

Meeting of the RTA Board of Directors

April 16, 2026

Welcome! Meeting Starts at 8:30 a.m.

Meeting Agenda: rtachicago.org



1. Call to order

Pledge of allegiance



RTA Board of Directors meeting

- Roll call

3. Executive Session

Illinois Open Meetings Act Section 2(c)(29)

RTA Board of Directors meeting

- Approval of minutes

5. Public Comment

6. Executive Director's report



Ridership campaign

A smarter Chicago commute starts with transit.



**Gas prices are rising.
Transit fares are not.**



Legislative update



Today's agenda



7. Information items

7a. Proposed 2026 Operating Budget Amendment



Goals of the proposed amendment

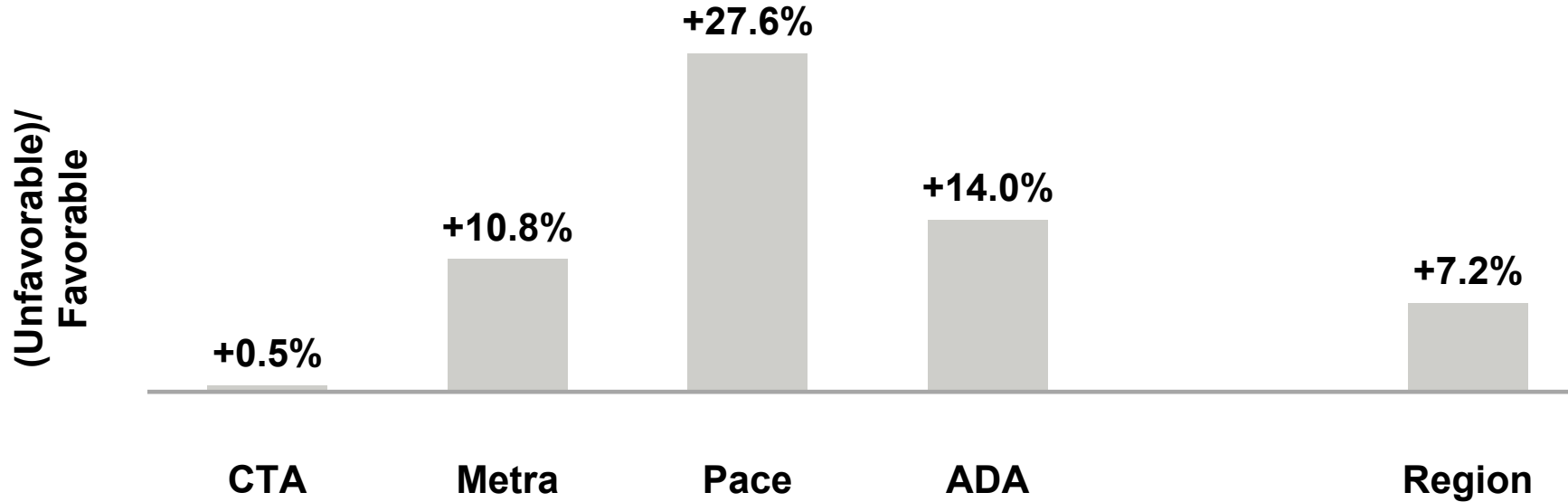
- **Fund key priorities identified in the NITA Act for early implementation**
 - Allows staff to begin planning and implementation of key early milestones identified in the NITA Act
- **Allocate only a portion of the total estimated available 2026 funds leaving future policy and budgetary decisions to the new NITA Board**
 - NITA Board will make determination of longer term priorities through future 2026 amendment(s) and the 2027 Budget process

New 2026 revenue allocations from December 2025

(in millions)	2026 Adopted Budget
0.25% sales tax	\$199.2
5.0% of gas sales tax	\$365.5
Total New Revenue	\$564.7
Previous allocations to resolve 2026 budget gaps:	
CTA	\$142.0
Metra	\$27.9
Pace Suburban Service	\$18.9
ADA Paratransit	\$56.7
Unallocated remainder	\$319.2



2026 positive budget variance (PBV) thru February



(in millions)

	CTA	Metra	Pace	ADA	Region
Budget	(\$296.7)	(\$150.2)	(\$53.5)	(\$54.0)	(\$554.4)
Actual	(\$295.2)	(\$133.9)	(\$38.7)	(\$46.5)	(\$514.3)
Variance	\$1.5	\$16.3	\$14.8	\$7.6	\$40.1



Enhancements already in approved 2026 Budget

CTA

- Expansion of Frequent Bus Network
- Bus route extensions and improved connections

Metra

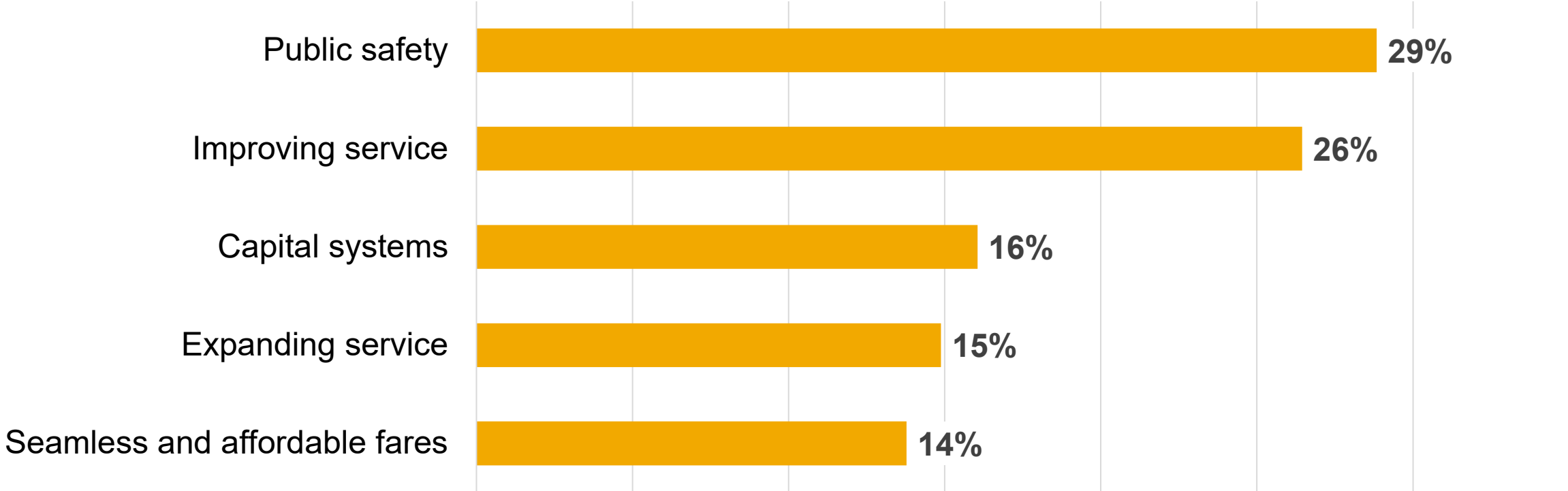
- Increased weekday service to alleviate overcrowding
- Expanded weekend service throughout the system

Pace

- Increased service and frequency compared to 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



Riders, operators and communities across six counties benefit

- Increase staffing levels across service boards and partner agencies
- Make the system more secure for riders and operators
- Enhanced transit service delivery and reliability
- Seamless and affordable fares
- Improved customer experience and information
- Budget for regional priorities will live at RTA/NITA to ensure coordinated implementation with CTA, Metra, and Pace

Working Groups

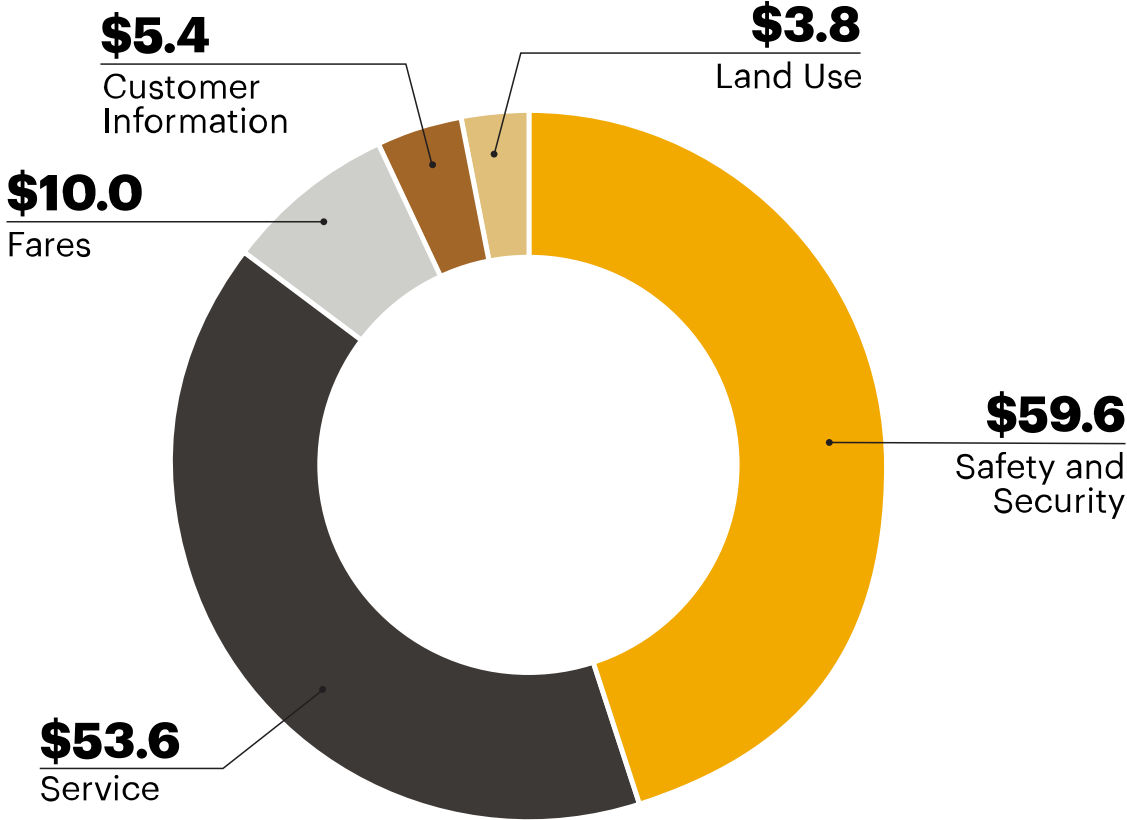
- Working groups are comprised of RTA and Service Board staff
- Staff has identified immediate actions, resources needed to advance key priorities

5 topic areas for rider-focused near term improvements

- Public Safety & Security
- Service
- Rider Information
- Fares
- Land Use

Summary of 2026 amendment proposal

Proposed expenses by category
(in millions)



Total \$132.2 million

Agency

CTA	\$64,050,000
Metra	\$22,000,000
Pace	\$8,500,000
RTA/NITA	\$37,650,000
Total	\$132,200,000



Public safety & security

Increased human presence on transit

- More sworn officers
- More security/response staff: K-9 Patrols & Safe Ride Specialists (crisis intervention)
- Early efforts to set up a transit ambassador program

Improved conditions for frontline staff

- Funds to install bus shields & body cameras

Technology upgrades

- Fund and begin work on safety software and incident reporting app



Safety & Security

Proposed RTA Budget Amendment Amount

CTA

Chicago Police Department Voluntary Special Employment Program (VSEP): increase headcount from 99 to 180	\$20,000,000
K-9 Patrols: increase deployments from 164 to 200	\$10,000,000
Safe Ride Specialists Crisis Intervention Team	\$2,000,000
Safety Software: Hazmat software to meet FTA mandate	\$300,000

METRA

Metra Police: 14 additional officers, 6 sergeants and captains	\$3,800,000
Body Worn Cameras: Software and maintenance cost for conductors	\$1,400,000
BNSF Late-night On-board Security staffing	\$500,000

PACE

Bus Shields: retrofit 668 vehicles with enhanced shield for operators	\$3,000,000
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Cook County and State Police Support

Officers and Security resources strategically deployed across system, including at Pace locations	\$12,500,000
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RTA/NITA

Task Force / Security Office (NITA deadline)	\$2,500,000
Cook County and State of Illinois Health and Human Services assistance	\$3,000,000
Incident report app (NITA deadline)	\$500,000

Safety & Security Total	\$59,500,000
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Service expansion & enhancement

Staffing/headcount increases to expand service

- Invest in Frequent Network, Route Extensions, Increased hours (CTA)
- Advance Rock Island Regional Rail (Metra)
- More weekend suburban bus service in the future by funding garage staffing at every location (Pace)

Prioritize service reliability and delivery

Advance facilities upgrades and cleaning

- Refresh & Renew, Mid-line & coach cleaning



Service

Proposed RTA Budget Amendment Amount

CTA

Service Reliability

Rail Slow Zone Mitigation	\$10,000,000
Rail Car Maintenance	\$10,000,000
Automated Bus Lane Enforcement (ABLE) Expansion	\$1,000,000
Bus Service Reliability Tool	\$2,000,000
Bus Priority Zones (BPZ) Expansion	\$500,000
Improve schedule reliability on 35 routes	\$3,000,000

Service Improvements

Frequent Bus Network (FBN) Expansion on 4 routes	\$1,500,000
Route Extensions: #10 and #57	\$1,750,000
Span Extension: Extending service span weekdays/end on six routes	\$500,000

Cleaning and facility upgrades

Enhanced Refresh and Renew to improve stations	\$500,000
Rail Mid-Line Cleaning on Red and Blue lines	\$1,000,000

Service continued

Proposed RTA Budget Amendment Amount

METRA

Service Improvement

Rock Island Regional Rail Pilot: Staffing 24 crews, trainers, rental space for training	\$5,500,000
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Service Expenses

Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Maintenance and Track Usage Fees	\$7,800,000
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Cleaning and Facilities

Enhanced Coach Cleaning: staffing to expand/enhance budget coach cleaning program	\$3,000,000
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PACE

Service Improvement

Weekend Garage Staffing at All Pace Facilities	\$5,500,000
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Service Total

\$53,550,000



Rider information

Advancing an accessible, unified rider experience

- Upgrades at key inter-agency locations across the collar counties, suburban Cook, and the city of Chicago
- Language and accessibility improvements
- Digital information expansion and standardization
 - Paths of travel, real-time elevator status



Rider information

Customer Information

RTA/NITA

Full-Scale Signage Modernization Pilot: 10 Inter-agency locations	\$2,000,000
Language Access Plan (LAP) (NITA deadline)	\$300,000
Regional Multilingual Signage Expansion	\$350,000
Digital Information Standardization Policy Guide	\$500,000
GTFS Pathways Development	\$600,000
Expand Digital Modernization to Bus Stops	\$1,000,000
Real-time Elevator Status for CTA, Pace, and Metra Facilities	\$400,000
Translation Services	\$250,000
Customer Information Total	\$5,400,000



Fares

Expanded affordability, centralized programs

- Expansion of the Access Pilot to CTA and Pace
- RTA/CTA Transit Benefit program merger
- Harmonizing fare policies
 - Students, U-Pass, military and other programs

Fares

RTA/NITA	\$10,000,000
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Expand Access pilot to include CTA and Pace: income-based reduced fare program (NITA requirement)

Transit Benefit Merger

Harmonizing/Centralizing Fare Policies: standardizing students, free and reduced fares, U-Pass, and other programs as first step toward full regional consolidation.

Continue Regional Day Pass: Continue current pass, develop new pass products

Fares Total	\$10,000,000
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Land use

Investing in communities

- Additional funding for Community Planning grants to fast-track People Over Parking Act implementation
- Additional funding for Access to Transit grants to improve accessibility
- Equitable Transit Oriented Development study for new green line station

Land Use

RTA/NITA

Community Planning: Additional funding for 2026 Community Planning program to support zoning and parking regulation updates to support People Over Parking Act implementation.	\$400,000
Model Zoning and Parking Ordinance: Support People Over Parking Act implementation	\$100,000
ETOD Study: New Green Line Station in Englewood (station is NITA requirement)	\$250,000
Access to Transit: Additional funding for 2026 program	\$3,000,000
Land Use Total	\$3,750,000

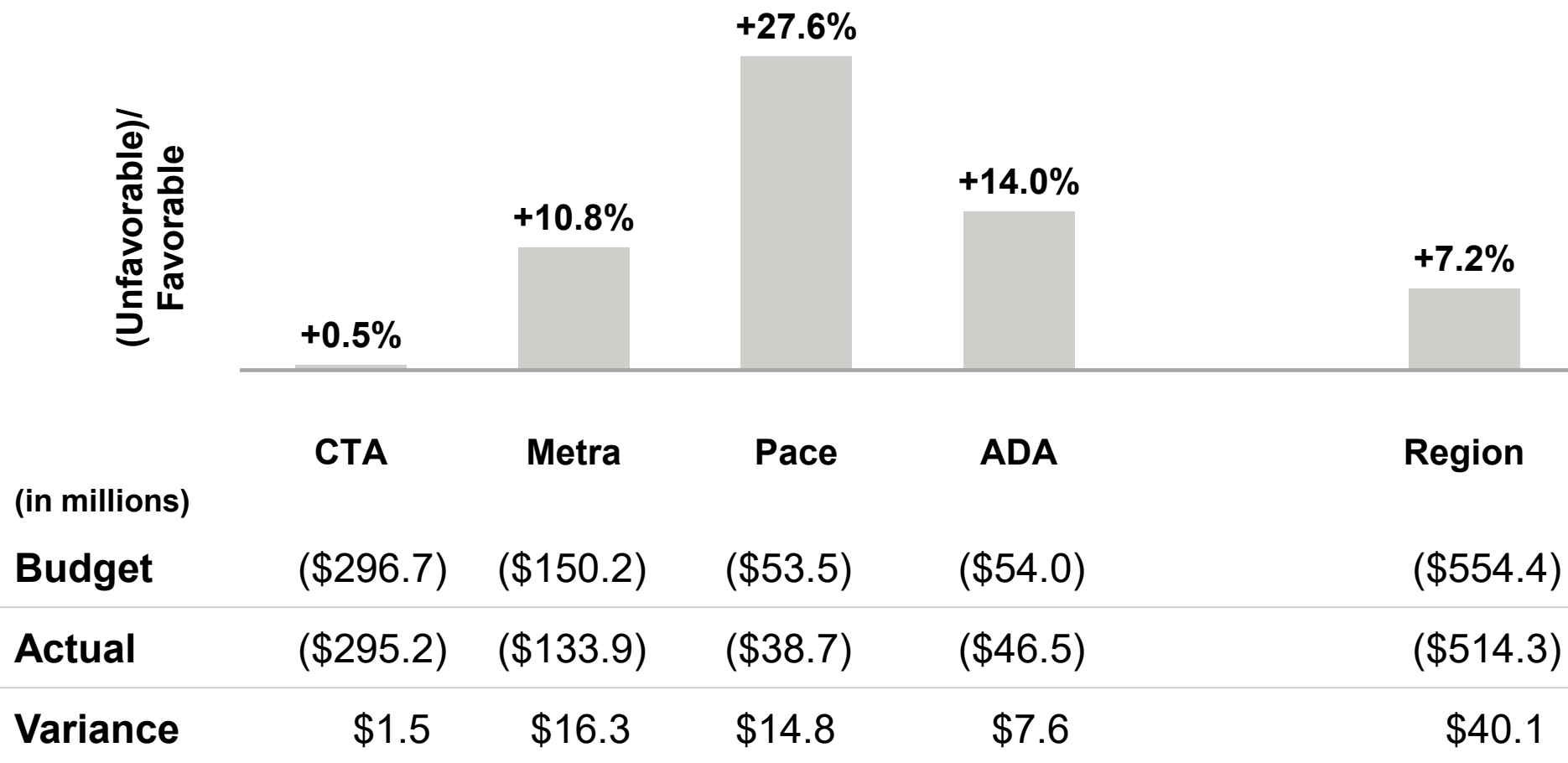
Next steps

- Seek input and feedback from advocates, stakeholders and RTACAB
- Host a Transit is the Answer Coalition meeting for public input April 29
- Public comment period April 20 – May 8
- Staff will incorporate feedback and finalize proposal for May vote
- Service Board approval in June
- July financial reporting would reflect amended budgets

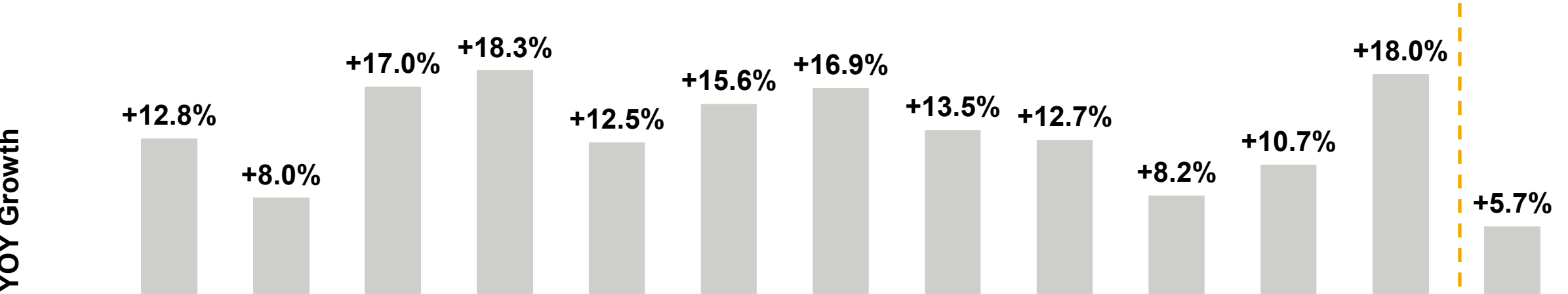
7b. Monthly financial results – February 2026



Operating deficit variances from budget YTD through February



Monthly sales tax growth through January 2026



(in millions)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-26
2024 receipts	\$121.9	\$119.7	\$138.5	\$132.3	\$146.1	\$142.6	\$143.7	\$145.7	\$145.9	\$157.9	\$146.6	\$167.8	\$137.4
2025 receipts	\$137.4	\$129.2	\$162.2	\$156.5	\$164.3	\$164.9	\$168.1	\$165.4	\$164.4	\$170.7	\$162.3	\$197.9	\$145.7
Growth	\$15.6	\$9.6*	\$23.6	\$24.2	\$18.2	\$22.3	\$24.3	\$19.7	\$18.5	\$12.9*	\$15.7	\$30.2	\$8.3

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

8. Action items

8a. Appointments of two trustees to the RTA Pension Board of Trustees



8b. Appointments for an Acting Chair and an Acting RTA trustee to the RTA Pension Board of Trustees



8c. Appointment of an Acting Treasurer of the RTA



9. New Business

Adjournment

The next meeting of the RTA Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, May 21.

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