

Regional Transit Strategic Plan

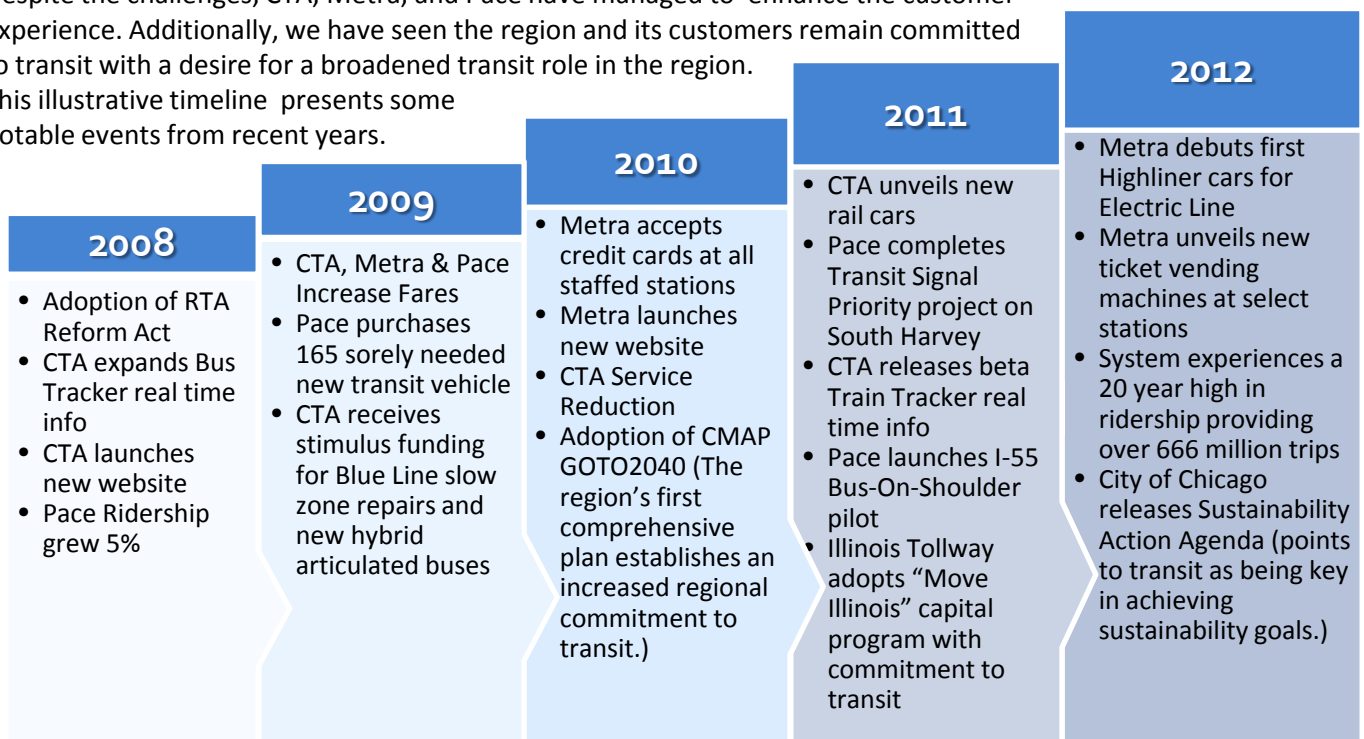


The Regional Transit Strategic Plan is intended to be used as a roadmap to shape the future of the region's transit system. Having such a plan helps to define the region's common vision and goals for transit and forges a thoughtful and coherent basis by which decisions can be made. The Strategic Plan attempts to highlight the most important issues that face transit in our region over the next five years, allowing transit to respond effectively to developing issues.



State of Transit: A Look Back

The past five years have presented significant challenges to transit in this region primarily due to the great recession. Despite the challenges, CTA, Metra, and Pace have managed to enhance the customer experience. Additionally, we have seen the region and its customers remain committed to transit with a desire for a broadened transit role in the region. This illustrative timeline presents some notable events from recent years.



Benefits of Transit: Why the Region Should Care

The broad reaching benefits of investing in transit are well acknowledged. Not only does public transportation benefit those who use it, but it also benefits society -- individuals, families, communities, and businesses -- as a whole. Among other things, transit reduces congestion, gives people mobility options, provides access to jobs, helps the environment and supports economic development. The Northeastern Illinois region has a long history of committing to transit.

- 12% of the region's residents & 31% of people that work in Chicago rely on transit to get to work
- 3.5 million times each year, a person with disabilities or an elderly person relies on Pace's ADA Paratransit service
- Providing over 2 MILLION rides per weekday, transit is vital to the mobility of the region
- A transit rider will spend only 17¢ for every \$1 spent by an auto driver
- 76% of jobs have access to transit, expanding the job market
- Proximity to transit increases property values by 5-20%
- The RTA System displaces more than 5 times the carbon produced by its transit operations
- Households near public transit drive 4,400 fewer miles, saving 223 gallons of gas per year.

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Survey Results: The Region Speaks

As a first step to updating the region's Transit Strategic Plan (Moving Beyond Congestion), the RTA conducted an online survey to gather input on the current plan's Vision and Goals. The survey was launched on December 19, 2012 and closed on January 31, 2013. The RTA received over 1,500 responses from members of the general public, stakeholders and elected officials. We were pleased with the breadth of representation in these responses. Overall, the results of the survey did not support a wholesale revision of the Plan's vision and goals, but did support 1) a more succinct vision statement; and 2) goals that would bring greater definition to the vision and that are more reflective of customer needs and wishes.



Dispersion of Survey Respondents



Vision: A world-class regional public transportation system providing a foundation to the region's prosperity, livability, and vitality.

- **Goal A: Provide valuable, reliable, accessible and attractive transportation options**
- **Goal B: Ensure financial viability**
- **Goal C: Promote a green, livable and prosperous region**
- **Goal D: Advocate for and be a trusted steward of public transportation**

Priority Issues and Recommendations

I. Transit's Significant Capital Backlog and Insufficient Capital Funding

- Proactively Seek Stable Long-Term Funding Solutions to Support State of Good Repair
- Strategically Invest
- Increase Awareness of Transit's Capital Need and Its Impact on the Region

II. Improve the Customer Experience through a Modernized & Integrated System

- Modernize the Customer Experience
- Pursue Behind-The-Scenes Initiatives
- Develop Marketing That Better Resonates with Customers

III. Strike a Balance between Meeting Current Demand & Developing New Markets

- Manage and Accommodate Current Growing Demand
- Thoughtfully Increase Ridership to Better Leverage Existing Capacity

IV. Balancing Tight Operating Budgets

- Continue to Manage Costs and Increase Efficiencies
- Grow Revenues

V. Reauthorization of the Federal Transportation Bill & the Need to Educate

- Proactively Seek Funding Solutions for Existing Needs
- Reduce Unfunded Mandates and Support Initiatives that are Transit Supportive