

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

July 16, 2026

Welcome! Meeting Starts at 9:00 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

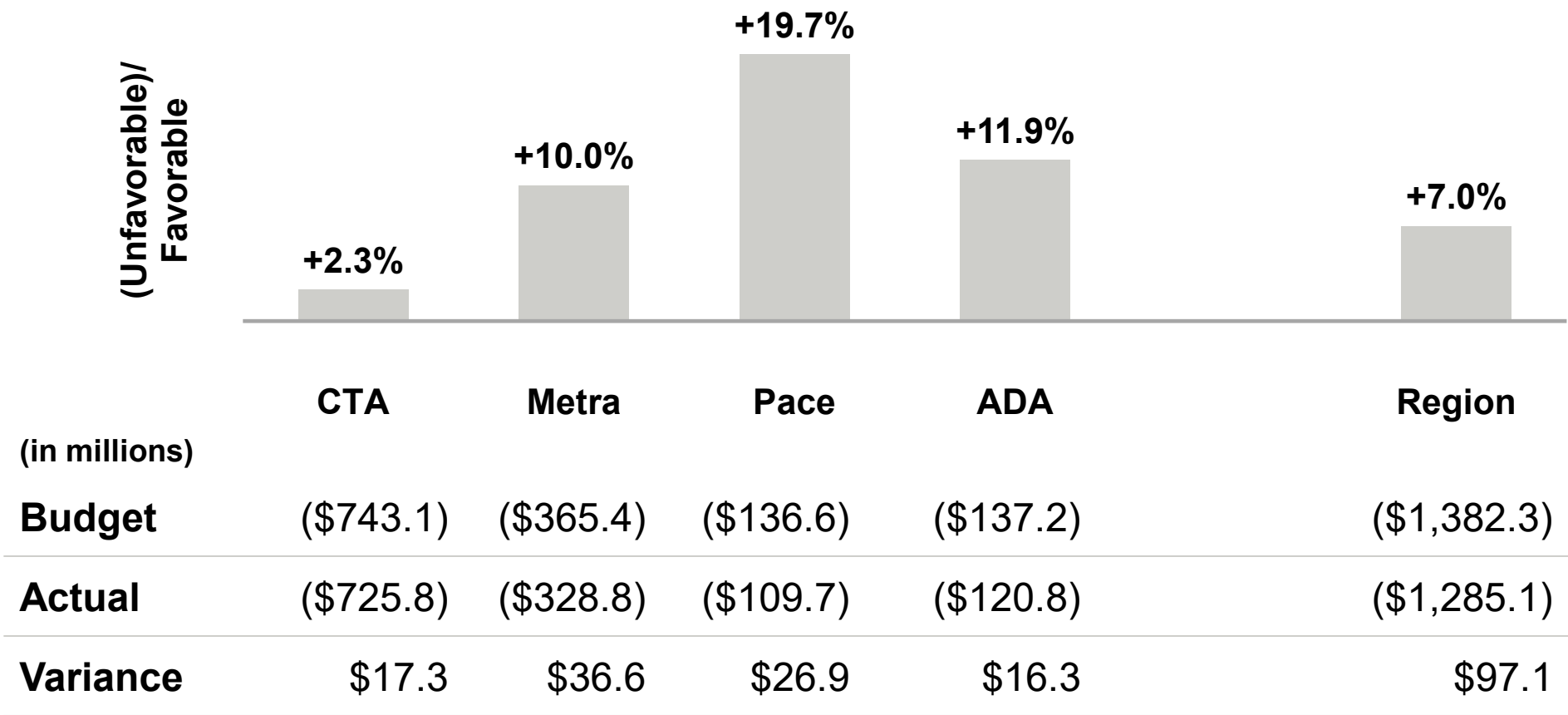


6. Information items

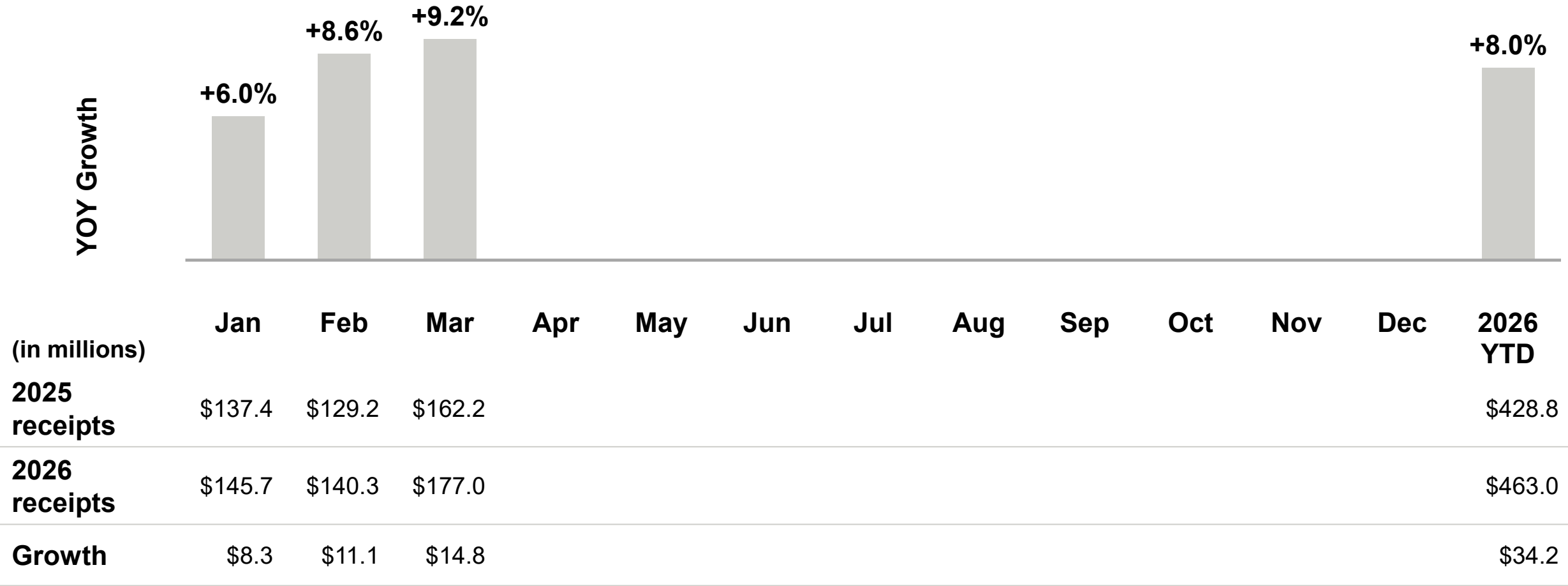
6a. Monthly financials



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through May 2026



Monthly sales tax growth through March 2026



6b. Regional service planning



Regional service planning study

- Consultant supported study of current and future regional service planning
- Supplement to the transition working group
- Focus on inter-agency connectivity
- Build foundational knowledge for NITA Act implementation



NITA Act Implementation

- NITA Board adopts by Dec 2027
 - Transit Propensity Thresholds
 - Service Standards
- Regional service plan process 2028



PROJECT UPDATE

RTA Regional Services Coordination

JULY 16, 2026

TYLin





Purpose of Our Study

Support interagency coordination around service planning in the near term to serve as a bridge to the future NITA service planning process.

Agenda

1. Review of service planning process before NITA
2. Evaluation of service coordination at key interagency transfer locations
3. Summary of service planning process under NITA



Review of Service Planning Process Before NITA





Routine Service Planning Today

- Planners and schedulers consider many different priorities in their work to improve transit services.
- Coordination between Service Boards:
 - Regular interagency meetings (e.g. Transit Service Working Group facilitated by RTA)
 - Special outreach for key changes (as stakeholders or full partners)
- CTA and Pace service changes occur a few times each year when a “pick” is planned. They need to be approved months in advance to allow for data system updates, public communications, etc.
- Metra’s coordination with freight railroads/crews adds additional steps to implement their schedule adjustments.

Active Network Planning Efforts

- CTA Bus Vision
 - Framework Report evaluating existing conditions completed in 2023.
 - Informed initiatives such as Frequent Network expansion.
 - Public outreach timeline being aligned with the NITA transition.



Active Network Planning Efforts

– Pace ReVision

- Draft network concepts were released in 2024.
- Significant improvements to off-peak and weekend service proposed.
- Service increases on key corridors (including future Pulse Lines) are being implemented.
- Public outreach timeline being aligned with the NITA transition.



Active Network Planning Efforts

- Metra Systemwide Network Plan
 - Planned shift to regional rail service model is described 2023-27 Strategic Plan
 - Will improve off-peak and weekend service to make the system more useful for purposes beyond traditional commuting
 - First phase simplifies stop patterns and increases service for 30-60 minute frequency.
 - More consistent schedules could facilitate connections
 - Second phase requires major capital investments to achieve 15-30 minute frequencies.
 - Public outreach timeline being aligned with the NITA transition.





Opportunities for Regional Coordination in Service Planning

- Collaborative planning
 - Evaluate the impacts of proposed schedule changes on interagency transfer coordination.
 - Conduct service coordination and network planning reviews in key areas where the Service Boards connect with each other.
- Public communication/engagement
 - Ensure NITA is solely responsible for engaging stakeholders. NITA can ensure when engagement requires one, two, or all three Service Boards to participate and partner.
 - Customer research could be centralized, so that one Service Board's passenger survey would link to other transit surveys.
 - NITA coordinates public engagement activities to begin presenting the network plans as a unified effort. This could include a coalition meeting with all Service Boards represented, and other joint meetings where service areas intersect.
- Information sharing
 - Connect or consolidate Service Board data systems (significant process to change systems)

Evaluation of Service Coordination at Key Interagency Transfer Locations



Overview of the Analysis

A PLANNING-LEVEL SCREEN OF SCHEDULED TRANSFER QUALITY, PAIRED WITH OBSERVED TRANSFER DEMAND.

60+

Regional transfer locations reviewed

All

Time periods reviewed, plus an all-day average

3

Day types reviewed: Weekday, Saturday, & Sunday

3 – 15

Minute target transfer window

Scheduled transfer screen

Composite GTFS dataset combining CTA, Pace, and Metra schedules. April 2026 service dates were used to reflect typical scheduled conditions.

Transfer classification

Arrivals were compared with downstream departures on other route-directions pairs. Connections were classified as acceptable, too short, too long, or with no candidate transfer.

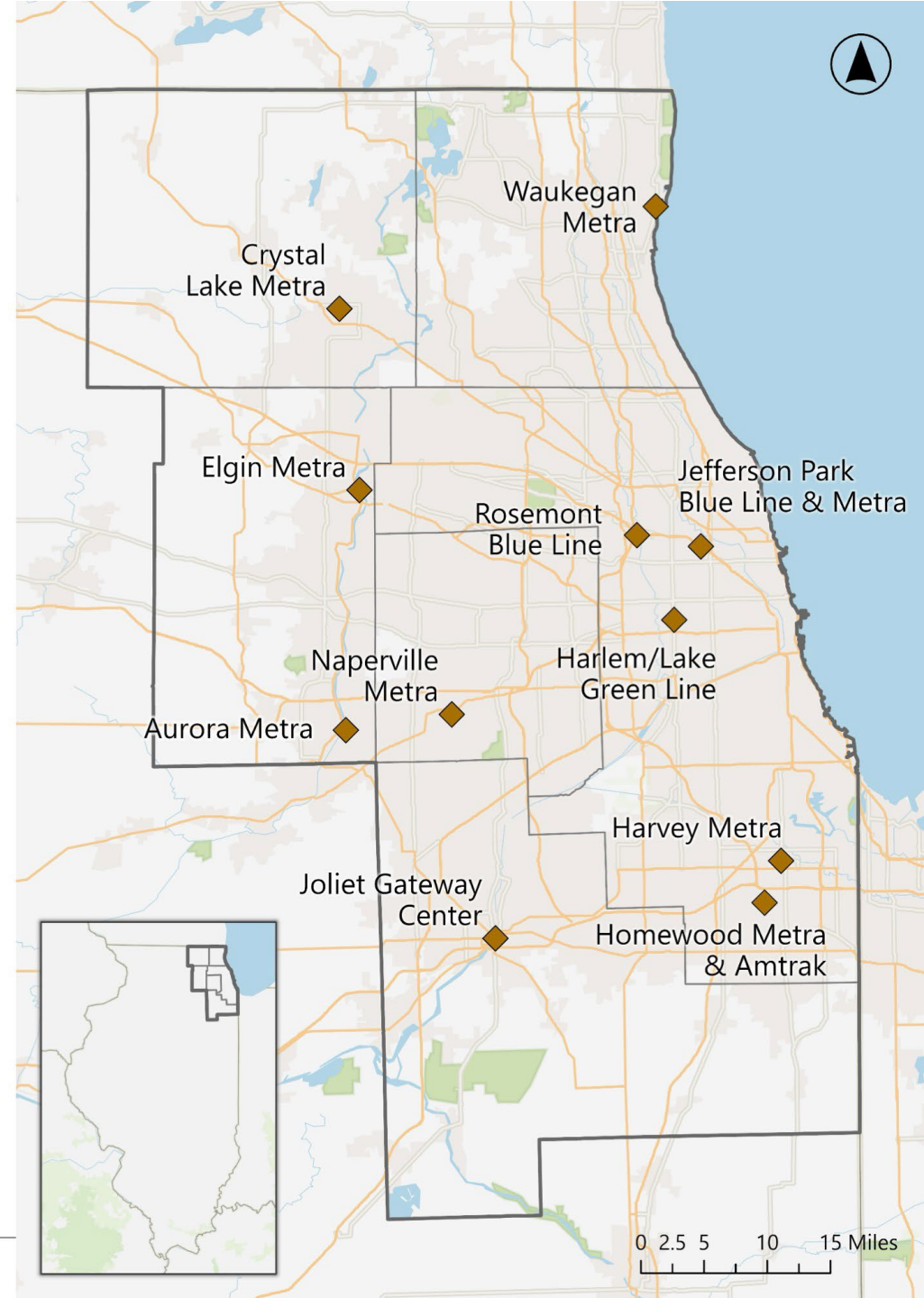
Observed demand lens

Ventra records from September and October 2025 identified where CTA and Pace riders are already making transfers, including locations where poor timing may still attract riders.

Key Interagency Locations

TODAY'S RESULTS FOCUS ON 11 HIGH PRIORITY LOCATIONS

- Locations are key connections between the three service boards
- Represent all counties and geographic areas of the RTA region





Results

TRANSFER QUALITY IS UNEVEN

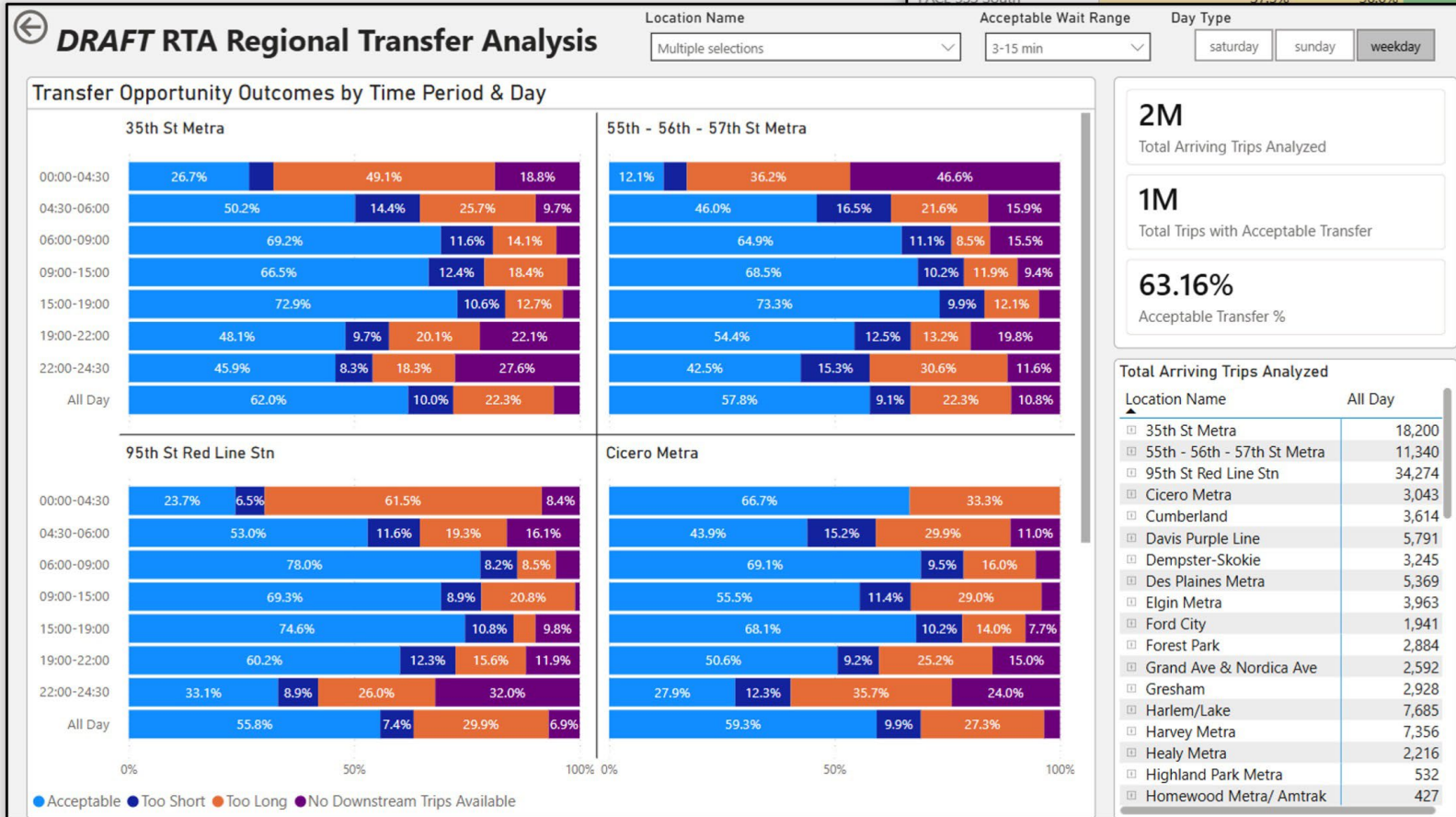
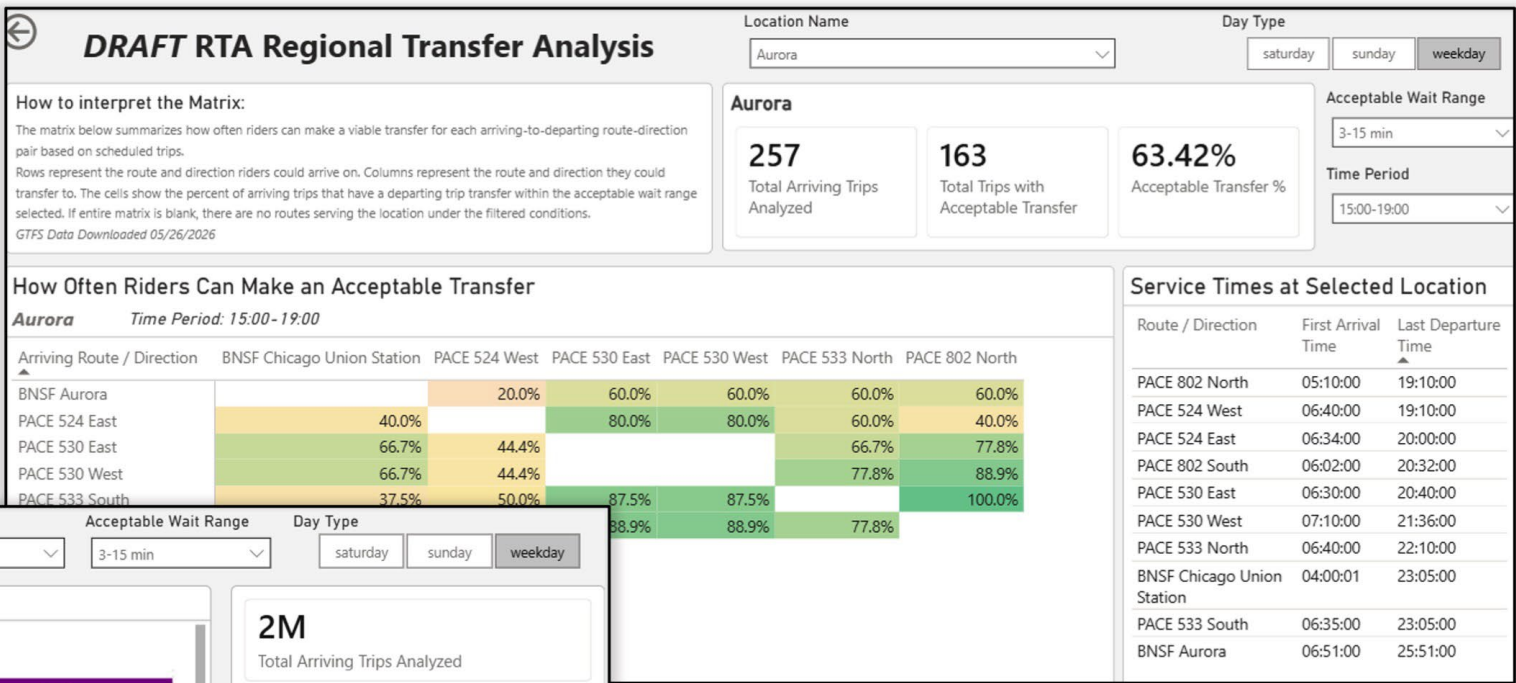
- 45% of transfer opportunities are within the target wait window
- Frequency of the route transferring to is the strongest indicator of transfer quality
- Long waits can be caused by a variety of reasons
 - Schedule alignment (i.e. just missing a connection by a couple minutes)
 - Beginning / end of service differences
 - Lower frequency or gaps in service offered



Results

TRANSFER QUALITY CHANGES BY TIME OF DAY AND DAY TYPE

- Weekday peak periods perform strongest
- Midday periods on weekdays can see lower frequency or gaps in service
- Evening service also sees lower frequency and depends more on schedule coordination
- Key locations see certain routes end service earlier in the day than others, and not offered or severely reduced on weekends



Summary of Service Planning Process Under NITA

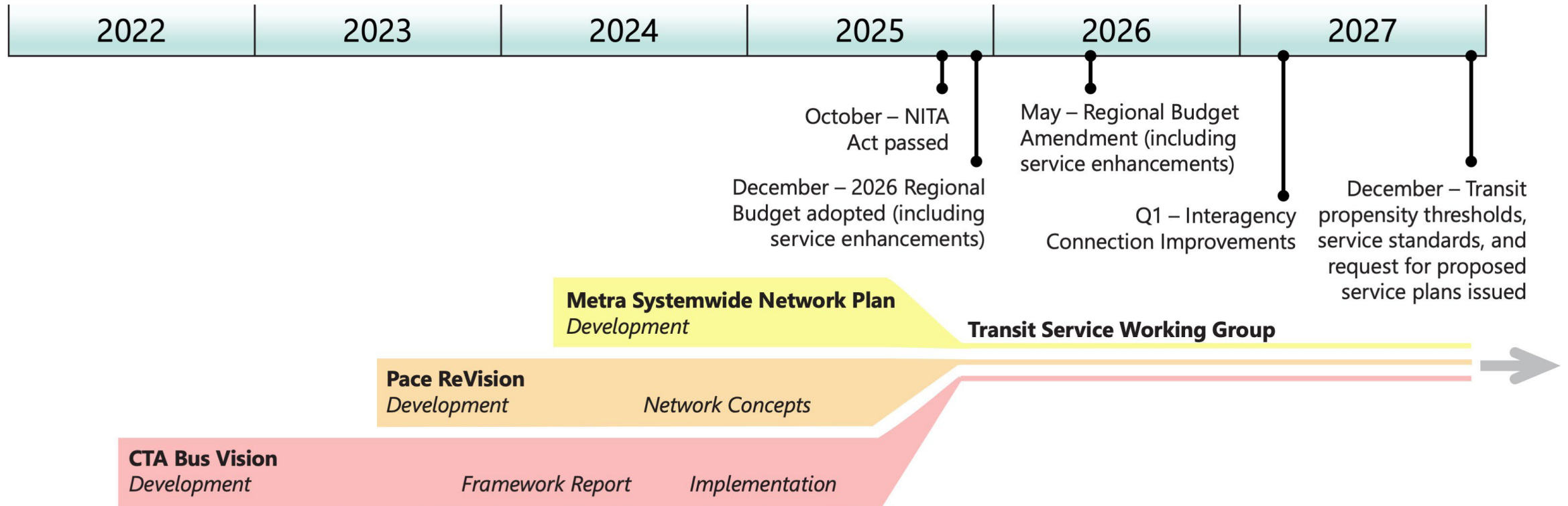




Summary of NITA Service Planning

- **Transit propensity analysis** determines where different types of service are justified.
- **Service standards** define the appropriate characteristics for each type of service.
- The **Regionwide Service Plan** shows planned service levels, which must comply with regional service standards.

Timeline Leading to NITA Service Planning





Timeline of Annual Service Planning Steps

- NITA will issue a **request for proposed service plans** by December 15, 2027.
- NITA will adopt **transit propensity** thresholds and regional **service standards** by December 31, 2027.
- Service Boards will present **preliminary service proposals** by March 31, 2028.
- Service Boards will submit **proposed service plans** to NITA by April 30, 2028.
- The NITA Board must adopt a **regionwide service plan** by December 31, 2028. The first budget year implementing the regionwide service plan will be 2029.



Transit Propensity

- Propensity index will be a map layer that considers the following factors (at a minimum):
 - Population density, employment density, low-income populations, disabled populations, zero-car households, intersection density, and the presence of sidewalks
 - Shall apply weights to each metric to generate overall scoring
- Thresholds will be set where different types of service are justified

Key choices:

- Select weighting that is reasonable and evenhanded.



Service Standards

- Identify the appropriate characteristics for each type of service.
 - May also address Metra's station typology.
- This includes but is not limited to:
 - Mode
 - Vehicle type
 - Frequency
 - Time span
 - Stop spacing
 - Coverage
 - Vehicle and stop amenities
 - Network connectivity
 - Route directness
 - Route deviation
- Also consider:
 - Revenue hours
 - Revenue miles
 - Passenger miles
 - Unlinked passenger trips

Key choices:

- How broad or specific are service categories?
- Are the standards easily achievable or ambitious?



Regionwide Service Plan

- Describes all transit services (CTA, Metra, and Pace)
- Covers a period of one to three years
- Must include the following information:
 - Location, frequency, days and hours of service
 - Reasons for any changes from previous service plan
 - Funding assumptions
 - Requirements for reliability, cleanliness, and safety
 - Requirements for fare systems, customer information, branding, coordination, etc.
- Adopted once per year

Key choices:

- How prescriptive or flexible is the request to Service Boards?
- Approval process for major vs minor changes?



Preparing for NITA

- We recommend documenting existing Service Board processes:
 - Current service categories and definitions.
 - Current service standards applied to the categories.
 - Policies and processes for proposed service changes to be evaluated/approved.
 - *When is board approval needed? When is a public hearing needed? Definition of a major service change needing Title VI analysis? Process to request operating rights on a street?*
 - Software systems that are used for service planning and scheduling.
 - Systems used to store and access key service planning data.
 - The current schedule of “picks” or “bids” when service changes may occur, and the timeline of steps prior to implementation.
 - *Timeline may vary depending on requirements for new vehicles, operators, stops, etc.*
 - Budget timelines to fund service improvements.
- Potential to align some of these systems and practices to support regional integration.

6c. 2026 Community planning projects



Program history

- Community Planning Program's 28th Year
- Technical Assistance for Land Use and Transportation Planning.
- Planning for housing and jobs near transit.
- Developing walkable communities with access to transit.



Program impact

- Local Planning 2025 Annual Report
- 8 new projects began and 6 were completed
- Municipal Highlights:
 - Worth
 - Tinley Park
 - Highwood
- Look for the “Annual Report” on our webpage: rtachicago.org/cp



Types of assistance

Planning Focused

- Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Plans
- Transit Corridor Plans
- Neighborhood Access to Transit Improvement Plans

Implementation Focused

- Zoning Code Updates
- Parking Regulation Updates
- Development Dialogues



2026 Call for Projects

- March 30 – April 17, 2026
- Partnered with CMAP
- Received 12 Applications
- Application Review Process
- Service Board Feedback



2026 Program of Projects

ETOD and Transit Corridor Studies

- 130th Street RLE ETOD Plan
- Western Avenue Corridor Study
- Harvard US-14 Corridor Study
- South Elgin La Fox Street Corridor Study



2026 Program of Projects

Development Dialogues

- Fox Lake
- Glenwood
- Oak Park



2026 Program of Projects

Parking and Zoning Projects

- Des Plaines
- Park Ridge
- Skokie

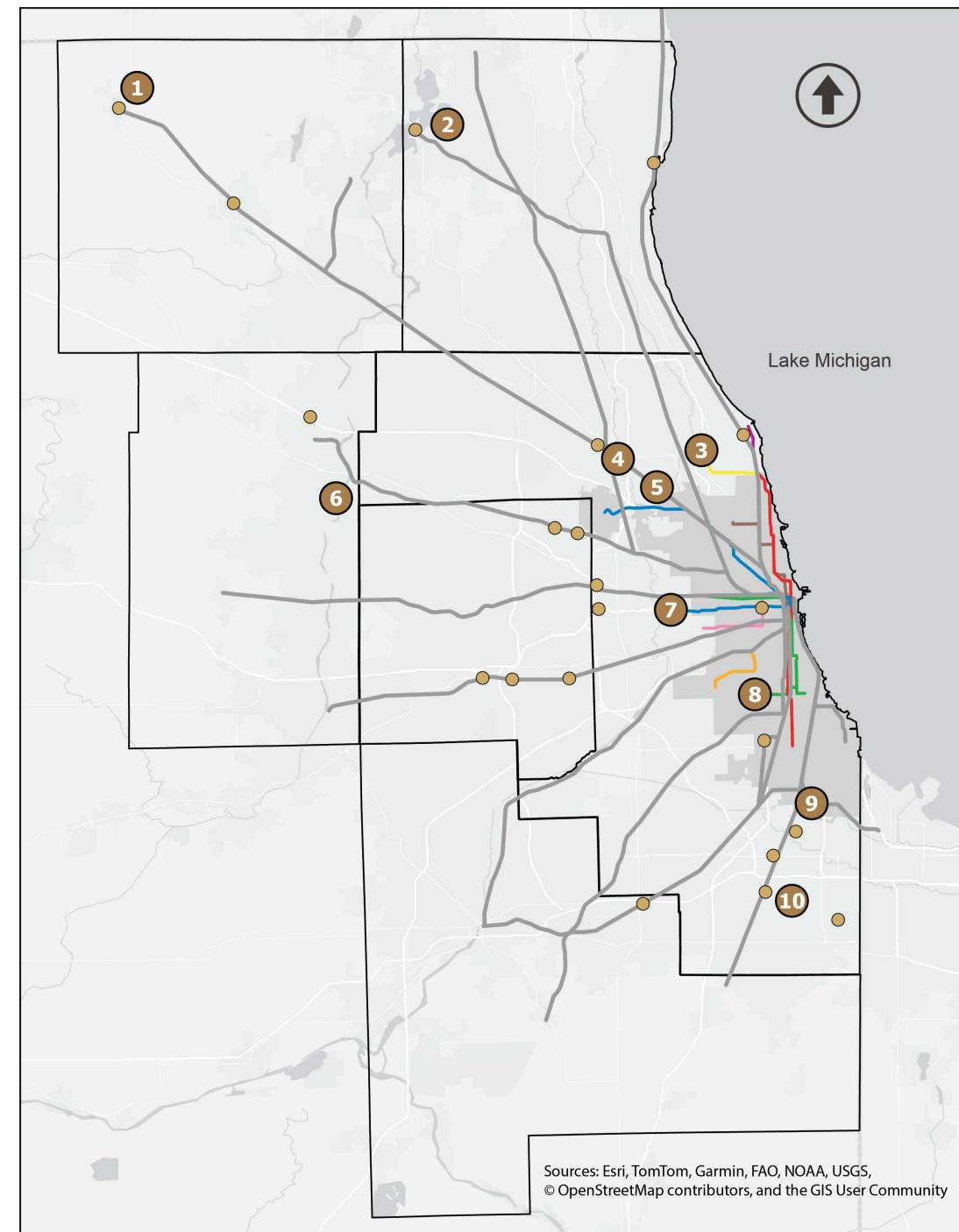


Community Planning Program of Projects

Project Locations

- 1 Harvard South Division Street Corridor Study
- 2 Fox Lake Development Dialogue
- 3 Skokie Parking and Zoning Updates
- 4 Des Plaines Parking and Zoning Updates
- 5 Park Ridge Parking and Zoning Updates
- 6 South Elgin La Fox Street Corridor Study
- 7 Oak Park Development Dialogue
- 8 Chicago Western Ave Corridor Study
- 9 Chicago 130th Street Station ETOD Plan
- 10 Glenwood Development Dialogue

● 2026 Access to Transit projects



Next steps

- Notification Letters
- Contracting and Scoping
- Projects underway by end of year

rtachicago.org/cp



7. Action items

A photograph showing the interior of a double-decker bus. The bus is filled with passengers. On the lower deck, people are seated in blue upholstered seats, some looking out the windows, others looking down at their phones. A few people are standing in the aisle. On the upper deck, passengers are visible leaning over the side railings. The bus has a modern design with metal handrails and a clean, bright interior. The perspective is from the front of the bus looking towards the rear.

7b. Appointment of an Acting Trustee to the Pension Trustees



7c. Approval of travel expense reimbursement(s)



8. New Business

Adjournment

The next Ad Hoc Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 22.

The next meeting of the RTA Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, August 20.

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