



**Regional
Transportation
Authority**

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RTA RELEASES GREEN TRANSIT PLAN

*RTA, PARTNERS LAY OUT PLAN TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF
TRANSIT*

CHICAGO – The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and several of its transportation partners have released the Chicago Regional Green Transit Plan that quantifies the environmental benefits of the region's public transit system and will serve as the roadmap for how transit can help the Chicago region become more sustainable.

Crafted by RTA, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra, Pace, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Chicago Regional Green Transit Plan highlights the RTA system's ability to become greener and more fuel efficient. Each year, the region's transit system saves 6.7 million metric tons of carbon from being emitted into the atmosphere. That's equivalent to 750 million gallons of gas or taking one million automobiles off the roads. Between 2005 and 2008, the RTA system improved its carbon-emissions efficiency up to five percent, thanks to increased ridership and more fuel-efficient vehicles such as hybrid buses.

"Public transportation and ride sharing lessen our region's impact on the environment by minimizing the number of cars on our highway," said Joe Costello, RTA Executive Director. "We are working toward making our entire system truly green, and this plan will help our region work together in addressing climate change, improve the quality of air, while improving mobility for millions of riders each day."

The Plan also provides a vision for a more environmentally-friendly transit system that can maximize the environmental benefits of transit in the future. The Plan identifies four main strategies for increasing the environmental benefits of transit, including (1) growing ridership and market share, (2) promoting transit-oriented development, (3) improving operational efficiency and (4) greening the transit system. Key initiatives highlighted in the Plan include bringing the region's system to a state of good repair, expanding real-time bus and train arrival information, modernizing fare payment systems, expanding technical assistance and funding efforts related to transit-oriented development, studying and piloting more efficient locomotives, trains and buses, and installing additional pollution control technologies on buses and trains.

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RTA RELEASES GREEN TRANSIT PLAN - PAGE 2

“Transit already improves air quality and reduces the consumption of fossil fuels by reducing the number of cars on the road, but new technologies increase the ways that we can contribute to improving the environment,” said Pace Chairman, Richard Kwasneski. “Pace is aggressively pursuing compressed natural gas-powered buses, testing hybrid vehicles and looking at other green technology.”

The RTA received a \$1.3 million grant to develop and implement the Plan from the IDOT State Planning and Research program. The Plan brings the RTA system in line with transit agencies across the country that have completed sustainability and climate action plans including the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro).

Download a copy of the Chicago Regional Green Transit Plan and learn more about the environmental benefits of transit by visiting www.RTAchicago.com.

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About the RTA: The RTA provides financial oversight, funding and regional planning for the three public transit operations 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.