

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

March 27, 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



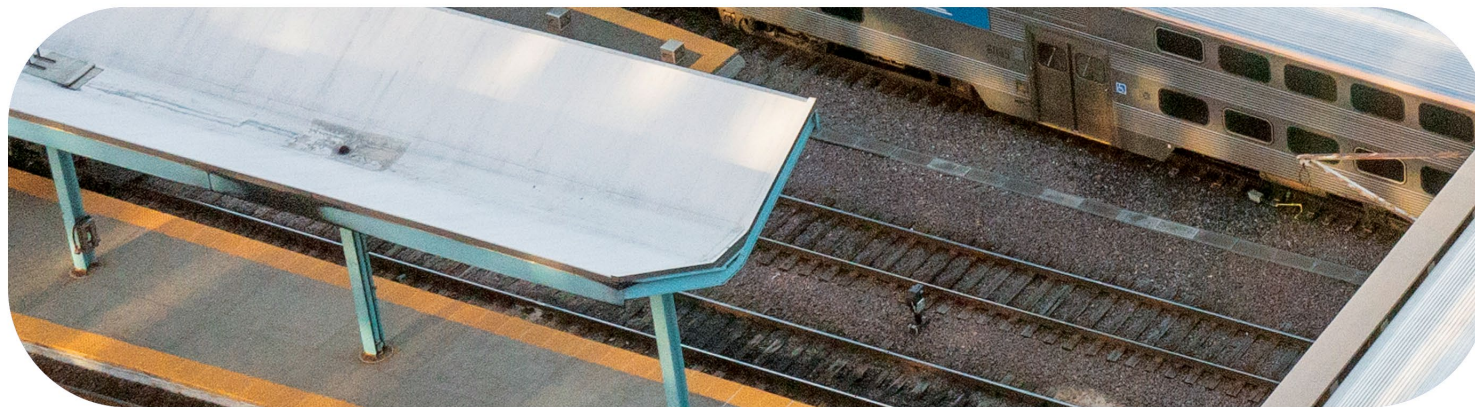
Today's agenda



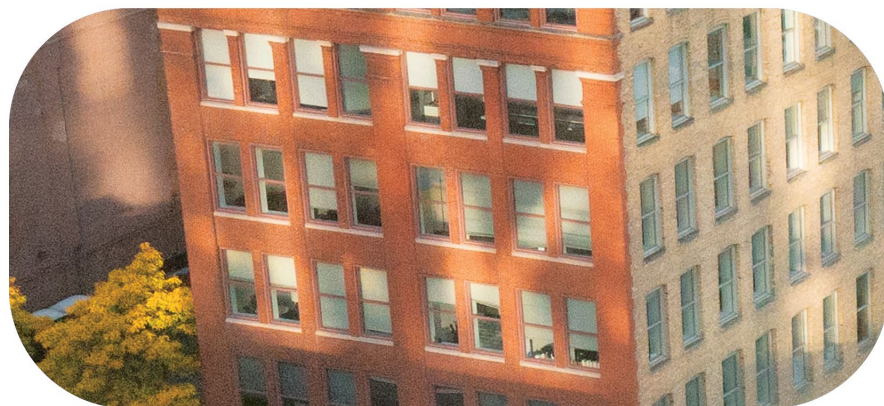
6. Information items

6a. Transit is the Answer Update





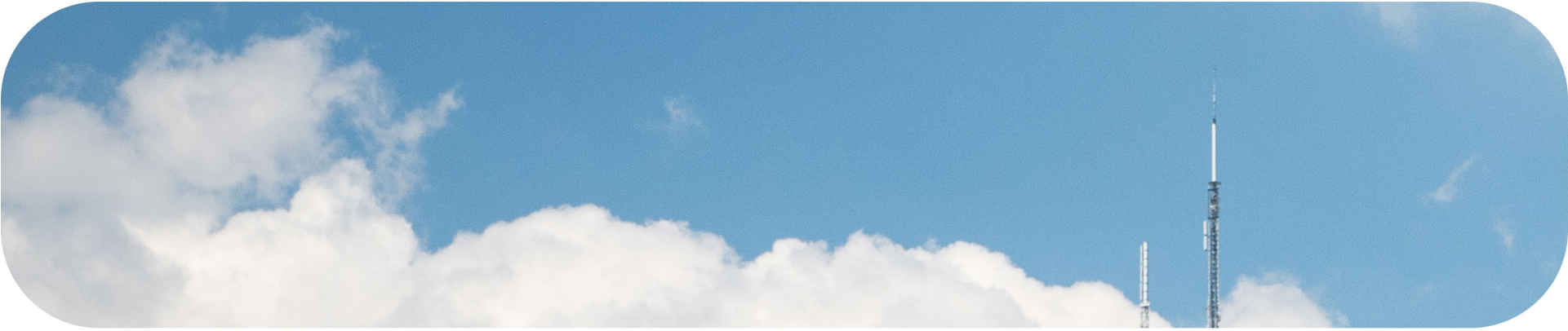
LEGISLATIVE



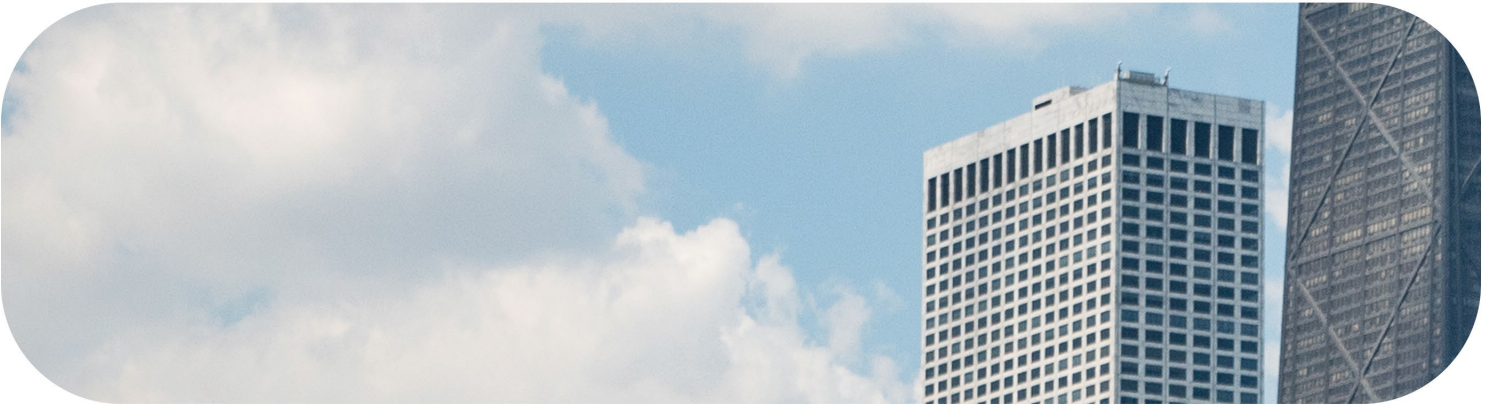
UPDATE

Critical 2025 State legislative session continues

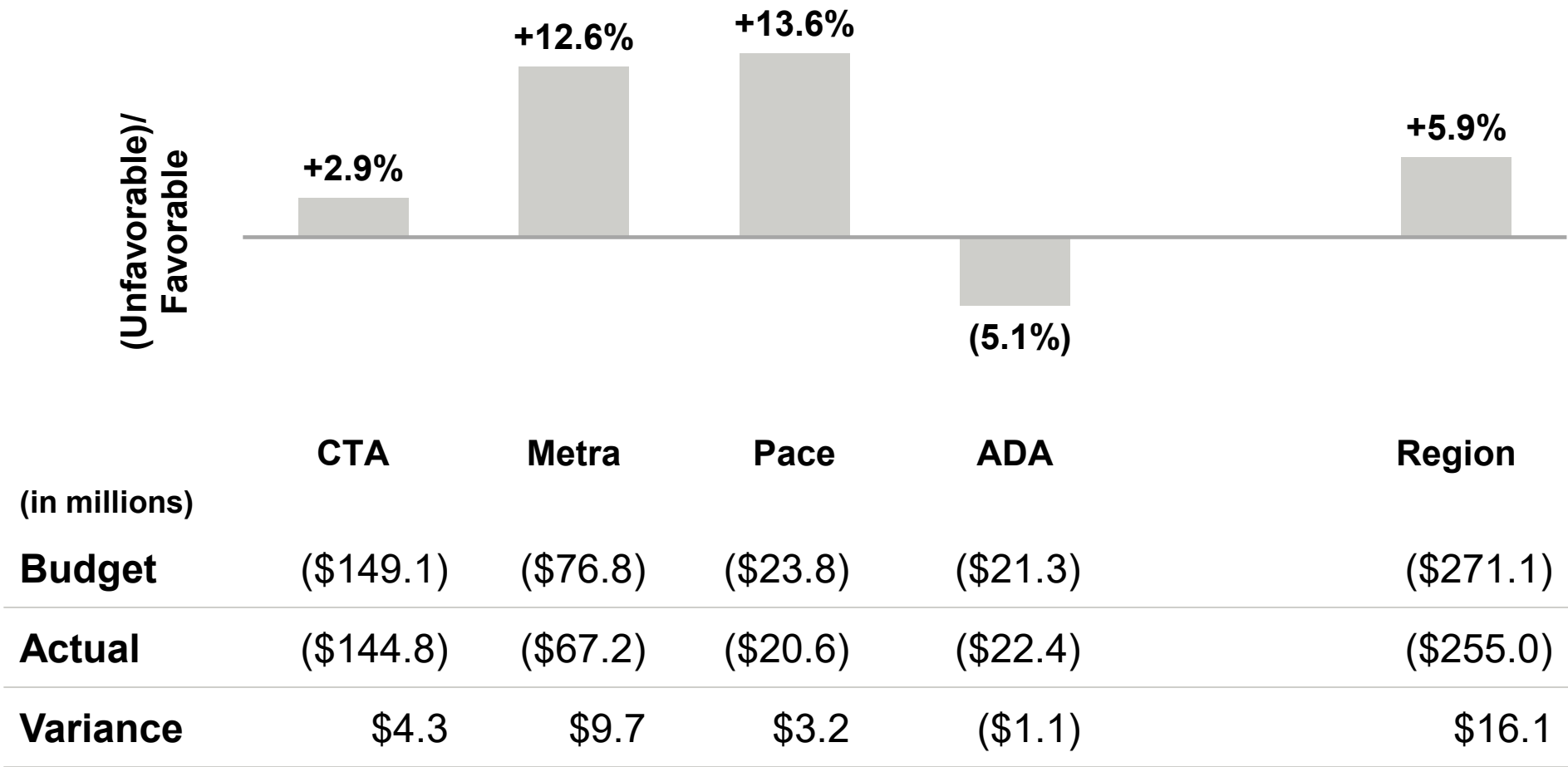
- Spring session advances past important legislative deadline
 - Friday, March 21: Deadline for bills out of committee
- House and Senate hold transit hearings
- Key dates
 - Tuesday, April 1: Consolidated Local Elections
 - Friday, April 11: 3rd Reading Deadline
 - April 14 – 25: Legislative Spring Break
 - May 31: Session Adjournment (scheduled)



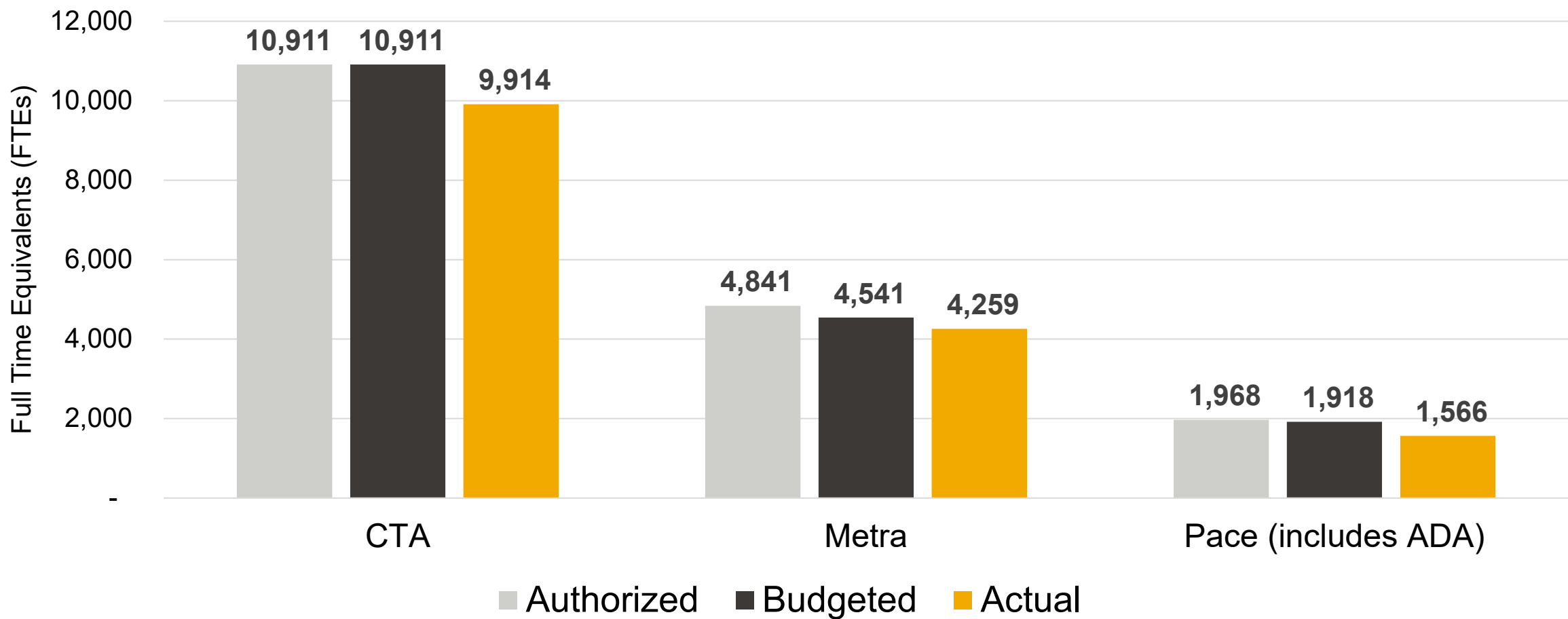
FINANCE



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through January 2025



Service Board headcount January 2025



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



**6b. Update on
RTA Board
resolution 2025-01
directing next
steps to address
the fiscal cliff**



Agenda

- **Background**
- **Timeline for cuts if no new funding is secured this session**
- **Efficiencies, Cost Savings, New Revenue**
- **Fiscal Cliff v. Expansion Service Scenarios**
 - CTA
 - Metra
 - Pace
 - RTA Regionwide Impacts

Understanding service impacts

20%

Annual budget gap

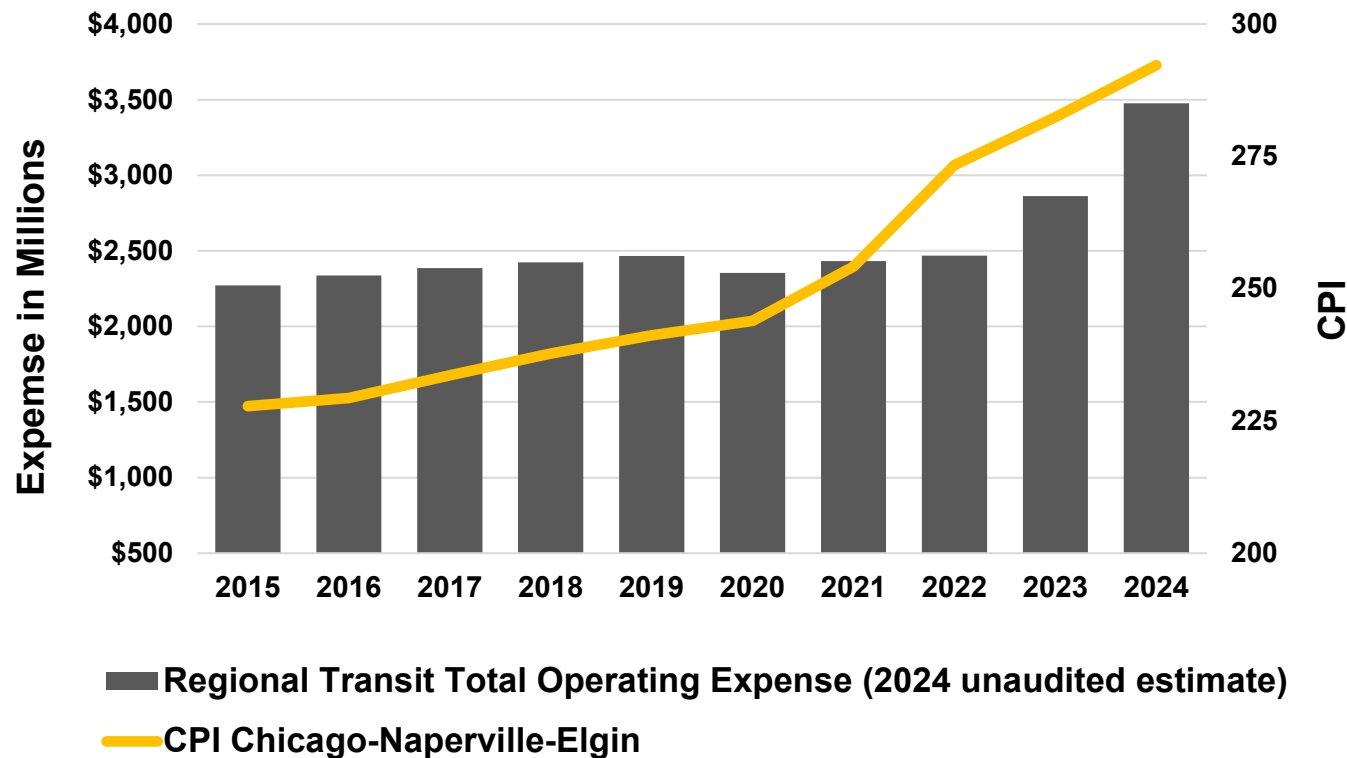
40%

Cut to service frequency

The Largest Single Cut of Any Large Transit Service Ever

Inflation increases urgency for legislative action

Total Operating Expense and Consumer Price Index (CPI), 2015-2024



- Total operating expense increase aligns with Consumer Price Index
- Inflation is driving up cost to operate service

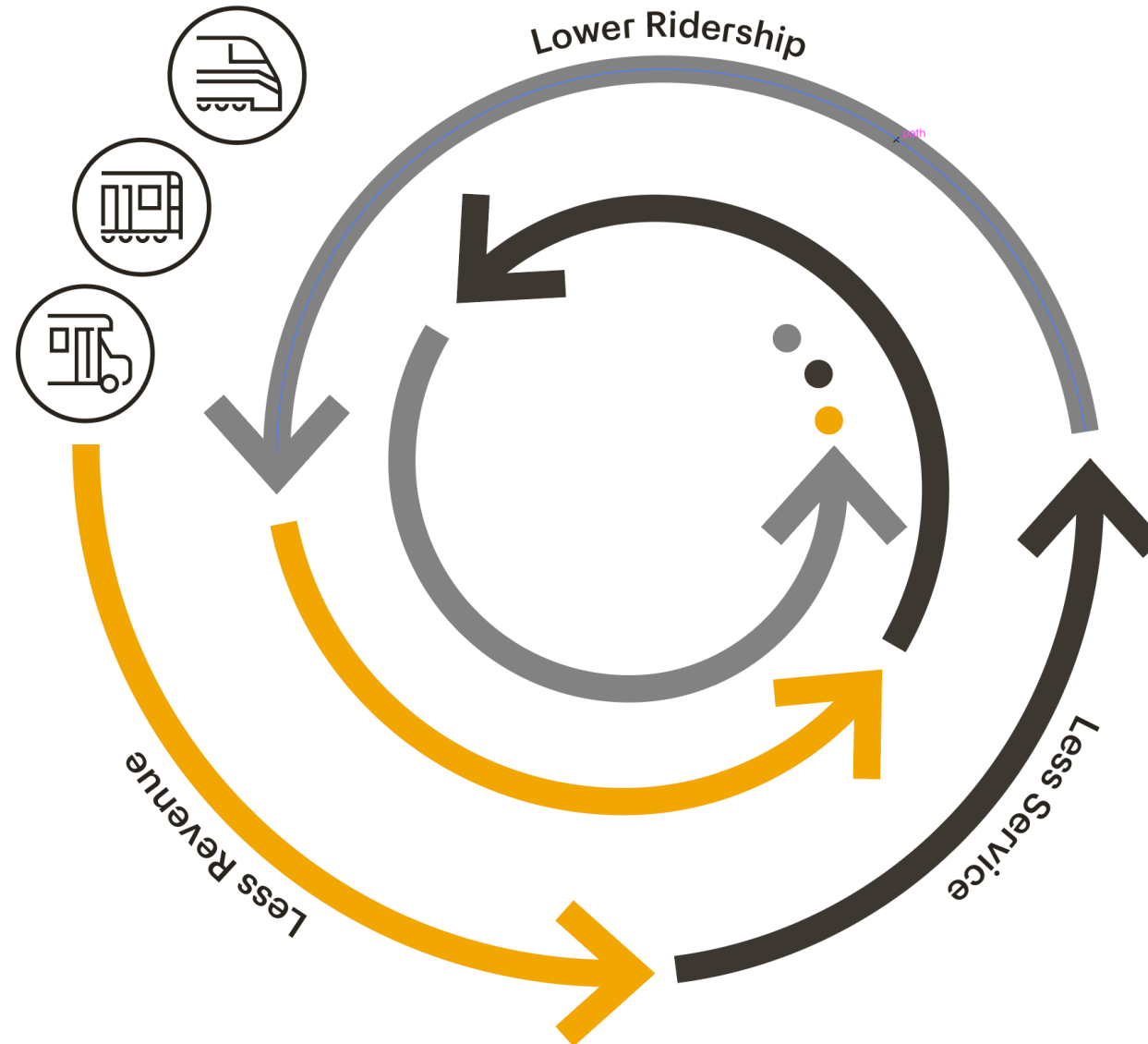
Source: National Transit Database & US Bureau of Labor Statistics



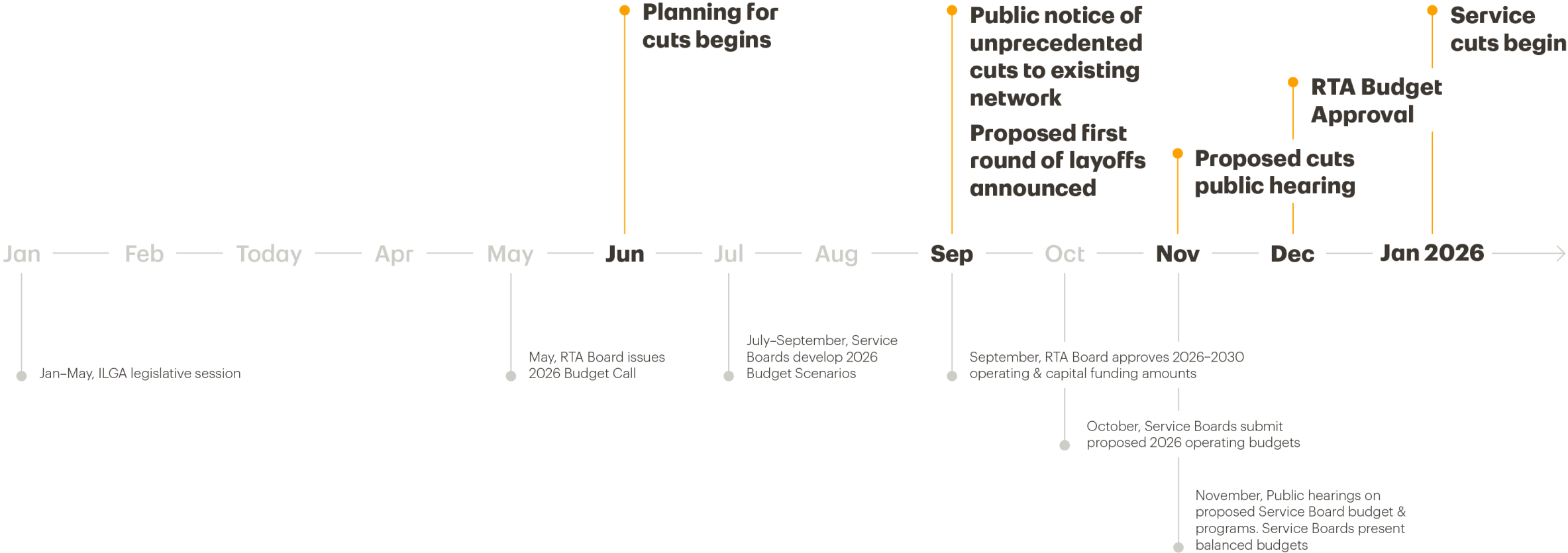
Cuts in state funding contributed to fiscal cliff

Revenue Category	Budget Impact 2015-2024 (in millions)
Sales Tax Surcharge	(\$139.6)
Public Transportation Fund (PTF)	(\$98.0)
Interest on Short-Term Borrowing	(\$29.7)
Reduced Fare and ADA Appropriation	(\$137.1)
Total loss in operations funding	(\$404.4)

Fiscal cliff is not a one-time event



Timeline for cuts if no new funding is secured



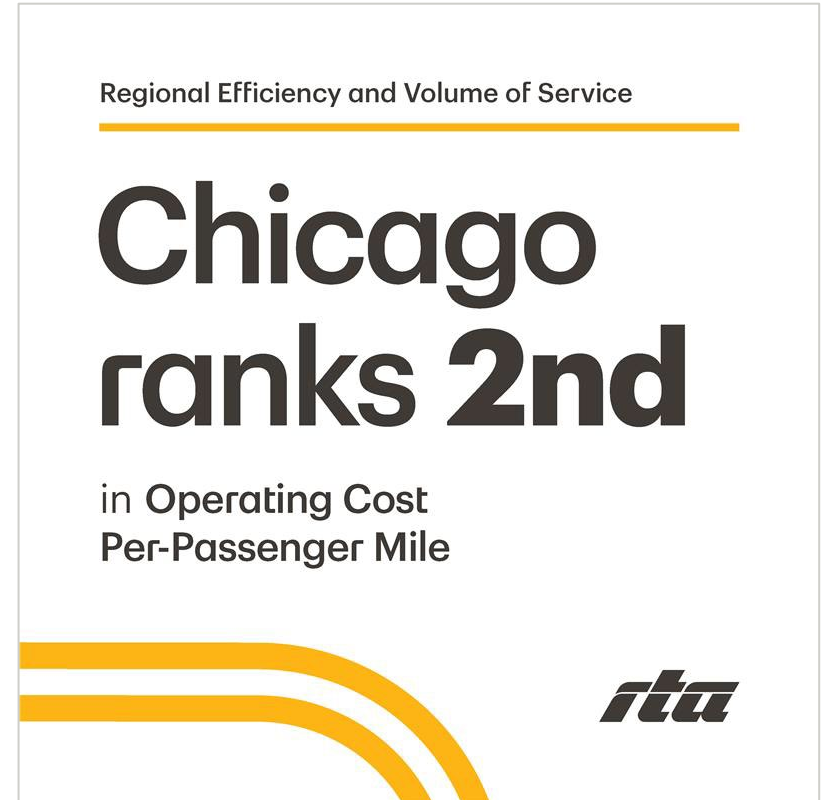
**Efficiencies, cost
savings, and new revenue**



RTA system is one of the most efficient in the country

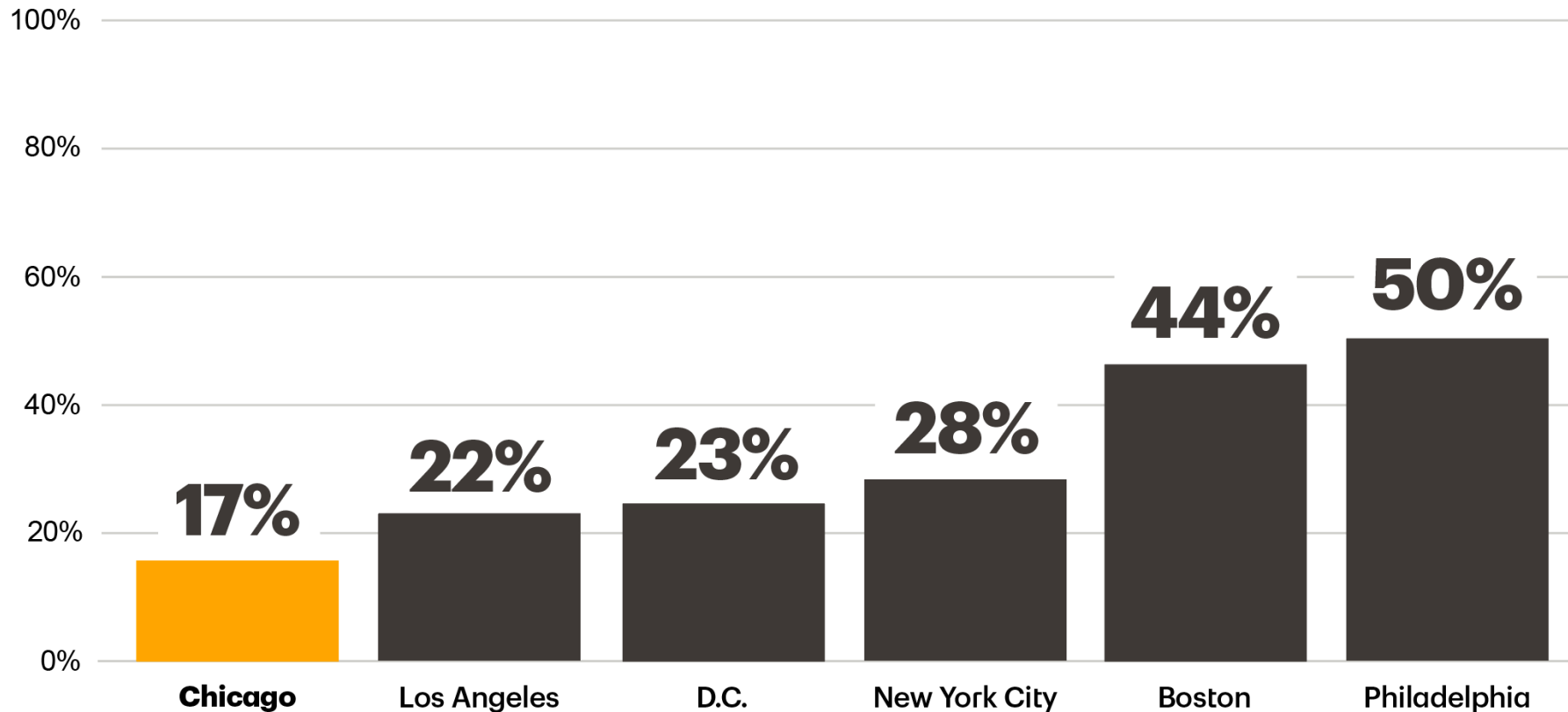
“The region’s transit service providers are already more cost-efficient than most of their peers. Thus, while there are opportunities to minimize cost growth, for the most part, more service requires more funding.”

– Plan of Action for Regional Transit, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2023



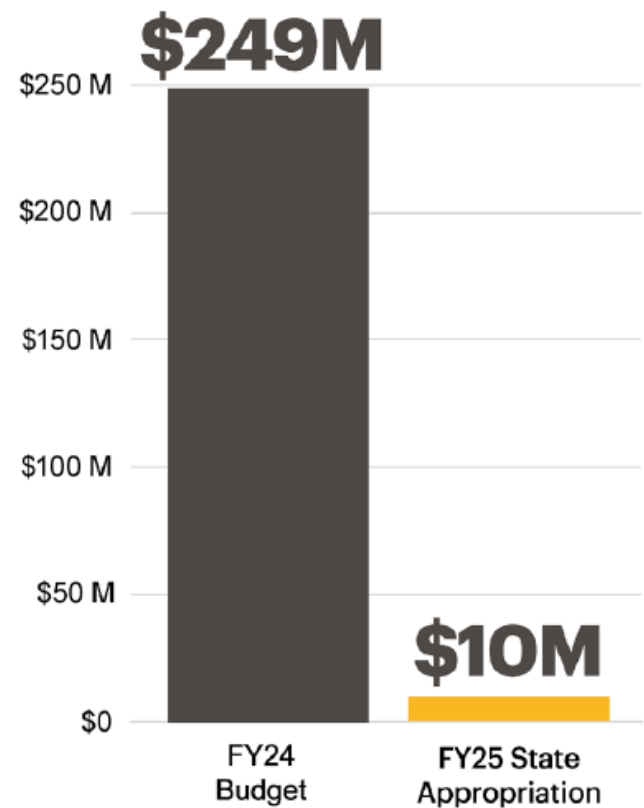
Illinois ranks last among peer states in funding public transit

Share of State Funding Received

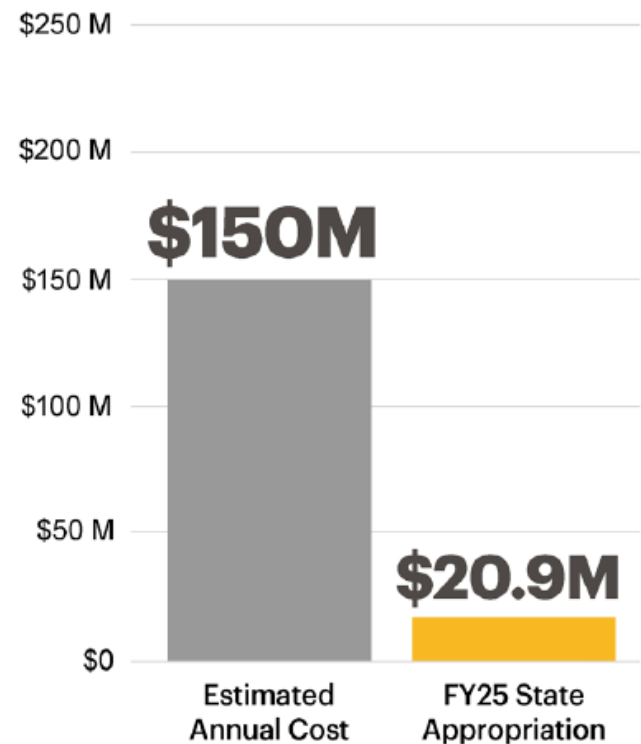


Mandated programs are consistently underfunded

**Pace ADA
Paratransit Service**



**Reduced Fare and
Ride Free Programs for CTA,
Metra, and Pace Riders**



\$100M+ in efficiencies, cost savings, and new revenue

Category	Annual Savings (in millions)
10% Regional Fare Increase	\$50.0
Service Delivery Improvements	\$10.0
Labor Optimization (headcount, position type changes)	\$20.1
Leases, Rentals and Real Estate Savings	\$16.8
Operations & IT (modernized security data, improved farebox processes and optimized scheduling)	\$2.3
Vehicle Fleet & Equipment Modernization	\$3.0
Energy Savings	\$3.7
Other Miscellaneous Items (Bus priority)	\$7.3
Total	\$113.2



Coordinated improvements from enhanced RTA

- Administrative and Operational Improvements
 - Identify shared services in certain areas
 - Facility Consolidation
- Financial Benefits
 - Cost Savings
 - Revenue Enhancement
- Regional Customer Service
 - Integrated Fare Policy and Programs
 - Enhanced Coordination
 - Simplified Customer Information

Fiscal Cliff and Expansion Scenarios

Potential impacts on service





CTA

CTA cuts dismantle Chicago's economy and ability to function

CTA Rail

- At least 4 of 8 rail lines see service suspended on all or a portion of the line
 - More than 70 miles of rail service lost
 - More than 50 stations closed or see dramatically less service
- Remaining service sees frequency reduced by 10-25%

CTA Bus

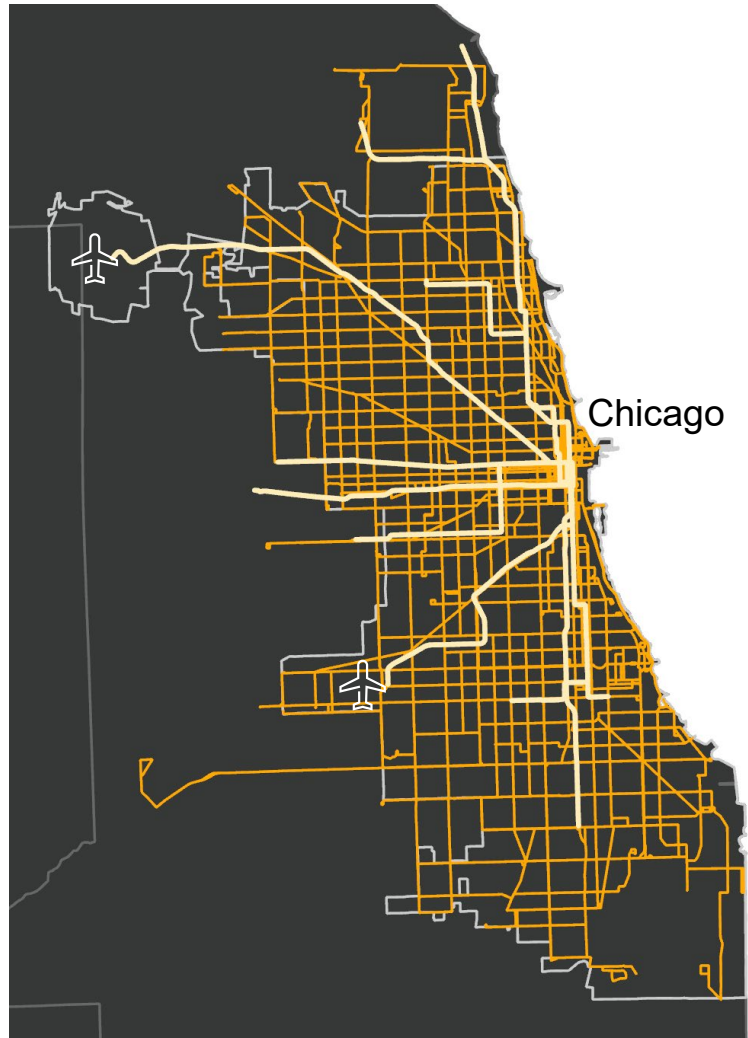
- 74 bus routes eliminated (approx. 60% of all bus routes eliminated)
- CTA drops from one of the largest transit agencies in the country to having fewer bus routes than Madison, Wisconsin or Kansas City

Impacts

- Equivalent to 1 in 5 Chicago workers must find a new way to get to their job each day
- 500,000 Chicago residents lose access to a bus route within a 1/2 mile of their home
- Trains and buses would see crowding all hours of the day, and many customers would no longer be able to board due to overcrowding.
- More than 30% of CTA riders make \$25,000 or less; these individuals can't afford another transportation option since a personal vehicle would be at least 50% of their income

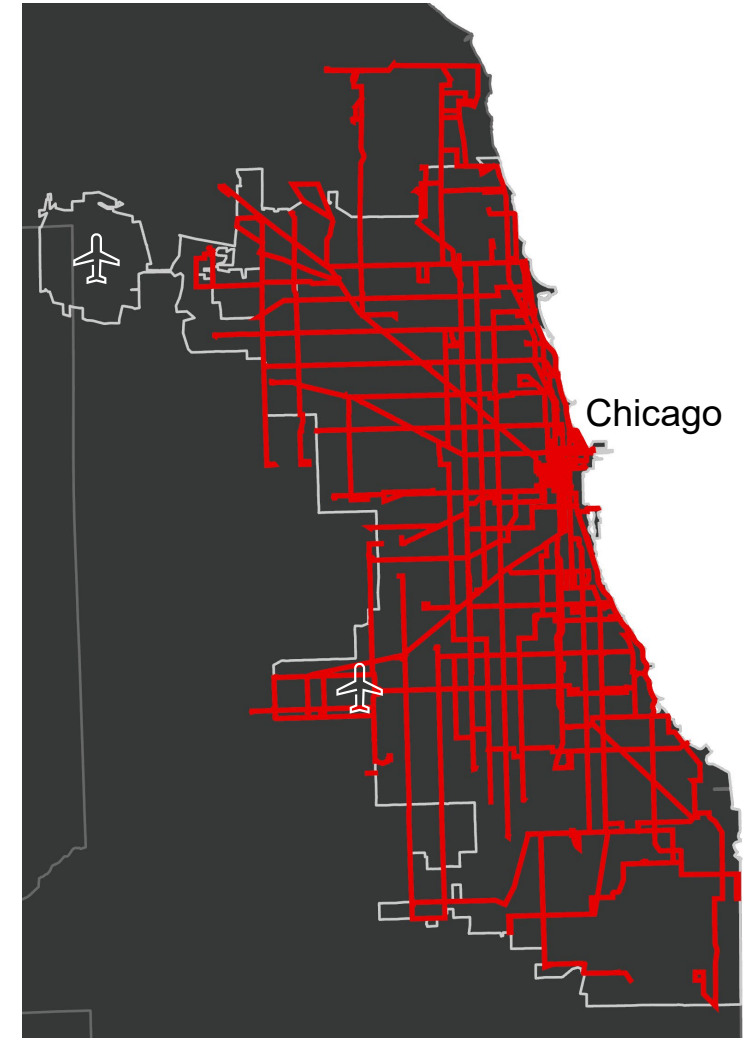


Existing CTA service and potential eliminations



Service Area

- Bus service
- Rail service
- Potential eliminated service



Conversely, expanded funding can help CTA deliver more frequent, reliable service citywide

CTA Rail

- 6-minute or better headways 5am-10pm on all rail lines, all day, every day
- 10-minute or better headways from 10pm-5am on all rail lines, all day, every day
- Expanded Owl service across rail lines

CTA Bus

- Frequent Bus Network: 47 routes, 8-minute headway, all day, every day
- 87 routes, 15-minute headway, all day every day
- Expand Owl bus service to broader network
- Harness Bus Vision work to identify new bus routes and route adjustments to better serve riders

Additional CTA capital investment can unlock further upgrades

- Fully modernize bus and rail fleets
- Achieve a fully accessible regional transit network
- Build at least six new CTA rail infill stations
- Re-build Forest Park branch I-290 corridor
- Eliminate all slow zones
- Establish 100 miles of dedicated bus lanes within CTA Service Area



CTA expands TOD and Second Chance initiatives

Expand Second Chance Program

- Current program has 315 spaces and is focused on vehicle and station cleaning roles.
- Expanded program can add roles in other professions by providing access to training opportunities.

Expand eTOD and Land Use Footprint

- Establish Office of Equitable Transit Oriented Development (eTOD)
- Reactivate vacant CTA concessions
- Launch eTOD Technical Assistance Program
- Launch CTA Prime Site Program

Metra



Metra cuts destroy connections throughout the region

Metra Rail

- Potential elimination of service on the ME Blue Island Branch
- Service reduced by **40%** systemwide
 - 1 train per hour on weekdays
 - 1 train every 2 hours on weekends
 - Extremely limited express trains during rush
 - No trains operating before 6am or after 10pm

Impacts

- Extreme overcrowding on most trains during morning and evening rush
- Traffic increases on Chicago's roadways – already the 2nd most congested in the nation, 5th most in the world
- It may take 5 years or longer to restore any service that is cut – some 2018 service cuts have yet to be restored due to freight railroad resistance

Metra potential cuts to number of trains

	System
Current Trains Weekday Sat/Sun	665 477
Trains Eliminated Weekday Sat/Sun	-267 -189
Net Trains Weekday Sat/Sun	368 288

Metra potential cuts



Weekday Service

 10 Trains
Currently Operated

 10 Trains
Potentially Eliminated



Weekend Service



Metra delivers more frequent service all day and all week

Regional Rail 1.0

- Working towards 50%+ increase in service
- Off-peak weekday and weekend service frequency expanded to hourly headways on all eight full-service lines
- Enhanced service on three limited-service lines
- Implement 30-minute headway schedules, seven days a week, where ridership potential, limited freight traffic, and infrastructure capacity exists. These may include:
 - Metra Electric Line
 - Rock Island Line
 - UPNW Line
 - UPN Line

Additional capital investment can unlock further Metra upgrades

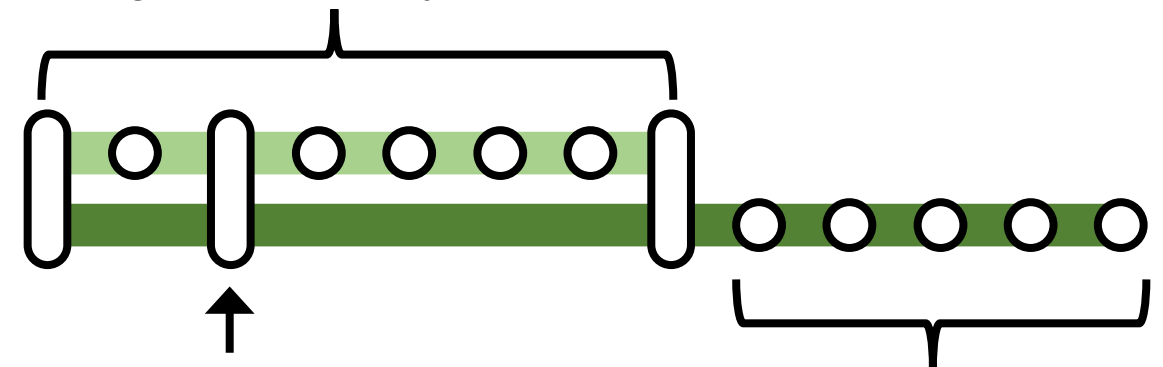


Regional Rail 2.0

- Systemwide Network Plan will help identify needed infrastructure and framework to support expanded operations:
 - Frequent all-day Inner Zone service paired with all-day express trains to Outer Zone
 - Through Running Downtown
 - Improved Service to O'Hare Airport

Inner Zone:

- Higher frequency service



Key Stations:

- Served by both service patterns

Outer Zone:

- Express pattern beyond transfer station



Pace

Pace cuts leave many suburban riders stranded

Pace Bus

- All weekend fixed route and On Demand service for potential elimination
- Late night service (after 8pm) cut on 62 routes

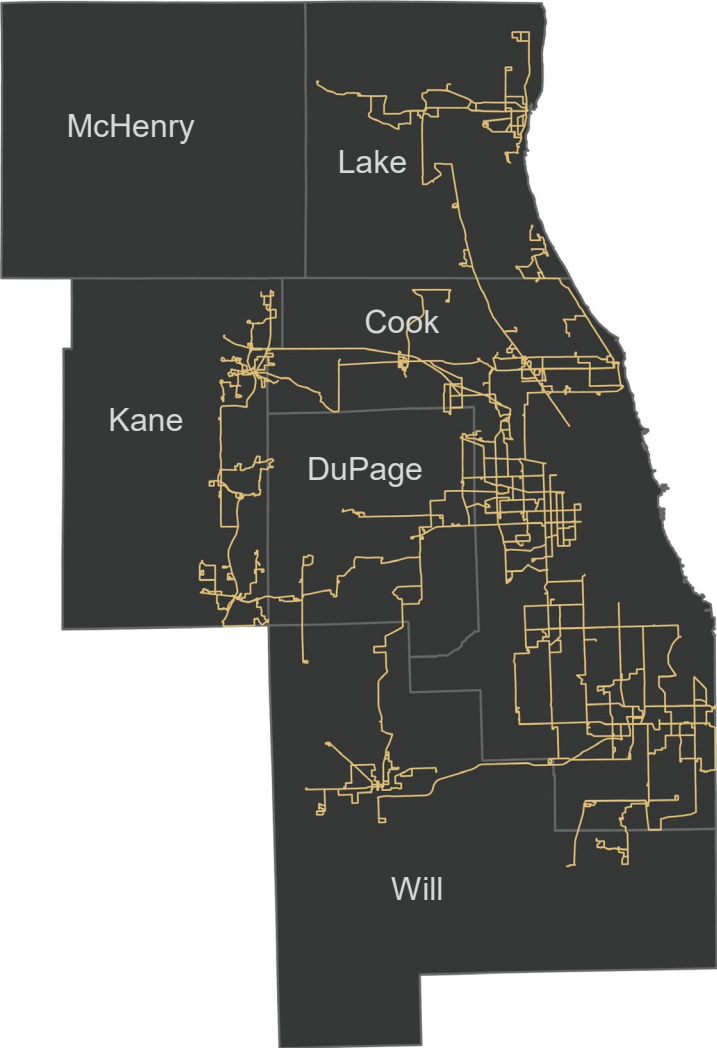
Frequency decrease:

- 21 routes could operate every 30 minutes
- 23 routes could operate every 60 minutes

Impacts

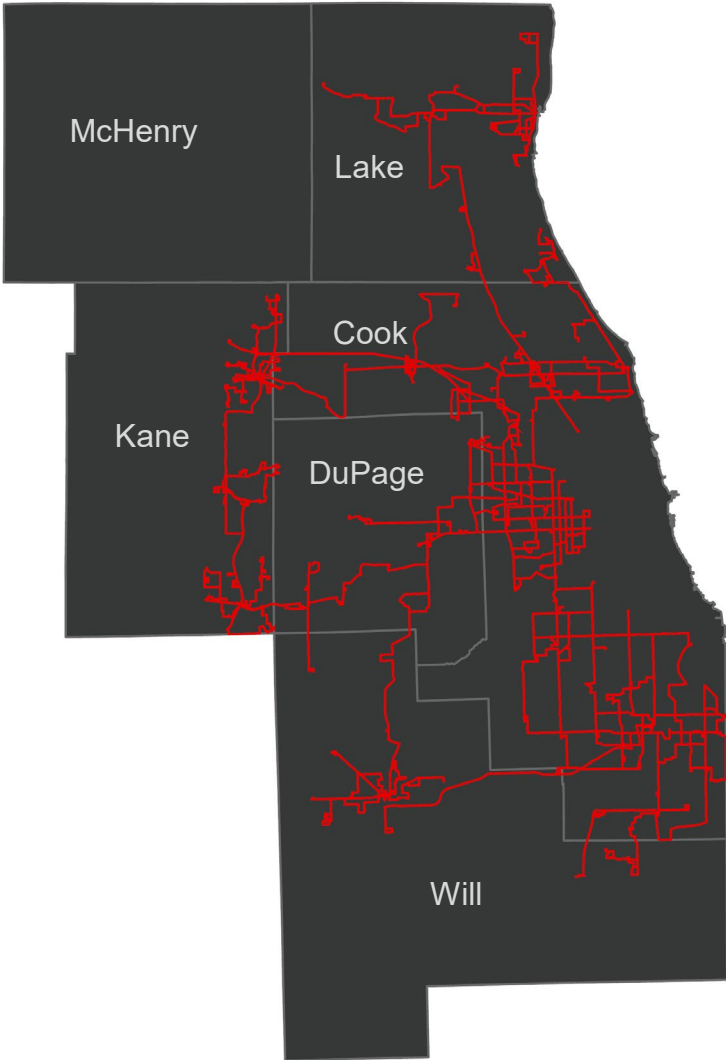
- Long waits, infrequent buses in all suburbs
- Weekend ADA paratransit ends in suburban communities
- Potential reduction in Pace funding available to subsidize local and county-wide dial-a-ride services
- Roughly 3.9 million people and 2.5 million jobs would be within a ½ mile of a bus route that would be impacted by these service reductions

Weekend Pace service and potential eliminations



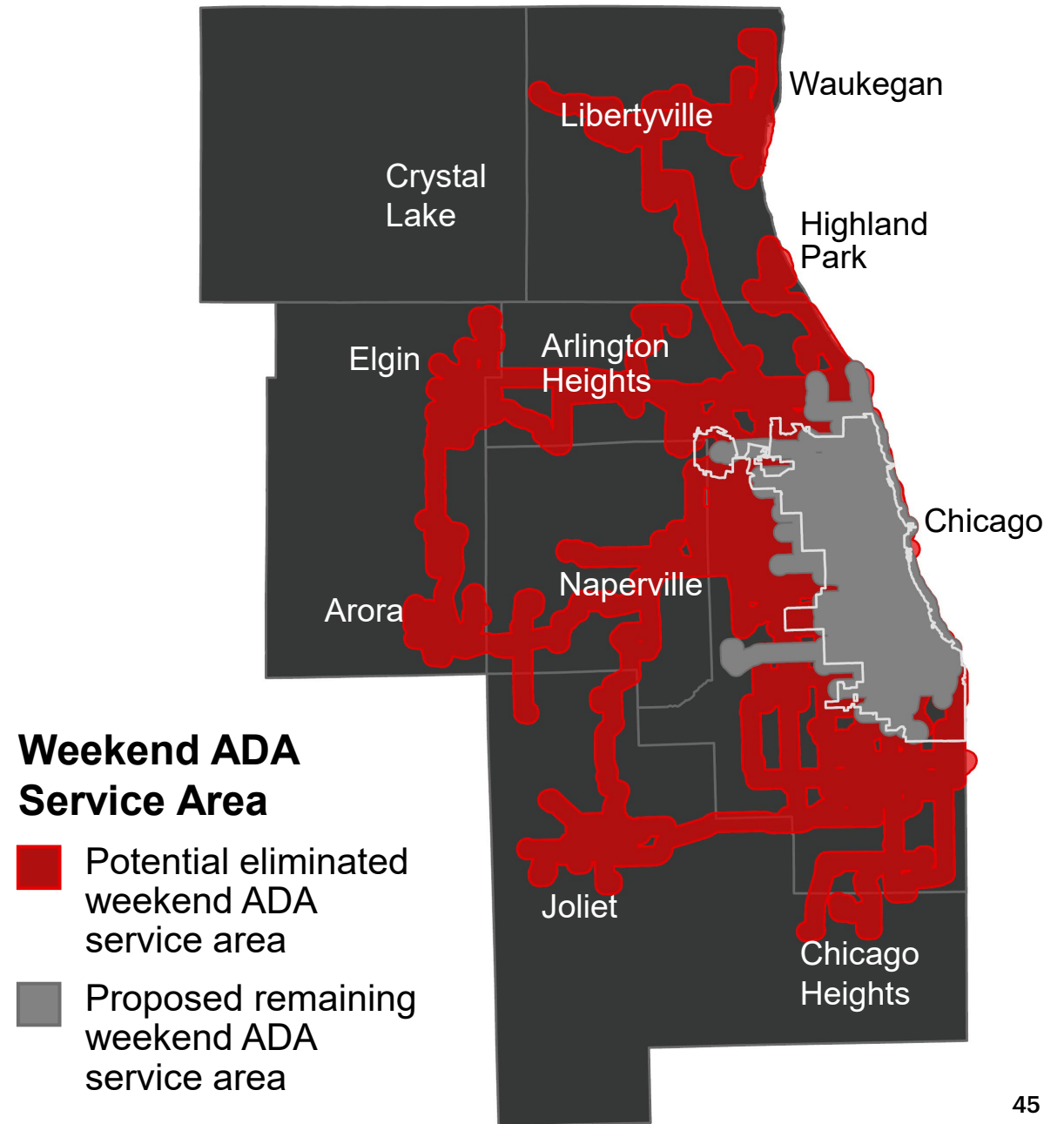
Service Area

-  Pace bus
-  Potential eliminated weekend service



People with disabilities lose mobility option

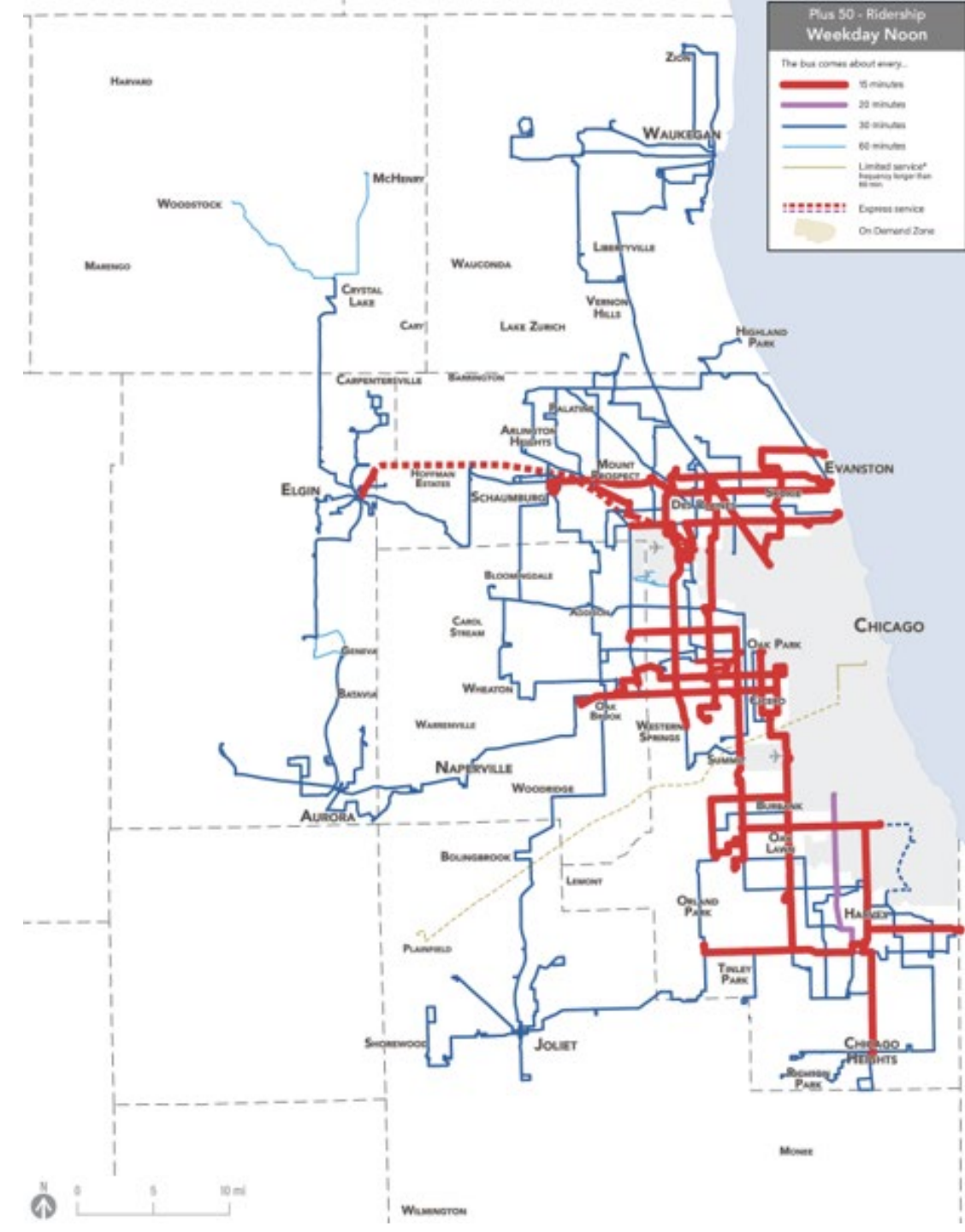
- ADA service area reduced by approx. two-thirds to just 274 square miles on weekends.
- 15,000+ RTA certified suburban ADA riders will have no weekend service in their community



Pace revision scenarios include two alternatives

Ridership

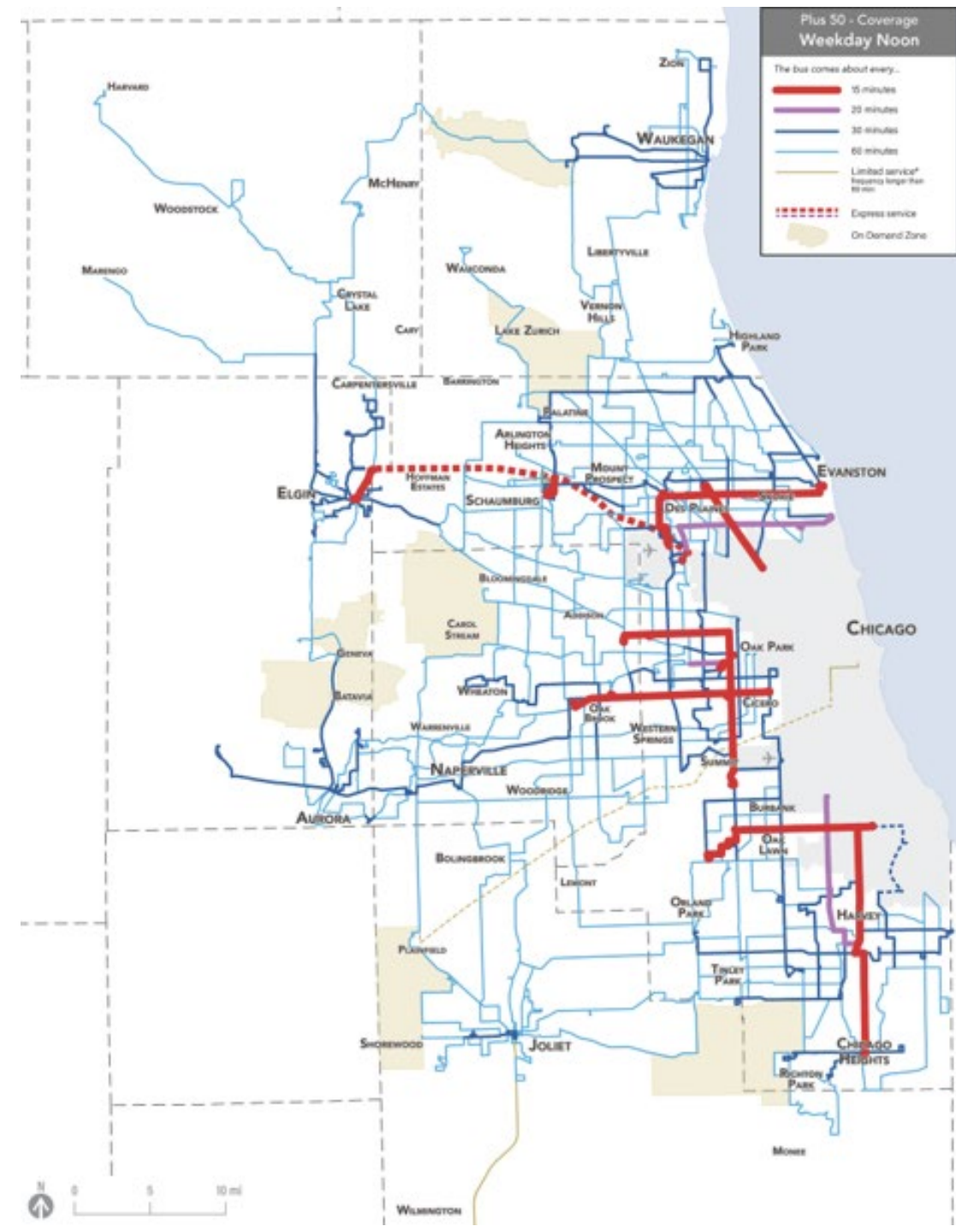
- Pulse Expansion
- Most routes run 15-30 min
- 37% of residents within ½ mile of service
- 86% more job access within 1 hour
- Median low-income resident could reach 129K jobs



Pace revision scenarios include two alternatives, cont.

Coverage

- Pulse Expansion
- Most routes run every 60 min
- 56% of residents within ½ mile
- 30% more job access within 1 hour
- Median low-income resident could reach 101K jobs



Additional Pace capital investment can unlock further upgrades

- Continued fleet and facility modernization
- Pulse Network Expansion
 - 95th Street
 - Cermak Road
 - Harlem Avenue
 - Golf Road
 - Touhy Avenue
 - North Avenue
 - Western Avenue
 - Halsted Extension
- Passenger facilities supporting I-290/I-88 and I-294 Express Bus service
- Increased bus speed via additional Transit Signal Priority corridors



RTA Regionwide impacts



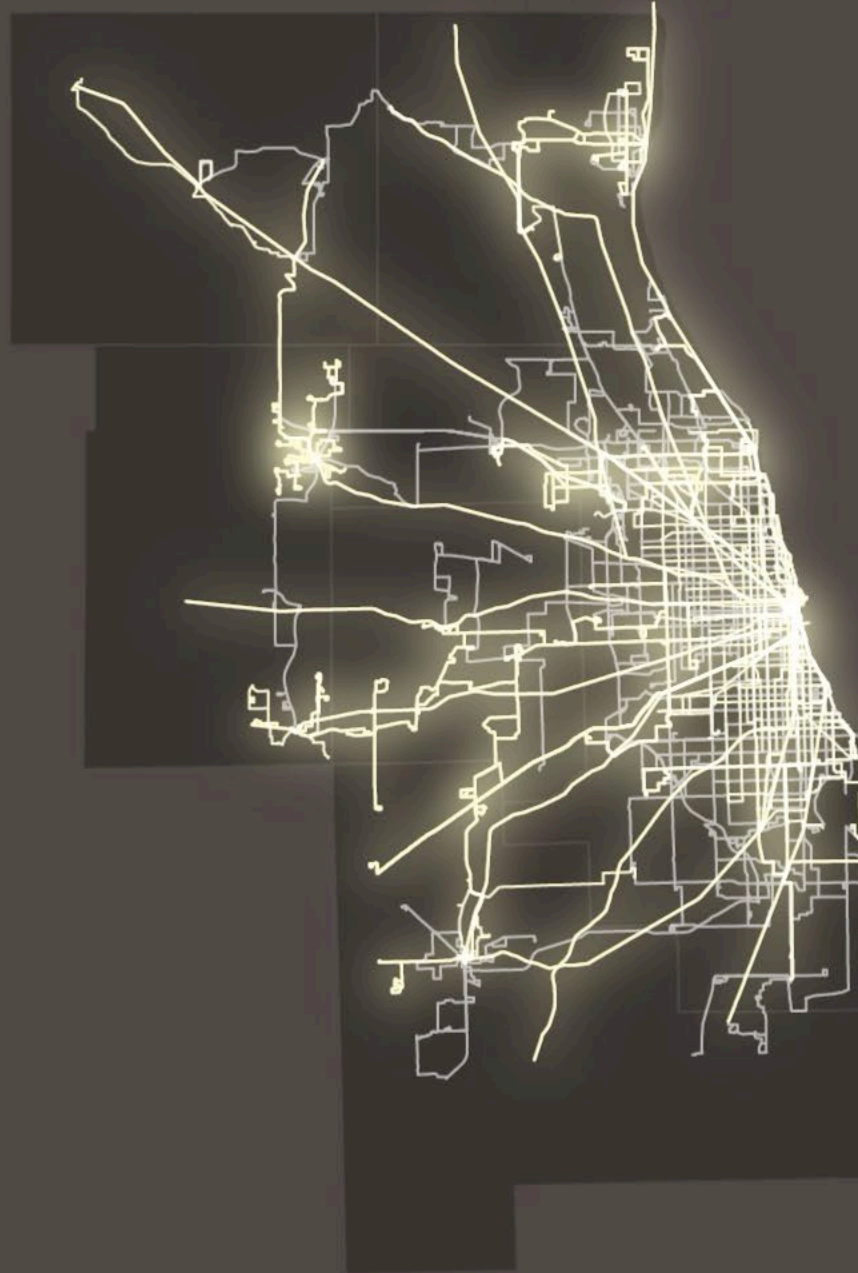
Systemwide cuts will harm all riders and residents

- Magnitude of fiscal cliff could require full route eliminations on CTA Rail and Metra
- 80+ CTA and Pace bus routes eliminated
- No weekend bus service in suburbs
- Metra early morning and late evening service ends
 - 1 train every hour weekdays
 - 1 train every 2 hours on weekends
- ADA service area shrinks by two-thirds on weekends
- Up to 3,000 positions could be eliminated across the transit system

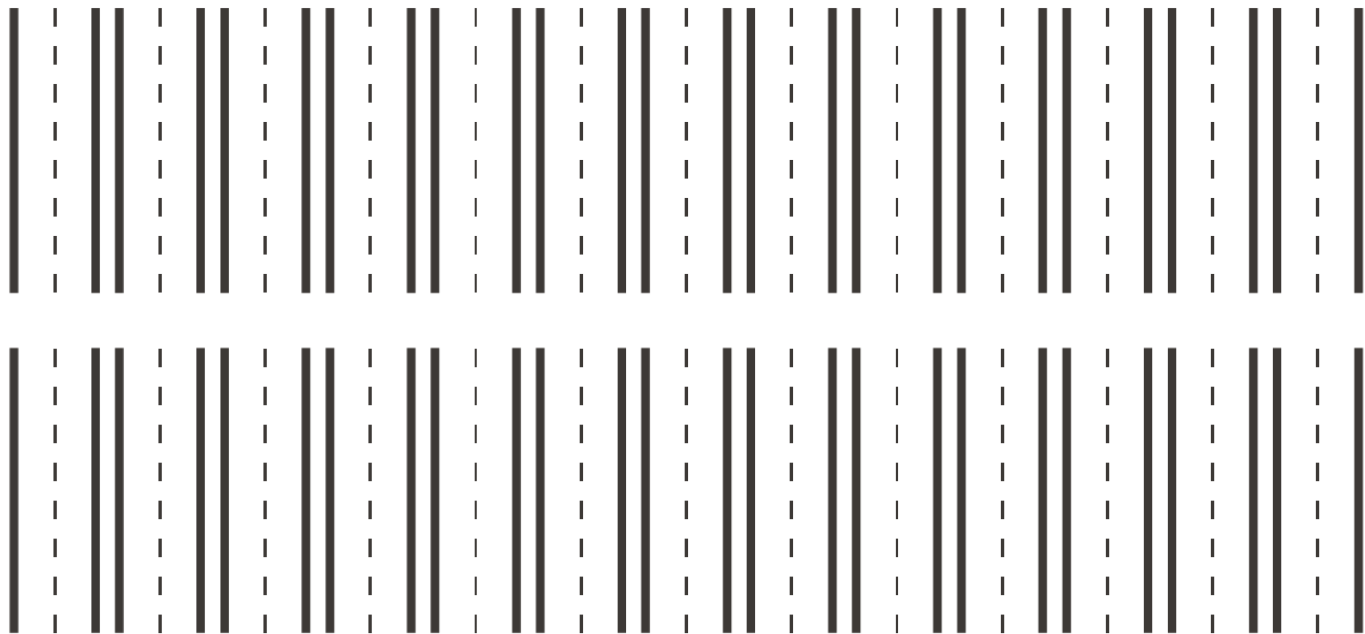


Weekday frequency

CURRENT

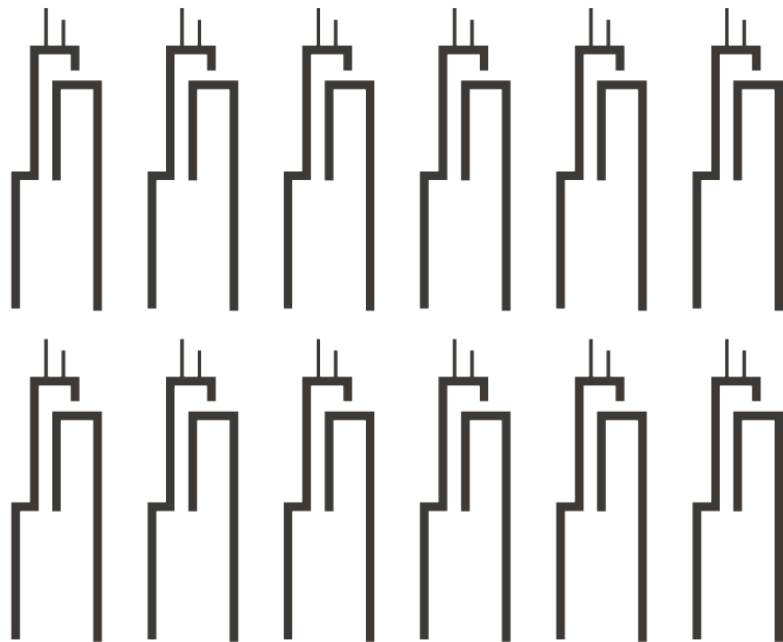


Proposed cuts lead to dramatic rise in congestion and parking need



Additional Highway Lanes Needed During Rush Hour

26 (+93%)



Additional Downtown Parking Demand

12 Willis Towers

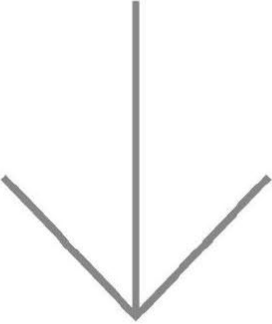


More frequent service for everyone, everywhere

Mode					
City Rail	City Rapid Bus	City Local Bus	Regional Rapid Bus	Regional Rail	Regional Local Bus
Customer Wait Time*					
3–6 min	4–8 min	6–12 min	7–15 min	15–30 min	20–30 min
					

*Wait time is equal to half the amount of time between transit vehicles arriving at a given stop.

Fall off the Fiscal Cliff

\$2.6B

Regional Economic GDP **Losses**

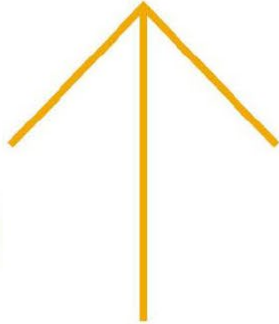
27,000

Jobs **Lost**

\$1B

Wages **Lost**

Expand the System

\$2.7B

Regional Economic GDP **Gains**

28,000

Jobs **Gains**

\$1B

Wages **Gains**

7. Action items

7a. Approval of Letters of Understanding with Indiana and Wisconsin, Amendment of the 2025-2029 Capital Program, and extensions to ICE funded projects



Capital Program: evaluation metrics



Regulatory
Requirements



Impact to Operating Costs



Accessibility
Improvements



Equity based on
Residential Geography



Economic Impact



Access to Key
Destinations



Benefits to Riders



Capacity Benefit and Need



Impact to Service Speed
and Reliability



Asset Condition &
Useful Life

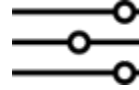


Climate Agency
Operating Impacts &
Ridership/Mode Shift



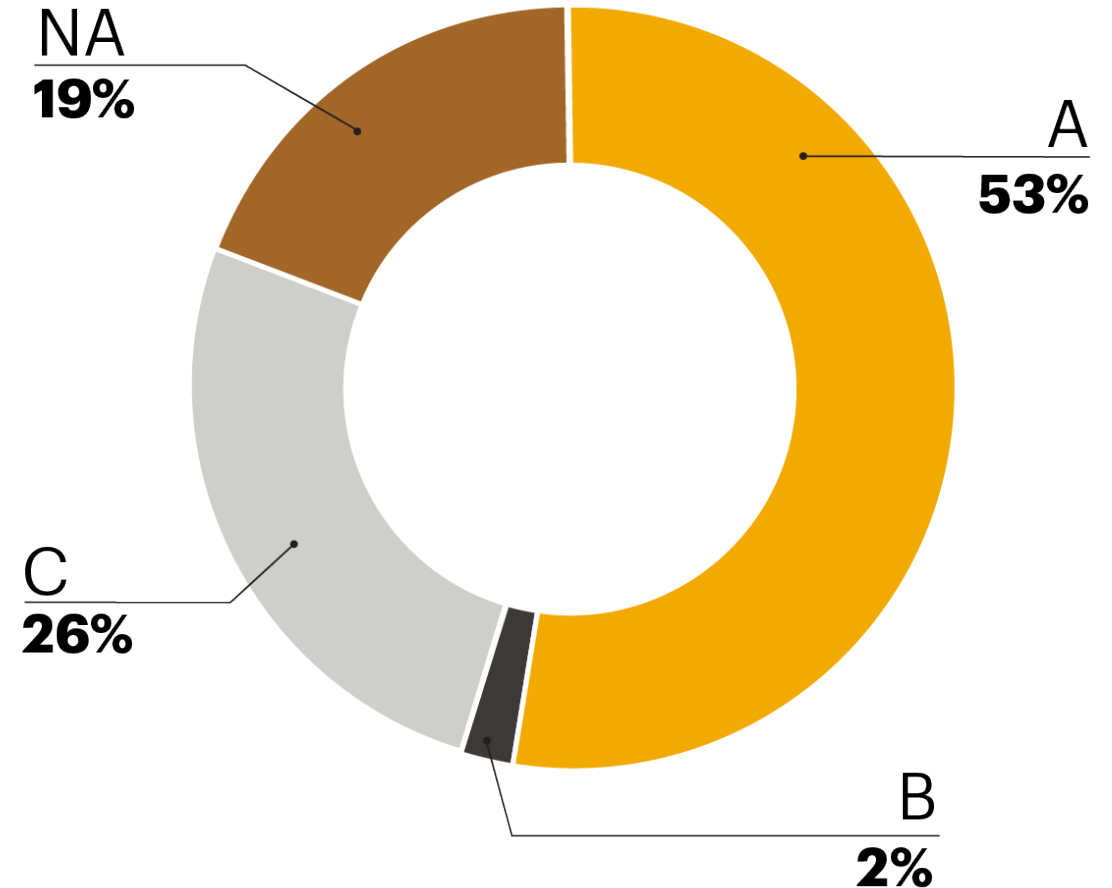
Impact on Safety &
Impact on Security

Capacity benefit and need



Project impact on overall capacity, reflecting current and planned levels of utilization

- A:** Project increases capacity of transit operations or facilities where current or planned utilization is near capacity
- B:** Project increases capacity of transit operations or facilities where current or planned utilization is not near capacity
- C:** Project maintains/returns system to original capacity
- NA:** Not related to capacity of transit operations or facilities



A. (53%) Increase capacity where utilization is near capacity

CTA

- 103rd Street Bus Garage (\$133M)

Metra

- New Bi-Level Rail Cars (\$400M)

Pace

- River Division (\$82M)



B: (2%) Increases capacity where utilization is not near capacity

Metra

- Rogers Park Station (\$58M)
- Olympia Fields Station (\$27M)



C: (26%) Maintains/returns system to original capacity

CTA

- Rail Car Purchase (\$350M)
- Bus Overhaul Projects (\$117M)

Metra

- Car Rehabilitation Projects (\$286M)
- Bridge Improvement Program (\$120M)

Pace

- Fixed Route Electric Buses (\$174M)
- Paratransit Vehicle Purchases (\$40M)



Innovation, Coordination and Enhancement (ICE) extensions

Metra

- GPS Train Tracker
- Downtown Terminal Information Displays

CTA

- Ventra Improvements
- Safety Management Systems



Regional federal formula allocations – partial (in millions)

2025 Regional Federal Formula Funds	Funding	Percent
Regional Transportation Authority	\$359.35	95.8%
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission	15.59	4.1%
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission	0.05	0.01%
Total 2025 Partial Regional Federal Formula Funds	\$374.99	100%



2025-2029 Funding changes (in millions)

2025-2029 Funding Changes	Current	Change	Proposed
CTA	\$5,973.62	\$23.44	\$5,997.05
Metra	2,129.74	124.21	2,253.95
Pace	379.22	36.00	415.22
2025-2029 Total Available	\$8,482.57	\$183.66	\$8,666.22

New competitive funding this quarter: \$98M

Metra

- Van Buren Street Station (\$24M)
- Rogers Park Station (\$24M)
- Smart Gates (\$22M)
- Battery Electric & Hybrid Vehicles (\$0.57M)
- Woodstock Yard (\$0.21M)

Pace

- Purchase Fixed Route Electric Buses (\$27M)



Proposed ordinances for approval

- Extensions to ICE Funded Projects
- Letters of Understanding with Indiana and Wisconsin
- Amendment of the 2025-2029 Capital Program

7b. Ordinance authorizing a contract for legislative consulting services



7c. Ordinance Authorizing a Contract for Transit Signage On-Call Maintenance and Storage Services



7d. Ordinance authorizing a contract amendment for audiovisual equipment and services



7e. Approval of travel expense reimbursement(s)



8. New business

Adjournment

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

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