

# Regional Transportation Authority Budget

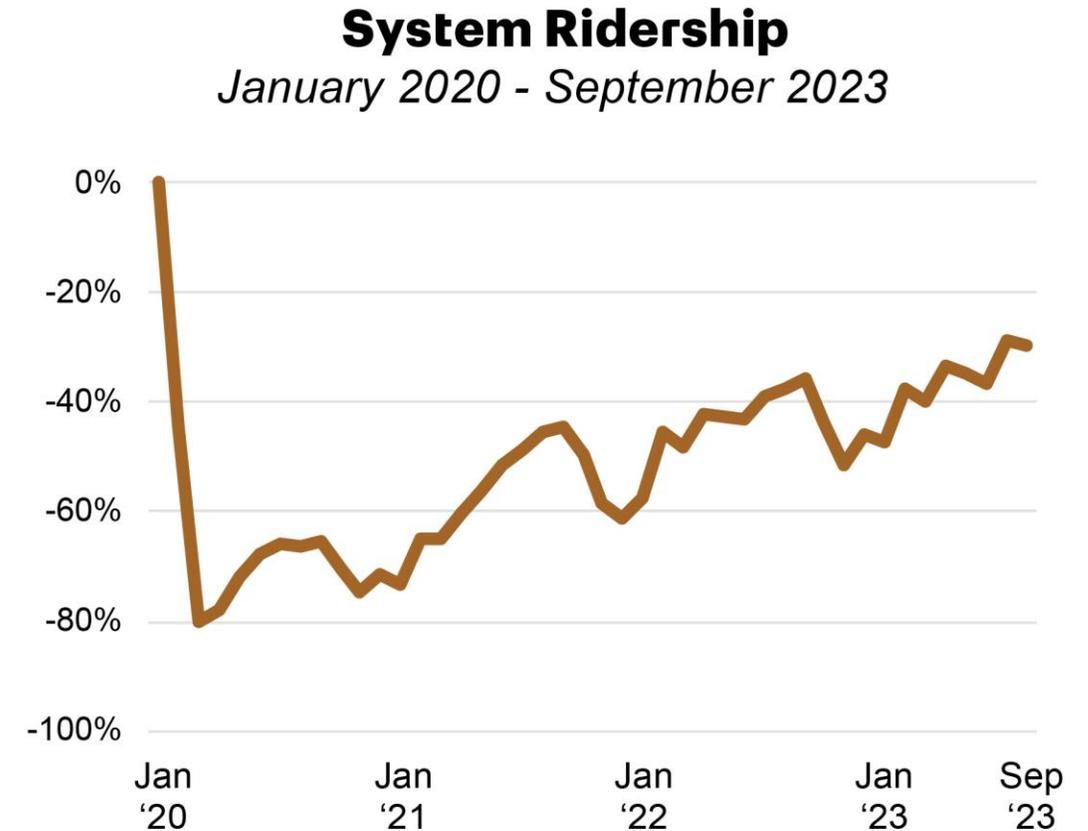
October 31, 2023

Cook County Board of Commissioners



# Transit recovery continues

- Currently providing over one million rides per weekday regionwide
- Transit adapting to new commuting patterns:
  - Additional weekend and midday trips
  - Estimated 80% of riders have returned to the system, but riding less frequently
- Expansion of free and reduced fare programs, additional fare pilots



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# Proposed 2024 Regional Operating Budget

- Total regional expenses projected at \$3.924 billion
  - 9.5% increase from 2023 Regional Budget
  - Continued service restorations, higher labor expense amid workforce challenges
- Federal relief funding still expected to begin to exhaust toward the end of 2025
  - Projected shortfall of more than \$700 million starting in 2026
  - New funding sources and policy reforms need to be in place to avoid extensive service cuts and fare increases
- Recovery ratio waiver extended for 2024 and 2025—permanent fare policy reform necessary



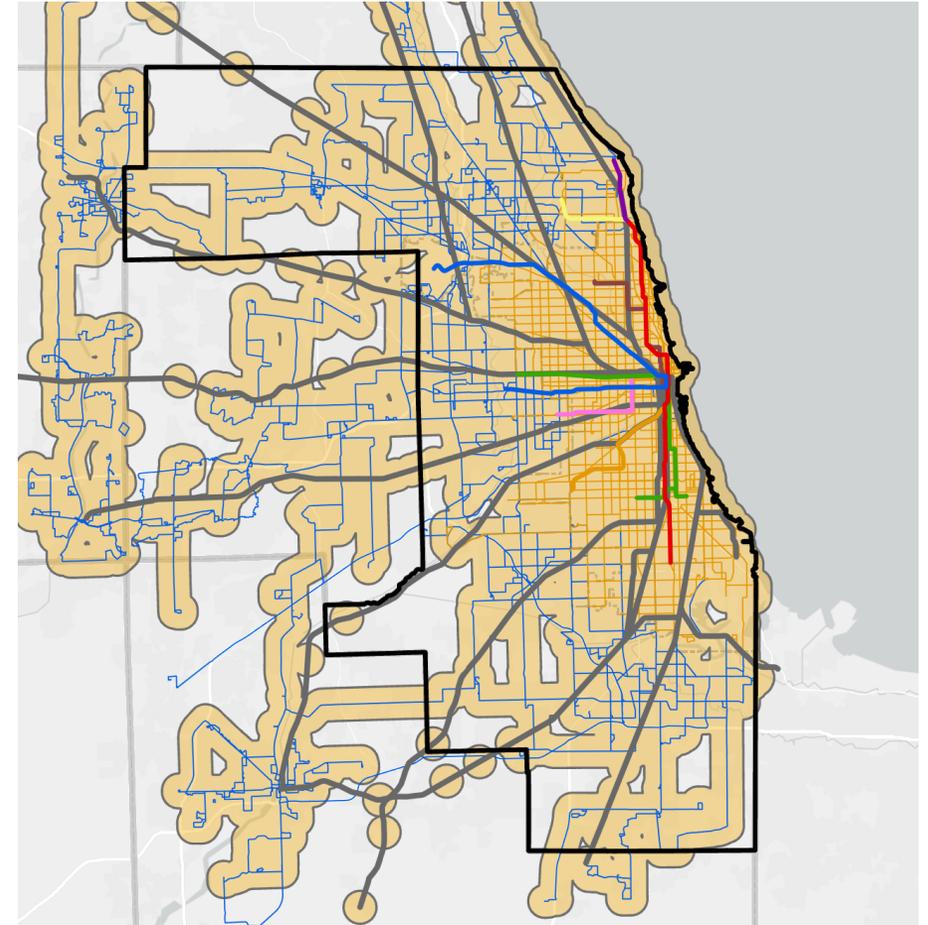
# Cook County Transit Snapshot

## Ridership

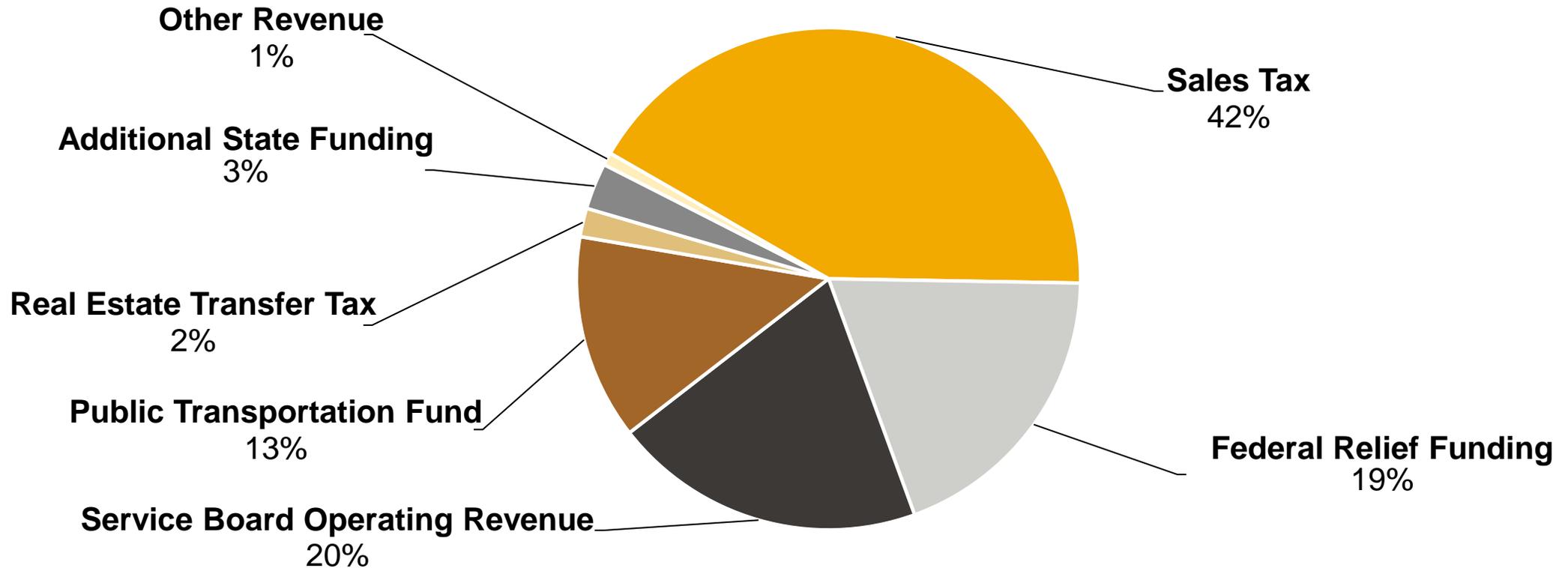
- Serviced by CTA, Metra, and Pace, includes majority of region's Metra stations and Pace bus routes
- Increased service, ridership on northwest lines

## Capital program highlights

- Pace Pulse: Dempster Line, South Halsted, and 95<sup>th</sup> Street
- Pace Southwest Division Electrification and Expansion
- CTA 103<sup>rd</sup> Street garage electrification
- Harvey Transportation Center

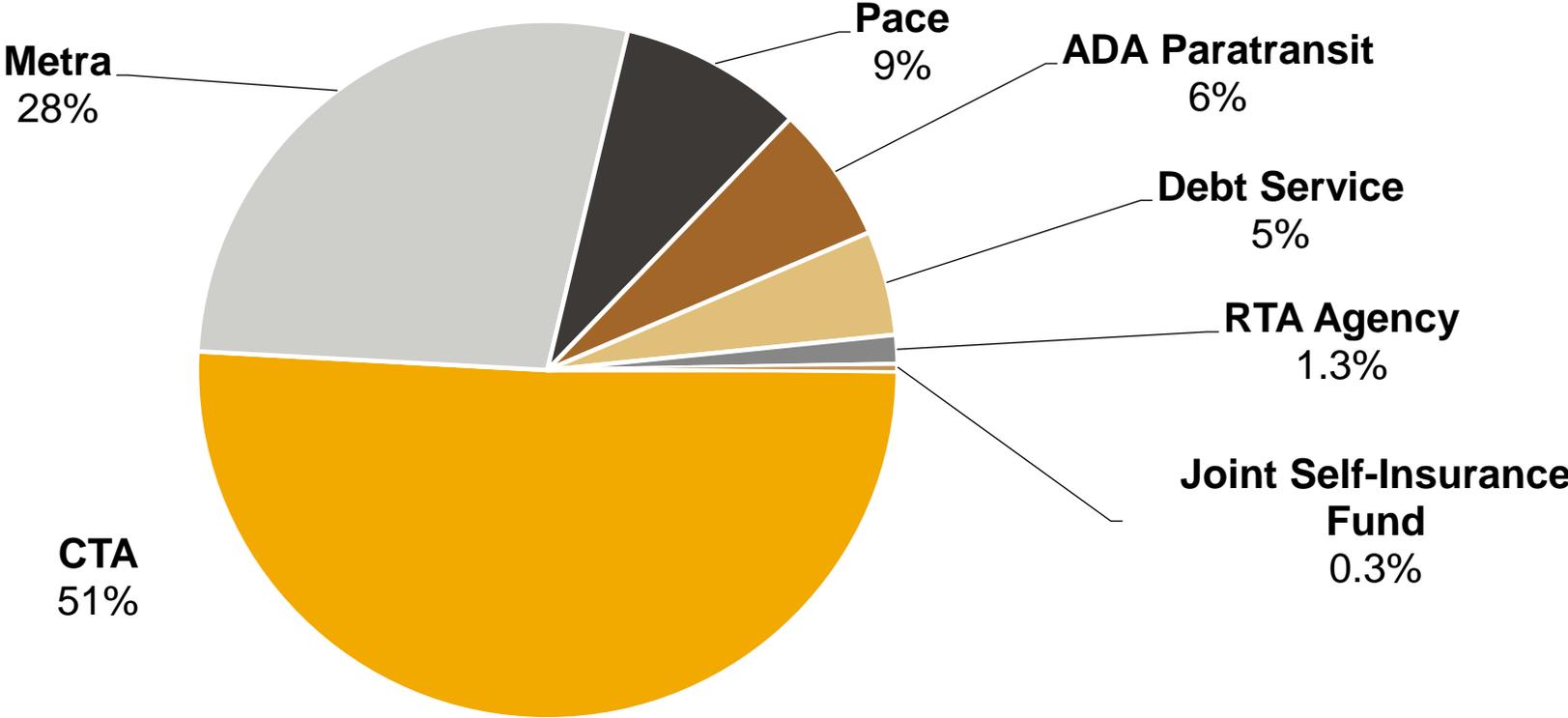


# 2024 transit budget still being stabilized by Federal relief



Revenue by Source (Proposed 2024 Budget)

# 2024 budgeted expense by agency



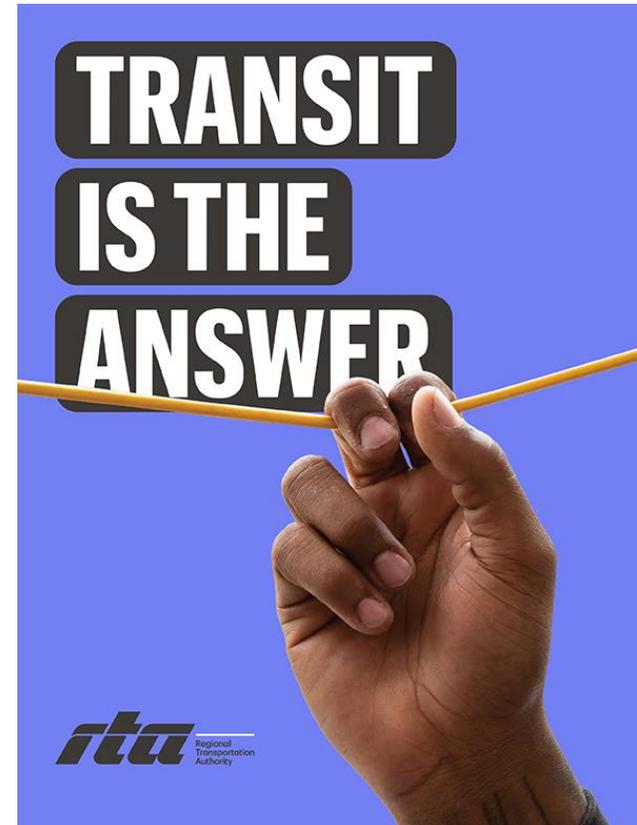
Expenses (Proposed 2024 Budget)



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# *Transit is the Answer* in action

- *Transit is the Answer*, the regional transit strategic plan, highlights strategies to address the fiscal cliff and continue to grow ridership
- Implementation includes:
  - Reduced fare expansion and new fare products
  - Development of legislative agenda and outreach to elected officials
  - Transparent reporting of data on operating and capital improvements



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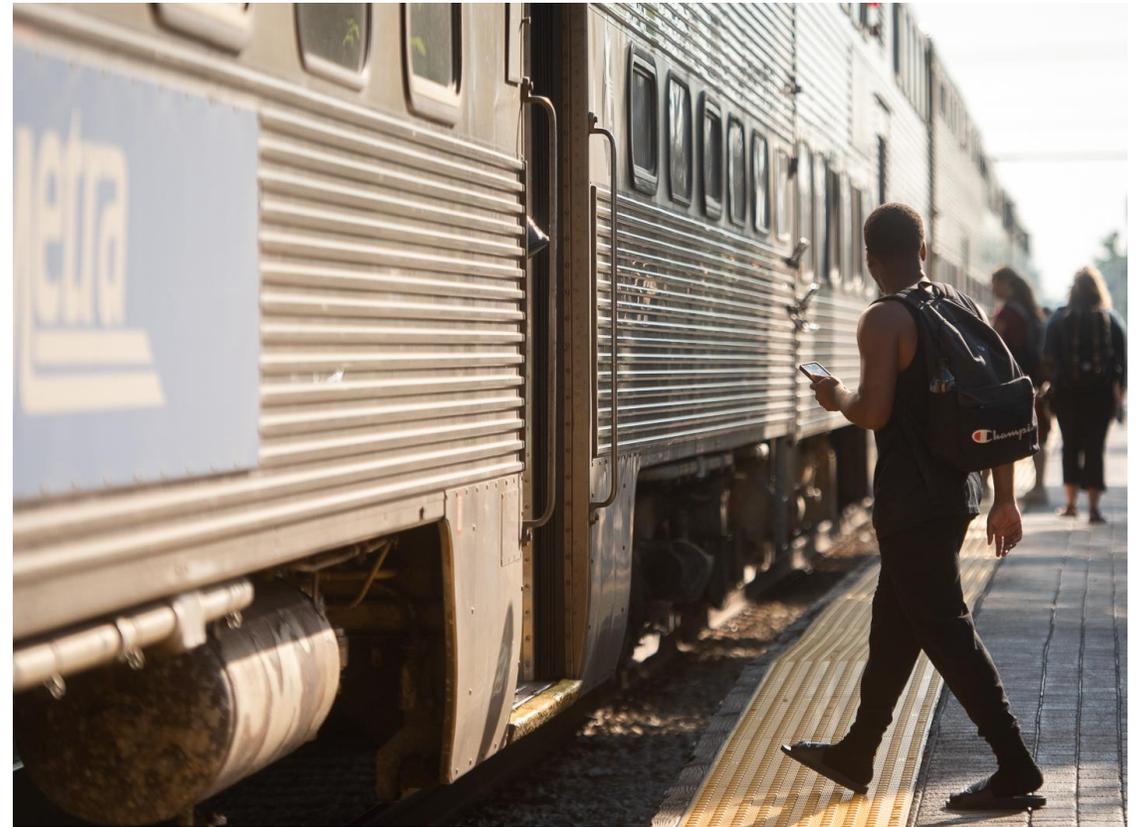
# Transit delivering on legislative reforms

- Providing \$500,000 in pre-loaded farecards to The Network for distribution to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
- Improvements to the regional Ride Free program for seniors and people with disabilities
- Expansion of the Transportation Benefits pre-tax transit fare program
- Additional capital funds and continued improvements for capital project delivery
  - Over \$3.5 billion in Rebuild Illinois capital funds programmed
  - New criteria for evaluating capital projects

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# 2024 State Legislative Agenda

- Goal: Build support for state legislative action to address projected fiscal cliff and other RTA policy goals
- Resource for educating lawmakers and advocates about challenges, opportunities, and potential solutions
- Agenda is a living document; will be updated/revised based upon feedback from legislators and stakeholders



# LEGISLATIVE

# AGENDA

2024

01

## **Fully fund the region's transit system**

- Raise at least \$730M annually in new operating revenue
- Increase levels of sustainable capital funding to meet transit's infrastructure needs of \$3.5B per year over the next 10 years

02

## **Develop a funding structure less reliant on rider fares**

- Reform 50% farebox recovery ratio requirement
- Fully fund free and reduced fare programs
- Pilot expansion of reduced fare program to include people experiencing low-incomes

# LEGISLATIVE

# AGENDA

2024

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**03**

## **Pursue reforms and efficiencies that will improve transit operations**

- Strengthen regional approach to fare policy
  - Build on data-driven capital investment process to advance equity, mobility justice
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**04**

## **Work with the State to leverage transit to reduce emissions and advance racial equity**

- Set statewide and regional GHG goals for transportation
- Reform road system user fees (tolls, parking, etc.) to support transit
- Provide additional capital funding to accelerate transition to zero-emission bus network

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# Next Steps

- November 16 – agencies present to RTA Board
- December 5 – Transit is the Answer Coalition meeting
- December 7 – RTA virtual public hearing
- December 14 – RTA Board of Directors votes on budget adoption



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