



**Regional
Transportation
Authority**

For immediate release

DATE: December 4, 2008

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RTA holds final 2009 budget hearing *Riders get last chance to weigh in on budget before board approval*

CHICAGO – Riders have one more chance to voice their views about the regional mass transit system before the 2009 Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) budget is presented and slated for approval by the board in mid-December. The RTA will hold its last hearing at the University Center-Loop/River Room, 525 S. State St., Second Floor, Chicago on December 15 at 9 am.

“It’s important that we get input from the public because our transit budget will affect mobility in the region,” said Steve Schlickman, executive director, RTA. “It is our responsibility to ensure that we make the public’s commute easier, more efficient and economical, but the only way we can meet those needs is if we are informed.”

The Central Chicago budget hearing completes the second series of 13 hearings that occurred in August and November. Hearings were started earlier this year to allow for input in our budget process, said Schlickman. Thus far, the hearings have rendered feedback including expanded transit service and support for a capital bill. The scope of the commuters’ needs have been diverse, but without their voices these needs could go unmet.

“All of the comments received are taken very seriously by the RTA,” Schlickman said. “They are given to our board and the service boards, so they understand the needs of the public, and then we can begin to move towards securing adequate funds to either begin studies, construction, enhancements, or whatever is required to make feasible changes,” Schlickman said.

Schlickman urges those that attended the August and November hearings to consider joining them for the last budget hearing. Information will be provided on the 2009 budget, funding programs for transit projects and the need for a state capital bill to enhance and expand the transit system.

Meetings are open to the general public and are ADA accessible. Any attendee requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to attend a meeting or have questions, please call 312-913-3153 (TTY – 312-913-3111) at least two business days before the meeting. For more information, visit www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org.

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About the RTA: The RTA provides financial oversight, funding and regional planning for the three public transit operators in northeastern Illinois: The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus and train, Metra commuter rail and Pace suburban bus and paratransit. For more information, visit www.rtachicago.com and www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org.