

# Regional Transportation Authority Budget

November 18, 2025  
Lake County Board

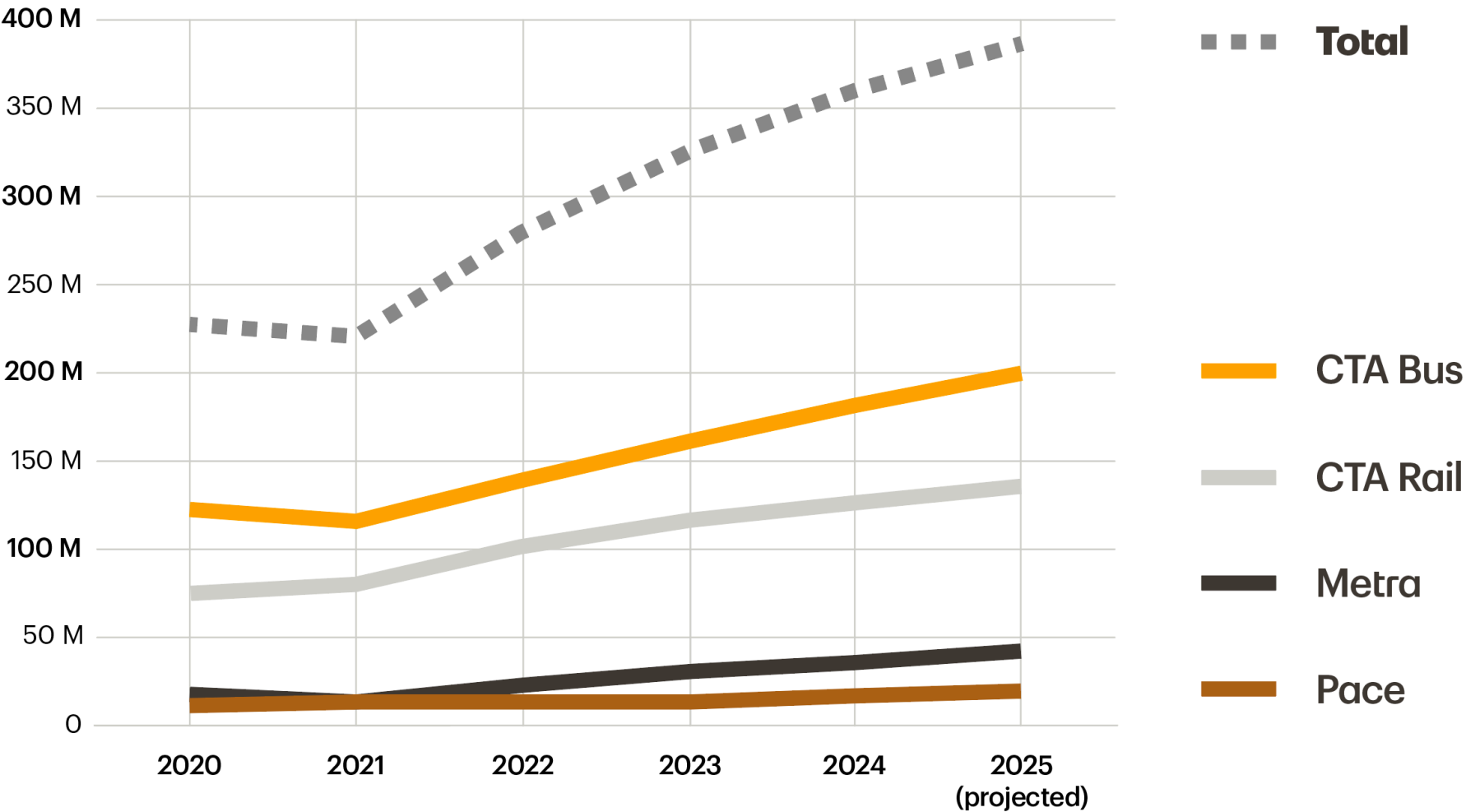


# 2026 SB 211 overall impacts

- No service cuts
- No layoffs
- No fare increases in 2026
- Continued improvements to service quality and experience



# Ridership momentum continues



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# **SB2111 - Operations Revenue (\$1.209B)**

- **Sales Tax on Motor Fuel – Estimated \$731M for RTA Region annually**
  - 85/15 statewide split (\$860M total)
  - 5% of 6.25% sales tax on gas to fund transit operations beginning July 1, 2026
- **RTA Sales Tax Increase – Estimated \$478M annually**
  - 1% - 1.25% on general merchandise in Cook County
  - 1.25% - 1.5% on qualifying food, drugs, and medical appliances in Cook County
  - 0.75% - 1% on general merchandise and qualifying food, drugs, and medical appliances in collar counties, with 0.25% still eligible for collar counties transportation or public safety costs
  - New increment (Sales Tax III) is not matched by the state (no PTF III)
  - RTA Board must approve increase within 60 days of June 1, 2026



# 2026-2028 new funding

<b>\$ Millions – Annual Public Funding</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
<b>Existing Operating Funding</b>	<b>\$2,568.1</b>	<b>\$2,633.5</b>	<b>\$2,686.8</b>
New 0.25% RTA Sales Tax “III” <i>(Estimated to begin August 2026)</i>	\$199.2	\$520.7	\$531.1
5.0 pts of State 6.25% sales tax on gas <i>(Estimated to begin July 2026)</i>	\$365.5	\$731.0	\$745.6
<b>Total Operating Funding</b>	<b>\$3,132.8</b>	<b>\$3,885.2</b>	<b>\$3,963.6</b>
Increase from existing funding	\$564.7	\$1,251.7	\$1,276.8
<b>New Capital Funding</b>			
Road Fund Interest from IDOT <i>(Estimated to begin July 2026)</i>	\$180	\$180	\$180

## 2026 Funding Amendment – proposed marks remedy shortfalls

	2026 Adopted Marks	2026 Proposed Marks	\$ Change
CTA	\$1,377.0	\$1,518.9	+\$141.9
Metra	\$635.9	\$663.8	+\$27.9
Pace	\$251.6	\$270.5	+\$18.9
ADA Paratransit	\$280.1	\$280.1	+\$0.0
RAP / TAP	\$0.0	\$56.7	+\$56.7
Debt Service and JSIF	\$59.2	\$59.2	+\$0.0
RTA Agency	\$40.4	\$40.4	+\$0.0
Projected Regional Funds (Q4 2026)	\$0.0	\$319.2	+\$319.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,644.1</b>	<b>\$3,208.8</b>	<b>+\$564.7</b>

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# Recovery ratio changes in SB2111

- Lowered to 25% (budgeted) for 2026-2029 budgets (5% for ADA)
  - Must be reported to State upon budget adoption, or RFR is forfeited
  - Separate penalty for revenue shortfalls to 25%
  - Waiver of penalty for 2026
- Lowered to 20% (actual) for 2030 and beyond (5% for ADA)
- All adjustments removed, except security expense and ICE funding
  - RTA debt service must now be included, creating downward pressure
  - Legislative remedy anticipated for longer-term compliance



# New funding will lead to service improvements

- Accelerating operator hiring and training to support increased frequency
- Expanding the Access Pilot Program to CTA and Pace riders
- Expanding Access to Transit projects that improve sidewalks, crossings, shelters, lighting, and accessible station access.
- Beginning coordinated service planning to make it easier to transfer between CTA, Metra, and Pace.
- Beginning planning for increased public safety programs included in the bill such as transit ambassadors





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# SB2111 – Board Structure and Transition

- Current RTA Board terms expire September 1, 2026; members can be reappointed
- New board structures for NITA and Service Boards, members appointed by September 2026
  - NITA Board 20 members, 5 from each subregion
  - Major decisions require supermajority of any 15 members or at least 12 directors; 2 from each subregion
  - 17 of 20 NITA directors also serve on one of the boards of each Service Board
  - Service Board Chairs and Executive Directors chosen by board members with majority vote;
    - All Board Chairs confirmed by Senate until Sept. 1, 2030
    - NITA Board and ED involved in choosing Service Board EDs, who are subject to approval and annual performance review by NITA Board; can be removed by NITA board
    - NITA Executive Director confirmed by Illinois Senate until September 1, 2030

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# SB2111 – Key Dates and Deadlines

- June 1, 2026: Effective date for legislation; RTA board votes to approve sales tax within 60 days
- September 1, 2026: Terms of current RTA board members expire, can be reappointed
  - IDOT procures transition consultant
- Jan 1, 2027: NITA Law Enforcement Task Force recommendation due
- June 1, 2027: Vote on implementation of sworn law enforcement officer program
- July 1, 2027: NITA adopts transition plan ordinance
  - Transit ambassador program established
- December 2027: First service plan process begins for service standards funding allocations
- January 1, 2028: Process for unified fare system begins, to be implemented by 2030
- June 1, 2028: Expansion of fare programs, implementation of fare capping

# Five Year Capital Program

Totals \$9.2 billion over five years

Additional funding in SB 2111

## Lake County projects

- UP-N and MD-N Improvements-
  - Track, Bridges, Crossings

## Regionwide projects

- Metra new Bi-level Rail Car Purchase
- Pace New Buses and Paratransit Vehicles



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# Next Steps

- November/December – County Board hearings, service board public hearings
- November 14 – December 5 – Regional Budget open for public comment
- November 20 – Agencies present to RTA Board
- December 4 – RTA virtual public hearing
- December 18 – RTA Board of Directors votes on budget adoption



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