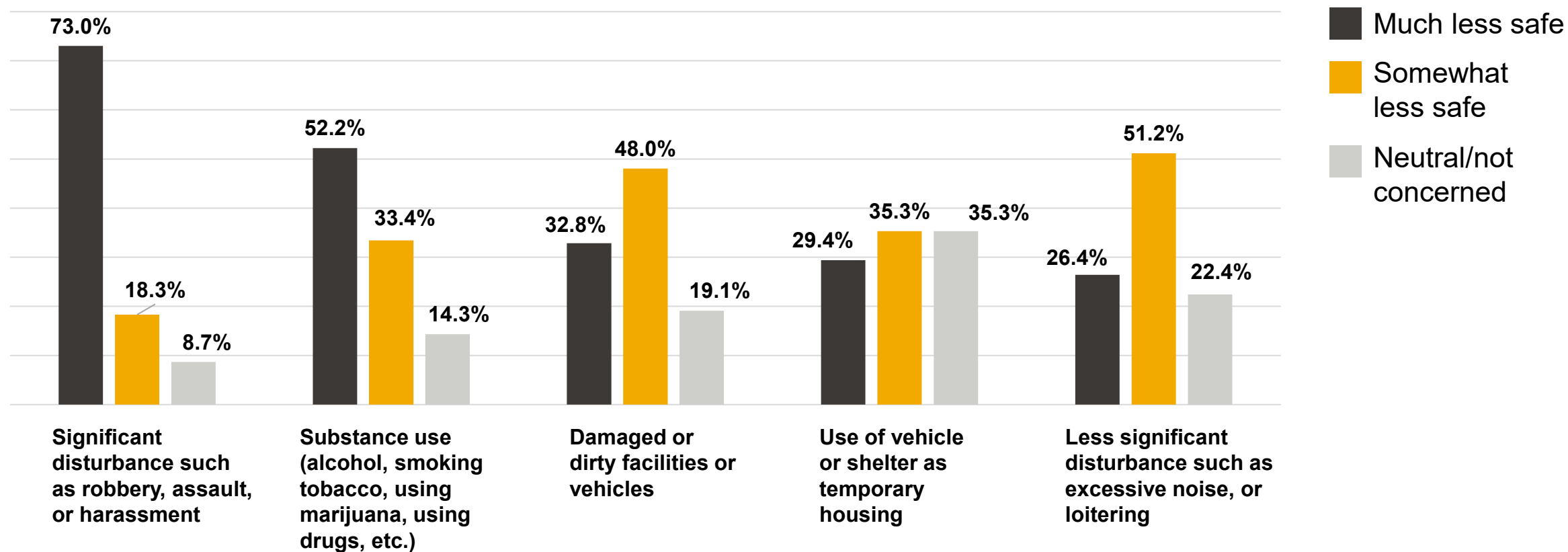


- 80.4% of regional riders are satisfied with value of service given fare paid
- 78.9% of regional riders would recommend transit to others
- 70.9% of regional riders are overall satisfied with public transit in the region

n = 1,455

Public safety - perception

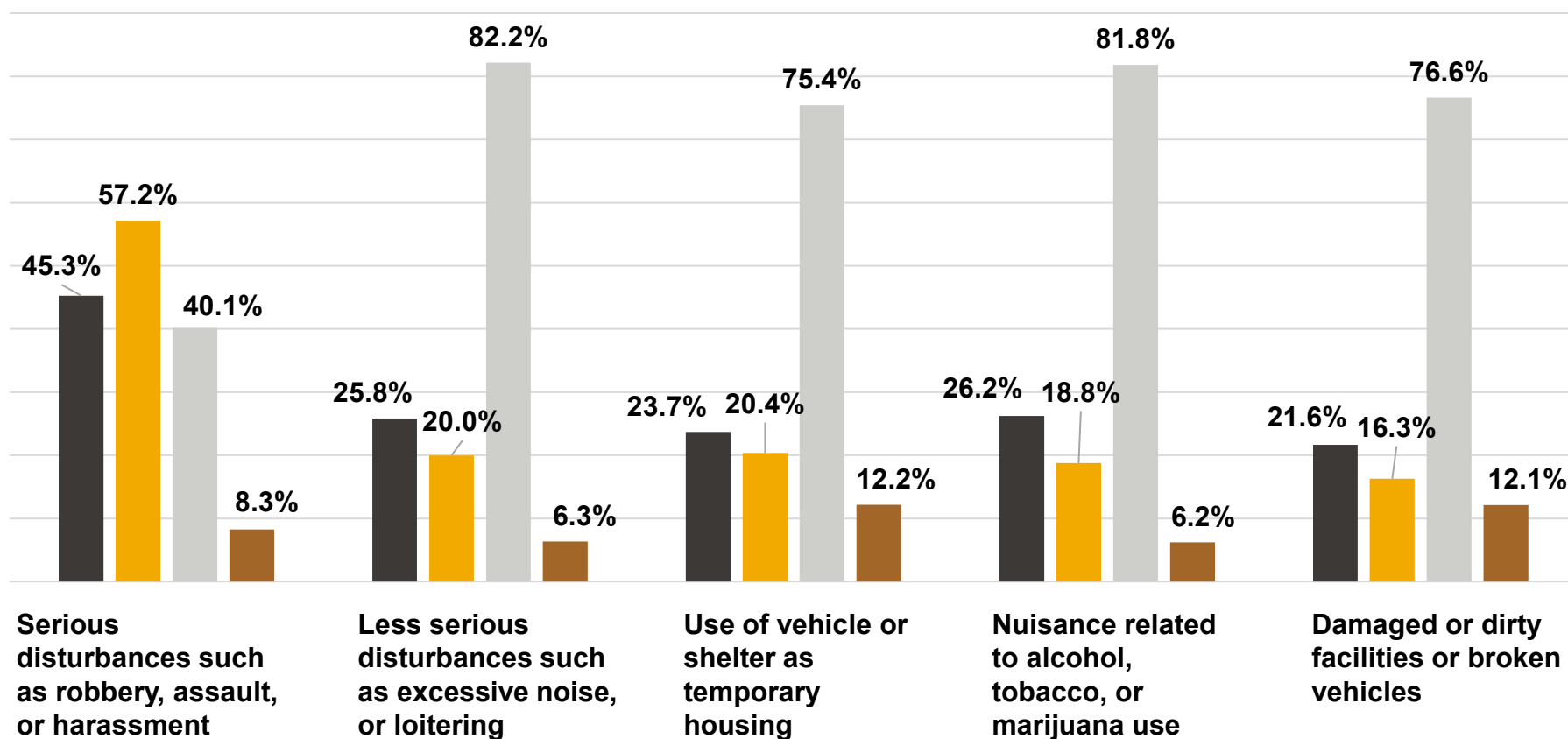
What makes you feel less safe/secure while riding transit?



n = 1,386

Public safety - experience

Mark the options that best correspond with your experience

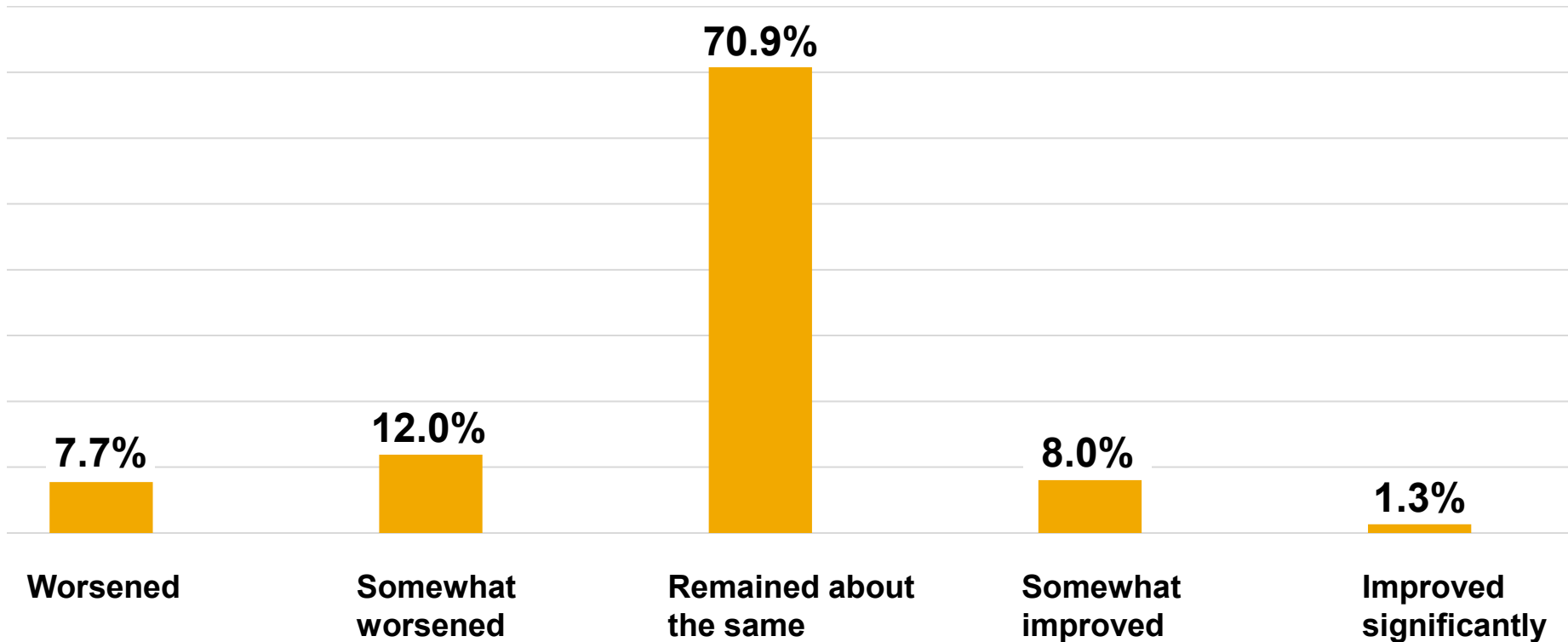


- I have heard about this through word of mouth or social media
- I have heard about this through traditional news media
- I have witnessed this
- I have not witnessed this or don't know

n = 1,386

Public safety - personal perception of change

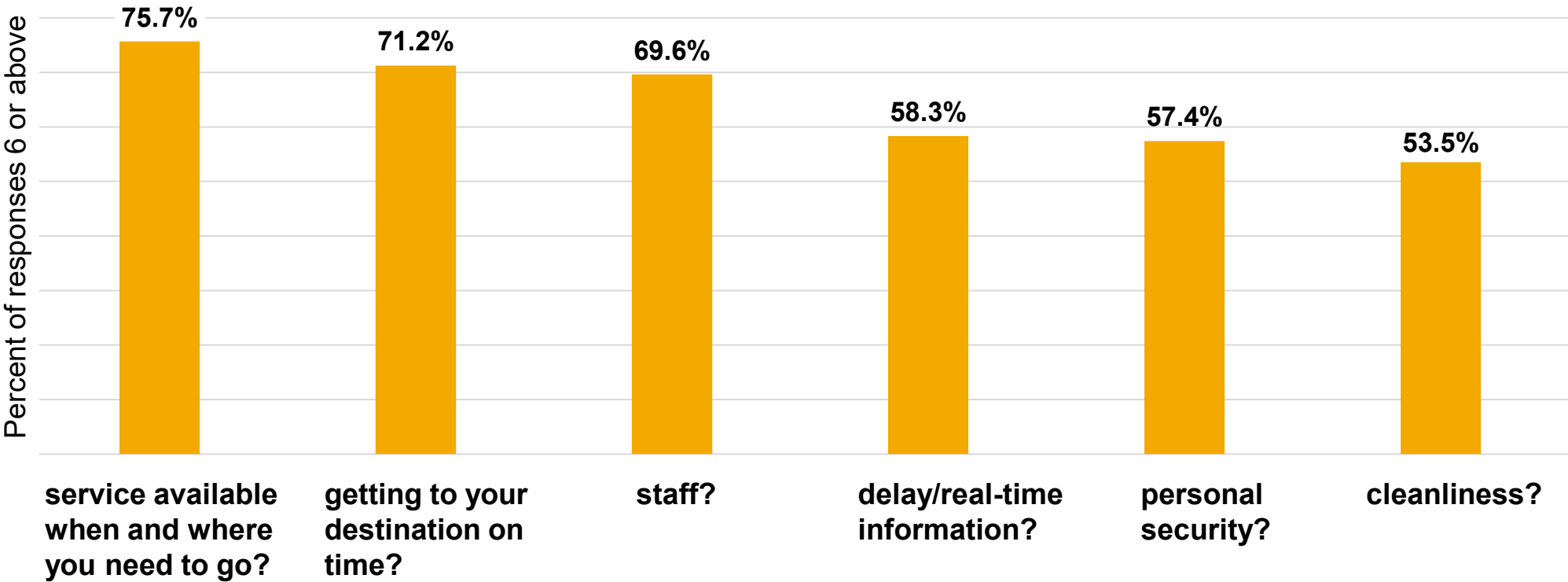
Considering your typical trip on your primary mode, how do you feel your personal safety has changed in the last three months?



n = 1,382

Service quality - satisfaction

Please indicate how satisfied you are with each aspect of service quality on a scale of 1-10. Consider all transit service in the Chicago region that you are familiar with. How satisfied are you with...

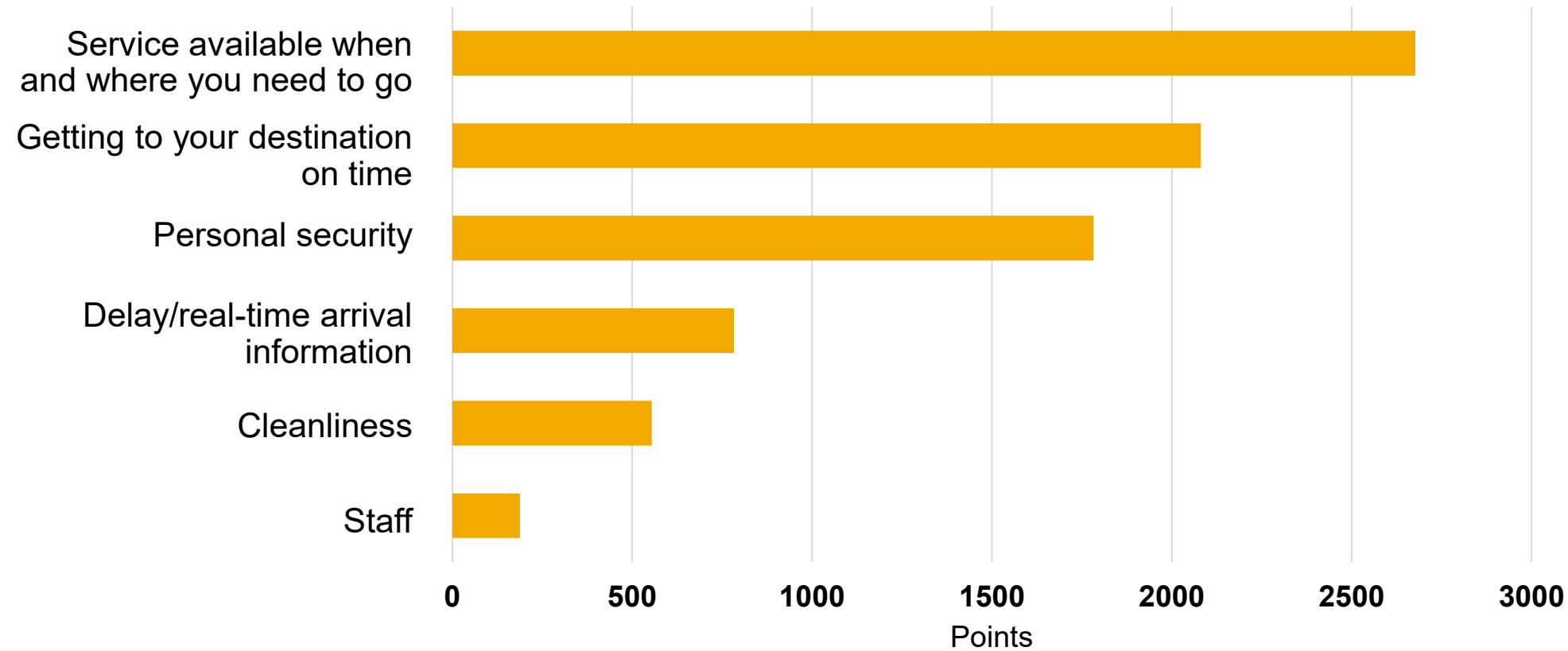


n = 1,364



Service quality - ranked priorities

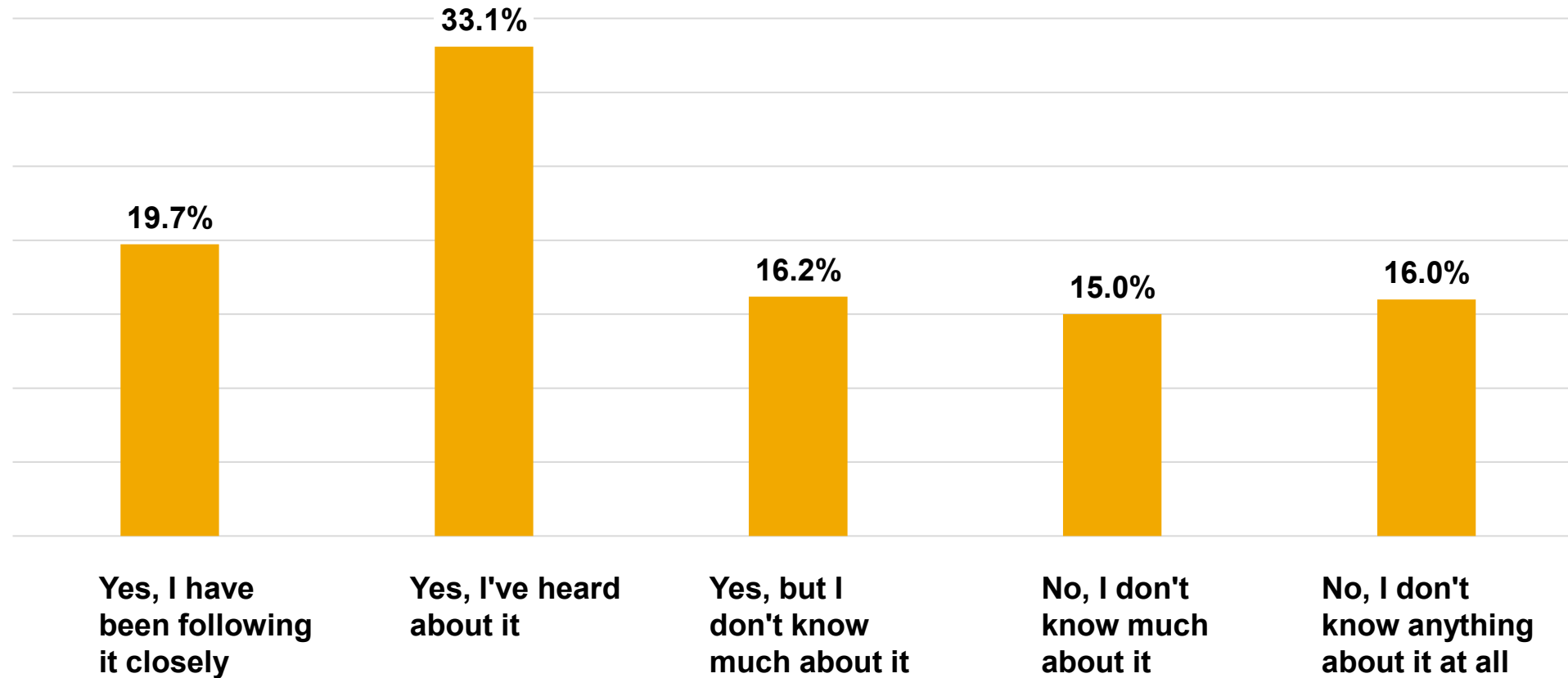
From the following list, please rank the three qualities that are most important to you



n = 1,344

Funding gap

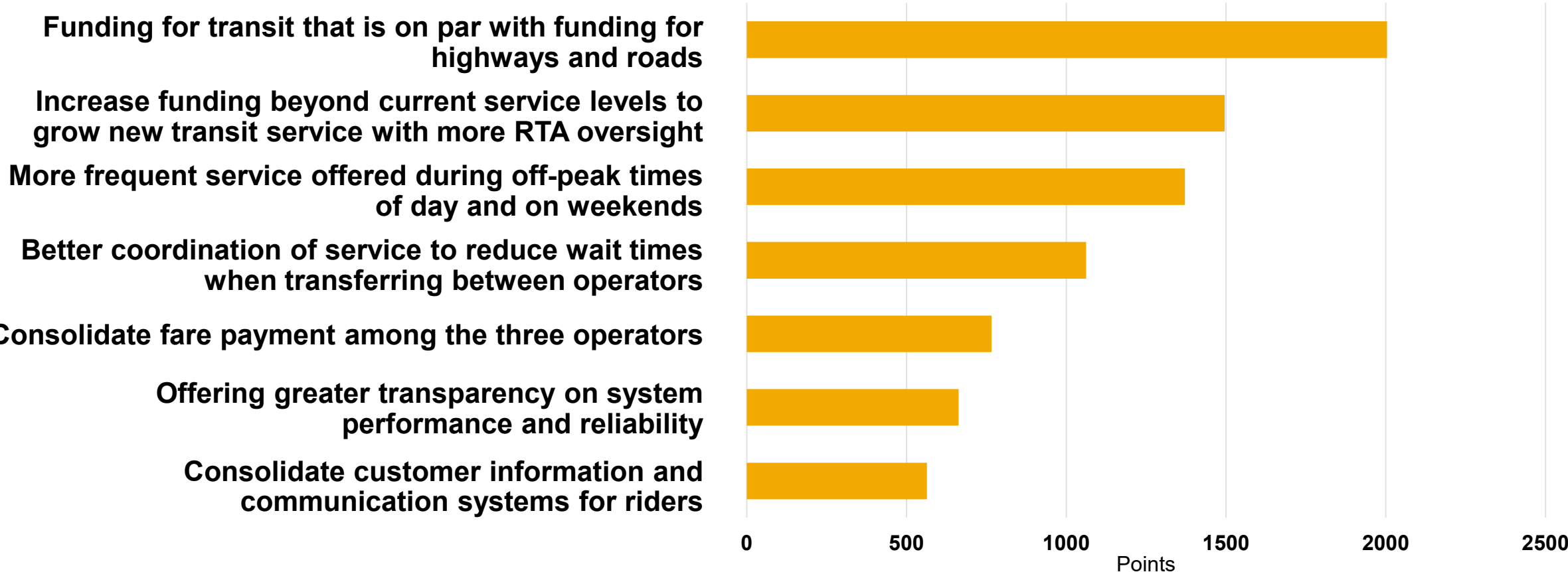
Were you aware of the funding gap affecting public agencies in the Chicago region?



n = 1,340

Accountability - ranked priorities

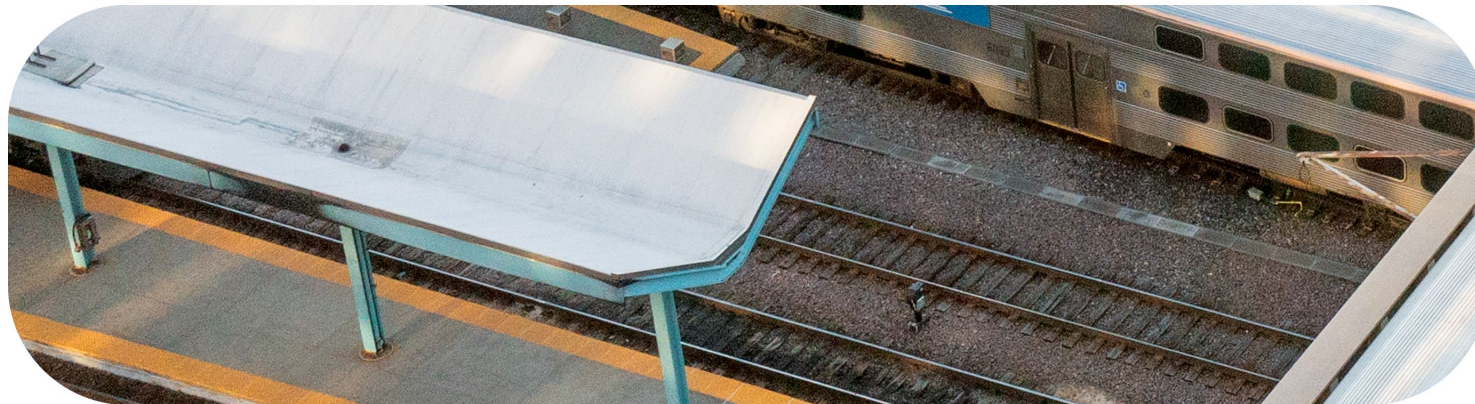
Which of these would have a significant impact on creating the best system for our region.
Please rank the three responses that you think would be the most significant



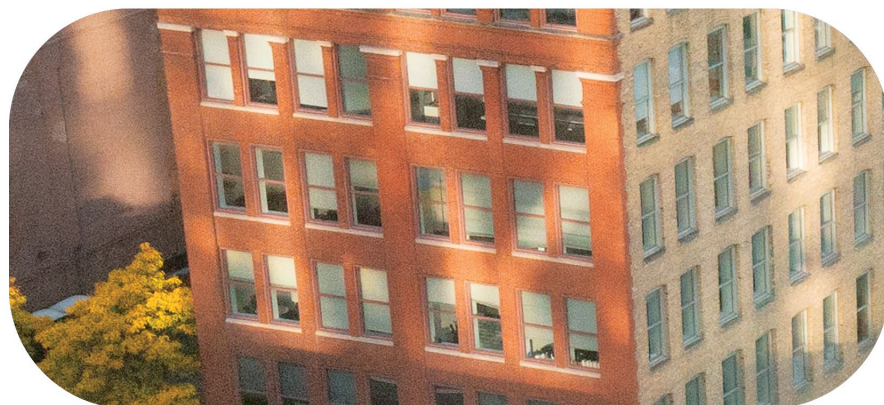
n = 1,321

Next Steps

- Spring Quarterly survey out in May
- Incorporate panel findings into dashboarding
- 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey results will be released later this spring



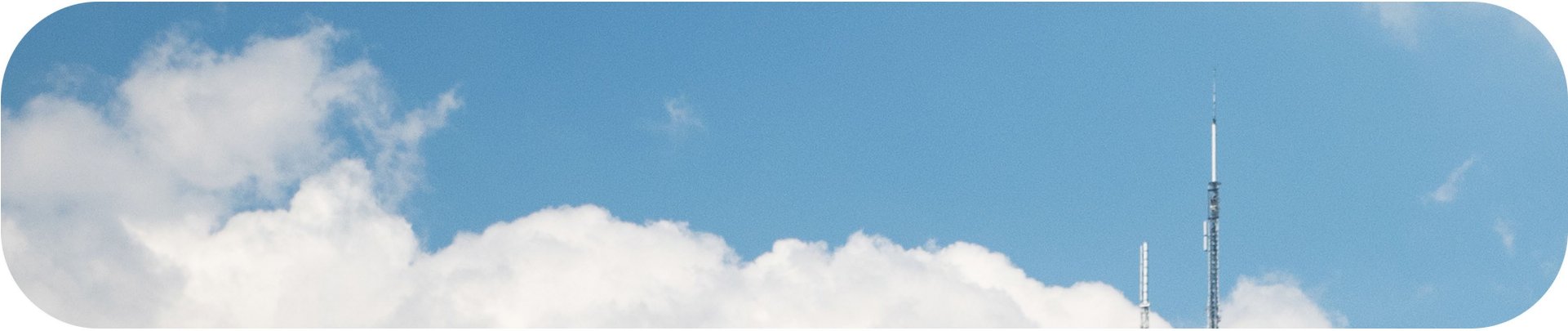
LEGISLATIVE



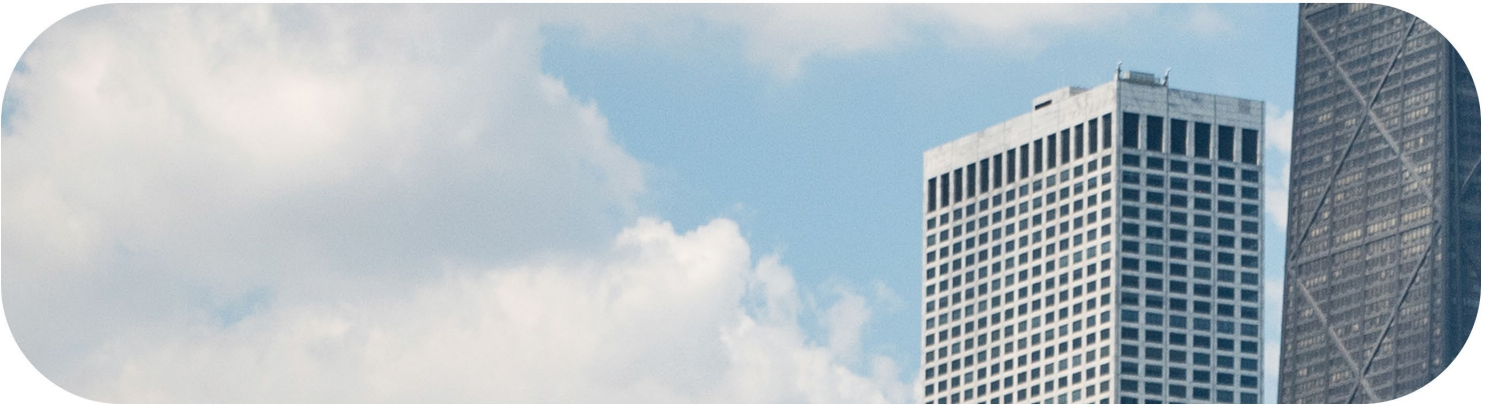
UPDATE

Critical 2025 legislative session continues

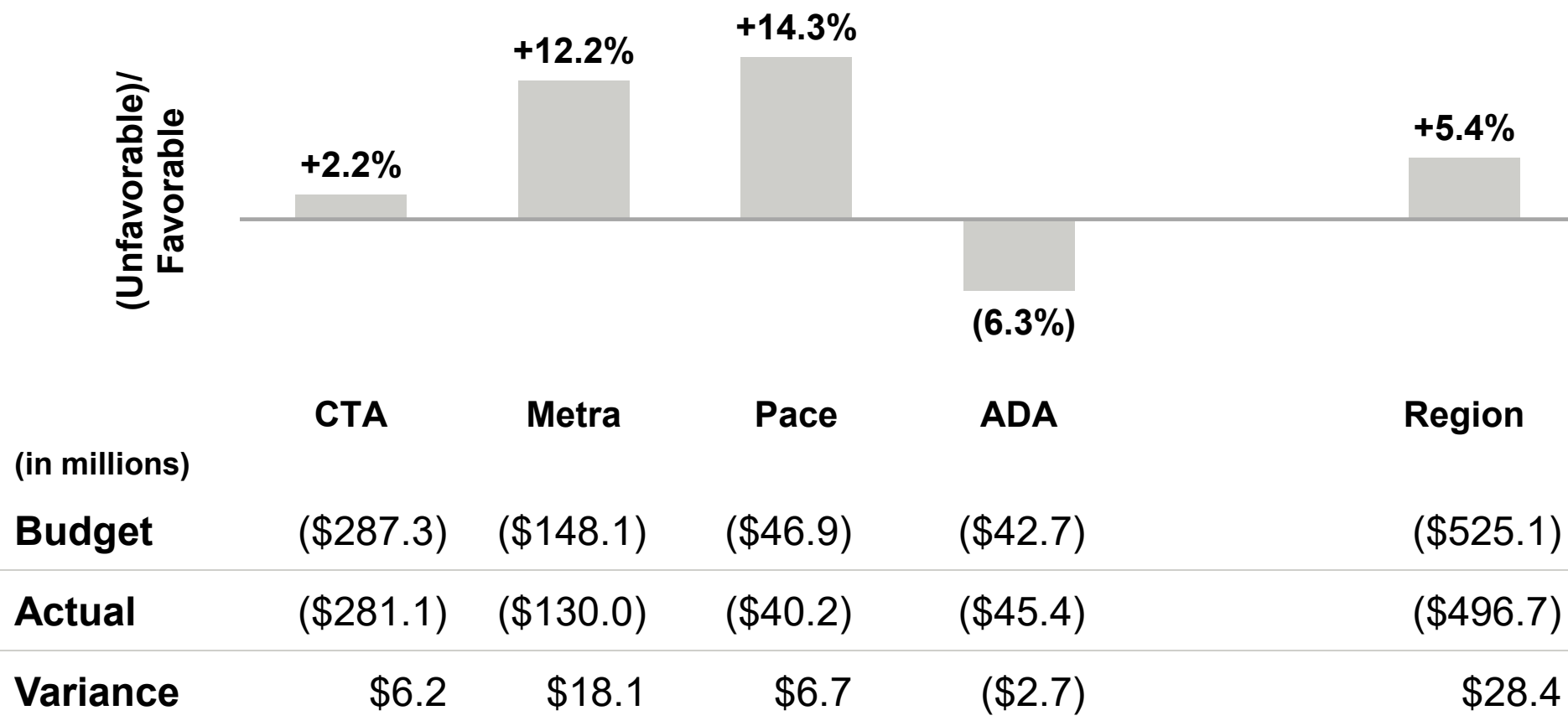
- Spring session advances past important legislative deadline
 - Friday, April 11: Deadline for bills out of committee
- House and Senate hold transit hearings
- Key dates
 - April 14 – 25: Legislative Spring Break
 - Third reading deadline
 - May 31: Session Adjournment (scheduled)



FINANCE



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through February



6b. 2024 Pace ADA Paratransit Funding



Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit overview

- Pace operates for the entire region
- 2nd largest in the United States
- RTA certifies eligibility
- Three modes
 - Traditional ADA Paratransit
 - Taxi Access Program
 - Rideshare Access Program

2024 ADA Paratransit budget results

- Overall ridership of 4.9 million exceeded budget by 677,000 rides or 16%
- Growth in eligible customers and ridership on all service types
- March 2024 region-wide launch of Rideshare Access Program (RAP) to complement existing Taxi Access Program (TAP) within the City of Chicago

(in millions)	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Change	% Change
Ridership	4.197	4.874	+0.677	+16.1%
Operating Expense	\$248.9	\$277.5	+\$28.6	+11.5%
- Operating Revenue	\$12.9	\$16.0	+\$3.1	+24.0%
= Funding Required	\$236.0	\$261.5	+\$25.5	+10.8%



Rideshare Access Program

- Launched region-wide in March 2024
 - A recommended outcome of the RTA ADA Paratransit Innovation Study (February 2021)
 - 2023 pilot program in DuPage County only
 - Utilizes Uber and UZURV service with same-day reservations
 - Only ADA-certified customers are eligible
 - \$2 fare with maximum trip cost of \$30

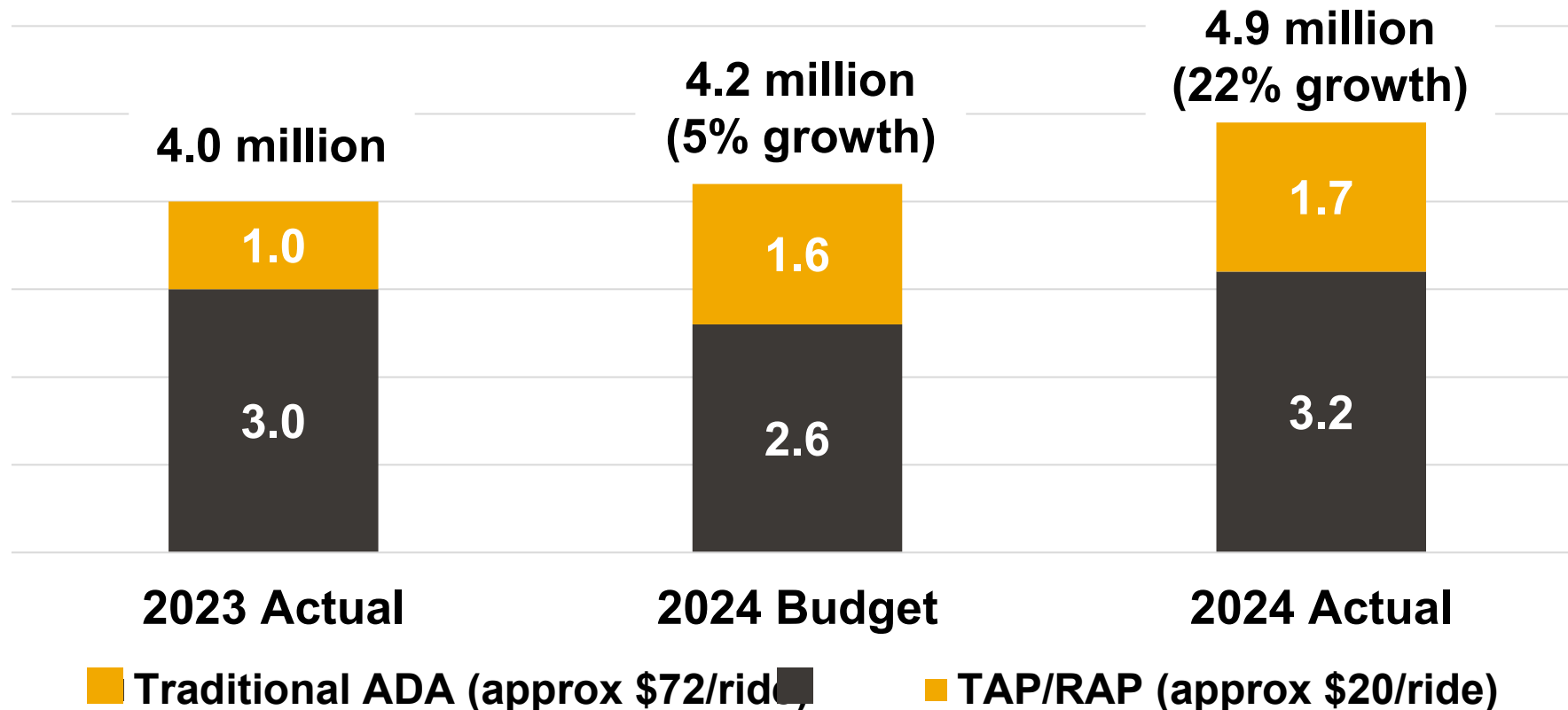
Average cost per passenger trip

ADA Paratransit	RAP	TAP
\$72.65	\$19.82	\$25.95



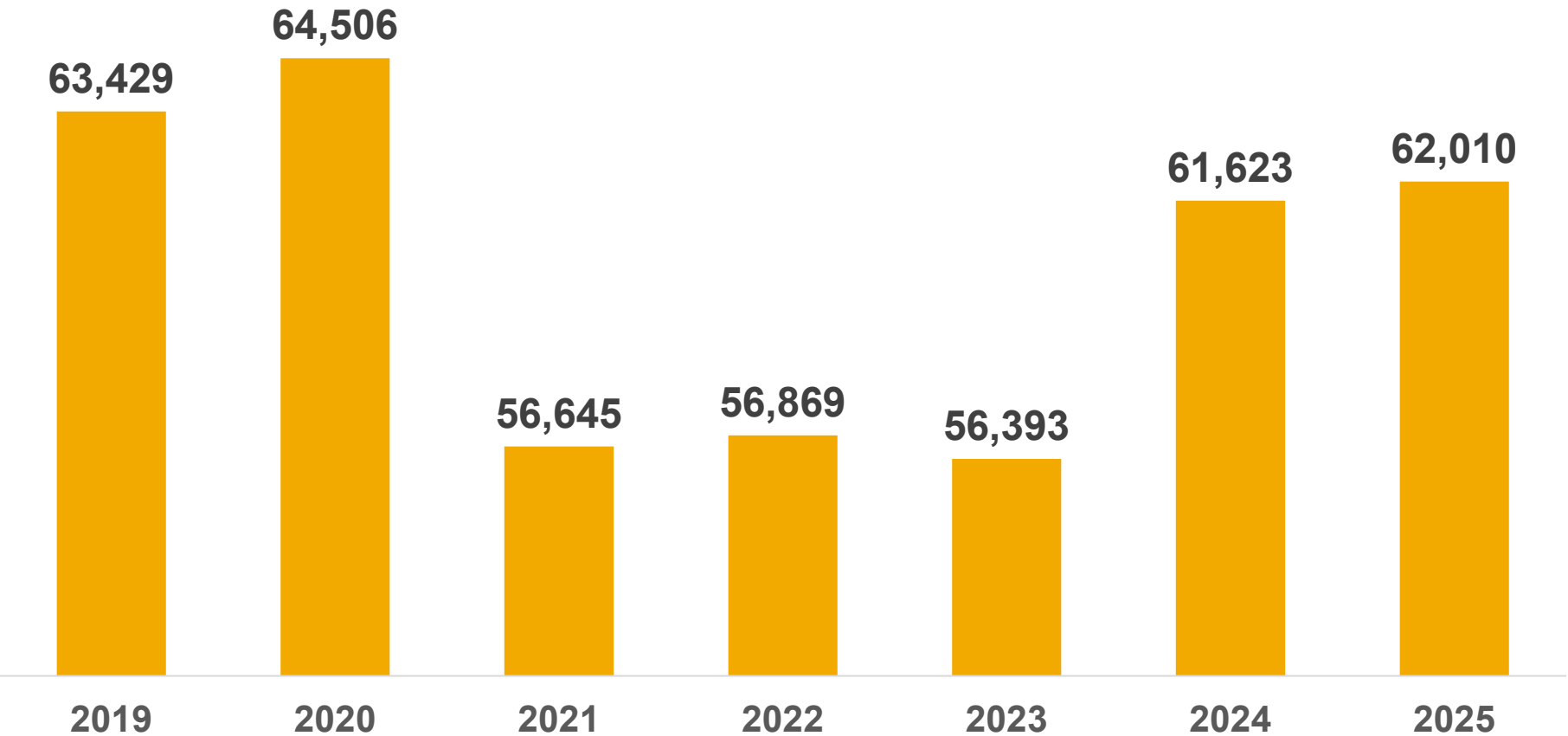
TAP and RAP are a growing share of ADA Paratransit ridership

- 2024 Budget assumed that RAP rides would replace traditional ADA Paratransit rides
- 2024 Actual RAP rides were largely incremental, driving overall ridership and costs above budget



Certified ADA Paratransit riders

Total eligible



ADA Paratransit reserve

- A subaccount of the RTA General Fund
 - Holds year-end surpluses of ADA Paratransit funding for future ADA Paratransit use
 - Provides a funding buffer to absorb the variable costs caused by unanticipated ridership, obviating the need for excessive funding amendments
 - Balance increased to \$42 million from 2014 to 2020 and was then largely drawn down to mitigate COVID sales tax downturn
 - Balance was rebuilt in 2022 and 2023 and now stands at \$33.8 million
- The 2024 shortfall and developing 2025 shortfall would fully deplete the reserve later this year, requiring additional funding to be provided for the ADA Paratransit budget

7. Action items

7a. Ordinance Authorizing Long-Term Borrowing



Limitations on RTA debt

Current Outstanding Debt

- SCIP bonds \$600 million
- RTA (non-SCIP) bonds \$468 million

RTA Act

- Outstanding principal of RTA (non-SCIP) bonds may not exceed \$800 million.
- Rolling authorization

RTA General Bond Ordinance

- The Revenues Test requires average annual sales tax receipts over the prior 24 months to be at least 2.5 times the projected Maximum Annual Debt Service (MADS) on all senior lien bonds projected through the maturity of the last bond.

Projects

- Purchase of locomotives - \$34.0 million
- Harvey Transportation Center - \$23.8
- Mid-life car rehabilitation - \$12.0
- Zero-emission trainsets (locomotives) - \$25.3 million
- Jackson substation of Metra Electric Line - \$12.0 million
- Western Avenue coach yard on Milwaukee District - \$22.9 million

Plan of finance

- Proceeds of \$130 million
- 30-year amortization
- Level debt service
- Competitive sale
- Tax-exempt

Participants

- Financial Advisor – Backstrom McCarley Berry & Co., LLC
- Bond Counsel – Barnes & Thornburg, LLP
- Trustee – US Bank
- Rating Agencies – Fitch, Standard & Poor's
- RTA Staff – Treasury, Budget, Capital, Legal
- RTA Board

Calendar

- Rating Agency Presentations – April 9 & 10
- Board approval – April 17
- Receive ratings – Week of April 21
- Sale – Week of April 28
- Closing – May 14
- Results – May 17

7b. Approval of travel expense reimbursement(s)



8. New business

Adjournment

The next meeting of the RTA Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, May 17.

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 rtachicago.org

 transitistheanswer.org

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