

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

August 21, 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. Update on the activities of the RTA Transit Access Citizens' Advisory Board

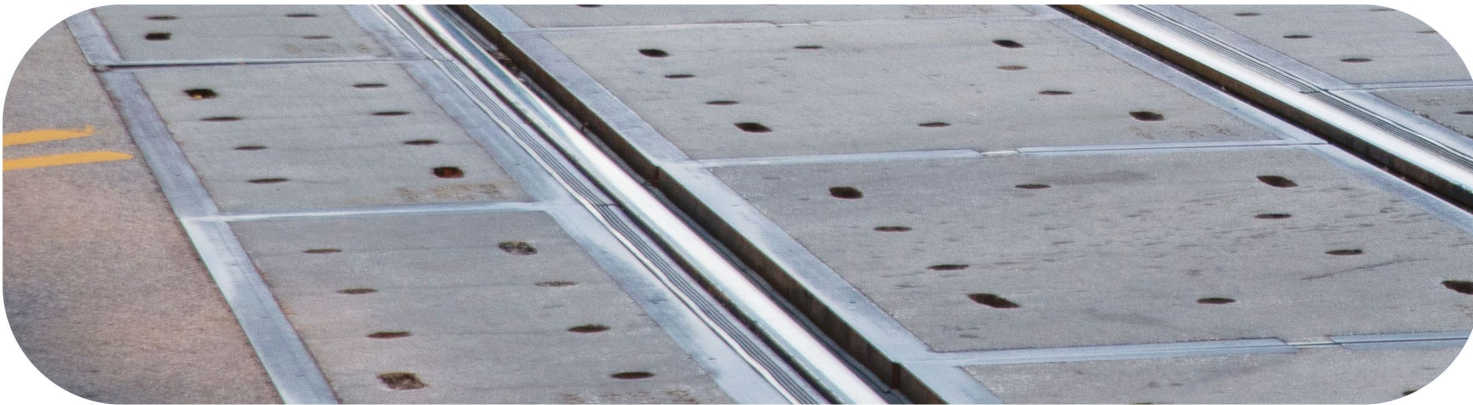


6b. Transit is the Answer Implementation Update





ENGAGEMENT



Transit is the Answer Coalition

- Virtual coalition meeting held August 13 with nearly 200 attendees
- Multiple legislators and elected staff as well as staff from local governments and Service Boards
- Discussed fiscal cliff next steps, peer regions update, legislation overview
- Feedback and questions from audience showed concern about transit service and desire for a solution.



Coalition: What are you most concerned about for the 2026 budget process?

- “Fare increases”
- “Service cuts in the communities that need the service the most”
- “I’m concerned that the state will fail to act, I don’t feel like representatives are concerned enough to actually act.”
- “Disproportionate impacts to disabled and low-income people.”
- “I will no longer be able to get where I need to go!”
- “I am concerned that the General Assembly is not taking this fiscal cliff seriously enough.”

Coalition: What feedback would you provide to lawmakers?

- “Transit is the key to improving quality of life across ALL of Illinois, not just Chicago. Not funding transit is incredibly short sighted .”
- “Investing in transit will benefit the whole state!”
- “Good transit makes a region better. Great transit makes it world class.”
- “Transit really is the answer to questions of climate, equity and more.”
- “Current version of the bill doesn't go far enough to empower NITA to create a truly integrated system.”
- “Ultimately, this is about service and the people who use the services.”

Transportation Tuesdays

September 9: Regional Human Services Transportation Plan Update

September 16: Introduction to Joint Development: What is it and what are the benefits

September 23: What are we hearing from riders? Customer Satisfaction Survey results

September 30: What's next for the transit fiscal cliff: A conversation between Chicago and peer systems

- Sessions are from noon-1:30 p.m. Registration required, free events.

6c. ADA Paratransit Action Plan Update



Action plan

- TAP/RAP 30 rides per month cap
- TAP/RAP \$3.25 fare restoration
- FREE fixed route rides across the system for ADA certified riders
- **RTA Paratransit Certification Review**

Review of the RTA ADA Paratransit Certification Program



USDOT Regulations on eligibility & process

- **ADA paratransit eligibility standards** Title 49, Part 37, Subpart F: Sec. 37.123
- **ADA paratransit eligibility process** Title 49, Part 37, Subpart F: Sec. 37.125
- **Federal Transit Administration Triennial Review**

RTA's ADA Paratransit Certification Program model

- Vendor Operated
- 2 Assessment Offices
- Program Model Used
- New Applicants
- Returning (Recertifying) Applicants
- Determination within 21 days
(Average of 1-2 Days)
- Appeals Program



Screening process

Average Monthly Application Volume from January 2024 through March 2025

Stages of the Screening	Decrease in Applicants per Stage in the Screening Process	Percent decrease per Stage of the Screening Process
New and recertification inquiries about ADA Paratransit eligibility	2449	100%
	↓	↓
Flyers / Recert Notices Sent	2261	92%
	↓	↓
Appointments Scheduled	1663	68%
	↓	↓
Interviews Completed	1322	54%
	↓	↓
Applicants that Complete the Certification Process	1311	54%

Eligibility categories

RTA

- Unconditional – 70%
- Conditional – 13%
- Temporary – 16%
- Not Eligible - <1%

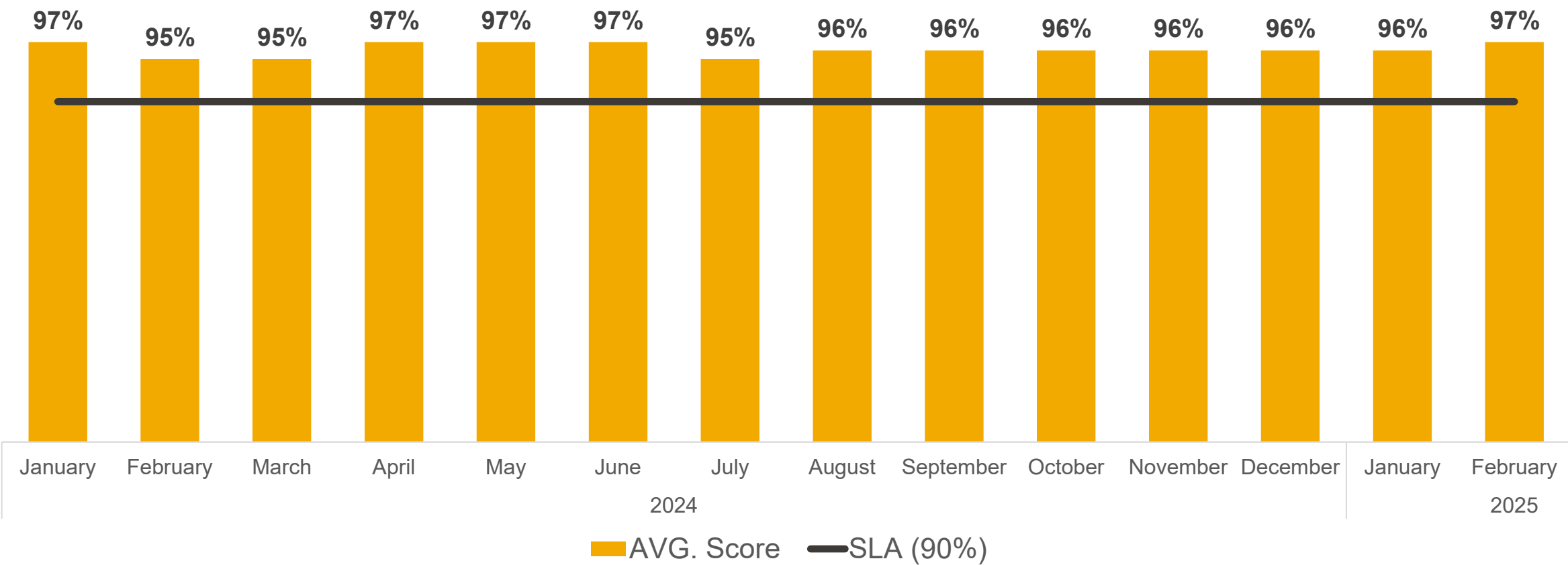
Peer Averages:

- Unconditional: - 71%
- Conditional – 15%
- Temporary – 5%
- Not Eligible – 2%

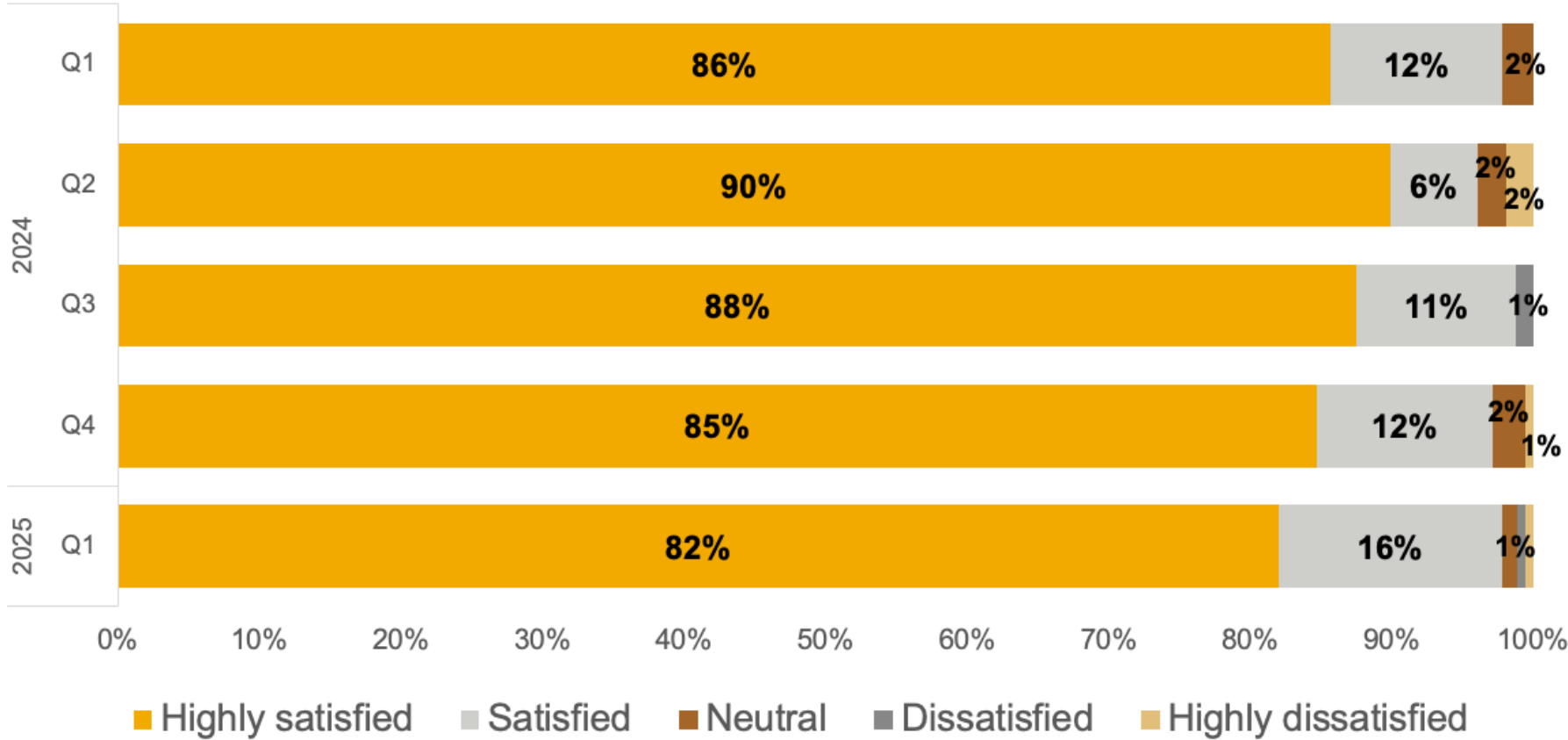


Program accuracy

Results from January 2024-February 2025



Customer satisfaction



On average 97.6% of survey respondents report being satisfied or highly satisfied with the knowledge and professionalism of staff, with the vast majority (86.2%) reporting being highly satisfied.

Peer review

Consistency with peers

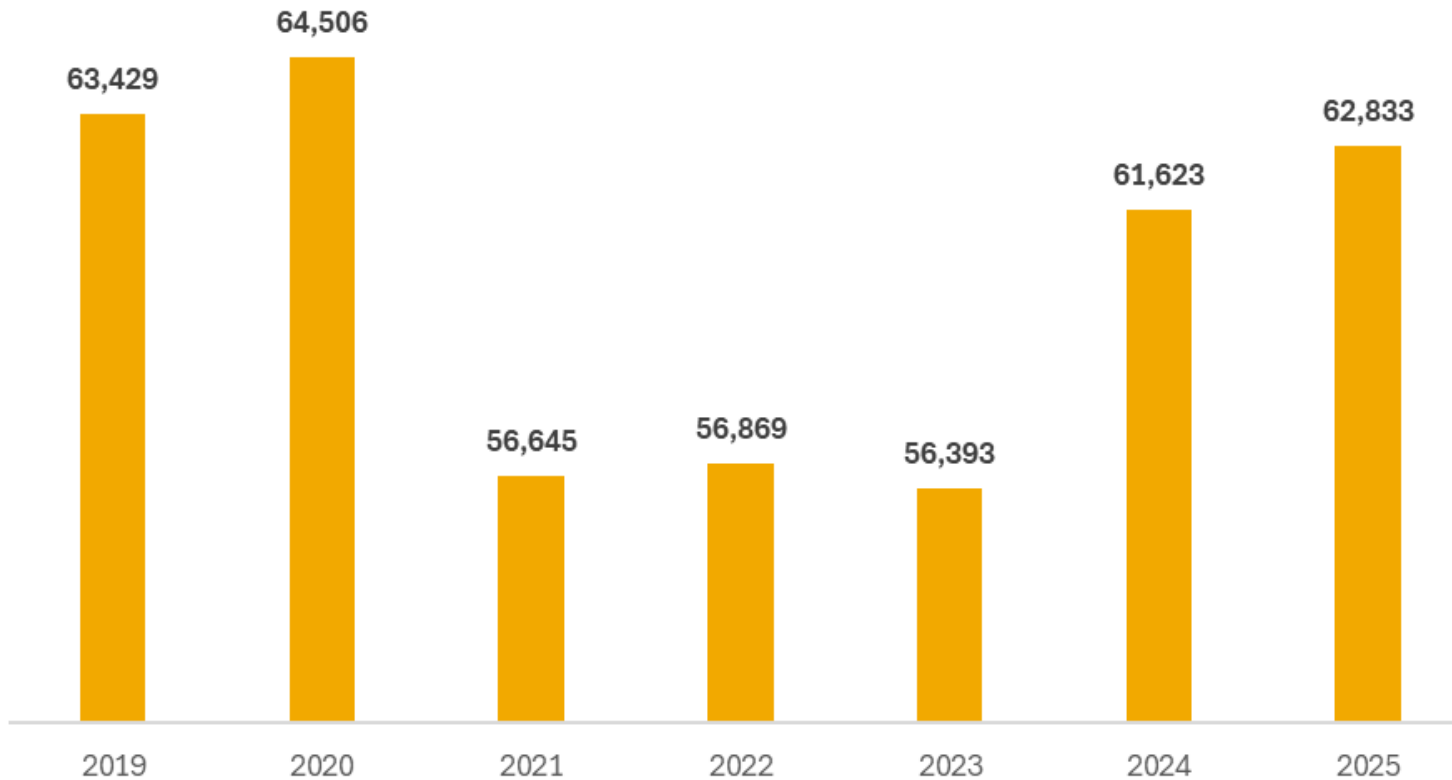
- Vendor operated
- Same eligibility categories
- Same assessment types utilized
- New applicant process
- Similar percentages for eligibility outcomes

Variance with peers

- Recertification process
- Medical verification

Challenges

Total Eligible Riders



Certifications Reaching Pre-Pandemic Levels

- Introduction of RAP in 2024
- Aging population
- Similar number of certifications as 2019
- Cost of the ADA paratransit operations was \$183M in 2019

Implementation of cost savings strategies

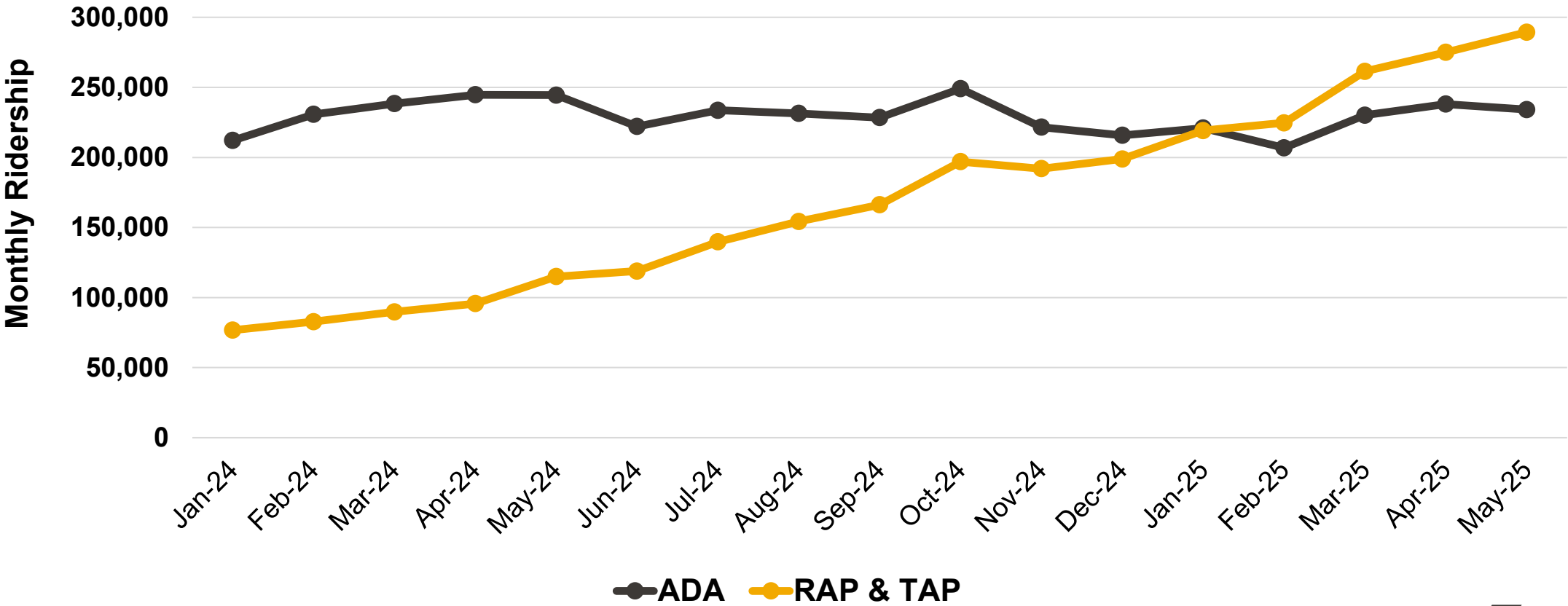
Strategy	Annual Savings
Elimination of Paper Applications	\$75,000
Electronic Eligibility Notification	\$230,000
Phone Recertification - Transportation Expense Reduction	\$655,000
Total	\$960,000

Review recommendations for consideration

- Connect certification to provision of subsidy programs
 - Subsidy programs only available to Unconditionally certified riders
 - Implement introductory period and/or 6-ride/month cap for newly unconditionally certified riders

Ridership update

ADA Paratransit Monthly Ridership by Service



Public hearing summary

- Lake County: July 24
 - Will County: July 25
 - McHenry County: July 28
 - DuPage County: July 29
 - Cook County: July 30
 - Kane County: July 31
- 350+ comments received at public hearings and online
 - 30 monthly ride cap was most frequent complaint
 - Minimal complaints about fare increase to \$3.25

Programmatic Analysis

- Riders will continue to have access to fixed route transit
 - Free rides on fixed routes (after implementation this Fall)
 - Ability to book trips using Traditional ADA paratransit
- Only 5% of all certified paratransit riders would be impacted by 30-ride/month cap.
- One third of RAP/TAP riders are newly certified. These rides cost \$2.3 million per month.
- Implementing the Action Plan saves \$3 million per month.
 - Future Actions: certification recommendations could increase savings to \$5 million per month.

Next steps

- Oct 1st Implementation
 - TAP/RAP 30 rides per month cap
 - TAP/RAP \$3.25 fare restoration
 - FREE fixed route rides across the system for ADA certified riders
- Future Actions
 - Certification Recommendations

6d. Update on HB 3438 - the Sustainable Transit for Northern Illinois Act



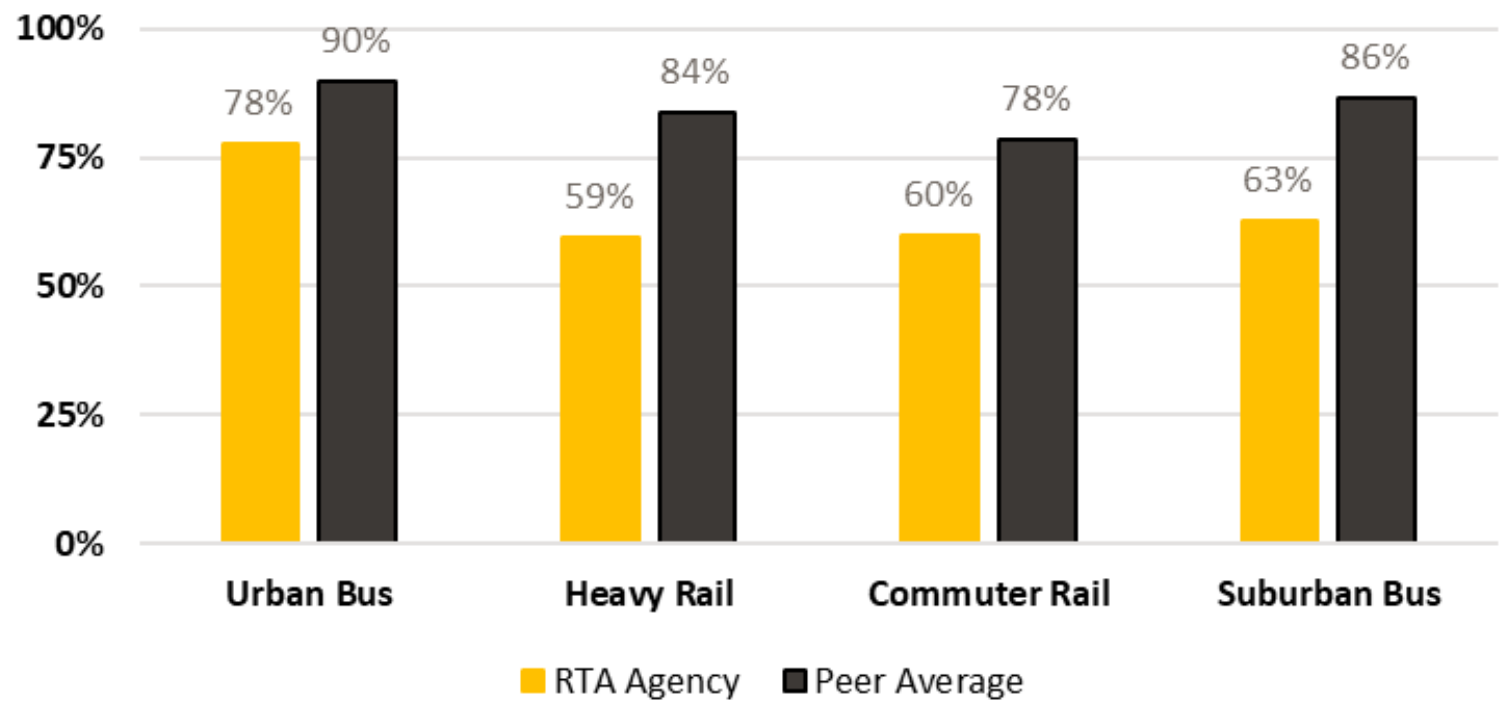
7. Action items

7a. Quarterly performance and Resolutions certifying Financial results - Second Quarter 2025



Quarterly finance & performance report

YTD Ridership Recovery 2025 vs. 2019

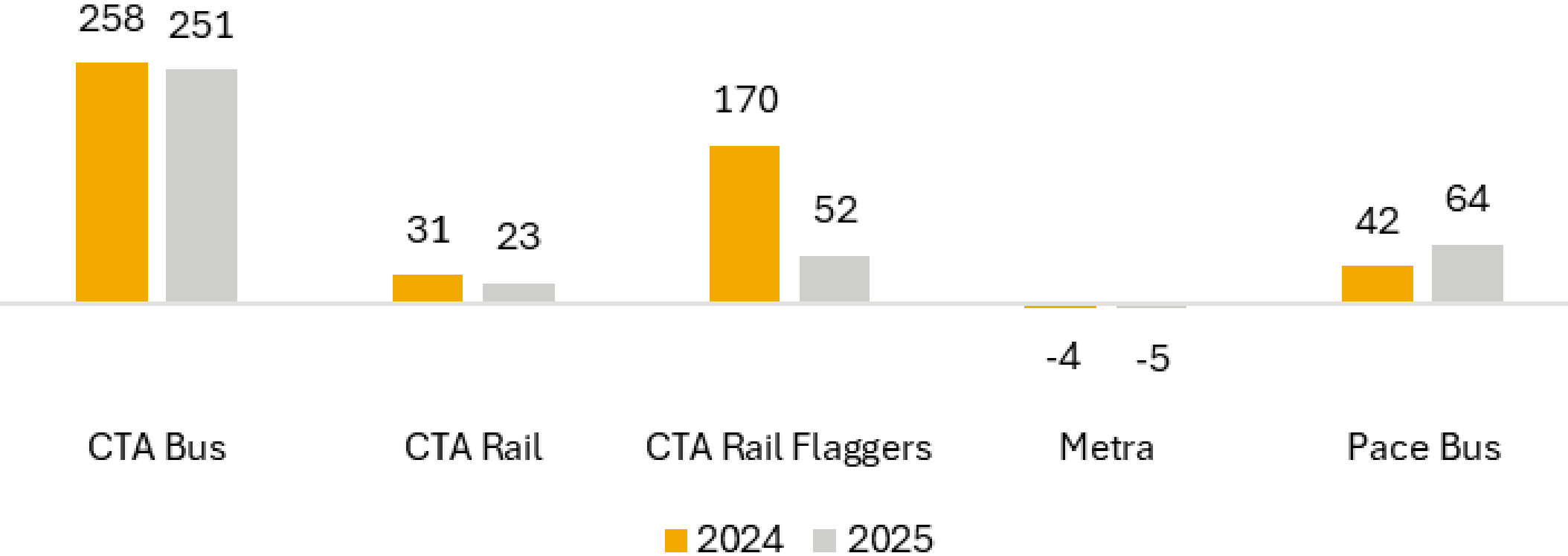


Illinois Public Act 103-0281

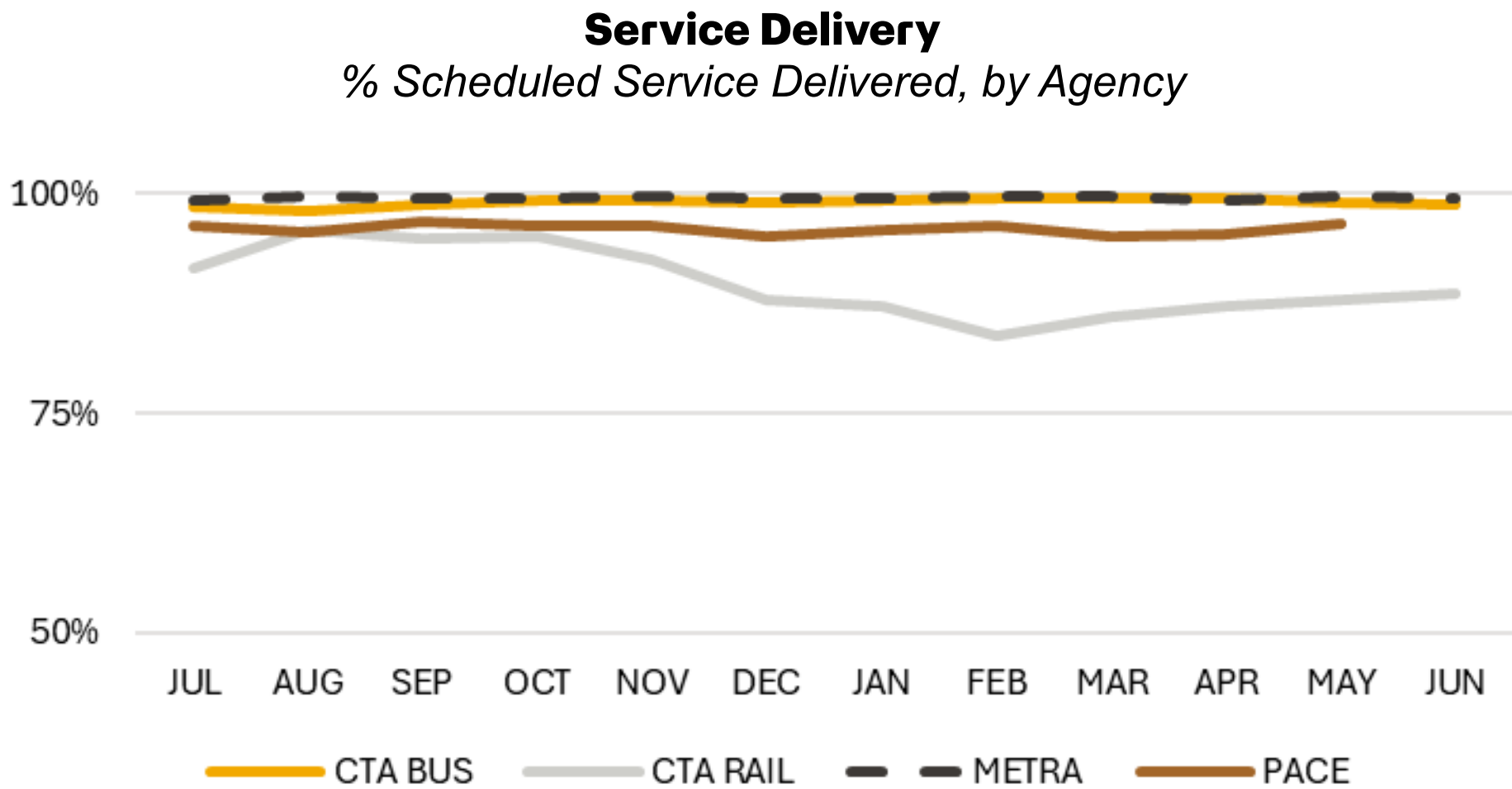
- Operations-based performance reporting
- Three categories of data:
 - Staffing
 - Service
 - Safety & Security
- Board certified substantial compliance in December
- Work to do in 2025:
 - Monthly data updates
 - Further development of public safety effectiveness metrics
 - Continue to seek public input and feedback

Staffing levels

Q2 YTD Service Operator Hiring
(net new positions)



Service delivery



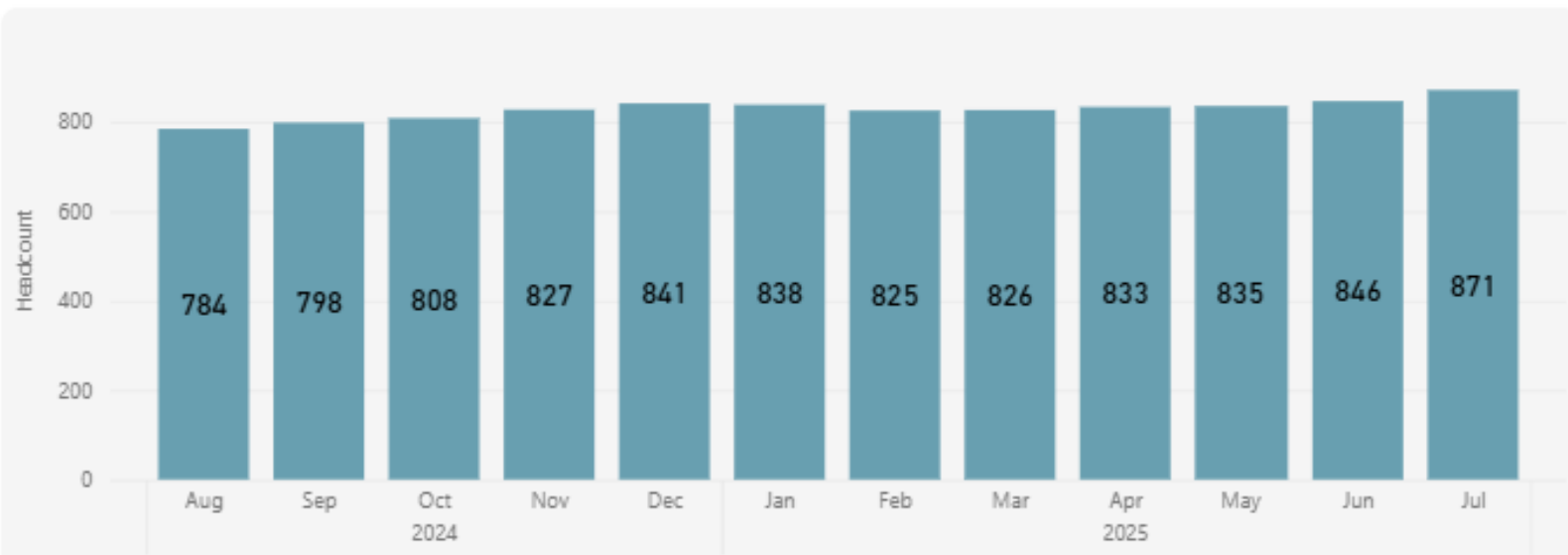
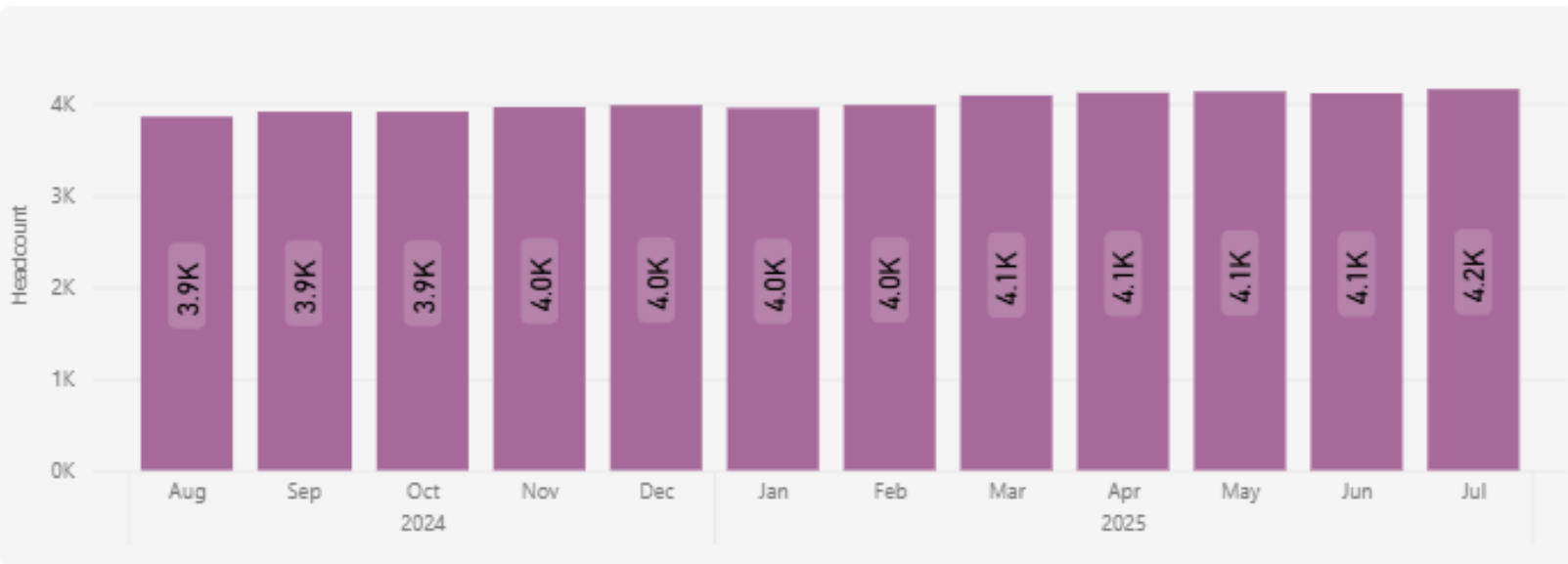


Bus Operator Headcount

The number of bus operators.
Since March 2022, CTA directly recruits full time bus operators instead of entry-level part-time positions.

Part time operators are shown as full-time equivalent (FTE).

Pre-Pandemic (2019) FTE Headcount
3,832



Rail Operations Headcount

The number of operating rail employees.

Operator Headcount includes Combined Rail Operators, Rapid Transit Operators, Switch Workers, and Tower Workers.

Pre-Pandemic (2019) Operator Headcount
880

Metra staffing

Metric	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025
Employees Required to Operate Service	440	440	440	440	440	440	440	444	431	431	440	440	426	426	426	426	426	426
Currently Available Employees	477	477	474	486	479	478	473	470	484	487	483	478	465	461	458	453	474	473
Newly Hired Employees	0	3	0	9	0	5	0	4	9	8	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	11
Departed Employees	3	4	3	3	3	5	7	4	4	4	2	5	2	2	2	6	5	1
Employees in Training	21	21	24	26	10	19	24	23	28	25	17	9	7	36	34	33	29	11
Absenteeism Rate	11.9%	11.7%	12.7%	12.1%	12.5%	11.7%	13.3%	12.8%	12.4%	13.6%	13.5%	11.1%	12.3%	12.4%	9.8%	11.5%	12.0%	9.7%

Pace staffing

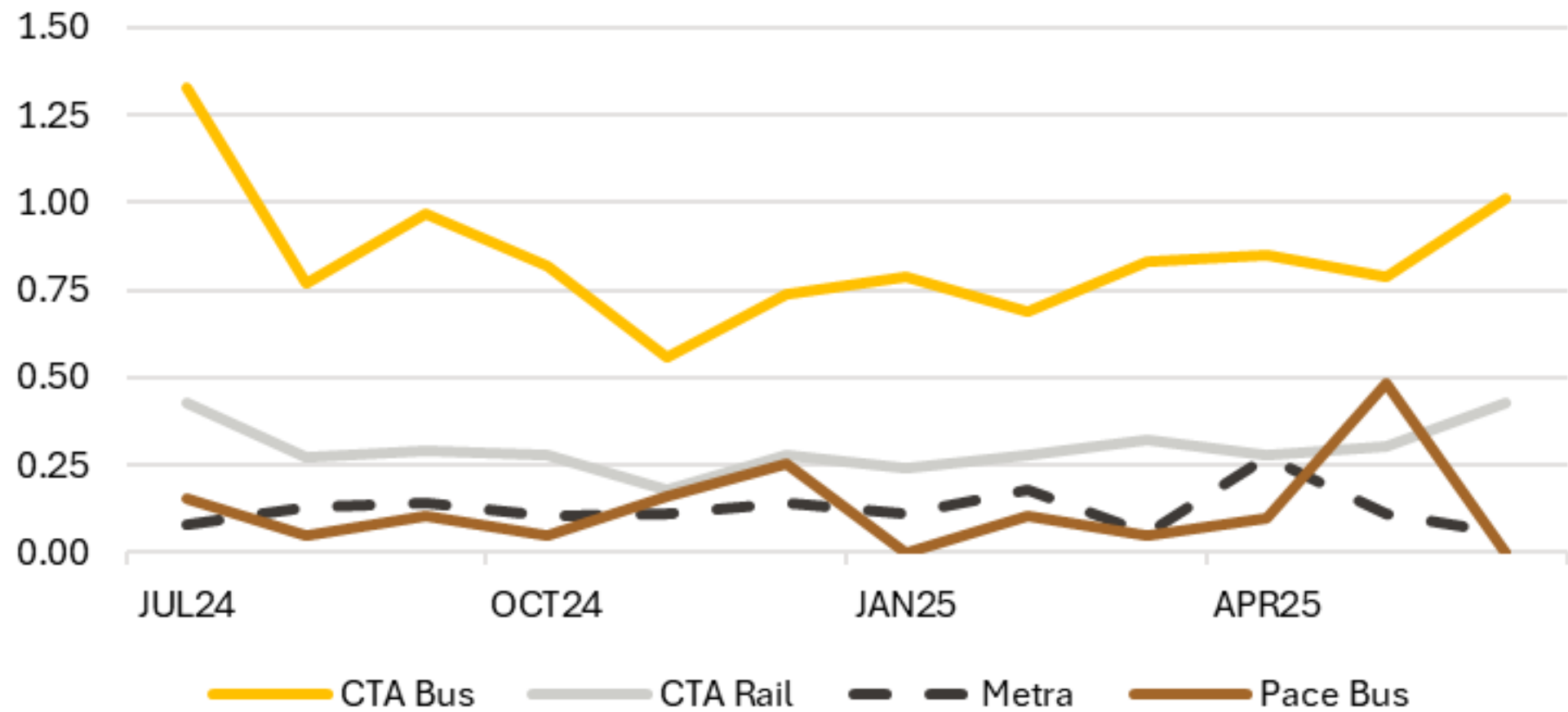
Employee data

The following statistics track the number of bus operators (drivers) who work directly for Pace.

metric	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	June 2025
Number of budgeted positions as of first of the month	1,138	1,138	1,137	1,137	1,137	1,141	1,141	1,159	1,159	1,159	1,159	1,171	1,171	1,171	1,192	1,192	1,192	1,195
Current positions employed as of first of the month	981	995	1,005	1,005	997	1,007	1,013	1,032	1,039	1,048	1,058	1,063	1,063	1,057	1,068	1,091	1,109	1,110
Operators hired during the month	34	28	26	28	19	32	30	43	34	31	35	25	21	35	40	49	25	37
Operators lost to attrition during the month	19	14	15	28	27	22	24	24	27	22	25	20	28	23	17	31	24	20
Operators in training as of first of the month	79	75	68	90	112	136	115	107	125	125	137	169	152	162	150	128	139	121
Operator absenteeism rate during the month	12.15%	11.92%	12.51%	12.48%	12.01%	12.74%	13.75%	13.44%	12.99%	14.0%	13.52%	13.30%	12.87%	14.03%	12.95%	12.95%	13.22%	12.95%

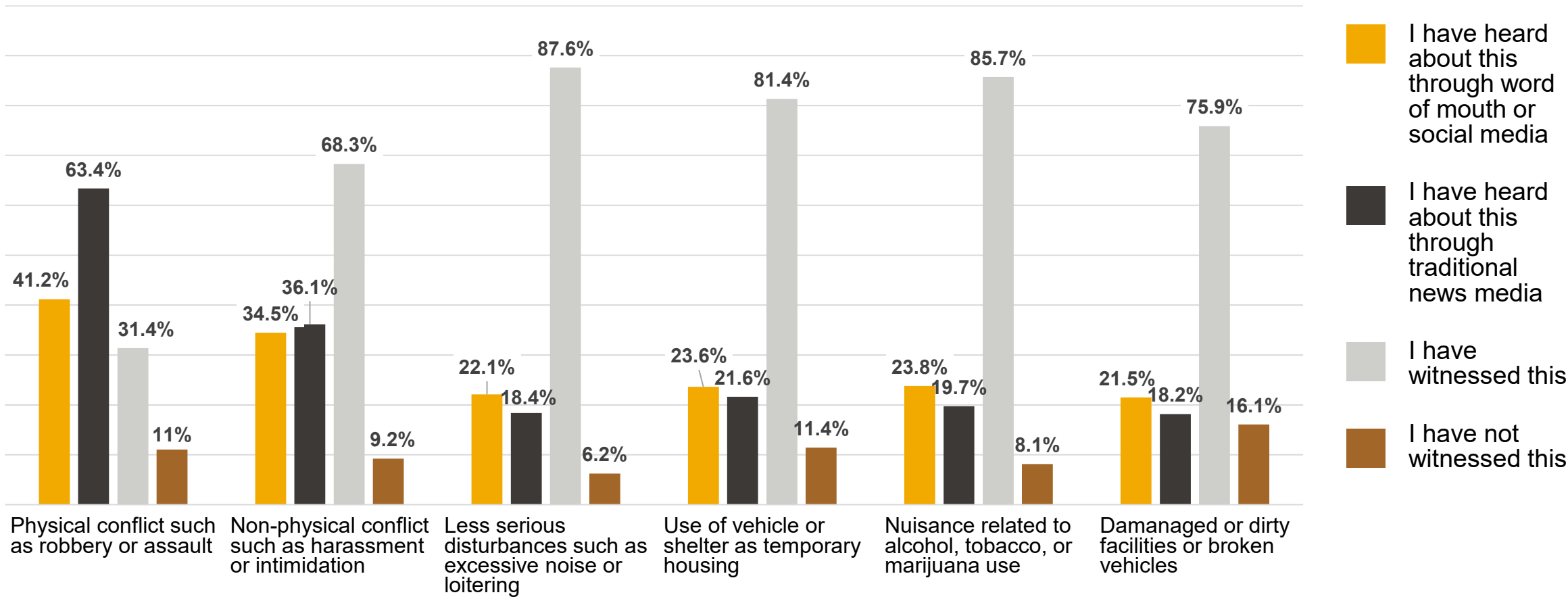
Safety & Security

Safety & Security Incidents per 100,000 Vehicle Revenue Miles



Q2 Customer Panel Survey

Mark the option that best corresponds with your experience.

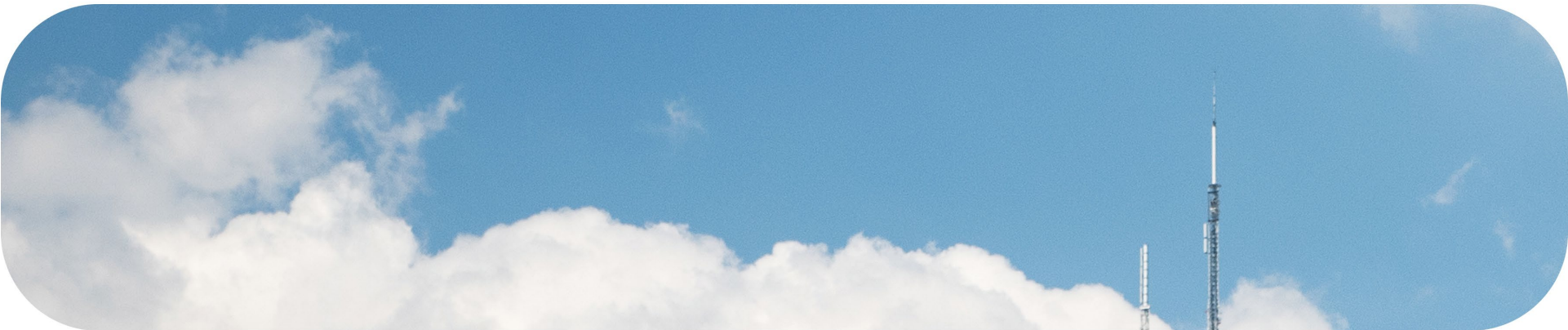


n = 1,349

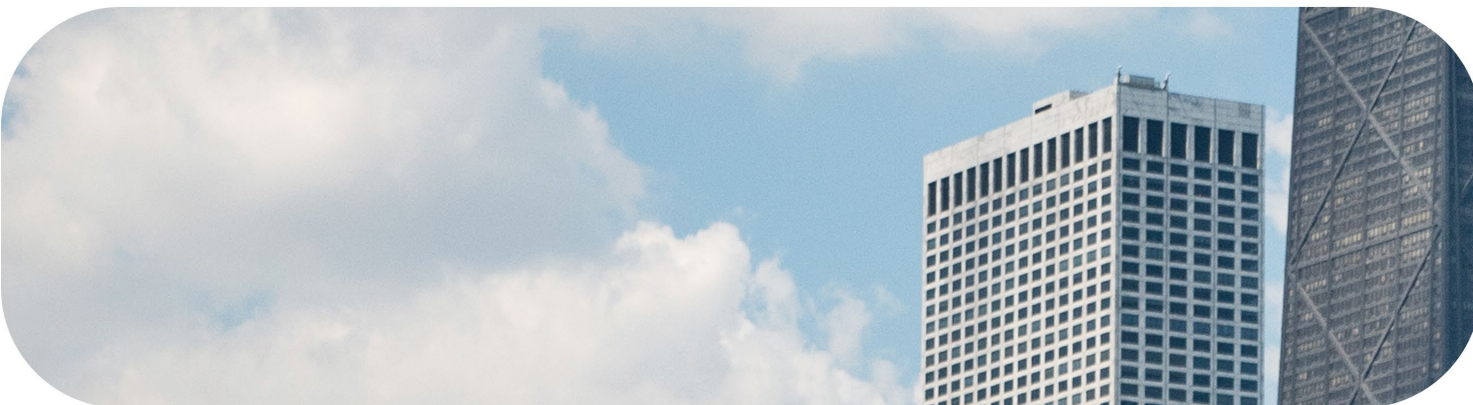
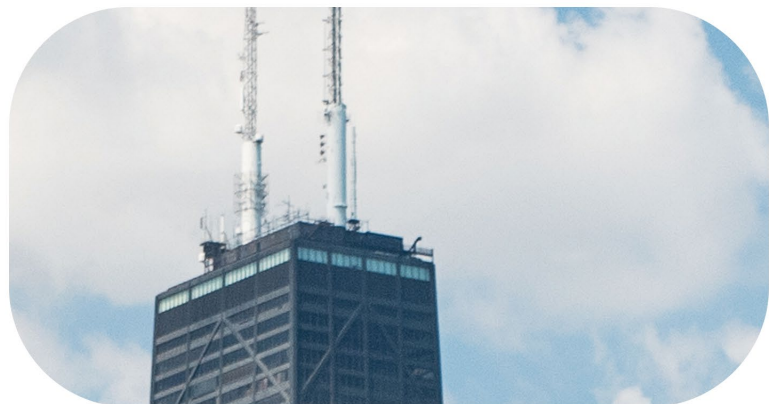


Omnibus reporting links

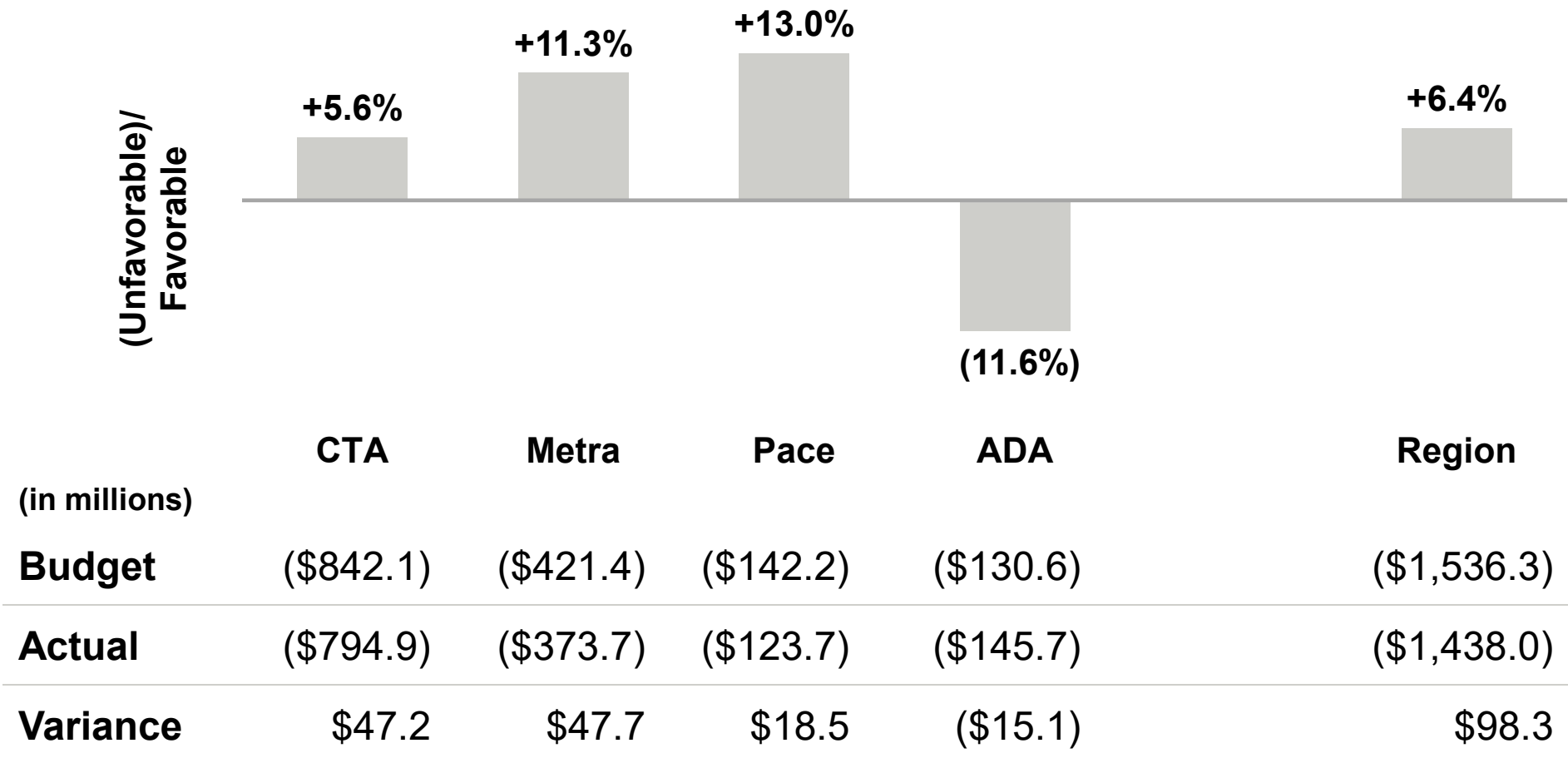
- transitchicago.com/performance/#kpis
- metra.com/performance-measures
- pacebus.com/performance-measures



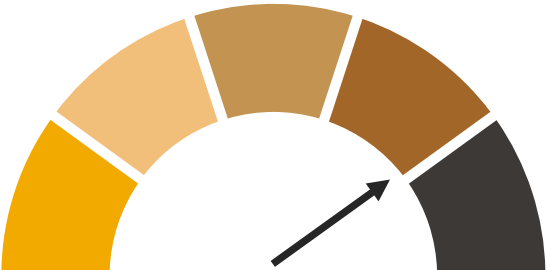
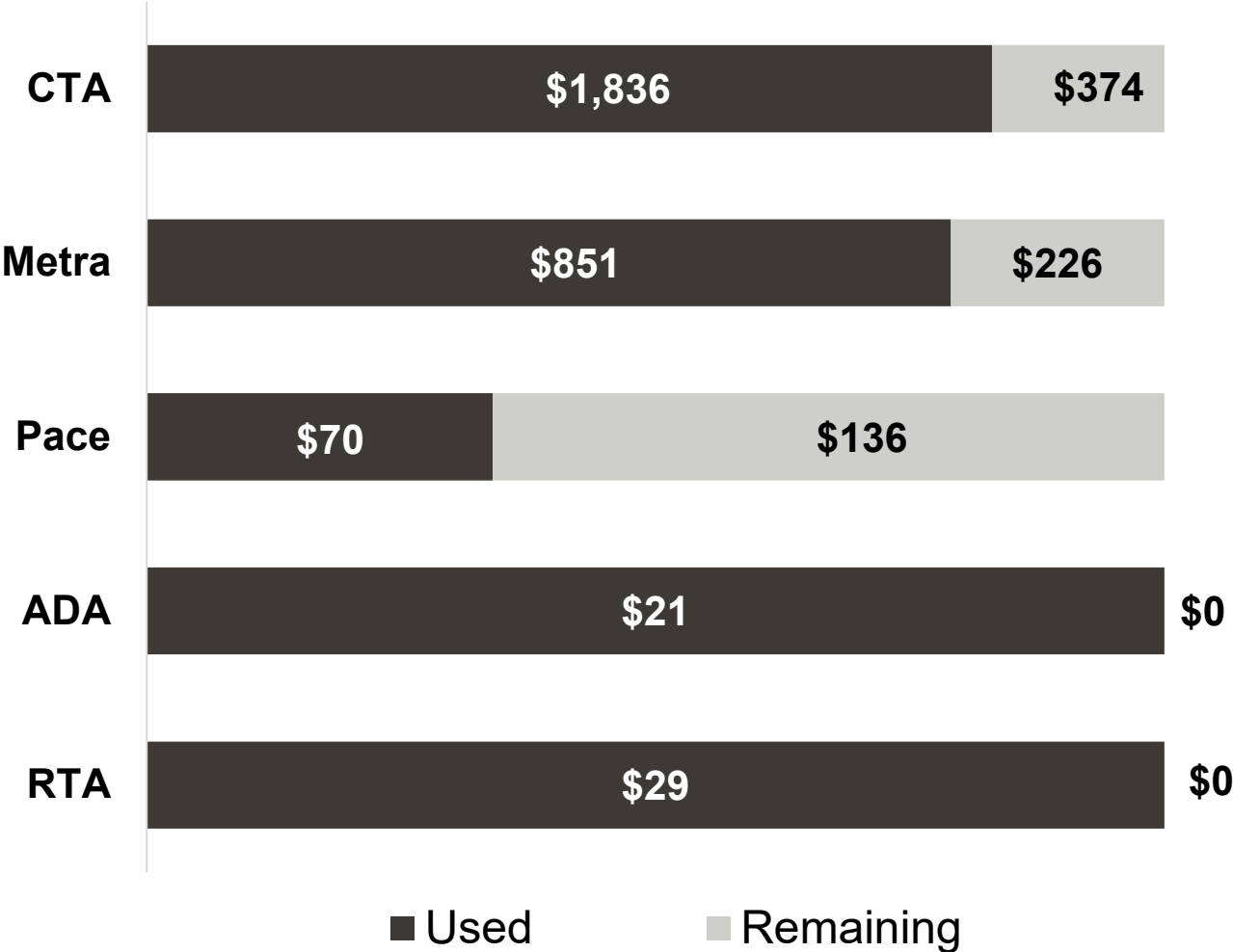
FINANCE



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through June



Relief funding used (in millions)

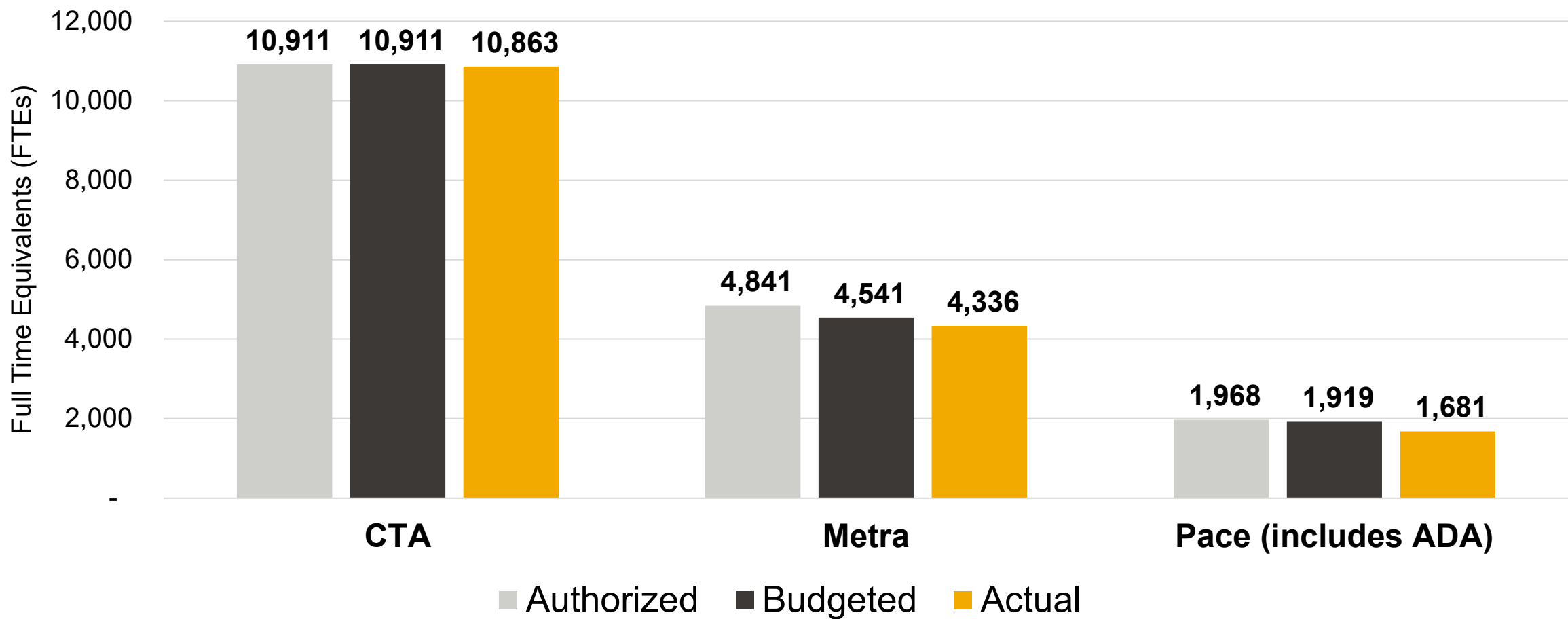


Region Total
Used = 79.2%

\$2.806B
of
\$3.540B



Service Board headcount June 2025



*CTA budgeted positions are prior to applying vacancy factor i.e. the effective number of CTA budgeted positions is lower than shown.



7b. Ordinance authorizing an amendment to the 2025 Pace ADA Paratransit Funding Amount



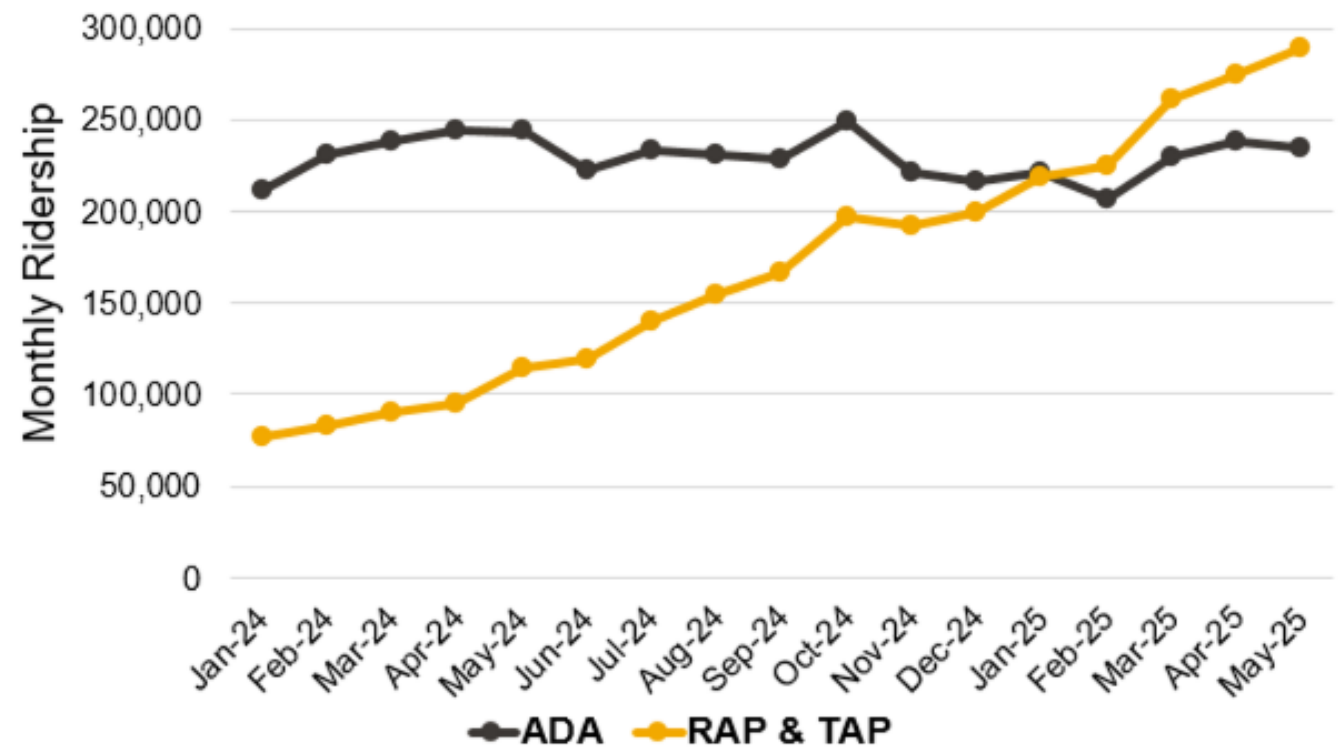
Background

- Collective goal is to ensure paratransit riders have access to quality transit services while managing costs in a challenging budget year
- Recent actions and briefings:
 - May 15 (RTA Board): \$25.5 million approved for 2024 shortfall from ADA Reserve; \$8.3 million remains
 - June 12 (RTA Board): Action Plan adopted to address expense growth
 - July 24 (ad hoc committee): staff presented funding options for 2025 shortfall; committee suggested a shared sacrifice solution
 - July 31 (budget working group): discussion of shared sacrifice funding options and next steps
 - August 11 (ad hoc committee): presentation and discussion of shared sacrifice option

ADA Paratransit ridership continues to grow rapidly

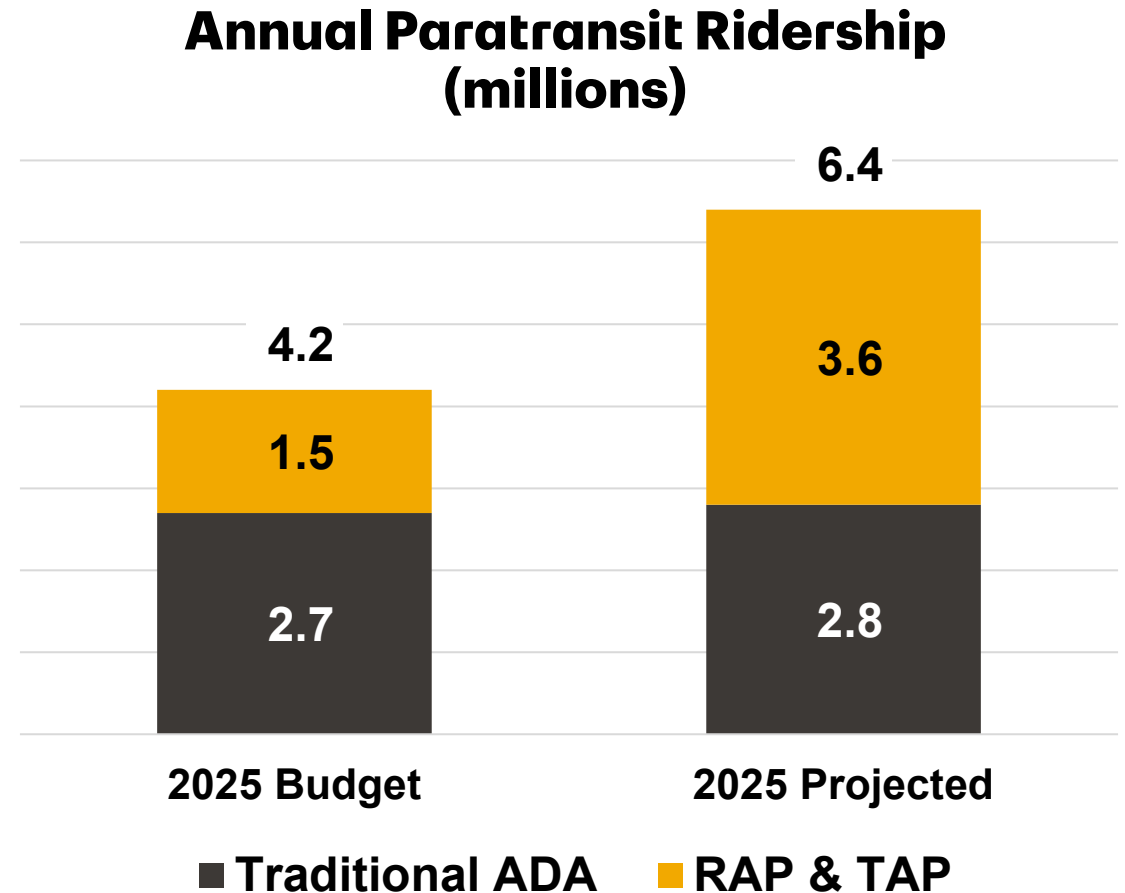
- Ridership continues to grow faster than anticipated
- 2025 Budget forecasted that RAP/TAP would be half of traditional ADA ridership
- As of Q1 2025 RAP and TAP are now providing more monthly trips than traditional ADA service

Pace Paratransit Monthly Ridership by Service



Estimating the 2025 ADA Paratransit funding shortfall

- Ridership projected to exceed budgeted levels by more than 2 million rides (50%)
 - Ridership increase focused in RAP/TAP
- Mitigating components of RTA Action Plan
 - 30 ride per month cap for RAP/TAP
 - RAP/TAP fare restoration to \$3.25
 - Implementation of free rides on all fixed routes
 - Review of RTA Certification Program



2025 ADA Paratransit budget shortfall – shared sacrifice

Based on the July 24 and August 11 Ad-Hoc Committee guidance, staff recommends the following four-component solution, after adjusting for action plan mitigations due to 30-ride cap and fare increase (in millions):

Unconstrained shortfall:	\$53.0
<u>Action Plan mitigations (4Q):</u>	<u>(\$7.9)</u>
Net funding shortfall:	\$45.1
1. Remaining ADA reserve:	(\$8.3)
2. Incremental RTA 15% ST I	(\$17.5)
<u>3. 2025 I, C, and E Funding</u>	<u>(\$16.6)</u>
4. Pace funding	\$2.8



2025 ADA Paratransit budget – next steps

August 21st RTA Board meeting

- Not in substantial accordance finding for 2Q ADA Paratransit results
- Funding amendment to approve RTA components of funding solution
- Revised budget required from Pace within 30 days

September 17th Pace Board meeting

- Revised budget adopted, including Pace funding as needed
- Revised budget submitted to RTA

October 23rd RTA Board meeting

- Revised budget adopted

7c. Ordinance establishing estimates of funding amounts available to the Service Boards for the 2026-2028 Operating Budgets, the required Recovery Ratios for 2026, and the preliminary 2026-2030 Capital Program funding amounts



Operating funding considerations

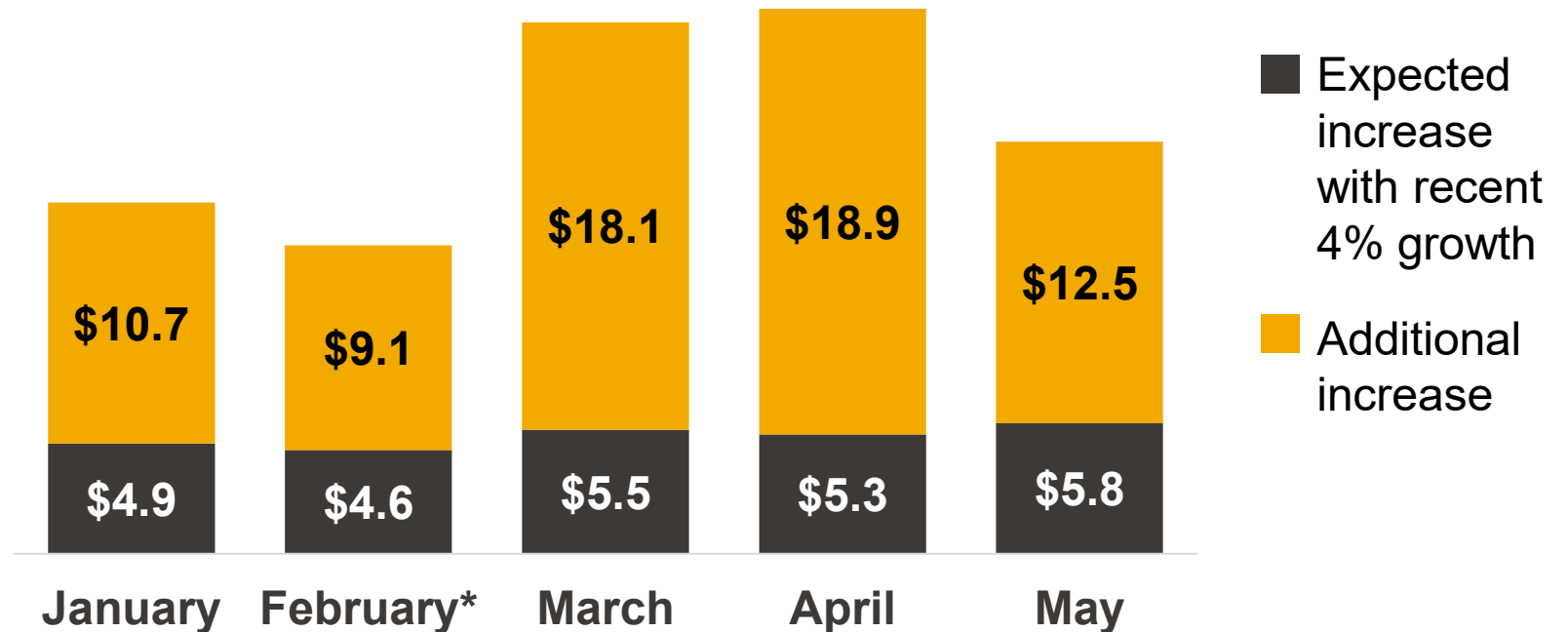
- RTA Act requires funding amounts for upcoming year to be established by September 15th
- Service Boards develop budgets utilizing the funding amounts set by the RTA Board
- RTA funding will combine with federal relief reserves and system-generated revenue to support operating expenses
- One-time shifts of limited discretionary funding to CTA in 2026 only



Sales Tax – impact of P.A. 103-0983

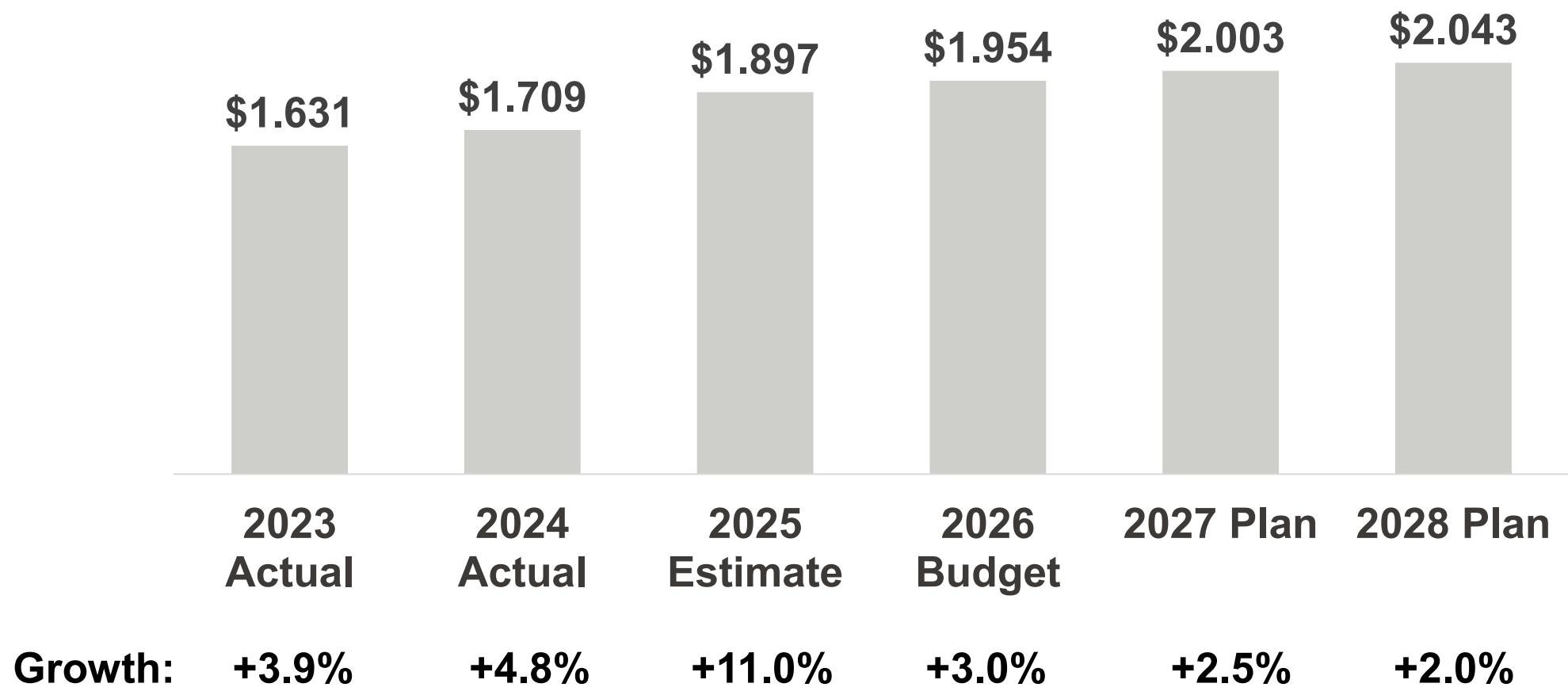
- YTD results suggest an upward RTA sales tax shift between \$10M and \$18M per month in 2025
- These amounts will be added to the sales tax base, but growth will return to normal in January 2026

RTA Sales Tax Receipts – YOY Increase Jan-May 2025 (in millions)



* Adjusted for extra day in Feb 2024 (leap year)

RTA Sales Tax forecast (in billions)



Additional marks assumptions – budget scenario 1 – no new funding

- \$74.0 million of RTA discretionary funding shifted to CTA in 2026 only
 - 2% Pace share of PTF I (\$7.3M)
 - Metra and Pace shares of residual Sales Tax I (\$42.3M and \$14.1M, respectively)
 - Metra and Pace shares of Innovation, Coordination, and Enhancement funding (\$6.8M and \$2.3M, respectively)
 - RTA Agency funding reduction (\$1.2M)
- Pushes CTA 2026 cliff forward by two to three months
- Non-statutory allocations return to traditional distributions in 2027 and 2028
- Funding ADA paratransit at previous plan levels preserves \$45M of Sales Tax II and PTF II funding for mainline services, split 48% CTA / 39% Metra / 13% Pace

Additional operating funding assumptions

- State FY 2026 budget includes:
 - PTF at full 30% match of sales tax and RETT
 - Reduced Fare Reimbursement = \$23.1M (10% increase)
 - ADA Paratransit funding = \$11.5M (15% increase)
 - AFA for SCIP bonds = \$99.1M



2026 ADA Paratransit funding proposal – partial funding for RAP

	2026 (in millions)	Traditional ADA	RAP/TAP	Total
• 2026 RTA marks fully fund traditional ADA and partially fund RAP/TAP, net of \$30M mitigations.	Operating Expense	\$267.5	\$117.4	\$384.9
	- Operating Revenue	(\$12.3)	(\$17.8)	(\$30.1)
	= Funding Requirement	\$255.2	\$99.6	\$354.8
• Pace provides remaining RAP/TAP funding from existing Suburban Service funding or reserves.	Mitigating Actions	---	(\$29.5)	(\$29.5)
	Net Funding Need	\$255.2	\$70.1	\$325.3
	State Funding	(\$11.5)	---	(\$11.5)
	RTA funding - ST II / PTF II	(\$243.7)	(\$24.9)	(\$268.6)
	Pace Funding	---	\$45.2	\$45.2

Proposed 2026 RTA funding levels

	2026 Previous	2026 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
CTA	\$1,170.6	\$1,377.0	+\$206.4	+17.6%
Metra	\$614.0	\$635.9	+\$21.9	+3.6%
Pace	\$248.3	\$251.6	+\$3.3	+1.3%
ADA Paratransit	\$278.6	\$280.1	+\$1.5	+0.5%
Debt Service and JSIF	\$62.2	\$59.2	-\$3.0	-4.8%
RTA Agency	\$41.6	\$40.4	-\$1.2	-2.9%
Total	\$2,415.3	\$2,644.1	+\$228.8	+9.5%

Includes Sales Tax, PTF, RETT, and State funding for ADA



Recovery ratios

- Budget Scenario 1, with no recovery ratio relief, requires pre-COVID recovery ratio marks of 54.75% CTA, 52.5% Metra, and 30.3% Pace Suburban Service for 2026-2028
 - Necessary to set up year-end penalty calculation, even though penalty is unlikely to be enforced
 - Relief funding reserves no longer authorized to be included as operating revenue for recovery ratio purposes
 - Instead, SBs need to include a generic revenue credit to reach mark as necessary
 - This credit also represents the potential year-end PTF penalty
 - ADA Paratransit requirement returns to 10%
- Budget Scenario 2, with stop gap funding, assumes recovery ratio relief

Capital Funding Marks



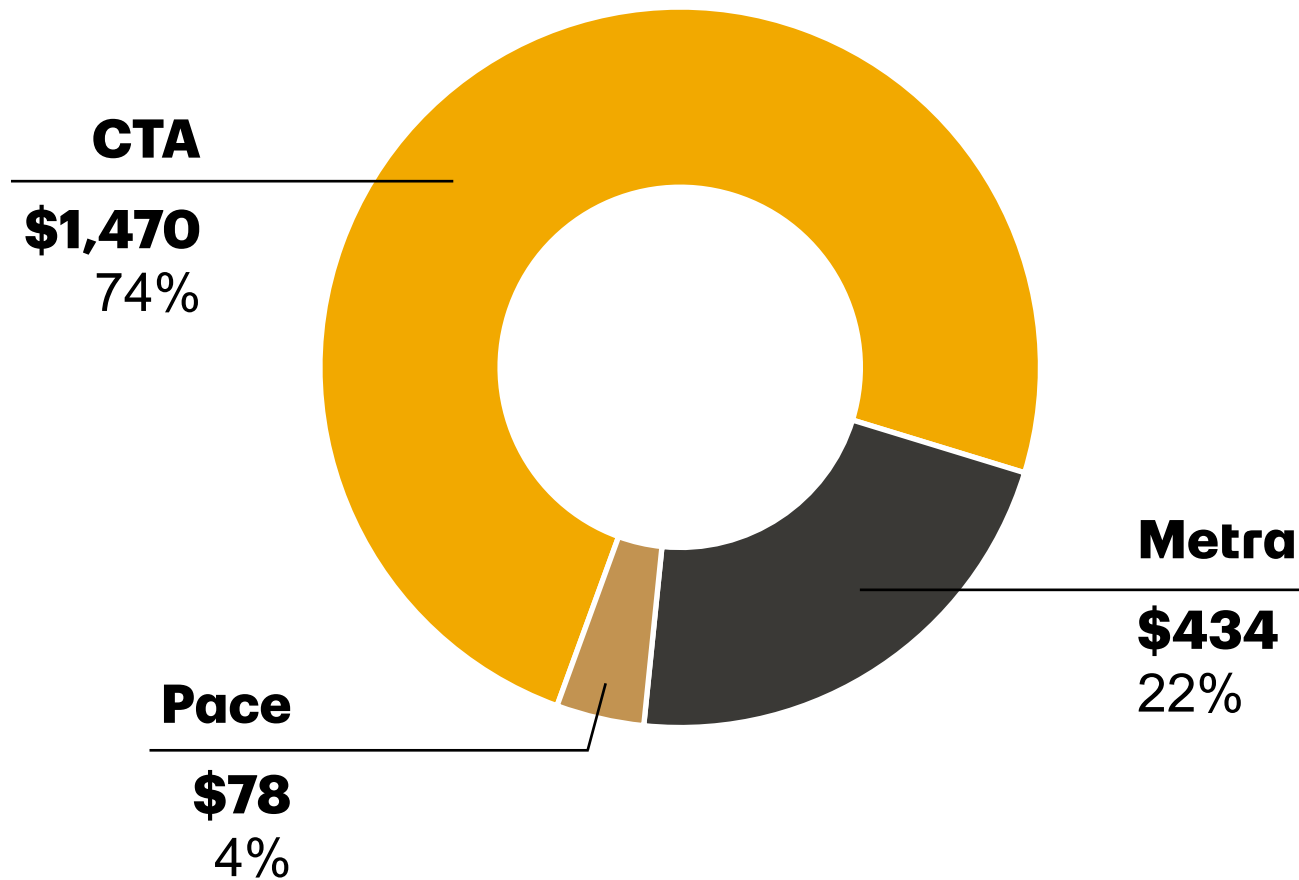
2026 Capital Program by funding source

Funding Source	2026 Capital Funding	%
Federal Formula	\$744M	38%
Federal Discretionary	\$542M	27%
State	\$270M	14%
Service Board & Local	\$425M	21%
RTA	\$0.1M	<0%
Total	\$1.982B*	100%

**Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in "Total"*

2026 Capital Program allocation (in millions)

Total: \$1,982 million



2026-2030 Capital Program by funding source

Funding Source	2026-2030 Capital Funding	%
Federal Formula	\$3,797M	41%
Federal Discretionary	\$1,498M	16%
State	\$1,419M	15%
Service Board & Local	\$2,476M	27%
RTA	\$35M	0.4%
Total	\$9,226M*	

**Rounding may result in slight discrepancies in “Total”*



Capital Allocation for federal formula and PAYGO

Base funding allocation on each Service Board's proportion of the regional annual capital need to achieve a State of Good Repair in 20 years.

2026 CTA: 59.7%, Metra: 32.8%, Pace: 7.5%

2027-2029 CTA: 59.7%, Metra: 33.2%, Pace: 7.1%

2030 CTA: 58.7%, Metra: 34.9%, Pace: 6.4%

Funding splits for 2030 are adjusted based on Performance Based Spending Targets

Funding allocations

Funding Source	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Federal Formula	\$744M	\$752M	\$759M	\$767M	\$775M
State - Paygo	\$270M	\$277M	\$284M	\$291M	\$298M

Capital Marks by Service Board

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total Program
CTA	\$1,469M	\$1,447M	\$1,604M	\$1,250M	\$966M	\$6,737M
Metra	434M	392M	466M	401M	414M	2,106M
Pace	78M	73M	74M	75M	64M	364M
Regional Fund	-	-	-	-	19M	19M
Total	\$1,982M	\$1,911M	\$1,955M	\$1,544M	\$1,259M	\$9,226M

2030 Withholdings: based on spend performance

	2030 %	2030 \$
CTA – with debt service	None	None
CTA – without debt service	None	None
Metra	3.76%	\$14.1M
Pace	6.85%	\$4.7M

Capital Marks – 2030 withholding adjustments

Exemption:

Up to 25% of annual State PAYGO funds that are programmed to Federal Discretionary Grant match could be exempted from the calculation

Adjustments to the start date when the delay exceeds 90 days:

Permitting / NEPA / other entity approvals (ICC/freight railroads etc.)

Vendor delays (documented in a change order)

Concurrence delays

Land acquisition delays

Any exemptions or adjustments made will be presented to the RTA Board in 2026 with the quarterly amendments

2026 Budget calendar

- June 12 Board Adoption of Budget Call
- Early July Release of Preparatory Funding Amounts
- Jul 11 Service Board Submittals of Capital Funding Estimates
- Aug 21 RTA Board Considers Adoption of 2026-2030 Funding Amounts
- Sep 26 Deadline for Capital Evaluations to RTA
- Oct 3 Deadline for Capital Budgets to RTA
- Oct 10 Deadline for Service Board Budget Submittals to RTA
- Oct/Nov Service Board Budget and Capital Program Public Hearings
- Nov 20 Service Boards Present Budgets at RTA Board Meeting
- Early Dec RTA Regional Budget and Capital Program Public Hearing
- Dec 18 Budget and Capital Program Considered for Adoption

7d. Approval of Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Awards



Section 5310 program overview

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding assistance for public transportation projects that focus on enhancing mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Co-designated recipient with IDOT for Northeastern Illinois
- RTA administers funding for operating, mobility management and administration projects.



Human Services Transportation Plan

Identifies critical transportation needs for:

- Older adults
- Individuals with disabilities
- People with low incomes

Recommends goals, strategies/projects

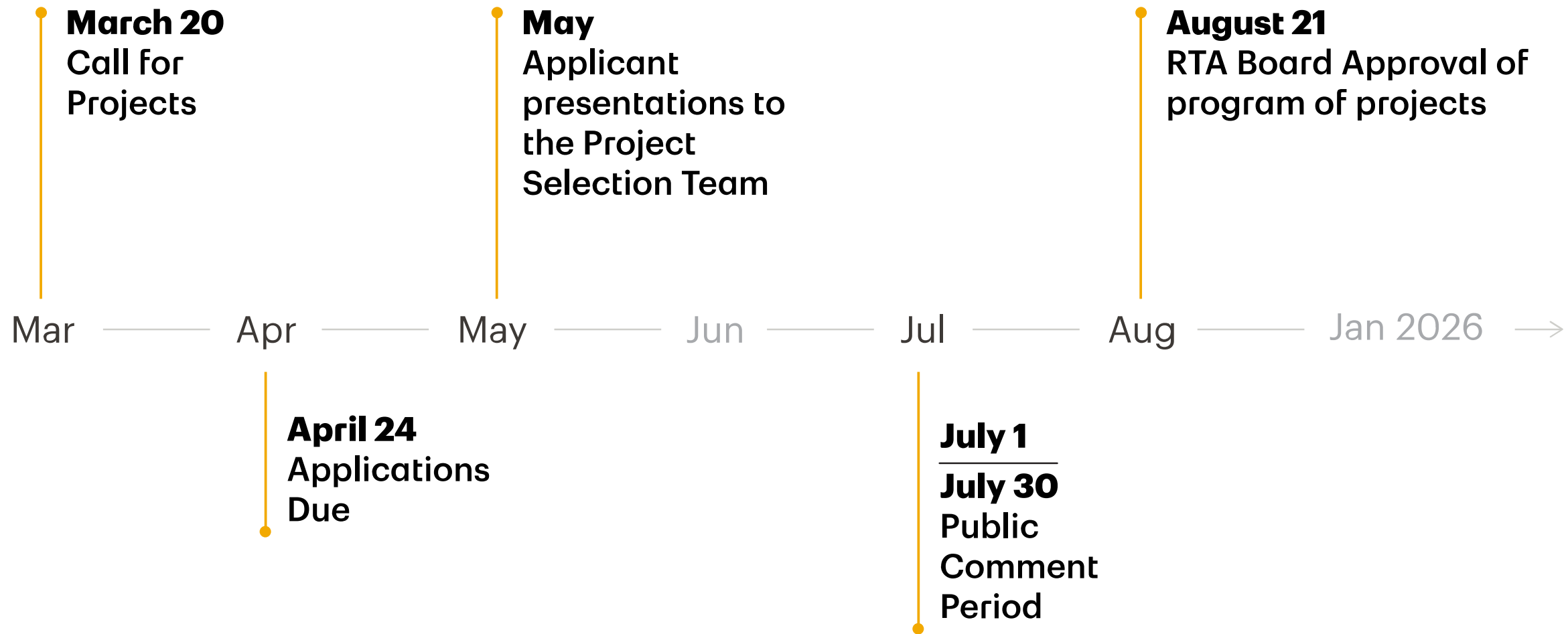
- To address needs and gaps
- To help people access their community with independence



Goals and strategies to meet transportation needs

1. Establish mobility management and travel training networks
2. Expand service areas and hours
3. Coordinate fare media and implement capped fares for certain trips
4. Coordinate volunteer driver support programs
5. Improve access to suburban jobs for residents with low incomes
6. Expand consolidated vehicle procurement types
7. Explore collaboration/consolidation of similar services
8. Establish a regional 1 call/1 click service
9. Create an accessibility infrastructure database

Call for Projects timeline



Funding details

- Total of \$20M in federal funding from FY2024 & FY2025
 - \$3.5M to IDOT for vehicle procurements
 - \$16.5M to RTA for Operating, Mobility Management and Capital projects



Recommended program

Applicant	Project	Federal Award
CTA	Real-Time Digital Station Customer Information	\$900,000
Clearbrook	Community Connections for Adults with Disabilities	\$420,000
CTF Illinois	Point-to-Point for Individuals with Disabilities	\$300,000
DuPage County	Transportation to Work Program	\$898,720
Kane County	Kane County Paratransit Service	\$2,684,779
Kendall County	Kendall Area Transit	\$1,000,000
Little City Foundation	Transportation Program	\$500,000
Naperville	Ride DuPage to Work	\$525,000

Recommended program

Applicant	Project	Federal Award
McHenry County	McHenry County Transportation Programs	\$1,995,000
Pace	Phase X Regional Call Centers Project	\$2,500,000
Ray Graham Association	Comprehensive Transportation Program	\$635,000
Grundy County	Grundy Transit System	\$100,000
Lake County	Ride Lake County	\$1,750,000
Metra	Metra Digital Displays Expansion	\$900,000
Will County	Access Will County Dial-A-Ride	\$1,020,000
RTA	Regional Dial-A-Ride Coordination Study	\$350,000

Next steps

- Notification to all applicants
- Application development for submission to the Federal Transit Administration
- Issuance of RTA grant agreements to our grantees



Questions?

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7e. State Legislative Consulting Contracts



7f. Approval of travel expense reimbursement(s)



8. New business

Adjournment

The next meeting of the RTA Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, September 11.

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