



October 2008

A Monthly Report of The Regional Transportation Authority

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RTA Chairman

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City of Chicago

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Suburban Cook County

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**Judy Baar Topinka**  
Suburban Cook County

**Douglas M. Troiani**  
Suburban Cook County

**Stephen E. Schlickman**  
Executive Director

**Next RTA Board Meeting:**  
October 23, 2008 - 9:30 a.m.  
Committee Meetings begin at  
8:00 a.m.

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## RTA Releases 2009 Budget Projections

*Economic conditions add additional budget pressures*

At its September meeting, the RTA Board of Directors took budget actions required by the RTA Act. RTA executive staff was joined by representatives from the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace to brief the Board on current budget conditions, financial plans for 2009, implementation of new governance and management reforms and the urgent need for new capital funding.

“When the funding and reform bill was enacted in January, we thought we could balance the budget even though new tax revenues would not be available until July, and we had to deal with the loss of revenue from the senior free rides mandate. Since then, increases in the price of fuel, the elimination of the state half-fare subsidy, economic pressures producing lower-than expected sales tax receipts and revenue from the real estate transfer tax, and increased operating costs due to deferrals in capital maintenance have all contributed to the more serious challenge that we face

today,” noted RTA Board Chairman Jim Reilly. “We have the responsibility to take steps to deal with the situation in a fiscally prudent manner and, in cooperation with the service boards, we will.”

*“The issues this year, while not easy, are eminently doable with further cost restraints and, if need be, a modest fare increase.”*

*- RTA Chair Jim Reilly*

The Board made changes to the 2008 budget to reflect these financial challenges and approved projected 2009-2012 financial plans. Metra Executive Director Phil Pagano, CTA President Ron Huberman, and Pace Executive Director T.J. Ross updated the Board on their efforts to implement recommendations from the Illinois Auditor General to improve the efficiency and coordination of the system.

*(Budget, continued on page 2)*

## RTA Recommends Funding for 43 Transit Projects

The RTA recommended 43 planning, operating, and capital projects for funding at the September Board meeting. Over \$18 million in federal, state and RTA funding will be allocated to support innovative projects to increase transit usage, provide multi-modal connections, improve efficiency and effectiveness of local transit, improve access to jobs, and help to increase mobility for our region’s seniors, people with disabilities and the general public.

Communities, counties, and transportation providers were invited to apply for grants through four planning programs. Out of 62 of the pro-

posals submitted, 43 are being recommended for funding. Applicants are also required to provide a certain percentage of the total project cost. The programs are designed to implement legislative mandates approved in January for the RTA and support the updated Moving Beyond Congestion strategic plan.

A public comment period is now underway through October 10 and will be incorporated into the final report for the RTA Board of Directors to consider on October 23. Approval of the program will allow the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace to incorporate those projects into their 2009 budgets.

*(Funding programs, continued on page 3)*

## RTA Chair to Co-Chair Transportation Coalition

RTA Board Chairman Jim Reilly was recently appointed as co-chair of the Transportation for Illinois Coalition (TFIC). The Coalition is a broad-based grouping of business, labor, highway, transit, airport, waterway and passenger rail interests formed several years ago to help Illinois speak with a unified voice on Federal transportation legislation and to push for state capital funding.

Chairman Reilly will co-chair the coalition with Mike Carrigan, the head of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

## Rising Ridership: By The Numbers

Percent increase in year-to-date ridership through July compared to last year



5.2%



5.3%



4.1%

*(Budget, continued from front page)*

“All of the service boards are facing challenges,” noted Steve Schlickman. “These challenges are made more difficult by a lack of state capital funding. When the CTA, Metra and Pace are forced to operate equipment that is out of date on an aging infrastructure, it costs them more money than it should and places more strain on an already-tight budget. We need action in Springfield on capital funding.”

“While we face some tough budgetary choices as we finalize the 2009 budget, the situation this year is dramatically better than that we faced last year thanks to the passage of last January’s RTA funding and reform legislation by the General Assembly and the Governor. Just one year ago we faced a deficit of hundreds of millions of dollars, a deficit so large that, as the Auditor General said, no possible combination of efficiencies and fare increases could possibly bridge the gap.

“When advocating for the passage of the RTA reform and funding bill, we anticipated that the plan would establish a strong stable base of public funding for mass transit operations for many years to come, and we still believe that to be the case,” explained Jim Reilly. “At the same time, we always maintained that periodic fare increases would be needed. Not only are we required to collect half of our revenue from fares, but transit riders ought to pay a reasonable share of the cost of their trip – which remains a legitimate bargain compared with driving.

“Going forward, the RTA will fulfill the important oversight responsibilities assigned to us by the Reform Act to ensure that transit services are provided as efficiently as possible while also seeking to coordinate modest fare increases every few years to provide continuity for our riders,” said Reilly.

The CTA, Metra and Pace will now develop their budgets and hold public hearings before submitting them to the RTA by November 15. The RTA will hold public hearings during the weeks of November 10 and 17 throughout the region on the combined budget before the RTA Board adopts the 2009 transit budgets at the December 18 Board meeting. Visit [www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org](http://www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org) for updates.

## Kane County Hosts Workshop to Improve the Transit System

The RTA participated in Kane County’s 2008 Transit Workshop held September 24 in Aurora. With rising gas prices, population growth and pollution, Kane County has identified public transportation as a high priority. The workshop included welcoming remarks by RTA Board Chair Jim Reilly and a presentation on transit-oriented development and RTA Funding Programs by Leanne Redden, Senior Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Regional Programs. Officials from Metra, Pace and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning as well as other planning professionals provided information and planning tools to help transit succeed.



Speakers in the Kane County workshop included (l-r): RTA Board Chair Jim Reilly, Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner and Karen McConnaughay, Kane County Board Chair

# Regional Transportation Authority Financial Report

JUNE 2008 (For comparative purposes, the CTA figures in 2006 do not include expenses for paratransit service)

The combined net results of the Service Boards of \$81.7 million were unfavorable to budget by \$3.9 million or 4.9%. Compared to last year, net results were unfavorable by \$10.2 million or 14.3%.

Year-to-date combined net results of the Service Boards of \$534.0 million were \$11.4 million or 2.2% unfavorable to budget. Combined revenue was \$12.8 million favorable, while expenses were \$24.2 million unfavorable to budget. Compared to last year, each Service Board had unfavorable results in a combined amount of \$49.9 million.

## Recovery Ratio

The system-generated recovery ratio of 58.5% was 1.3 points unfavorable to budget and was 3.9 points favorable to prior year's result. For the year,

the recovery ratio of 54.2% was 0.2 points unfavorable to budget and was 4.6 points favorable to last year's result.

## Sales Tax

June sales tax of \$65.7 million was \$0.9 million or 1.4% higher than budget but \$1.4 million or 2.1% lower than last year. Sales tax through June of \$362.4 million was \$8.1 million or 2.2% lower than budget and closely matched last year's result.

## Ridership

Ridership for the month of 55.6 million was 2.5 million or 4.8% higher than budget and was 3.1 million or 5.9% higher than prior year. Year-to-date ridership of 317.2 million was 11.1 million or 3.6% higher than budget and was 13.1 million or 4.3% higher than prior year.

## JUNE 2008 Operating Financial Report—Regional Summary (in millions)<sup>(3)</sup>

Net Results	Current Year vs. Budget								Current Year vs. Prior Year					
	Month				Year to Date				Month			Year to Date		
	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %
CTA	\$52.6	\$46.4	(\$6.2)	(13.3%)	\$329.5	\$313.3	(\$16.2)	(5.2%)	\$44.3	(8.3)	(18.7%)	\$303.6	(\$25.9)	(8.5%)
Metra	\$19.1	\$21.5	\$2.4	11.0%	\$145.8	\$147.8	\$2.0	1.4%	\$18.8	(0.4)	(2.0%)	\$130.0	(15.8)	(12.2%)
Pace	\$10.0	\$9.9	(\$0.1)	(0.6%)	\$58.7	\$61.5	\$2.7	4.5%	\$8.4	(1.6)	(18.7%)	\$50.6	(8.2)	(16.1%)
<b>Total (2)</b>	<b>\$81.7</b>	<b>\$77.8</b>	<b>(\$3.9)</b>	<b>(4.9%)</b>	<b>\$534.0</b>	<b>\$522.6</b>	<b>(\$11.4)</b>	<b>(2.2%)</b>	<b>\$71.5</b>	<b>(\$10.2)</b>	<b>(14.3%)</b>	<b>\$484.1</b>	<b>(\$49.9)</b>	<b>(10.3%)</b>
Recovery Ratio (%)	Month			Year to Date			Month		Year to Date					
	Actual	Budget	Δ Points	Actual	Budget	Δ Points	Actual	Δ Points	Actual	Δ Points				
	CTA	50.9%	54.9%	(4.1)	48.1%	49.0%	(0.9)	55.2%	(4.3)	49.6%	(1.5)			
Metra	66.2%	60.6%	5.5	55.2%	53.8%	1.4	61.0%	5.2	54.9%	0.3				
Pace	38.5%	37.2%	1.3	36.9%	34.8%	2.1	40.4%	(1.9)	38.9%	(2.0)				
<b>System (3)</b>	<b>58.5%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>(1.3)</b>	<b>54.2%</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>54.7%</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>4.6</b>				
Sales Tax Revenue	Month				Year to Date				Month			Year to Date		
	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %
	Region	\$65.7	\$64.7	\$0.9	1.4%	\$362.4	\$370.5	(\$8.1)	(2.2%)	\$67.1	(\$1.4)	(2.1%)	\$362.5	(\$0.1)
Ridership	Month				Year to Date				Month			Year to Date		
	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Budget	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %	Actual	Δ Unit	Δ %
	CTA	44.7	42.4	2.3	5.4%	255.8	247.0	8.8	3.6%	42.0	2.6	6.2%	245.1	10.7
Metra	7.7	7.4	0.3	3.6%	43.1	41.2	1.9	4.6%	7.3	0.3	4.7%	41.1	2.0	4.9%
Pace	3.2	3.2	(0.0)	(0.6%)	18.2	17.9	0.4	2.0%	3.1	0.1	3.6%	17.8	0.4	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>317.2</b>	<b>306.1</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>304.0</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>4.3%</b>

Bracketed data represents an unfavorable change. Line item calculations are based on whole numbers, some totals may not sum.

(1) Does not include region wide ADA paratransit service. (2) Sum of service board deficits.

(3) Service Board results exclude certain revenues and expenses that are included in the system calculation. The system calculation excludes certain Service Board revenues but includes the statutory expense credit for 2008 totaling \$200 million.

## (Funding programs, continued from front page)

The RTA Board will then consider adoption of the 2009 regional transit budget on December 18. For a complete list of the projects, go to [www.rtachicago.com/projectcomments](http://www.rtachicago.com/projectcomments) where you can also submit comments electronically. Written comments may be mailed, faxed, e-mailed or delivered through 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2008. **Mail or drop off comments:** The Regional Transportation Authority, ATTN: Funding Programs, 175 W Jackson Blvd – Ste. 1550, Chicago, IL 60604 **E-mail:** [programs@rtachicago.org](mailto:programs@rtachicago.org) **Call:** 312-913-3143 **Fax:** 312-913-3206 – ATTN: Planning Department

## RTA Job Opportunities

Find out more at [www.rtachicago.com](http://www.rtachicago.com)

**ADA Certifier:** This position is responsible for conducting certification of ADA eligible paratransit riders.

**Customer Service Specialist:** This position is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations and administration of the People with Disabilities Ride Free Program.

**Deputy General Counsel:** This position is responsible for providing advice and legal counsel to the RTA staff in relation to all applicable regulatory, statutory, and legal requirements.

**Project Manager, Regional Coordination:** This position manages multi-faceted and complex projects related to improving the coordination of transit information, services, fares and physical connections in order to enhance regional mobility.

**Senior Network Administrator:** This position is responsible for the design, implementation, administration, operation and maintenance of the RTA's critical computer systems.

To apply, visit  
[www.rtachicago.com](http://www.rtachicago.com)

## RTA Staff News

### Service Awards

Anne LeFevre, Manager, ADA Paratransit Certification Program in Regional Services, marked her 15-year service anniversary on August 24th.

Hershell Montgomery-Scott, Procurement Specialist in Procurement and Contracting, marked her 30-year service anniversary on September 5th.

### Farewell

The RTA said farewell to Jim Mullaghy but he won't be going far. Jim will be leaving after 5 1/2 years as an RTA ADA Certifier. He's moving to Pace as a Paratransit Administrator with the Ride DuPage program.

**O**n September 15, the RTA welcomed John Goodworth as the new Division Manager of Program Compliance in Research, Analysis and Policy Development. Prior to joining the RTA, John worked for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority where he was the Project Manager of Land Use and Design. John earned a Master of Science in Urban Studies from the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University and is currently a registered Architect in the state of Ohio.

The RTA welcomed three new staff members on September 29. Daphine Foster joined as an Administrative Assistant in Communications. Daphine previously worked for Ketchum Public Relations where she held the position of Office Manager.

Mary Kramer is the new Principal Analyst in Corridor Planning Studies. Mary worked 7 years at CTA where she was a Transit Service Provider. Mary has a Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from Miami University and a Master's in Urban Design and Planning from the University of Colorado-Denver.

Also joining the RTA is Nicole Nutter as a Special Programs Project Manager. Before coming to the RTA, Nicole worked for the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission where she held the position of Planner III. Nicole has a Bachelor's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Illinois – Champaign.



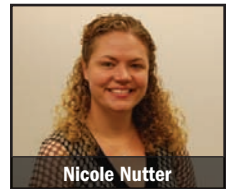
John Goodworth



Daphine Foster



Mary Kramer



Nicole Nutter



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