

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

March 19, 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



rta

6a. Customer Satisfaction Panel Survey update



Summary

- Responses from 1,423 regional transit users
- Survey was live from to Dec 12, 2025 - Jan 04, 2026
- This survey was available in English and Spanish
- Results are weighted by modal ridership from 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey unless otherwise noted
- Quarterly surveys include:
 - Questions on customer satisfaction, public safety, and service quality
 - Special topics on cleanliness, fares, and NITA Act

Spanish Version

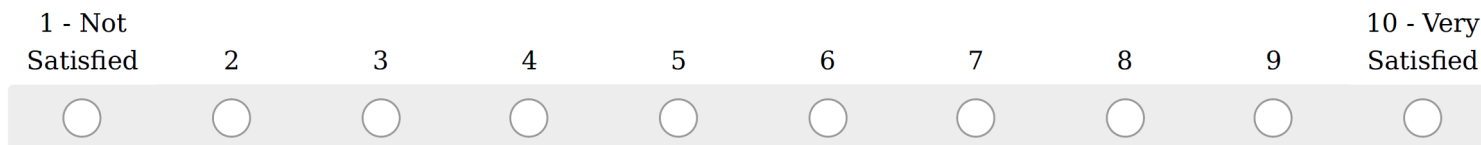
- 342 invitations sent using 2025 CSS
- Responses rate of 4.6%

4. Sobre todo, ¿qué satisfecho/a está con el transporte público del área de Chicago?

1 - Muy										10 - Muy
Insatisfecho/a	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Satisfecho/a	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Customer satisfaction

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



Satisfaction dropped slightly but remains high

Scores of six or higher	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
How satisfied are you with the value of service considering the fare paid?	79%	83%	82%	80%
How likely are you to recommend transit services of the Chicago region to others?	79%	83%	81%	79%
Overall, how satisfied are you with Chicago-area public transit?	73%	74%	74%	71%

n varies

Quarterly Panel Survey – Q4 2025

Service quality

Consider all transit service in the Chicago region that you're familiar with. On a scale from 1-10, how satisfied are you with...

Scores of six or higher	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
Staff	75%	77%	73%	71%
Service available when and where you need to go	74%	76%	71%	76%
Getting to your destination on time	75%	75%	73%	71%
Delay / Real-time information	65%	64%	62%	59%
Cleanliness	56%	63%	56%	54%
Personal security	57%	60%	56%	58%

n varies

Public safety

On a scale of 1-10, please indicate how strongly you would agree with the statements below using your primary mode of travel?

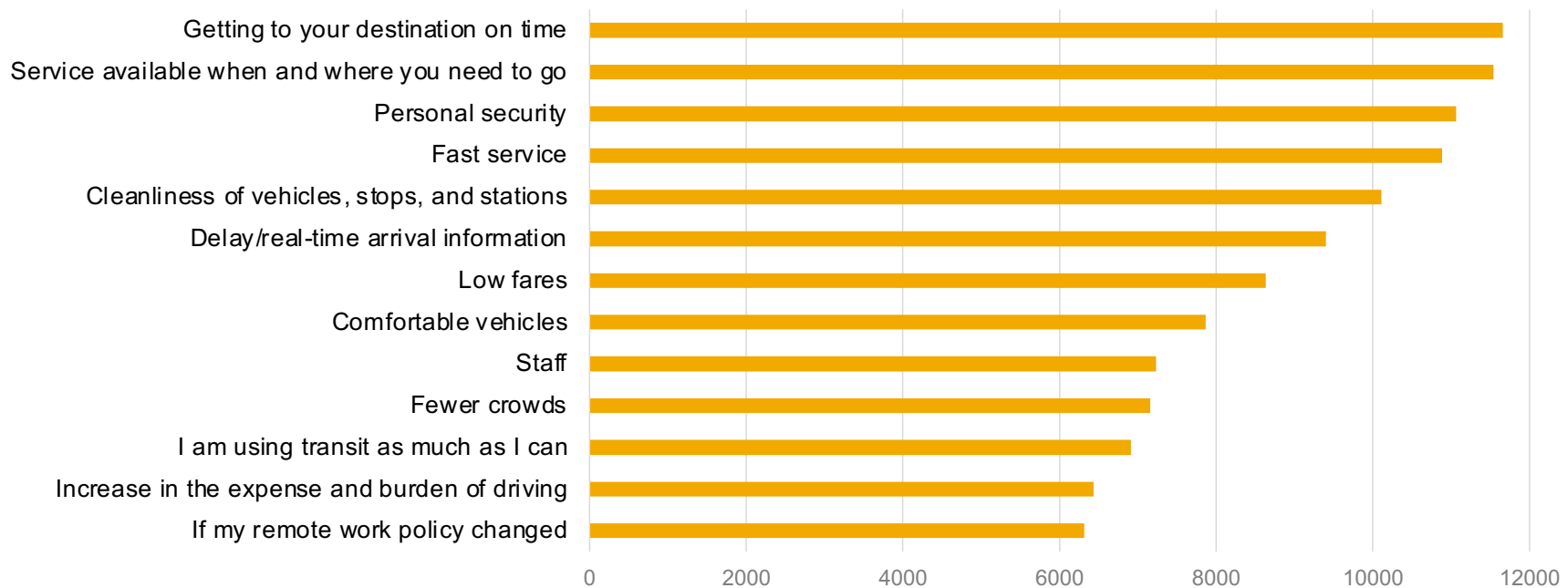
Sense of personal safety remains consistent

Scores of six or higher	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
I feel safe when traveling from home to my first station	68%	70%	71%	71%
I feel safe when waiting at stations/stops	61%	62%	64%	63%
I feel safe on the bus or train	57%	62%	64%	61%
I feel safe when traveling to my final destination from where I get off my bus/train	69%	70%	72%	71%

n varies

Using transit more

What would encourage you to use transit more often? From the following list, please RANK the following responses. The response that you think would be the **MOST SIGNIFICANT** should be ranked **FIRST**.

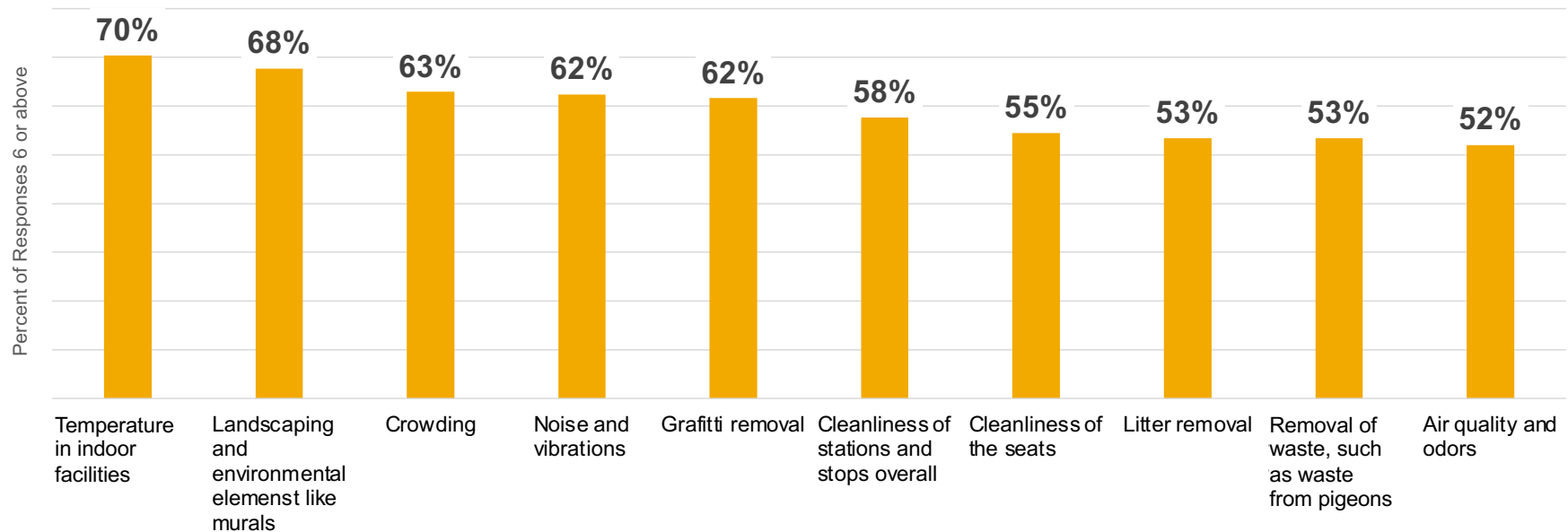


n = 1,266

Cleanliness – stops and stations

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.

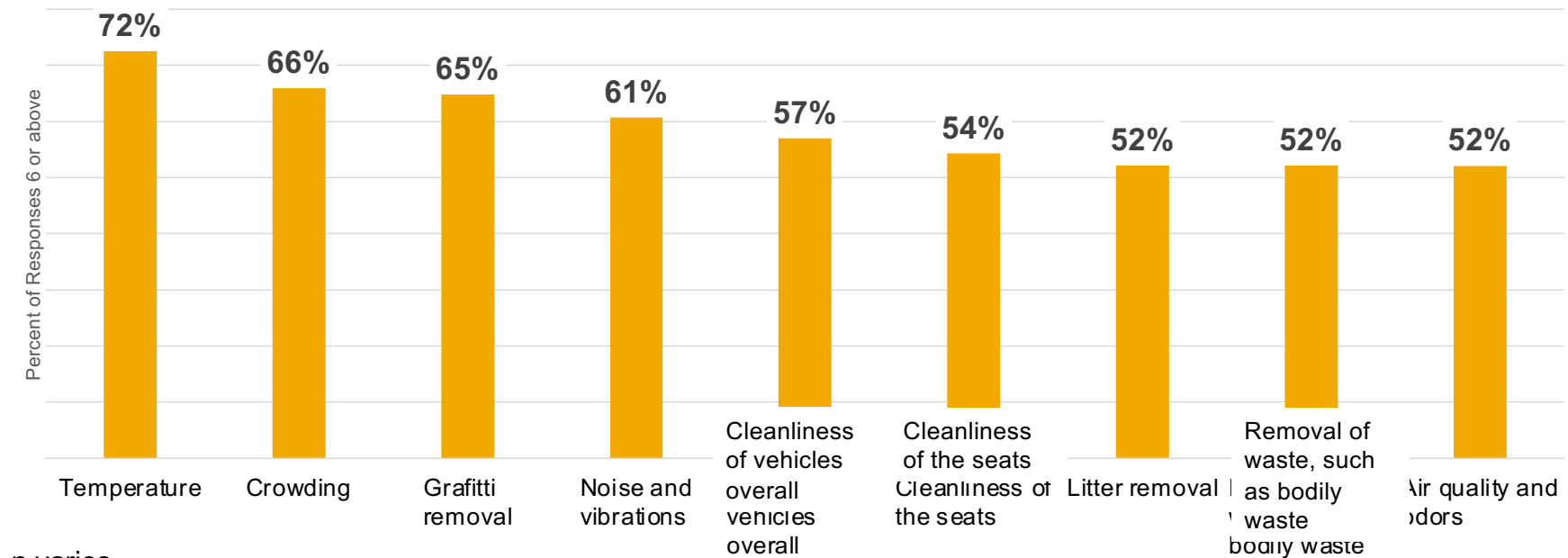
WHILE WAITING AT THE BUS STOPS AND STATIONS, how satisfied are you with...



n varies

Cleanliness – on board

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. ON BOARD THE VEHICLE, how satisfied are you with...



n varies

Price of fares

Please consider only the cost of fares using your primary mode. The price of fares is reasonable?



n = 1,148

Quarterly Panel Survey – Q4 2025



New transit funding bill

Were you aware of the recent funding bill passed by the legislature in November which will establish a new agency responsible for regional planning and provide increased funding for local transit agencies?



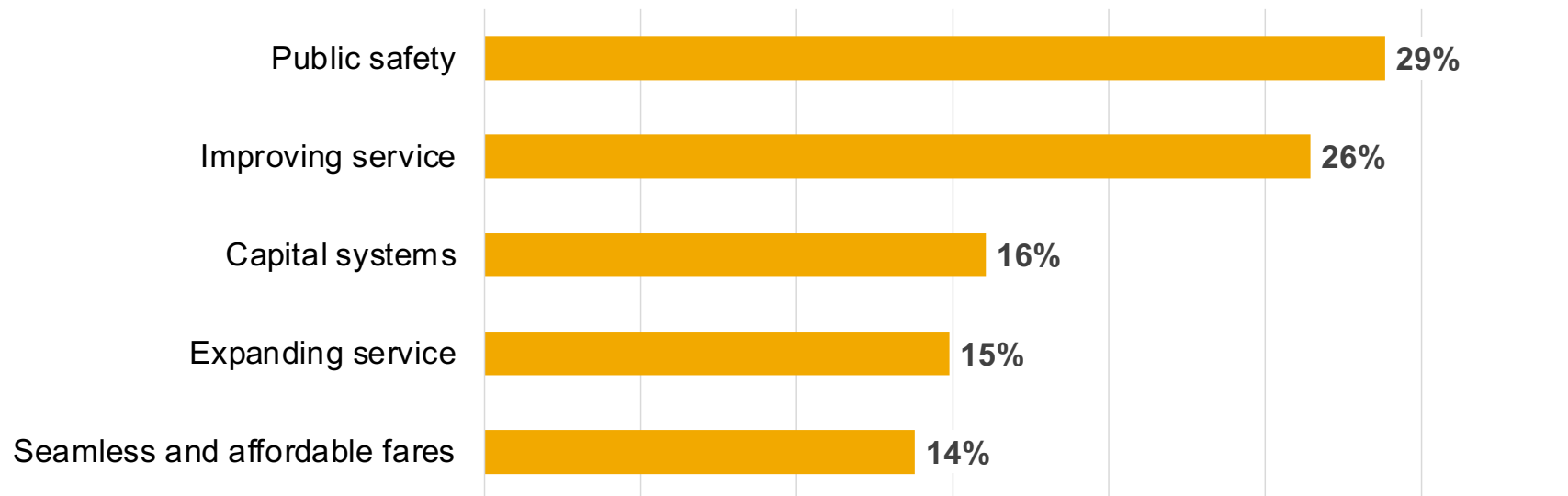
n = 1,154

Quarterly Panel Survey – Q4 2025



Future of regional service

On June 1, 2026, NITA will take on new responsibilities from RTA. Our regional transit system has the opportunity to invest and improve our transit network. If you had 100 points to divide between five objectives below representing how important each objective is to you, how many points would you assign each?



n = 1,072

Quarterly Panel Survey – Q4 2025



6b. Expanding Access Pilot



Access Pilot overview

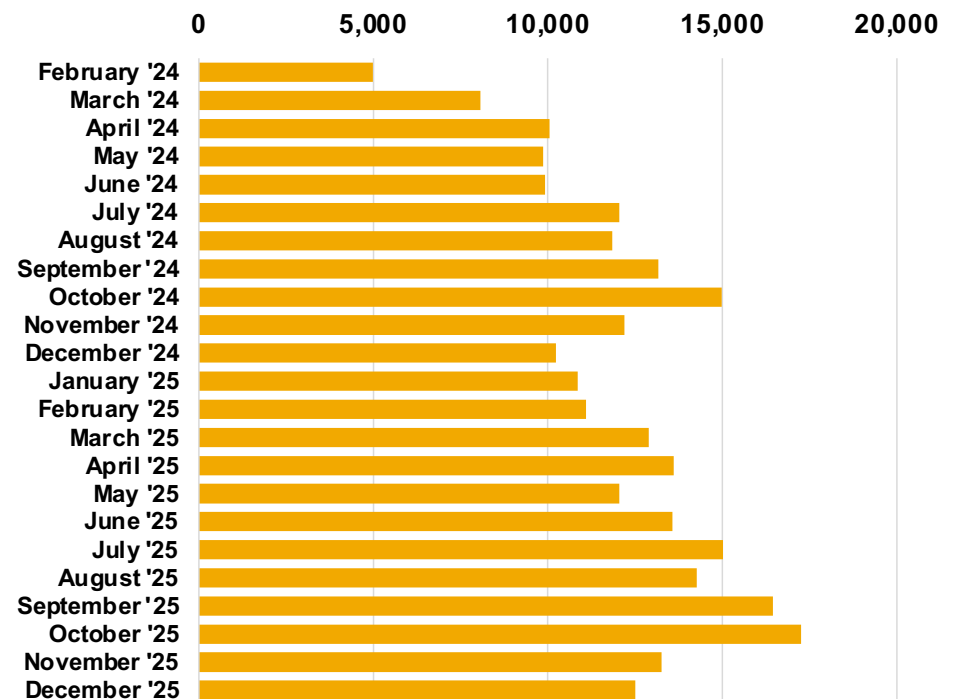
- The Access Pilot provides a reduced fare on all Metra lines for households enrolled in SNAP within the six-county region, launched in Feb 2024
- Began as Fair Transit South Cook pilot on Rock Island and Metra Electric lines as ending
- Fair Transit South Cook was a universal reduced fare on two lines
- Access is an income-based reduced fare across the entire six-county region
- Cook County pays majority of operating costs
- RTA certifies riders and issues Access permits via the fare portal



Access Rides by Month

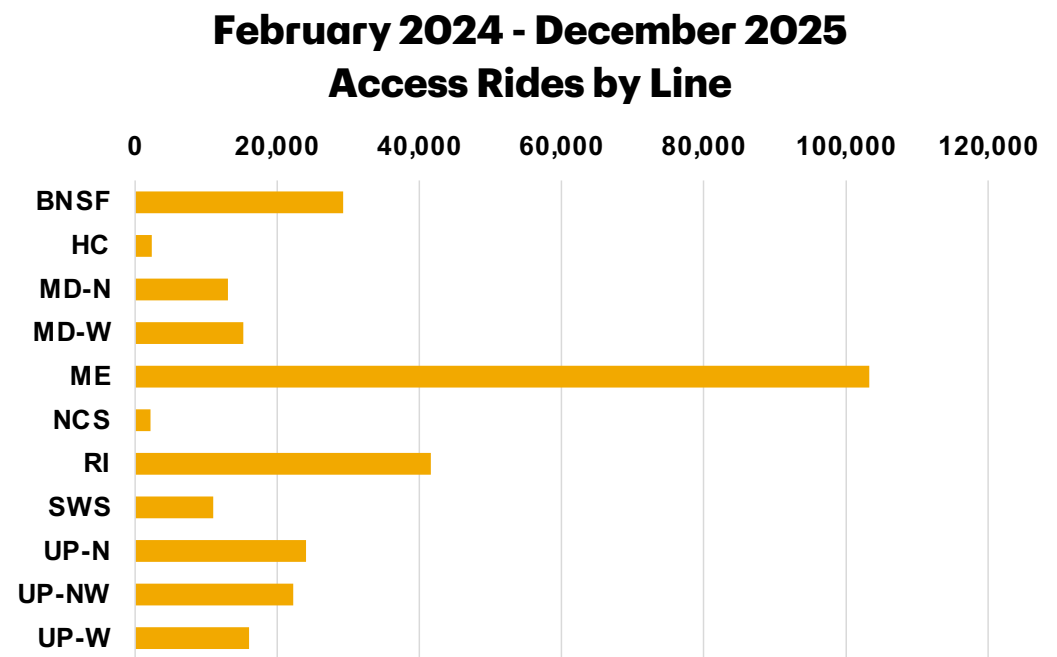
- Just over 280K total Access rides
- Averaged 13.5K rides per month in 2025
- Peak of 17K rides in October 2025
- 81% of Access rides in 2025 began in Cook County
- In December 2025, Access accounted for 0.5% of Metra rides

February 2024 - December 2025 Access Rides by Month



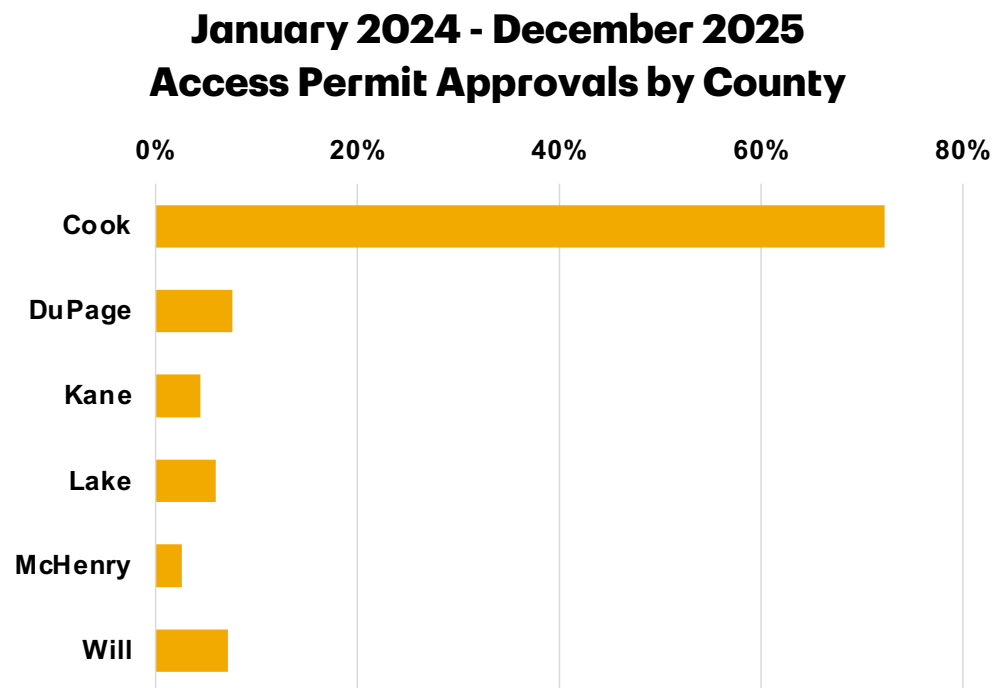
Access Rides by Metra Line

- Metra Electric & Rock Island total 52% of total Access rides
- Metra Electric, Rock Island and Southwest Service have highest proportion of rides taken using Access



Access Permit Applications

- Riders can apply through RTA's fare portal
- 14,000+ cumulative applications
- 7,500+ Access permits issued
- 72% of all approved Access permits went to Cook County residents
- On average, 256 Access permits were issued each month in 2025



Next Steps

- NITA Act centralizes fare policy and programs at the regional agency
- NITA Act calls for an income-based reduced fare program
- Fares working group is estimating costs, timeline for expanding Access to CTA and Pace
- Expansion could be included with budget amendment
- Fare portal will certify riders and issue permits



Fare Programs Online Portal Briefing



Online Fare Programs Portal

- Reduced Fare, Ride Free, and Access Pilot Program application process
- Previously paper application only (In-person or mail)
- Fare Programs Portal launched in 2022
- fares.rtachicago.org OR GetAccess.org
- Google analytics data and customer feedback prompted revision
- Opportunity to simplify the process and increase accessibility
- Portal 2.0 launched late December 2025



Enhancements

- Ability to select preferred language
- Ability to select webpage font size
- New options:
 - Switch between fare programs
 - Update photo or contact information
 - Check application status
 - Receive email updates
 - Upload missing documents
- Instructional videos (English and Spanish)
- Email notification option



Landing page with language and accessibility enhancements

The screenshot shows the RTA Fare Programs Online landing page. At the top, the RTA logo and the text "Welcome to RTA Fare Programs Online" are displayed. Below this, there are two main sections. The left section, titled "Apply for or manage your Access Pilot Program Permit", features a blue background and a placeholder for an "Access" permit card. The right section, titled "Apply for or manage your RTA Ride Free, Reduced Fare, or ADA Paratransit Permit", features a grey background and three placeholder cards for "Ride Free Permit", "Reduced Fare Permit", and "ADA Paratransit Permit". Below these cards, the text "Same cards, new look." is displayed. In the top right corner of the page, there are two dropdown menus: "Language" and "Text Size". The "Language" dropdown is currently set to "English" and has a list of other languages open, including Español, 简体中文, Français, Deutsch, Português, 日本語, العربية, Русский, Italiano, 한국어, and Polski. The "Text Size" dropdown is currently set to "Regular Text" and has a list of other text sizes open, including "Large Text" and "XL Text". An arrow points from the "Text Size" dropdown on the page to the expanded "Text Size" menu on the right.

rtta
Regional
Transportation
Authority

Welcome to RTA Fare Programs Online

Apply for or manage your
Access Pilot Program Permit

Access

Next →

Apply for or manage your RTA Ride Free, Reduced Fare, or ADA
Paratransit Permit

Ride Free Permit
JOHN SMITH
P1234567890
EXPIRES
DEC 31 2029

Reduced Fare Permit
JOHN SMITH
P1234567890
EXPIRES
DEC 31 2029

ADA Paratransit Permit
JOHN SMITH
P1234567890
EXPIRES
DEC 31 2029

Same cards, new look.

Next →

Text Size

English Regular Text

English Regular Text Large Text XL Text

Español

简体中文

Français

Deutsch

Português

日本語

العربية

Русский

Italiano

한국어

Polski



Site options



WELCOME TO RTA FARE PROGRAMS ONLINE

RTA Fare Programs Online

What are you here to do? Click on the appropriate box below.

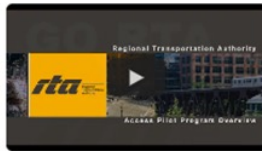
Apply for a New Access Pilot Permit	Replace Lost/Stolen/Damaged Access Pilot Permit	
Switch RTA Programs	Update your RTA Photo or Contact Information	Check the Status of Your RTA Application or Upload Missing Documents

← BACK



Program information and requirements

Apply for a New Access Pilot Permit:



English: RTA Access Pilot Program Overview



Español: Descripción general del programa piloto de acceso RTA

Access is a pilot program running through December 31, 2026, that provides a reduced fare on all Metra lines and zones for individuals living in households enrolled in the Illinois Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and who live within the Regional Transportation Authority's (RTA) six-county region (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties).

All members of the household between the ages of 12 and 64 are eligible to apply for an Access Pilot permit but will need to provide a valid/not expired State of Illinois ID

Documents required to complete this process:

New Access Pilot Permit

You will need to provide:

- A current color photo that clearly shows your face
- A valid/not expired State of Illinois ID card/driver's license with an address that matches the address on the SNAP decision notice letter
- A copy of your SNAP decision notice letter dated within 1 year of your Access application that demonstrates current eligibility
- *****Important to remember we do not accept a copy of your SNAP/Link card or appointment notice as proof of eligibility. We must have your SNAP decision notice letter*****

Your SNAP decision notice letter can be found in your IDHS ABE online account. If you don't have your online account setup, follow the instructions at this link, <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/?item=150512>, or call your case manager for assistance.

Questions? Call RTA Customer Service at (312) 913-3110

Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM CST

← BACK

Next →



WELCOME TO RTA FARE PROGRAMS ONLINE

First, let's verify if you're already in the RTA system.

First Name *

Last Name *

Street Address *

Apt/Unit

ENTER A LOCATION

- OR -

PO Box # (enter numbers only)

City *

State *

Postal Code *

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) *

MM *

DD *

YYYY *

RTA ID

* Required Fields

← BACK

NEXT →



Application

New Access Application

First Name *

M.I.

Last Name *

Test

Test

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) *

MM *

DD *

YYYY *

01

03

2001

Address Information

Street Address *

Apt/Unit

123 North LaSalle Street

- OR -

PO Box # (enter numbers only)

City *

State *

Postal Code *

Chicago

IL

60602

☐ Please check this box if your shipping address is different than the one listed above.

Telephone # *

(555) 555-5555

Email Address *

michael.vandekreke@rtachicago.org

☐ No, I don't have an email address

☒ **Check this box if you wish to opt into receiving all RTA communications electronically (paperless).** If you are opting into electronic communications, the email address you provided will be used as your primary method of contact for all notifications, updates, and official correspondence from the RTA.

☐ **If your email address is not provided, you will not receive an email confirmation or the status of your application.**

☐ **If you entered an email address, you will receive communication related to your RTA permit status. The RTA will not sell or share your email address with 3rd parties.**

This application must be signed in order to be considered under the Access Pilot Program. I understand that the purpose of this application is to determine eligibility for the Access Pilot Program. I understand that any information falsely presented on this application may result in my prosecution to the fullest extent allowable under the law. I understand that if I am issued an Access permit that the permit is for my personal use only, and that if I allow another person to use my card, then the card could be revoked, I could be removed from the program, and I may be prosecuted to the fullest extent allowable under the law.

Please type your legal name in the signature box below

Signature *

TYPE NAME HERE



Uploading required documents

Please Provide the Following Documents



English: How to upload documents using a cell phone or tablet



English: How to upload documents using a laptop or desktop



Español: Como cargar documentos usando su dispositivo móvil o tableta.



Español: Como cargar documentos usando su computadora o computadora portátil

On mobile devices, clicking "select files" will allow you to either select a file or take a photo from your phone.

Type of ID: *

Select ID type...

Government Issued ID *

Upload the front side of your current State of Illinois Driver's License or State of Illinois ID

***The address on your State of Illinois Driver's License or State of Illinois ID must match the address on your SNAP decision notice letter**

Select files...

Drop files here to select

A current color photo and it must clearly show your face *

Select files...

Drop files here to select

SNAP Eligibility Documents

Upload your Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) notice by clicking "Select Files" below

Important to remember we do not accept a copy of your SNAP/link card or appointment notice as proof of eligibility. We must have your SNAP decision notice letter

Click on image below to see an example of the SNAP decision notice letter that needs to be uploaded

To obtain a copy of your SNAP decision notice click this link <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/> and login to your SNAP account.



Click image to view larger version

Select files...

Drop files here to select

* Required Fields

← BACK

NEXT →



Review order

Review Order

New Access Application

Customer Name	TEST TEST
Date of Birth	01/03/2001
Permanent Address	123 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, IL 60602
Phone	(555) 555-5555
Email	MICHAEL.VANDEKREKE@RTACHICAGO.ORG
Shipping Address	123 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, IL 60602

Your Uploaded Files

Click links below to review your uploaded files

1. [Sample Illinois Drivers License.jpg](#)
2. [Headshot 1.jpg](#)
3. [Test Document.docx](#)

← BACK

SUBMIT →



Confirmation page

Thank You!

Your application has been submitted and pending review. Please wait 3 business days before checking the status of your RTA Permit Card. If approved, you should receive your permit card within 7-14 business days.

New Access Application

Order Number	WACD9BYW9
Customer Name	TEST TEST
Date of Birth	1/3/2001
Permanent Address	123 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, IL 60602
Phone	(555) 555-5555
Email	MICHAEL.VANDEKREKE@RTACHICAGO.ORG
Shipping Address	123 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, IL 60602



English: What to expect next



Español: Qué esperar a continuación

If approved, you should receive your permit card within 7-14 business days at 123 NORTH LASALLE STREET CHICAGO, IL 60602.

If you have any additional questions or do not receive your RTA permit card, please contact RTA Customer Service at (312) 913-3110.

← START OVER

PRINT 🖨

Confirmation email

AllUnread

By Date ▾ ↑

▼ Today

RTA - No Reply

Thank you10:42 AM

You don't often get email from noreply@omicrontech.net. Learn

Thank you

RTA - No Reply <noreply@omicrontech.net>(RTA - No Rep

To Michael VanDekreke

☺

↩ Reply

↩ Reply All

➡ Forward

👤

⋮

Wed 2/4/2026 10:42 AM

ⓘ

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
We could not verify the identity of the sender. Click here to learn more.
The actual sender of this message is different than the normal sender. Click here to learn more.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

You don't often get email from noreply@omicrontech.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Thank you for submitting your RTA Application.

Card Type: Access ReducedFare

Order Number: WACD9BYW9

Customer Name: Test Test

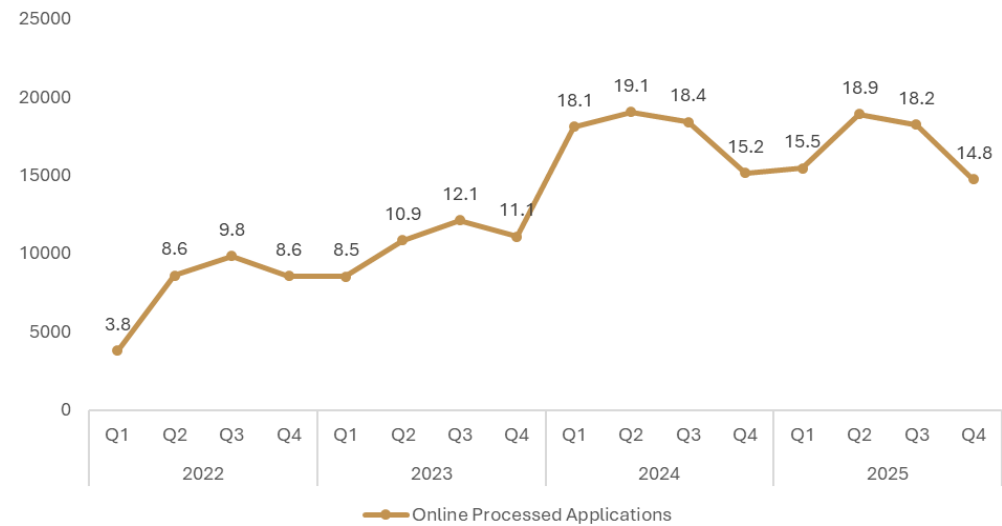
If approved, you should receive your permit within 7-14 business days at 123 North LaSalle Street , Chicago IL 60602 . If you have any additional questions or do not receive your RTA permit, please contact RTA customer service at (312) 913-3110.

Thank you for taking the time to complete your application through the RTA Fare Programs online application. Please take a few minutes to let us know about your experience by clicking this [link](#) to access a brief survey.

If you'd like to unsubscribe and stop receiving these emails [click here](#).

Applications processed

- Steady increase in volume
 - 31K in 2022
 - 67K in 2025
- 212K total applications processed
- \$215K in savings so far from reduced application printing and mailing expenses



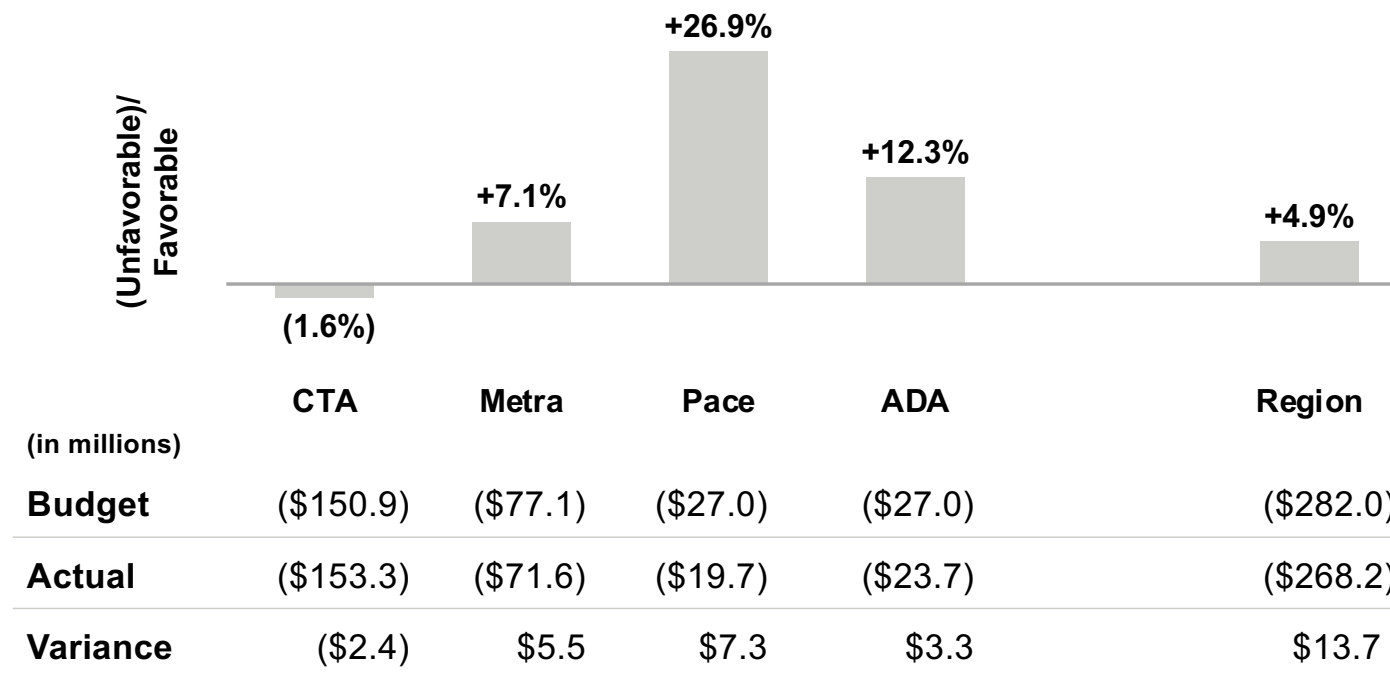
Applications processed 2022 - 2025 (Thousands)



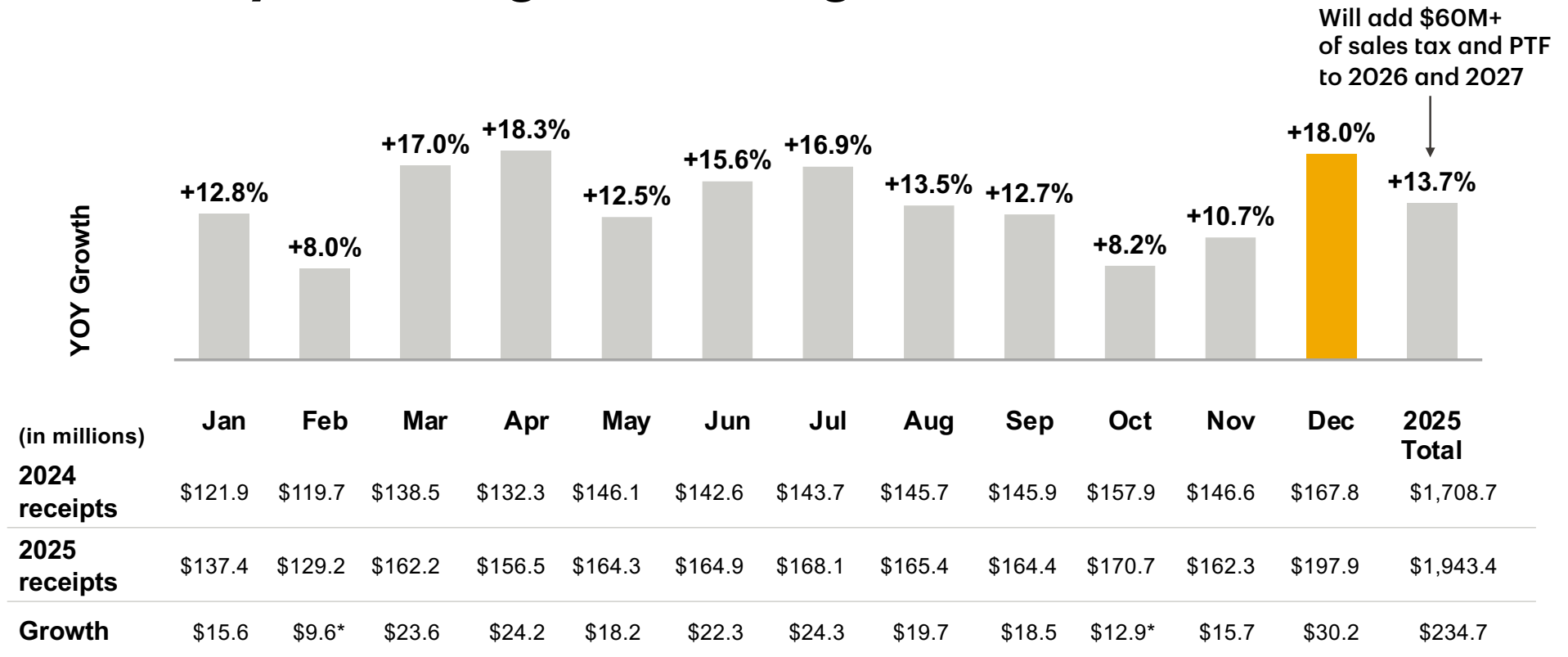
6c. Monthly financials



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through January



Monthly sales tax growth through December 2025



*YOY growth was reduced in February and October by high prior year results

7. Action items



**7a. Amendment of
the 2026-2030
Capital Program,
and extensions to
Innovation,
Coordination, and
Enhancement (ICE)
funded projects**



2026-2030 Funding changes (in millions)

2026-2030 Funding Changes	Current	Change	Proposed
Chicago Transit Authority	\$5,779.5	\$122.4	\$5,901.9
Metra	\$2,121.7	\$2.1	\$2,123.7
Pace	\$367.3	\$77.8	\$445.1
RTA	\$18.8	\$0	\$18.8
2026-2030 Capital Program Available	\$8,287.3	\$202.3	\$8,489.5



New Competitive Funding: \$161.7M

CTA

- Federal LoNo Bus Award: \$121.1M
 - Purchase of 150 Hybrid Buses
- RTA Access to Transit: \$0.8M
 - Bus Turnaround ADA & Site Improvements- Halsted and 79th Street

Pace

- Federal LoNo Bus Award: \$39.8M
 - Purchase of 36 Hybrid Buses



Reprogrammed Innovation Coordination and Enhancement Funding: \$1.9M

CTA: \$0.3M

- Englewood Racine Green Line Station Feasibility Study

Metra: \$1.6M

- Labor Apprenticeship & Development Project



Innovation Coordination and Enhancement Funded Project Changes

Time Extensions:

CTA:

- Safety Management System

Pace:

- Transit Signal Priority

Metra:

- Hybrid & Alternative Fuel Vehicles
- Luminous Platform Signs
- Downtown Terminal Information Displays
- GPS Train Tracker
- Station Displays
- Transportation Division Software



Proposed ordinances for approval

- Amendment of the 2026-2030 Capital Program
- Extensions for the Innovation Coordination and Enhancement Program

7b. ADA Action Plan 2

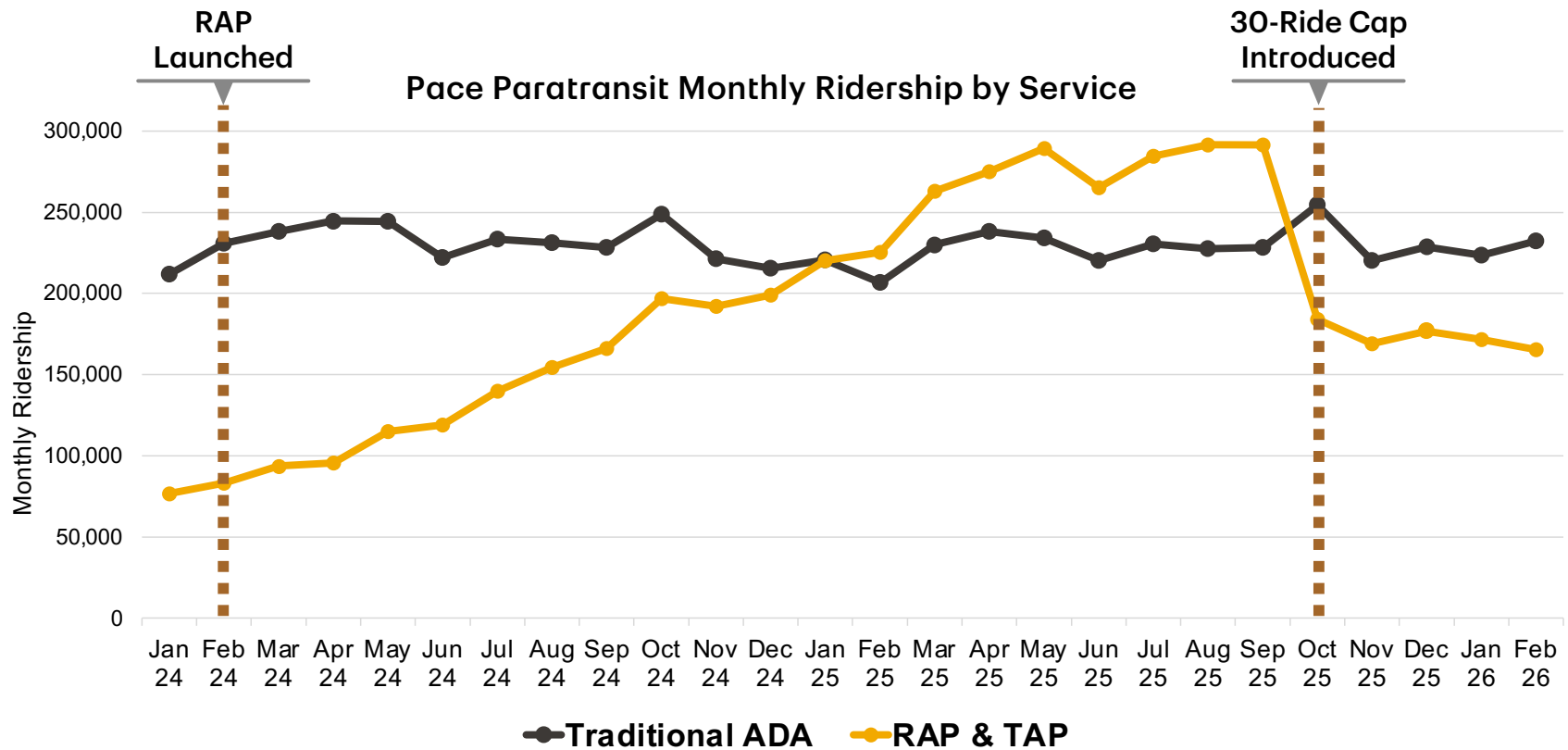


Background

- ADA Paratransit is a mandated service that complements fixed route
- In our region we fund ADA Paratransit first
- Pace is the second largest ADA Paratransit operator nationally, serving six counties and two subsidy programs, Taxi Access Program (TAP) and Rideshare Access Program (RAP), RTA certifies eligibility
- 2024-25 rapid cost increase of subsidy programs combined with fiscal cliff funding uncertainty led to the RTA Board adopting an Action Plan
 - 30-ride monthly cap
 - Fare restoration
 - Ride Free fixed route for ADA certified riders
- Passage of the NITA Act brought funding certainty
- RTA initiated an audit of Pace ADA Paratransit



ADA Paratransit ridership impact



Action Plan 2

- Make permanent fare restoration, matching traditional ADA at \$3.25
- Make permanent Ride Free fixed route for ADA certified riders
- Maintain the 30-ride cap
- Develop and manage an application process to increase monthly ride cap on RAP/TAP to 40 on a case-by-case basis
- Continue to advance better coordination of county RAP programs
- Continue to monitor ridership and usage on traditional ADA and RAP/TAP for NITA board to assess future changes



Why Action Plan 2?

- Action Plan 2 addresses public comments related to the 30-ride a month cap
- It is built from analysis of multiple months of data after Action Plan 1 was implemented
- It suggests making pilots recommended in Action Plan 1 permanent
- New NITA funding included in the 2026 Budget will cover Action Plan 2 changes
- The NITA Board will be responsible for future changes

How did we arrive at 40?

More flexibility addresses rider needs

- 80% of riders use 30 or fewer rides per month
- 97% of riders use 40 or fewer rides per month

Subsidy programs are cost effective

- TAP/RAP \$18/trip average cost (max cost per trip of \$30)
- Traditional ADA \$80/trip average cost



7c. Ordinance Authorizing a Contract for Printing and Mailing of Maps



**7d. Ordinance
Authorizing a
Contract for
Professional Services
for the DuPage
County Demand
Response
Transportation Study**



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 16.



Stay connected

rt rtachicago.org

rt transitistheanswer.org

 Connections blog – rtachicago.org/blog

 facebook.com/ChicagoRTA

 instagram.com/@RTA_Chicago

 threads.net/@rta_chicago

 tiktok.com/@rta_chicago

 twitter.com/@RTA_Chicago

 youtube.com/RTAChicagoLand

 @rtachicago.bsky.social

