2023 Regional Transit Strategic Plan

Memo Summarizing Work of Financial Responsibility Stakeholder Working Group

July 2022

Regional Transportation Authority

Regional Transportation Authority

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Introduction

The Chicago region's transit system is at a pivotal moment. The system has faced some disruption in the recent past – driven by changes in how people get around, changes in where people work, and shifts in demographics. But, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic many of these trends have accelerated. This is a challenge because transit in the Chicago region is funded in part by rider fares, which have not fully recovered. Transit spurs economic growth, mitigates climate change, and enables opportunity in ways and at a scale that no other transportation mode can. The next Regional Transit Strategic Plan will guide how Chicago's regional transit system will adapt to the impacts of the pandemic to provide safe, reliable, accessible public transportation that connects people to opportunity, advances equity, and combats climate change.

Beginning in the summer of 2021, RTA launched a six-month period of listening, titled *Making a Plan,* to hear and learn from transit riders, community members, and stakeholders about our regional transit system's future, including opportunities for impact, transit system adaptation, funding, equity, and engagement. Based on the input received, RTA staff developed a vision and three guiding principles that will be used to guide and test all activities of the plan. Additionally, staff used the input to identify six outcomes that describe what the region aims to achieve over the five years of the plan period.

Vision

Safe, reliable, accessible public transportation that connects people to opportunity, advances equity, and combats climate change.

Principles

- **Commitment to change.** Public transit is the core of the region's mobility network. Being committed to change means that the Strategic Plan will acknowledge that the mobility needs of the region are changing rapidly while many long-standing community mobility needs and expectations for transit are still unmet. In committing to change, the Strategic Plan process will empower the transit agencies and systems to adapt, innovate, and re-think regional transit options to better meet the needs of people and communities we serve across the region today and into the future.
- **Equity**. Advancing equity through the Strategic Plan means that the planning process will acknowledge, identify, and seek to change policymaking, planning, and distribution of resources to better meet the transit needs of historically under invested and overburdened people and communities in our region across agencies, community types, and political boundaries. Our working definition of equity begins with racial equity by improving transit options and outcomes for people and communities of color as well as people who are from low-income households, possess limited English proficiency, have a disability, and/or are Seniors.

- **Stewardship**. Being good stewards of the Chicago region's transit system means that we are committed to using public funding wisely and maximizing our shared resources. In seeking to be stewards, we will continually consider how the Strategic Plan process will ensure the financial health of the transit agencies while also advancing the purpose of transit as a public good, regional economic development catalyst, and tool for climate action.

Outcomes

In the future our region's transit system will be:

- Safe, accessible, reliable, and useful for riders
- In a state of good repair
- Financially stable

In the future our region will be:

- Connected
- Winning the fight against climate change
- Thriving

About the Stakeholder Working Groups

As the next step in the plan development process, the RTA convened three stakeholder working groups to involve a diverse group of individuals and organizations to develop goals for the regional transit system, identify strategies and actions, and craft performance measures to track progress.

The stakeholder working groups were comprised of approximately 30-40 people each and were designed to include diverse perspectives and experiences, with representatives from the Service Boards, partner agencies, non-profits, community groups, civic organizations, and academia. In addition to developing ideas and content for the plan, the RTA also aimed for the stakeholder working groups to create a forum for mutual learning and discussion. The goal was to cultivate a group of stakeholders knowledgeable about transit issues and invested in potential solutions, in anticipation of needing to call upon these and other stakeholders to help with implementation after the plan is completed in 2023. Each of the working groups focused on two of the outcomes described above—one related to the future of the transit system and one related to the future of the region overall. The groups met six times between April and June of 2022. The working group process is described in greater detail below and additional information is available at RTA's Stakeholder Working Group Hub, including the Stakeholder Group Participant Guide.

Outcomes

A transit system that is safe, accessible, reliable, and useful for riders.

A region that is winning the fight against climate change.

Outcomes

A transit system that is in a state of good repair.

A region of thriving communities.

Outcomes

A transit system that is financially stable.

A region that is connected.

The RTA recognizes that the transit system serves many people and communities of color, those experiencing lower incomes, and those possessing fewer mobility options to suit their needs for travel. The RTA's own data shows that this is even more true among essential riders who continued to ride transit during the worst of the pandemic. We also acknowledge that the transit system is planned by professionals who are statistically more likely to be white, come from higher-income households, and possess more mobility options to suit their needs such that we cannot assume that professional planner perspectives alone are representative of the rider base.

The RTA believes that the best outcomes can be achieved by convening a diversity of riders and stakeholders to listen and learn from each other and to work together toward solutions. As a result, the RTA seeks to create and support meaningful engagement that centers the voices of those who most rely on transit within the discussion, bringing communities to the table and incorporating their experiences, perspectives, and expertise into decision making for the 2023 Regional Transit Strategic Plan.

The RTA also compensated group members and organizations who requested it for their participation in recognition of the time, effort, and expertise brought to the process by people who are not full-time transit professionals.

Financial Responsibility Stakeholder Working Group's Focus

The Financial Responsibility Stakeholder Working Group focused on developing goals, strategies, and performance measures related to two of the plan's desired outcomes:

- A transit system that financially stable.
- A region that is connected.

The overarching theme throughout the process was to identify ways to find balance in funding while connecting people to opportunities that improve their quality of life. The group's discussions throughout the stakeholder working group process covered a wide range of topics, but key topics included operating costs, revenues, measuring and monitoring transit operations, fares and fare policy, recovery ratio measures and goals, and access to destinations across time of day and by different populations.

Financial Responsibility Stakeholder Working Group Members

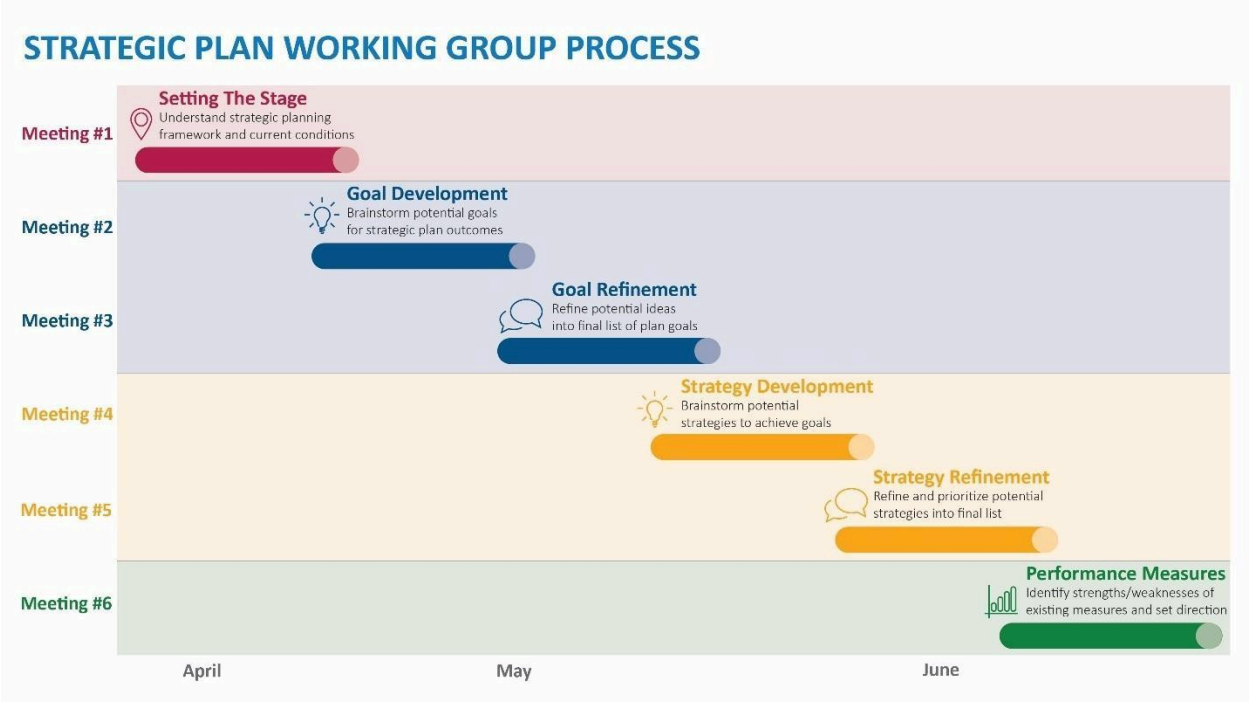
Members of the Financial Responsibility Stakeholder Working Group are listed below. In some cases, organizations sent an alternative representative to attend meetings when there were conflicts.

- Isobel Araujo, Territory NFP
- Kevin Brubaker, Environmental Law & Policy Center of the Midwest
- Laura Calderon, Illinois Public Transportation Association
- Melanie Castle, Pace Suburban Bus
- Daniel Comeaux, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- Kristi DeLaurentiis, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
- Jesse Elam, Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
- Rudy Faust, Shared Use Mobility Center
- Elizabeth Ginsberg, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- Henry Guerreiro, Illinois Tollway
- Jacky Grimshaw, Center for Neighborhood Technology
- Chris Groven, Regional Transportation Authority Board
- Scott Hennings, McHenry County
- Peter Kersten, Regional Transportation Authority
- Tom Kotarac, Commercial Club of Chicago
- Vignesh Krishnamurthy, Chicago Department of Transportation
- Bill Lachman, Regional Transportation Authority
- Jeremy Lamarche, Regional Transportation Authority

- Erik Llewellyn, Pace Suburban Bus
- Kate Lowe, University of Illinois, Chicago
- Rebecca Mason, Transportation for Illinois Coalition
- Rebeca Mendoza, Evanston Latinx Business Alliance
- Alan M. Ochab, Metra
- Andrea Reed, Greater Roseland Chamber of Commerce/Coalition for Modern Metra Electric
- Bea Reyna-Hickey, Regional Transportation Authority
- Laura Salzman, Access Living
- Judy Shanley, National Center for Mobility Management
- Lisa Smith, Chicago Transit Authority
- Brian Stepp, Metra
- Sonali Tandon, Chicago Transit Authority
- Brad Tietz, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
- Maulik Vaishnav, Chicago Transit Authority
- Paula Worthington, University of Chicago

Working Group Process

The working group process included the following phases: (1) Setting the Stage; (2) Goal Development & Refinement; (3) Strategy Development & Refinement; and (4) Performance Measures & Next Steps. At the end of each meeting, RTA solicited feedback from the participants about their satisfaction with the meeting format, facilitation, and any additional comments they had about the process. This feedback was then used to adjust subsequent meetings and provide an improved experience for members.



Phase I: Setting the Stage

In the first Phase, the working groups convened in Meeting #1 to lay the groundwork for how the groups would be conducted and to get better acquainted with participants. This was mainly a listening session for members, with an overview of procedural information and a code of conduct to encourage all members to participate with respect. Working Group members participated in a series of polling questions using the Menti polling platform; these served both as feedback for the RTA team as well as practice for Working Group members to become more comfortable with different engagement tools.

The working groups were informed that the final product of the process would be a recommendations memo for consideration by RTA staff. Members were encouraged to let all ideas flow; the memo would include a summary of where there was consensus, as well as where there was not. Facilitators reminded members that their participation and support of a goal, strategy, or measure did not represent an endorsement from their organization.

Phase II: Goal Development & Refinement

In the second Phase, the Working Groups focused on Goal Development (Meeting #2) and Goal Refinement (Meeting #3). The RTA team provided members in Meeting #2 with examples of peer agency goals and provided a structure for developing a goal. Beginning with Meeting #2, the members were divided into breakout groups to better facilitate small group discussion. The discussion around refining goals in Meeting #3 breakout groups was structured on confirming that (1) the intent of the goal was clear; (2) the goal was not in conflict with any of the plan's three core principles; and (3) nothing was missing.

Phase III: Strategy Development & Refining

In preparation for Meeting #4, the RTA team reviewed the draft goal statements, particularly looking for where there may be some overlap or duplication. The team assembled and shared a complete list of goals across all three working groups.

In Meeting #4, working groups used the refined ideas for their goals as the framework for developing strategies. Participants reviewed, modified, and discussed draft strategies and generated more strategies by responding to the prompt, "What are the specific actions that can be implemented to answer the question of how to achieve this goal?" This step was also a good opportunity to look back at the draft goal statements and consider if there were any changes that need to be made.

Ahead of Meeting #5, the RTA team refined and categorized each strategy according to its status: Refine, Reconcile, Ready, Remove, Reassign, and Ramp-off. In the meeting, facilitators focused on strategies that needed to be (1) **Refined** ("talked about in more detail") and those that need to be (2) **Reconciled** ("have conflicting strategies that must be talked through"). Strategies flagged to be Removed, Reassigned or Ramped-off were not discussed further in the groups and are summarized in "Other Topics Discussed" section at the end of this document.

During Meeting #5, discussion around the Refine and Reconcile strategies included whether they were clear and within RTA's jurisdiction to act upon; attainable in the timeframe of this plan; aligned with the plan's principles; and not in conflict with each other or practical reality. The groups noted where recommendations should be either tweaked to better articulate RTA's specific role or included in requests to the appropriate implementing agencies.

Working Group Guest Speaker Presentations

Thank you to guest speakers who joined the working groups to share their expertise and experience.

Meeting #4

Jesse Elam, Director of Strategic Planning for Cook County Dept of Transportation and Highways, presented on fare integration and the Fair Transit South Cook pilot. Jesse detailed current legislative requirements related to fares, transfers, and integration, as well as examples from the San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, and Dallas. Watch a video of his presentation.

Brian Lowenberg, Principal Analyst with RTA Capital Planning, presented on the work of the Capital Priority Projects Technical Working Group. Watch a video of his presentation.

Doug Anderson, Manager of Operating Budgets and Analysis at the RTA, presenting on the work of the 10 Year Financial Plan Technical Working Group, including their identification of a more than $700 million per year budget gap when COVID relief funding runs out. Watch a video of his presentation.

Meeting #5:

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning presented about CMAP's Mobility Recovery work. More information can be found here: https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs/mobility-recovery

Phase IV: Performance Measures

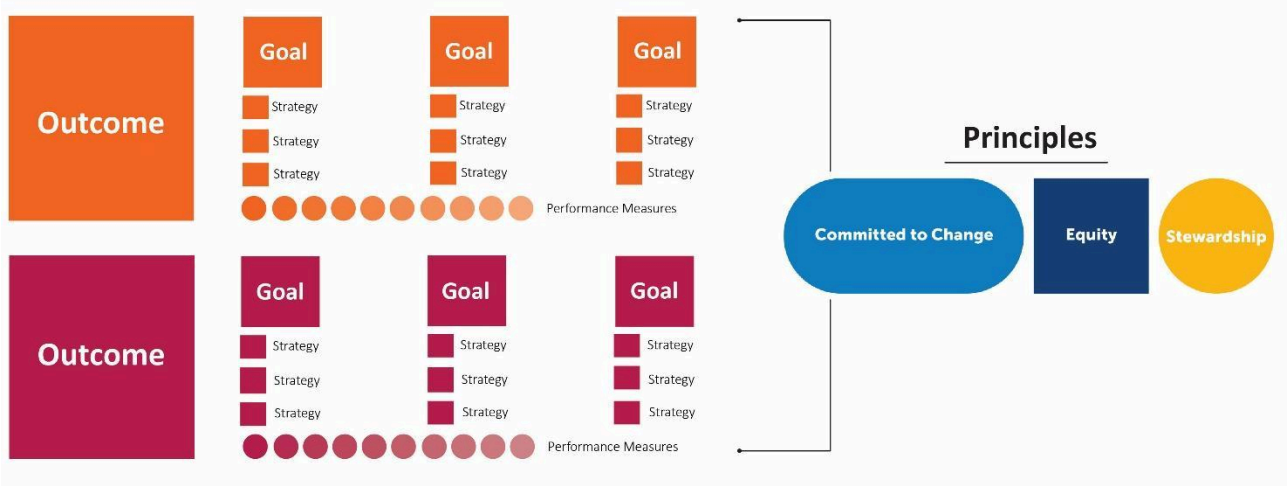
Heading into Meeting #6, some unanswered questions remained about whether some strategies were ready to advance as recommendations in the plan, or whether they needed additional refinement. The RTA team issued a survey to all working group members to gauge the level of support for draft strategies at this point. Draft strategies that received conflicting levels of support were prioritized for discussion in the upcoming meeting.

Meeting #6 took a slightly different format in which all members participated in a deeper dive discussion on strategies. It resulted in some strategies being deemed fit to proceed with recommended tweaks, while others were flagged as not having consensus to move forward.

Following this discussion, the group was asked two questions using an in-meeting Zoom poll: one on their overall satisfaction with the goals and strategies, and one on their satisfaction with the overall working group process. Breakout groups then discussed both existing and proposed performance measures for a handful of draft strategies that needed the most input. The presentation concluded with a round of appreciation as well as next steps such as the development and review of the working group memos, and opportunities for further engagement in the overall RTA Strategic Plan process.

Working Group Recommendations

Working group members were tasked with developing goals, strategies, and performance measures related to their group's two key outcomes. Throughout the process, the plan's principles—equity, stewardship, and commitment to change—were used to evaluate and refine ideas that were generated by the group.



RTA provided the following definitions to working group members to guide idea generation and refinements.

- **Goals**—represent a broad set of actions necessary to achieve our desired outcomes.
- **Strategies**—discrete actions that support the delivery of each goal.
- **Performance Measures**—data points that are tracked over time to determine if we are achieving our goals.

Goals and Strategies

Over the course of the working group process, members generated ideas for 11 goals and 50 strategies, which are listed below and organized by the group's two outcomes. The goals and strategies were collaboratively refined throughout the process. The strategies will be further refined and prioritized based on public input and RTA staff technical expertise.

Outcome: A transit system that financially stable.

Goal: Control, innovate, and plan for cost growth to maximize delivery of service that responds to the needs of the region.

- Identify new methods to share and reduce costs across Service Boards.
- Pursue opportunities to reduce costs through technology.
- Pilot new service and partnership models that address communities' mobility needs and decrease costs for the system.

Goal: Increase and improve community engagement and transparency with diverse groups during planning and budgeting for transit projects.

- Standardize practices for working with and compensating community groups' involvement in outreach and engagement on transit projects.
- Develop standards for fully accessible community meetings (and other engagement platforms) and budget resources needed to engage people of all abilities.
- Build a broad, diverse coalition of stakeholders beyond traditional transit partners that will seek sustainable transit funding for the region.
- Develop common standards to compensate individuals and stakeholders for their participation in transit planning and budgeting processes.

Goal: Communicate the value the transit system brings to the region.

- Quantify transit's diverse impact on equitable access, climate, safety, public health, and economic development.
- Develop an equitable access to opportunity tool for analysis across disaggregate population groups and regional geographies that captures the full spectrum of destinations while accounting for fare cost and temporal factors.
- Benchmark regional transit performance against traditional and non-traditional peer agencies, seeking to identify best practices and opportunities for innovations to adopt.

Goal: Develop an equity-based operating funding structure to allow the Service Boards to enhance transit affordability while lowering reliance on fares to balance the operating budget.

- Seek authority from state legislature for greater RTA autonomy in the distribution of capital and operations funding in a transparent, data-driven, equitable fashion.
- Study and pilot free transit routes, transit stops, and/or rider-targeted fare subsidy programs to support fare affordability.
- Better promote and make it easier for individuals to take advantage of existing fare subsidies.
- Expand fare subsidies to other populations for whom fare cost is a barrier to transit usage.
- Make transfers between modes of transit, including bike-share and scooters, more affordable, seamless, and easier to access.
- Fully fund the development of an integrated fare system.

- Work with social service organizations to better understand and respond to riders' unmet mobility needs and use that information to make decisions.
- Invest in and create tools to better track and create data on emerging and currently unmet rider needs.
- Advocate for permanent relief from the legislatively mandated fare box recovery ratio.

Goal: Increase and diversify operating funding sources to fund a robust system that provides equitable and high-quality service across our region.

- Increase local funding through expansion of sales tax base to support equitable transit service.
- Develop value capture methods for development around transit.
- Evaluate joint development models that share costs with municipalities/counties.
- Advocate for increased taxes and fees on private automobiles and commercial trucks including fuel, registration, vehicle size and weight, VMT taxes and fees, high-occupancy toll lanes, congestion pricing, and parking.
- Expand the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) to suburban Cook and collar counties and have the state provide Public Transportation Fund match on that expanded RETT, similar to what CTA receives now for Chicago real estate sales.
- Advocate for more State funding through increased Public Transportation Fund and new, dedicated funding streams.

Goal: Maximize system-generated, non-farebox revenue.

- Adopt innovative approaches to generating advertising revenue within transit vehicles and facilities.
- Adopt innovative approaches to generating revenue through facilities including: rental for concessions such as lockers for package delivery, fiber optic cables, and placemaking.
- Study opportunities for enhanced transit power generation for example solar panel installations at transit facilities.
- Study opportunities for transit to integrate with distributed energy systems.
- Increase partnerships with employers to increase utilization of transit benefit programs and align transit benefit programs with changing mobility needs of commuters and focusing on lower-paying and part-time jobs.
- Partner with tourism and entertainment entities to include transit fare passes in ticketed events, hotel stays, and other modes of travel.
- Deploy land disposition and joint venture strategies to generate revenue from real estate and joint development.

Outcome: A region that is connected.

Goal: Improve responsiveness, including better serving off-peak and non-work trips, to high need corridors while ensuring coverage throughout the region.

- Provide complementary bus transit in Metra corridors when trains are not currently operating to make transit travel in these corridors more useful across all times of day and days of the week.
- Develop and be held accountable to regional service standards so that transit resources are allocated to high-need (e.g., transit-dependent) and transit-receptive (e.g., dense) populations and communities across the region.
- Modify Metra rail schedules to operate more like regional rail in order to capture new and changing regional travel markets.
- Adjust CTA and Pace bus service levels to better serve non-traditional riders, especially during off-peak hours.

Goal: Increase access to opportunities via transit, focusing on connecting underserved communities to the resources they need.

- Prioritize increased frequency and speed for buses, targeting communities with a demonstrated transit need.
- Improve transit service in lower-income neighborhoods and suburbs so there is better access to jobs, healthcare, and other important destinations.

Performance Measures

During the final working group meeting, members began the process of generating ideas for new performance measures that can be used to track RTA and the Service Boards' progress against the plan's goals. RTA conducted an inventory of existing measures the agency's tracks related to the working group's goals to help inform this conversation. Potential new measures will be evaluated by the RTA team over the summer to determine data availability and feasibility.

Outcome: A transit system that is financially stable.

Goal: Control, innovate, and plan for cost growth to maximize delivery of service that responds to the needs of the region.	
Existing Measures **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: • Operating cost/passenger trip • Operating cost/vehicle revenue mile • Operating cost components	**Potential New Measures** • Share of operating funding allocated to coverage goals vs. efficiency goals • Accessibility relative to cost • Operating costs (independent of/with inflation separated out vs. new programs)

Goal: Increase and improve community engagement and transparency with diverse groups during planning and budgeting for transit projects.	
Existing Measures	**Potential New Measures** ● Participation in public forums for budget and capital discussions ● Number of outreach opportunities (in communities that are less engaged, different formats) ● Quality/perception of engagement, i.e., "did you feel heard?" ● Involvement of community groups (percentage of budget for outreach, percentage of budget for CBOs)
Goal: Communicate the value the transit system brings to the region.	
Existing Measures	**Potential New Measures** ● Traffic reduction from transit ridership
Goal: Develop an equity-based operating funding structure to allow the Service Boards to enhance transit affordability while lowering reliance on fares to balance the operating budget.	
Existing Measures **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: ● Fare revenue/passenger trip ● Recovery ratio	**Potential New Measures** ● Fares collected from individuals below poverty ● Number of riders utilizing fare subsidy programs ● Cost per passenger ● Average fare on a route/proportion of riders who qualify for and/or utilize reduced fares
Goal: Increase and diversify operating funding sources to fund a robust system that provides equitable and high-quality service across our region.	
Existing Measures **Regional Measures**: ● Sales tax by merchant category **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: ● Operations funding sources ● Recovery ratio ● Vehicle revenue miles per square mile	**Potential New Measures** ● Share of funding from new/innovative sources ● Amount and diversity of sources ● Average commute time/share of commuters with commutes less than a certain time ● Number of work/non-work trips supported ● Regional mode share (transit vs. car) ● Transit delays ● Predictability of trips
Goal: Maximize system-generated, non-farebox revenue.	
Existing Measures **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: ● Operations funding sources	**Potential New Measures** ● Non-farebox revenue as a percentage of all revenue ● Non-farebox revenue as a percentage of total expenditures

Outcome: A region that is connected.

Goal: Improve responsiveness, including better serving off-peak and non-work trips, to high need corridors while ensuring coverage throughout the region.	
Existing Measures **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: ● Unlinked transfer passenger trips ● vehicle revenue miles per square mile ● transit capacity per capita	**Potential New Measures** ● Transportation choice index ● Travel time competitiveness (transit versus car) ● Transit mode share on major corridors
Goal: Increase access to opportunities via transit, focusing on connecting underserved communities to the resources they need.	
Existing Measures **Regional Measures**: ● ADA application/call volumes ● Ride Free/Reduced Fare permits ● Customer program/helpline/Transportation Information Center call volumes ● Community ADA outreach events ● Travel training customers served **Regional and/or Agency Measures**: ● Unlinked passenger trips ● vehicle revenue miles per square mile ● transit capacity per capita	**Potential New Measures** ● Access to jobs via transit (disaggregate to compare disadvantaged communities to others) ● Access to healthcare, shopping, cultural institutions

Other Topics Discussed

Working group members also discussed strategies that are important to transit but are in the purview of other agencies and partners or are included in topical areas that are covered by the other two working groups. As such, RTA staff indicated a limited number of strategies for Removal (removed from discussion in this process), Reassignment (to another working group), and Off-Ramping (handed off to other agencies to address). The topical areas of these strategies that were Off-Ramped from this group for another agency to pursue include those that would likely have an implementing agency outside of the Transit Agencies, such as:

- Developing employer-based Transportation Demand Management plans,
- Guiding employers to make site selection decisions in ways that support transit access,
- Employing community benefits agreements with venues and commercial and residential developers of large projects to support transit access,
- Leveraging federal relief dollars to promote inclusive economic development,
- Allowing riders to donate funds to other riders in need, and
- Restructuring labor contracts.

Next Steps

The goals, strategies, and performance measures developed by the working group comprise the initial plan development elements of the next Regional Transit Strategic Plan. The contents of this memo will be shared in a variety of formats and settings over the summer and fall of 2022 as RTA staff continue to refine these ideas with input from stakeholders, partners, and the general public and work towards the draft plan document and the adoption of the plan in early 2023. Next steps will include:

- Public input survey on goals and strategies from working group memos,
- Virtual, public webinar and workshop on working group process and outcomes,
- Transit rider interviews,
- Presentation of working group memos at an RTA Board meeting,
- Draft Regional Transit Strategic Plan public comment in late 2022, and
- Regional Transit Strategic Plan adoption in early 2023.

Appendix

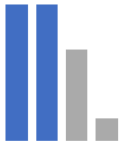
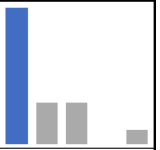
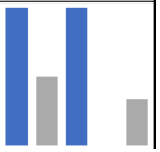
Results from Strategy Support Survey

At the culmination of the working group process, members were surveyed to better understand their level support for each strategy developed by the working group (working group members could also review and provide feedback on other groups' strategies). Results from the survey are included in the tables below and will be one key element used by the RTA to prioritize strategies for implementation, along with public and stakeholder feedback to be gathered over the summer. The survey results cover strategies developed by all three working groups. The numbers in each cell indicate the number of people who responded accordingly to the question. Note that the strategies below are listed as written for the survey and that some strategies were subsequently refined as captured in main memos for each working group.

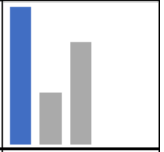
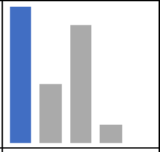
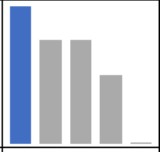
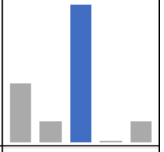
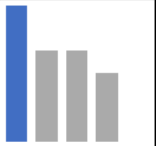
Transit Service Working Group

Outcome: A transit system that is safe, accessible, reliable, and useful for riders.

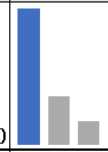
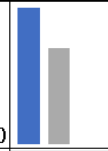
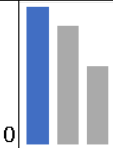
Goal: Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Create regional standard practices regarding cleanliness and safety at stations and stops.	6	6	4	1	0	
Install and maintain human-scale lighting and safe sidewalks in and around stations/stops.	10	3	3	0	1	
Provide public restrooms at all major transit centers.	6	3	6	0	2	

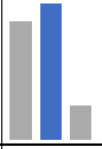
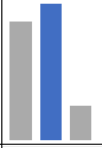
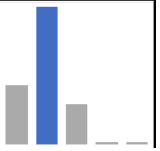
Goal: Increase safety and security for everyone using the system.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Develop the capability to report safety issues within the Ventra app.	8	3	6	0	0	
Increase training provided to frontline staff to recognize and properly address crises and safety issues.	7	3	6	1	0	
Pilot a regional transit ambassador program.	5	4	4	3	1	
Partner with communities on justice-centered approaches to violence reduction, such as affordable housing, mental health care, and living wages.	4	2	8	1	2	
Provide targeted, on-demand micro-mobility and last-mile options in areas of low density and/or high safety concerns.	6	4	4	3	0	

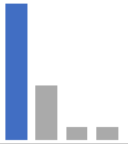
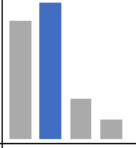
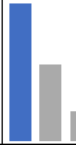
Goal: Ensure full accessibility of the transit system and its communications for all users, regardless of ability.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Evaluate and prioritize ADA accessibility needs across the system.	11	4	2	0	0	
Establish a dedicated funding source for ADA improvements.	10	7	0	0	0	
Make door-to-door solutions accessible to all, including those who cannot transfer from their mobility devices.	7	6	4	0	0	

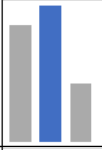
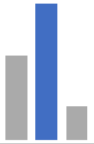
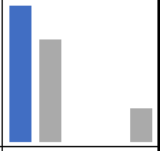
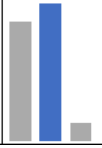
Goal: Adapt transit service to meet riders' changing needs and provide a competitive alternative to driving.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Regularly engage with partners and communities to identify service adjustments needed to better serve community's mobility needs.	7	8	2	0	0	
Implement service adjustments needed to better serve post-covid travel patterns.	7	8	2	0	0	
Develop regional service standards by mode and geography.	4	8	3	1	1	

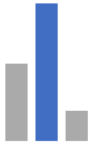
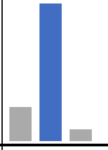
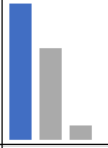
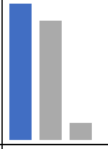
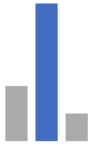
Goal: Improve the reliability and speed of transit trips to better compete with driving.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Advocate for the prioritization of transit over cars when allocating street space.	13	3	0	0	0	
Lobby for updating state laws to allow camera-enforced transit lanes.	10	4	1	1	0	
Launch a campaign to communicate and make the regional case for the benefits of Bus Rapid Transit.	6	7	2	1	0	
Build a coalition of governmental, business, and community support for Bus Rapid Transit projects.	9	5	2	0	0	

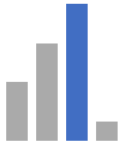
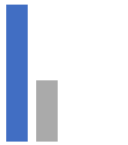
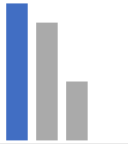
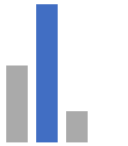
Goal: Improve the reliability and speed of transit trips to better compete with driving. (continued)

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Study new funding options and opportunities to increase funding for implementing Bus Rapid Transit projects.	6	7	3	0	0	
Invest additional funds in transit signal priority and other technologies to maximize transit speeds and improve the bus travel experience.	5	8	2	0	0	
Expand funding for technology and staffing to help Service Boards meet bus reliability goals.	8	6	0	0	2	
Expand opportunities to prioritize transit during long-term construction projects/disruptions.	7	8	1	0	0	

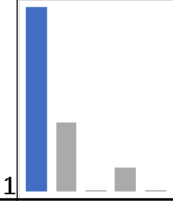
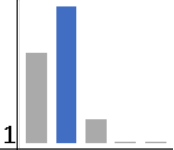
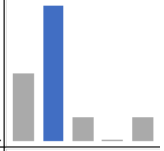
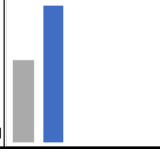
Goal: Increase the quantity and quality of consistent, real-time, easy-to-understand travel information that meets the needs of visitors and infrequent customers.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Review the existing methods used to communicate transit schedules and develop recommendations to make them more understandable for infrequent transit users.	5	9	2	0	0	
Review agency approaches to providing visual and audio communications in multiple languages, such as Spanish, and develop recommendations to expand multilingual communications.	3	12	1	0	0	
Test all manual announcement systems to ensure that all announcements are made with sound quality matching the automated systems.	9	6	1	0	0	
Review placement of all real-time service information displays, on all buses and trains, so that they are visible for all standing and seated riders.	8	7	1	0	0	
Develop additional methods to communicate elevator outage information to customers.	4	10	2	0	0	

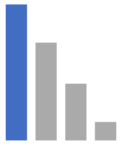
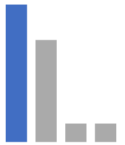
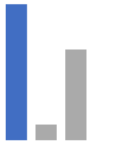
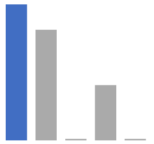
Goal: Increase the quantity and quality of consistent, real-time, easy-to-understand travel information that meets the needs of visitors and infrequent customers. (continued)

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Train current frontline employees and provide additional part-time staff to help riders navigate the system and ensure safety.	3	5	7	1	0	
Update trackers to accurately reflect arrival times on all systems.	11	5	0	0	0	
Develop a system to communicate with Metra customers with easy to use information onboard indicating what train car exits will be usable at stations.	7	6	3	0	0	
Develop a method for Metra to provide better information to customers identifying on what track a train stops at.	5	9	2	0	0	

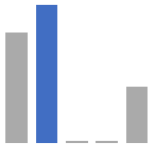
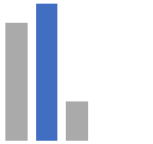
Goal: Expand and improve the coordination and connections between transit services in the region.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left= 5, far right= 0, blue= highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Create a regionwide consortium of local dial-a-ride and on-demand services in order to provide service coverage across and between communities so that areas of the region that have too little demand for fixed-route service are served with some type of transit.	9	4	1	2	1	
Identify a lead agency and system to integrate service information of transit agencies and external service providers operating and connecting to the region.	5	7	2	1	1	
Study a new regionwide program to provide a guaranteed-ride-home program to complement all transit services.	4	7	2	1	2	
Better integrate suburban dial-a-ride and paratransit transportation systems so that service area boundaries can be more easily crossed.	6	10	0	0	0	

Goal: Simplify and integrate the payment system across CTA, Metra, and Pace to improve the transit experience for all users.

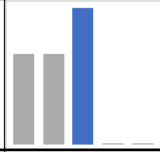
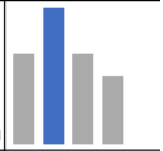
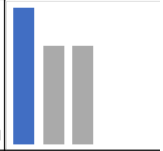
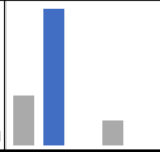
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Provide a single-ride regional fare instrument.	11	5	0	0	0	
Provide regional fare instruments for those without a smartphone.	7	5	3	1	0	
Provide reduced fares for customers transferring to/from Metra.	8	6	1	1	0	
Conduct a study within the next year on how to enable and pay for seamless transfers between CTA, Metra, and Pace.	9	1	6	0	0	
Coordinate with other transportation providers (such as Divvy, Uber, or Lyft) to integrate fares and payment and support first-last mile connections to transit.	6	5	1	3	1	

Goal: Create equitable fare policies that ensure transit is affordable and accessible to all.

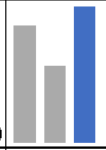
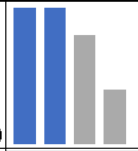
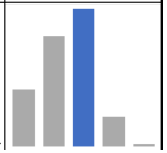
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Study the possibility of distance-based fares that reduce prices for short trips.	5	6	1	1	3	
Offer regional reduced or fare-free programs for low-income individuals.	6	7	2	0	0	

Outcome: A region that is winning the fight against climate change.

Goal: Achieve near-zero emissions for the region's transit buses, trains, and other operations, and prioritize equity in the transition.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Eliminate the use of all fossil fuel-burning buses and fleet vehicles by 2040 or earlier, starting with areas of poorest air quality.	4	4	5	2	2	
Create a zero-emissions commission to coordinate decarbonization efforts, including electric charging and purchasing as well as innovative propulsion, across the service boards.	4	6	4	3	0	
Better promote transit benefit programs with large employers located near transit	7	5	5	0	0	
Market and promote improvements that impact choice riders.	4	11	0	2	0	

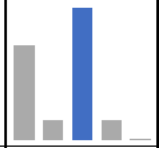
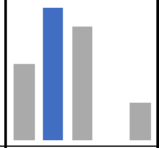
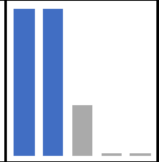
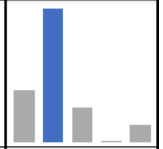
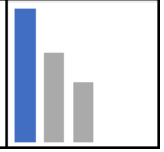
Goal: Develop and implement plans to ensure the system (physical, financial, labor) can withstand disruptions, including infrastructure emergencies and labor shortages, to maintain service levels for all users.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Make stations and stops comfortable year-round, even during extreme temperatures.	6	4	7	0	0	
Establish a funding program or incentive for Service Boards and local governments to implement green infrastructure solutions near transit.	5	5	4	2	0	
Create a climate preparedness fund for use in extreme weather events.	3	5	6	2	1	

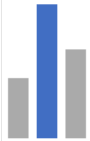
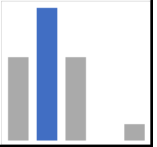
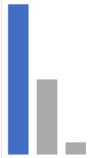
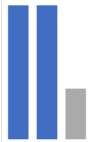
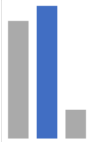
Infrastructure Investment Working Group

Outcome: A transit system that is in a state of good repair.

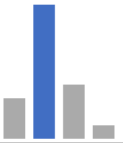
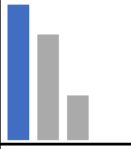
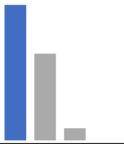
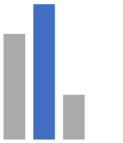
Goal: Invest in a complete transit experience to achieve a state of good repair across the system.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
For state of good repair projects, identify options for enhancement and modernization to improve the user experience.	6	2	8	2	1	
Use innovative techniques, materials, and practices during state of good repair projects.	4	7	6	0	2	
Increase access to the system for all users by ensuring sidewalks, curb cuts, elevators, stairs, crosswalks, and any assets within a half-mile radius of the station / stop are in good repair and ADA compliant.	7	7	3	1	1	
Utilize customer feedback, including crowdsourcing, to understand what riders want in infrastructure projects in project development.	4	9	3	1	2	
Transparently communicate the magnitude of capital needs along with the value to users of these investments.	9	6	4	0	0	

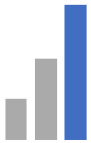
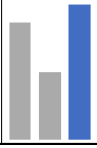
Goal: Increase and diversify capital funding sources.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Advance legislation to equitably distribute transit value capture mechanisms.	4	9	6	0	0	
Lobby for legislation for the RTA service area that requires transit infrastructure to be provided by employment centers.	5	8	5	0	1	
Establish project development practices and policies which foster early coordination between highway and transit agencies at county and regional levels to leverage roadway funds to provide transit improvements.	12	6	1	0	0	
Lobby Federal agencies to include set-asides for cooperative projects so that transit is integrated into projects more often.	8	8	3	0	0	
Cooperate across agencies to pursue and secure formula and discretionary federal funding.	8	9	2	0	0	

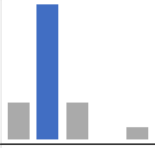
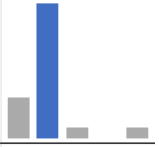
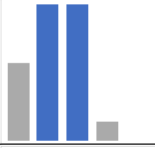
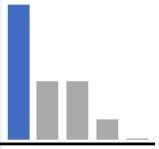
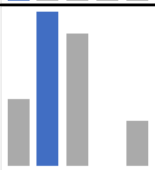
Goal: Ensure projects of different scales are able to compete for funding opportunities.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Advocate for relaxing grant minimum and maximum dollar values to give more flexibility across projects and sponsors.	3	10	4	1	0	
Advocate for increased transit set-asides in transportation funding.	9	7	3	0	0	
Broaden highway congestion programs to include transit infrastructure.	11	7	1	0	0	
Provide technical assistance for governments and agencies seeking transit-related funding.	8	11	0	0	0	
Lobby with funding agencies to streamline application processes to lower barriers to competing for funding.	7	9	3	0	0	

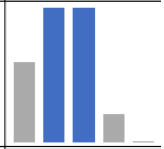
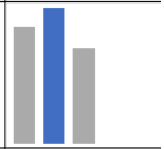
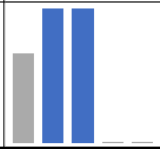
Goal: Facilitate collaboration between agencies, businesses, and public stakeholders on capital projects.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Examine benefits of joint procurement activities not already being performed and, if favorable, establish joint procurement practices and policies for administrative consolidation.	3	6	10	0	0	
Establish a regional mobility manager role to coordinate infrastructure investments with county-level mobility managers.	7	4	8	0	0	

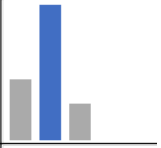
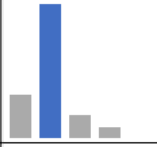
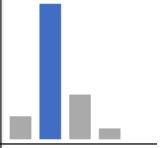
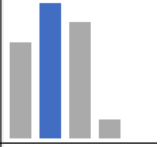
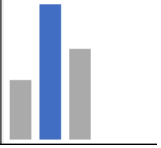
Goal: Distribute capital funding across the region in a manner that prioritizes the communities with the greatest need.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Identify what strategies USDOT and IDOT are using related to distributing funding to communities that have been historically harmed by inequities in past transportation and infrastructure decision-making.	3	11	3	0	1	
Identify funding opportunities specifically available to projects with high equity impact.	4	13	1	0	1	
Create committee of IDOT, CMAP, Service Boards and RTA to collaborate, coordinate and advance best practices for providing new equity requirements in capital funding decisions.	4	7	7	1	0	
Create mechanisms and process revisions to make project selection transparent and understandable.	8	4	4	2	1	
Publish a joint statement of four transit agencies and CMAP that specifies commitment to this goal, identifies the strategies will be utilized, and identifies the communities that have been historically harmed by past decisions.	3	7	6	0	2	

Goal: Revise capital programming to ensure that we equitably balance the needs of different markets and communities to increase ridership.

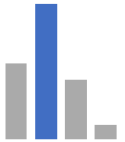
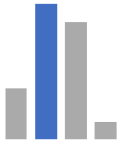
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Create an equity advisory group to ensure equity is integrated into capital investment and measured as a regional outcome.	4	6	6	2	1	
Identify and evaluate projects with an equity lens to serve markets where demand for transit is not being satisfied so as to grow ridership.	6	7	5	0	0	
Make equitable access to opportunity, accessibility, and zero emissions transit core requirements of the capital program.	4	5	5	2	2	

Goal: Increase transparency and communications with communities regarding transit spending and funding.

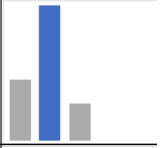
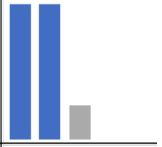
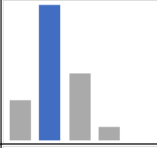
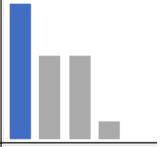
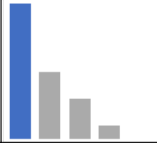
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Articulate key messages on transit investments in easily understood language and formats customized to each audience.	5	11	3	0	0	
Evaluate the current outreach process across transit planning and implementation to identify areas of improvement.	4	12	2	1	0	
Build a panel survey of residents that are representative of the region and can be called-on more often to provide input.	2	12	4	1	0	
Develop community advisory groups to provide input on investment and build capacity for providing substantive feedback on project prioritization.	5	7	6	1	0	
Evaluate and refine the prioritization process with a focus on transparency and communication.	4	9	6	0	0	

Outcome: A region of thriving communities.

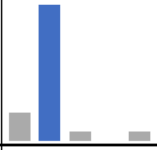
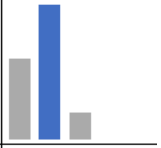
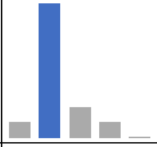
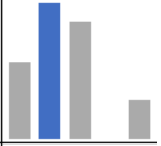
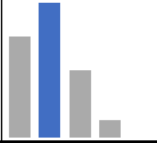
Goal: Increase community engagement and communication during project selection, planning, and service changes.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	4 - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	3 - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	2 - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	1 - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Employ a variety of tailored outreach and engagement methods to reach all community members and stakeholders and use the input to inform planning and decision making.	5	9	4	1	0	
Maximize or supplement service board capacity to lead engagement with community members.	3	8	7	1	0	

Goal: Reduce first/last mile barriers to using transit.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Promote partnerships to develop mobility hubs that support community quality of life, connectivity, and pride in place.	5	11	3	0	0	
Clearly and accurately communicate real-time modal options to riders through both digital and traditional signage.	8	8	2	0	0	
Directly engage residents on how to improve space in and around transit stations and stops.	3	10	5	1	0	
Pilot innovative mobility options to address system gaps.	8	5	5	1	0	
Increase connectivity for employment and industrial centers that are close to, but disconnected from transit.	10	5	3	1	0	

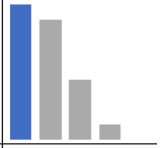
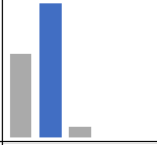
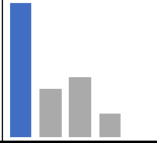
Goal: Support communities pursuing equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD).

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Work with municipalities to increase affordable, accessible, multi-family housing options and prevent displacement of current residents near transit.	3	14	1	0	1	
Provide guidance and technical assistance to local governments and agencies to finance eTOD.	6	10	2	0	0	
Establish an eTOD office at the RTA to institutionalize eTOD and better coordinate transit investments and land use development patterns.	2	10	3	2	1	
Give precedent in project selection for communities whose policies align with eTOD recommendations.	4	7	6	0	2	
Educate local governments and communities on eTOD benefits, best practices, and tools for alignment and implementation.	6	8	4	1	0	

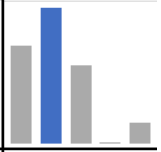
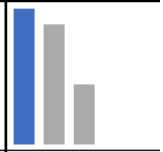
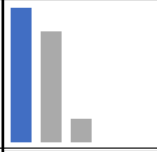
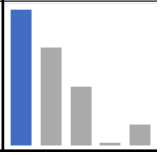
Financial Responsibility Working Group

Outcome: A transit system that is financially stable.

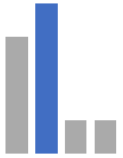
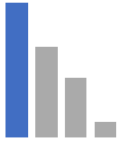
Goal: Control, innovate, and plan for cost growth to maximize delivery of service that responds to the needs of the region.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Identify new methods to share and reduce costs across Service Boards.	9	8	4	1	0	
Pursue opportunities to reduce costs through technology.	8	13	1	0	0	
Pilot new service and partnership models that address communities' mobility needs and decrease costs for the system.	11	4	5	2	0	

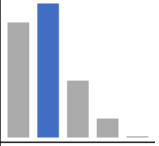
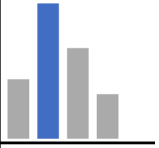
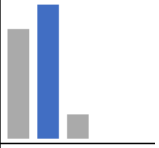
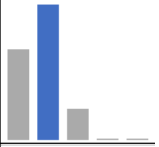
Goal: Increase and improve community engagement and transparency with diverse groups during planning and budgeting for transit projects.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Standardize practices for working with and compensating community groups' involvement in outreach and engagement on transit projects.	6	8	5	1	2	
Develop standards for fully accessible community meetings (and other engagement platforms) and budget resources needed to engage people of all abilities.	9	8	4	0	0	
Build a broad, diverse coalition of stakeholders beyond traditional transit partners that will seek sustainable transit funding for the region.	11	9	2	0	0	
Develop common standards to compensate individuals, community groups, and stakeholders for their participation in transit planning and budgeting processes.	8	6	4	1	2	

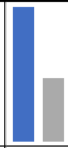
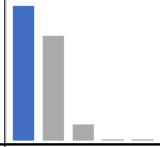
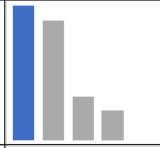
Goal: Communicate the value the transit system brings to the region.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Quantify transit's diverse impact on equitable access, climate, safety, public health, and economic development.	9	9	2	0	0	
Develop an equitable access to opportunity tool for analysis across disaggregate population groups and regional geographies that captures the full spectrum of destinations while accounting for fare cost and temporal factors.	7	9	2	2	0	
Benchmark regional transit performance against traditional and non-traditional peer agencies, seeking to identify best practices and opportunities for innovations to adopt.	9	6	4	1	0	

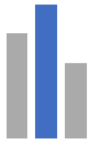
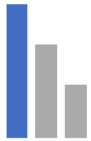
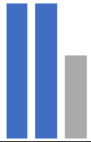
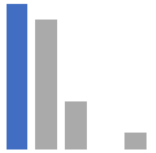
Goal: Develop an equity-based operating funding structure to allow the Service Boards to enhance transit affordability while lowering reliance on fares to balance the operating budget.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Seek authority from state legislature for greater RTA autonomy in the distribution of capital and operations funding in a transparent, data-driven, equitable fashion.	7	8	4	2	1	
Study and pilot free transit routes, transit stops, and/or rider-targeted fare subsidy programs to support fare affordability.	4	9	6	3	0	
Better promote and make it easier for individuals to take advantage of existing fare subsidies.	9	11	2	0	0	
Expand fare subsidies to other populations for whom fare cost is a barrier to transit usage.	7	10	3	1	1	
Make transfers between modes of transit, including bike-share and scooters, more affordable, seamless, and easier to access.	11	9	1	1	0	

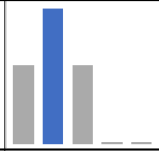
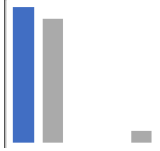
Goal: Develop an equity-based operating funding structure to allow the Service Boards to enhance transit affordability while lowering reliance on fares to balance the operating budget. (continued)

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Fully fund the development of an integrated fare system.	15	7	0	0	0	
Work with social service organizations to better understand and respond to riders' unmet mobility needs and use that information to make decisions.	10	8	2	1	1	
Invest in and create tools to better track and create data on emerging and currently unmet rider needs.	9	8	3	2	0	
Advocate for permanent relief from the legislatively mandated fare box recovery ratio.	11	7	3	1	0	

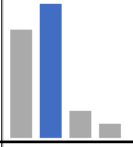
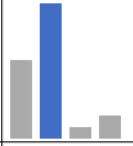
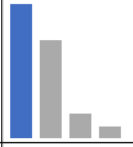
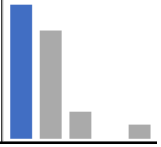
Goal: Increase and diversify operating funding sources to fund a robust system that provides equitable and high-quality service across our region.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Increase local funding through expansion of sales tax base to support equitable transit service.	7	9	5	0	0	
Develop value capture methods for development around transit.	10	7	4	0	0	
Evaluate joint development models that share costs with municipalities/counties.	8	8	5	0	0	
Advocate for increased taxes and fees on private automobiles and commercial trucks including fuel, registration, vehicle size and weight, VMT taxes and fees, high-occupancy toll lanes, congestion pricing, and parking.	9	8	3	0	1	

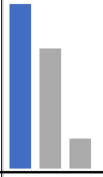
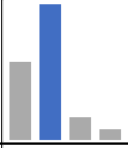
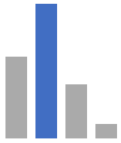
Goal: Increase and diversify operating funding sources to fund a robust system that provides equitable and high-quality service across our region. (continued)

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Expand the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) to suburban Cook and collar counties and have the state provide PTF on that expanded RETT similar to what CTA receives now for Chicago real estate sales.	5	8	5	1	1	
Advocate for more State funding through increased Public Transportation Fund and new, dedicated funding streams.	11	10	0	0	1	

Goal: Maximize system-generated, non-farebox revenue.

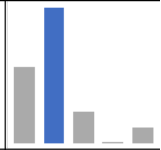
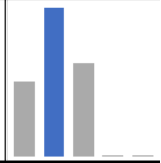
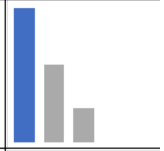
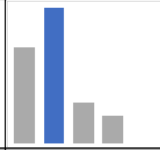
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Adopt innovative approaches to generating advertising revenue within transit vehicles and facilities.	8	10	2	1	0	
Adopt innovative approaches to generating revenue through facilities including: rental for concessions such as lockers for package delivery, fiber optic cables, and placemaking.	7	12	1	2	0	
Study opportunities for enhanced transit power generation for example solar panel installations at transit facilities.	11	8	2	1	0	
Study opportunities for transit to integrate with distributed energy systems.	10	8	2	0	1	

Goal: Maximize system-generated, non-farebox revenue. (continued)

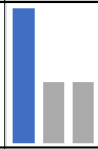
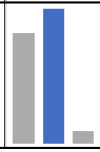
Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Increase partnerships with employers to increase utilization of transit benefit programs and align transit benefit programs with changing mobility needs of commuters and focusing on lower-paying and part-time jobs.	11	8	2	0	0	
Partner with tourism and entertainment entities to include transit fare passes in ticketed events, hotel stays, and other modes of travel.	7	12	2	1	0	
Deploy land disposition and joint venture strategies to generate revenue from real estate and joint development.	6	10	4	1	0	

Outcome: A region that is connected.

Goal: Improve responsiveness, including better serving off-peak and non-work trips, to high need corridors while ensuring coverage throughout the region.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	**4** - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	**3** - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	**2** - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	**1** - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Provide complementary bus transit in Metra corridors when trains are not currently operating to make transit travel in these corridors more useful across all times of day and days of the week.	6	10	3	1	2	
Develop and be held accountable to regional service standards so that transit resources are allocated to high-need (e.g. transit-dependent) and transit-receptive (e.g. dense) populations and communities across the region.	5	9	6	1	1	
Modify Metra rail schedules to operate more like regional rail in order to capture new and changing regional travel markets.	12	7	3	0	0	
Adjust CTA and Pace bus service levels to better serve non-traditional riders, especially during off-peak hours.	7	10	3	2	0	

Goal: Increase access to opportunities via transit, focusing on connecting underserved communities to the resources they need.

Strategies	Working Group Member Survey Responses					Survey Responses (far left = 5, far right = 0, blue = highest value)
	5 - I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy	4 - I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	3 - I like some of this strategy but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	2 - I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	1 - I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.	
Prioritize increased frequency and speed for buses, targeting communities with a demonstrated transit need.	11	5	5	0	0	
Improve transit service in lower-income neighborhoods and suburbs so there is better access to jobs, healthcare, and other important destinations.	9	11	1	0	0	

Working Group Process Details

All materials from the Working Groups are available on the RTA Working Group Hub.

Meeting #1

Goals

- Building team relationships
- Understanding working group objectives and how they fit into the overall strategic planning process
- Set a common base of knowledge, issues, and current state
- Homework to think about project goals

Agenda

- Welcome + Getting to Know Each Other
- Overview of Plan Process
- Review Meeting Charter
- Past Plans and Current State Review
- Reflection on Information Presented
- Q+A/Close-out

Polling Questions (Menti)

- What did you find notable from the briefing booklet and/or the data presentation?
- Is there anything that needs additional clarification from the briefing booklet and/or the data presentation?
- What is your greatest hope for this process?
- What is your biggest concern for this process?
- Are you open to meeting in person?

Inputs

- Briefing Books – update all participants on background information

Figure 1. Pages from the Briefing Books developed for working group participants.

Outputs

- Issues that need clarification

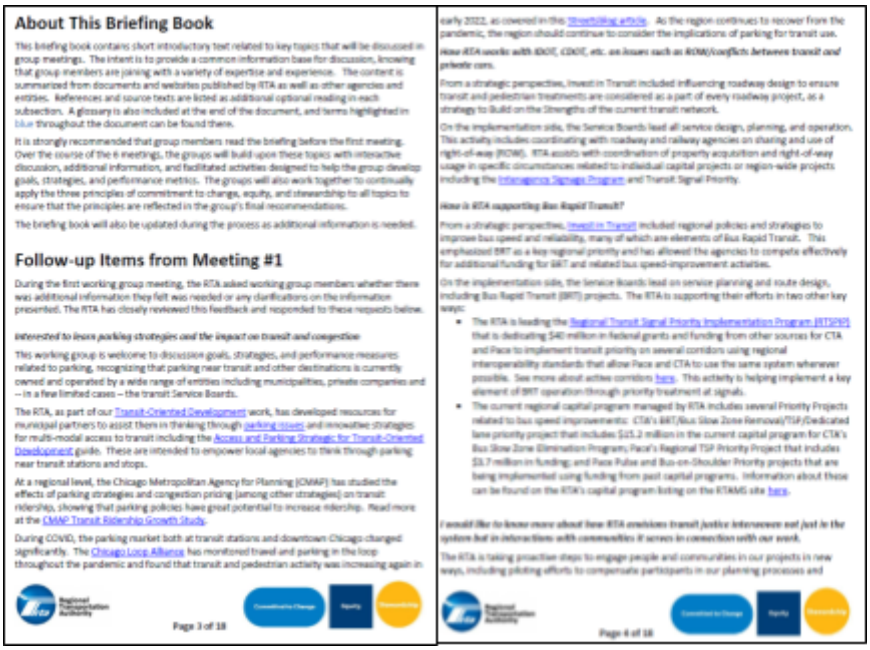


Figure 2. Questions from working group members were addressed in an updated Briefing Book following Meeting #1.

Meeting #2

Goals

- Building team relationships
- Developing potential goals

Agenda

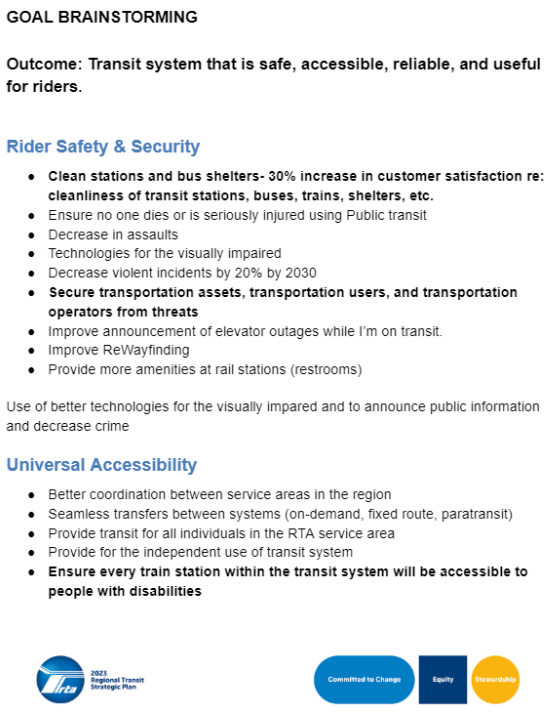
- Welcome + meeting ritual
- Meeting 1 recap
- Building Collaboration
- Developing goals + peer examples
- Breakout groups and report out
- Q&A/closeout

Inputs

- Additional information on issues that needed clarification
- Google Doc that lists outcomes and offers topics from the briefing books to organize goal brainstorming; working group members can edit the doc during the meeting

Outputs

- Completed Google Docs with proposed goals from Working Group Members
-



GOAL BRAINSTORMING

Outcome: Transit system that is safe, accessible, reliable, and useful for riders.

Rider Safety & Security

- **Clean stations and bus shelters- 30% increase in customer satisfaction re: cleanliness of transit stations, buses, trains, shelters, etc.**
- Ensure no one dies or is seriously injured using Public transit
- Decrease in assaults
- Technologies for the visually impaired
- Decrease violent incidents by 20% by 2030
- **Secure transportation assets, transportation users, and transportation operators from threats**
- Improve announcement of elevator outages while I'm on transit.
- Improve ReWayfinding
- Provide more amenities at rail stations (restrooms)

Use of better technologies for the visually impared and to announce public information and decrease crime

Universal Accessibility

- Better coordination between service areas in the region
- Seamless transfers between systems (on-demand, fixed route, paratransit)
- Provide transit for all individuals in the RTA service area
- Provide for the independent use of transit system
- **Ensure every train station within the transit system will be accessible to people with disabilities**

Figure 3. Example of Google Docs used during Meeting #2 to develop draft goal statements.

Inter-Meeting Steps:

- Used Miro to organize comments from Meeting #2 (grouped feedback by theme); draft goal statements that were developed/synthesized directly from WG-generated content)
- Categorized Draft Goals that need in-meeting refinement

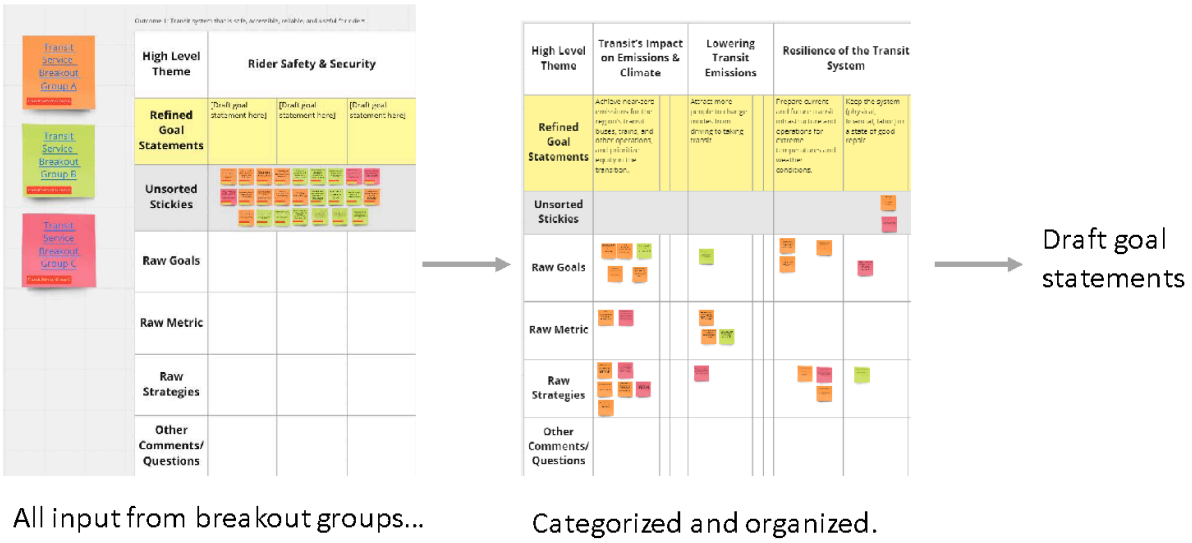


Figure 4. Example of how the RTA team used a Miro board between Meetings #2 and #3 to organize, categorize, and synthesize all comments from the Transit Service Working Group.

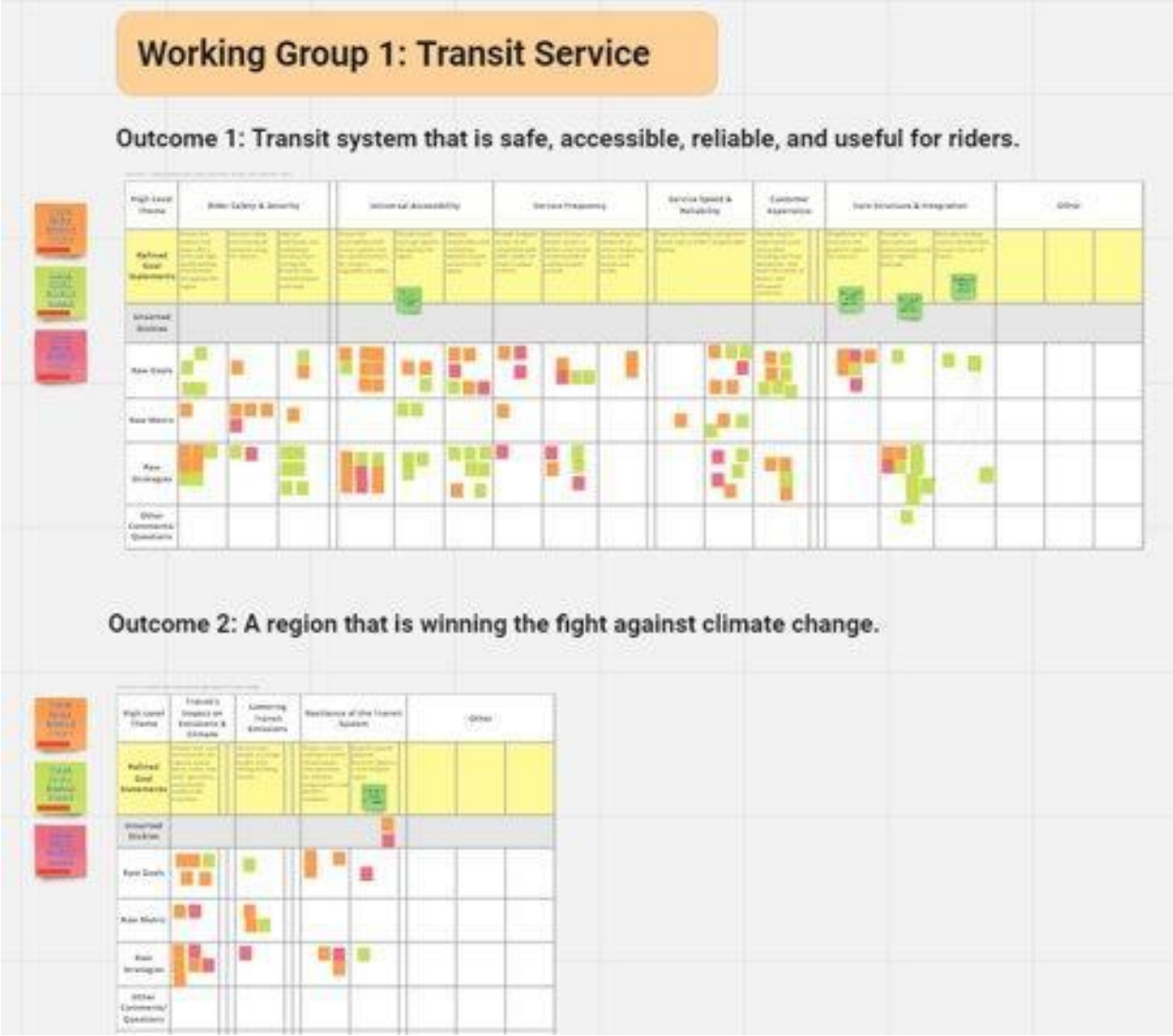


Figure 5. Screen capture of the Miro board used by the RTA team between Meetings #2 and #3 to organize, categorize, and synthesize all comments from the Transit Service Working Group.

Meeting #3

Goals

- Continuing to build team relationships
- Understanding the draft goal statements refining process that happened between meetings and how participants can access this documentation
- Refining draft goal statements into a list of goals that will move to the next stage

Agenda

- Welcome + Meeting Ritual
- Building Collaboration

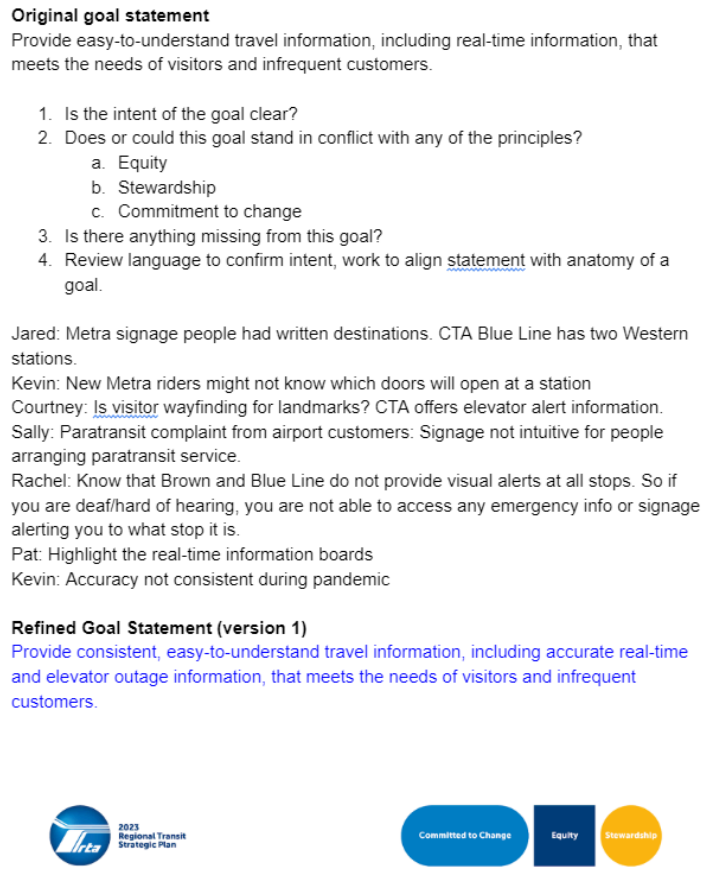
- Recap of Meeting #2
- Synthesis Process
- Small Groups to Refine Goals
- Report-Out & Discussion of Refined Goals
- Q&A + Close Out

Inputs

- Google Docs with lists of draft goal statements and room to write a refined goal statement for each

Outputs

- Completed Google Docs with suggested refined goal statements



Original goal statement
Provide easy-to-understand travel information, including real-time information, that meets the needs of visitors and infrequent customers.

1. Is the intent of the goal clear?
2. Does or could this goal stand in conflict with any of the principles?
    a. Equity
    b. Stewardship
    c. Commitment to change
3. Is there anything missing from this goal?
4. Review language to confirm intent, work to align statement with anatomy of a goal.

Jared: Metra signage people had written destinations. CTA Blue Line has two Western stations.
Kevin: New Metra riders might not know which doors will open at a station
Courtney: Is visitor wayfinding for landmarks? CTA offers elevator alert information.
Sally: Paratransit complaint from airport customers: Signage not intuitive for people arranging paratransit service.
Rachel: Know that Brown and Blue Line do not provide visual alerts at all stops. So if you are deaf/hard of hearing, you are not able to access any emergency info or signage alerting you to what stop it is.
Pat: Highlight the real-time information boards
Kevin: Accuracy not consistent during pandemic

Refined Goal Statement (version 1)
Provide consistent, easy-to-understand travel information, including accurate real-time and elevator outage information, that meets the needs of visitors and infrequent customers.

Figure 6. Example of Google Docs used during Meeting #3 to refine draft goal statements.

Inter-Meeting Steps:

- Used Miro to organize and categorize comments brainstormed in the meeting
- Combined, separated, or reassigned goals as needed within and between Working Groups
- Took strategy-level content that was previously generated by WG members in earlier meetings and added it under the appropriate goal statement

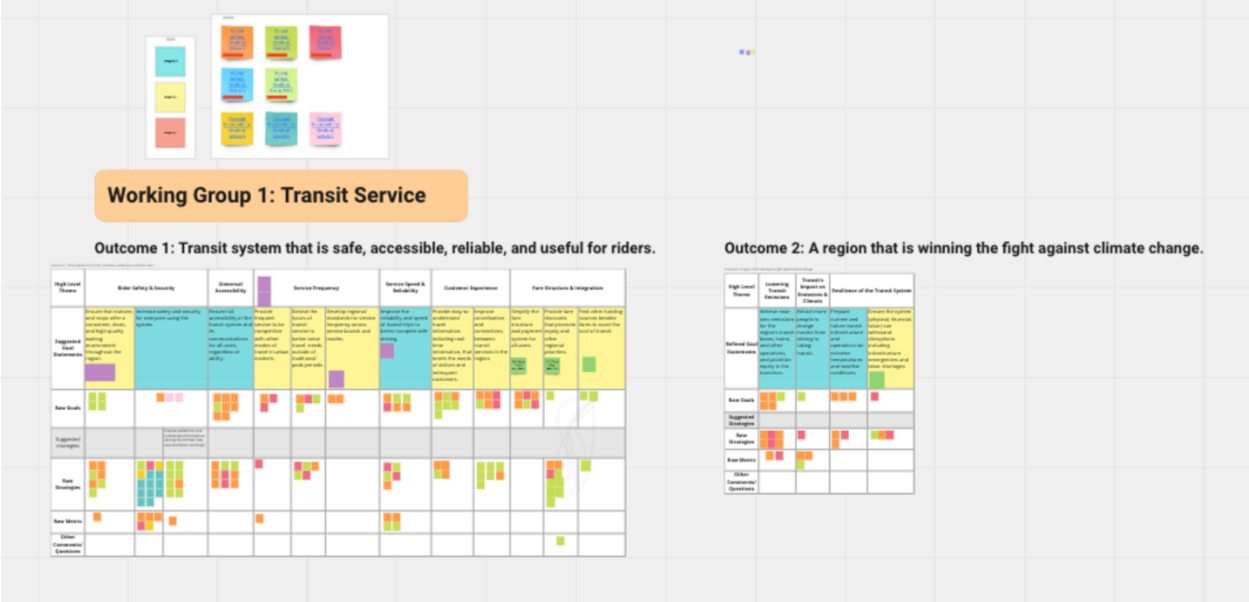


Figure 7. Screen capture of the Miro board used by the RTA team between Meetings #3 and #4 to organize, categorize, and synthesize all comments from the Transit Service Working Group.

Meeting #4

Goals

- Continuing to build team relationships
- Interdisciplinary learning across WGs and Technical Groups
- Brainstorming strategies

Agenda

- Welcome
- Process Overview + Recap of Meeting #3
- Technical Group Presentation
- Developing Strategies
- Breakout Groups: Strategy Creation
- Report-Out + Reflection
- Q&A + Close Out

Inputs

- Google Doc forms with refined goal statements; set up so that WG members can insert draft strategies as lists under each draft goal statement during the meeting

Outputs

- Completed Google Doc forms with lists of proposed strategies

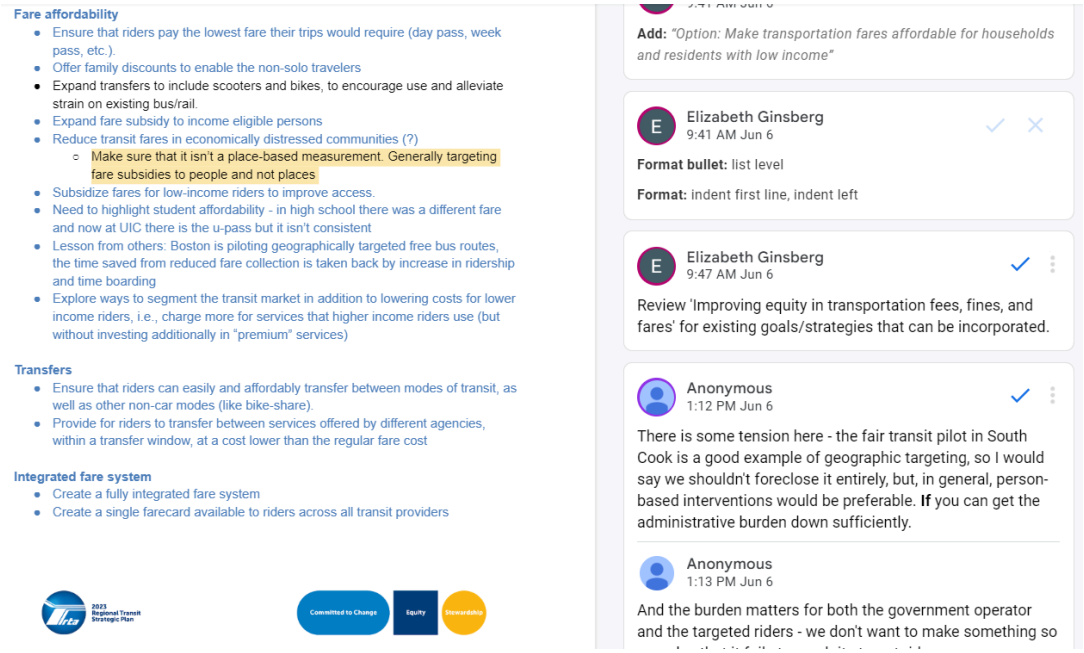


Figure 8. Example of Google Docs used during Meeting #4 to brainstorm potential strategies.

Inter-Meeting Steps:

- Developed Master Spreadsheet that included all goals/strategies
- Took proposed strategies and comments and synthesized draft strategy statements
- Vetted the draft strategy statements according to the three core principles (Equity, Stewardship, Commitment to Change), assigned each with an action needed in Meeting #5 (Refine, Reconcile, Ready, Remove, Reassign), and suggested discussion prompts/questions that needed to be answered by WG members for RTA to know how to move forward
- Breakout facilitators drafted possible refinements based on WG discussions and developed questions to ask so WG members could guide the direction needed for some strategies

Refined Goal Statement	Performance Measures	Refined Strategies	Current Status	Lead Actor	Secondary Actor	Time Horizon (short: 2-3 yr, mid: 5 yr, and long: post-plan)	Principle: Equity	Principle: Stewardship	Principle: Committed to Change	Action Needed for Meeting #5	Notes
Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.		Create regional standard practices regarding cleanliness and safety at stations and stops	Does not exist	CTA, Metra, Pace, RTA	Municipalities	Short				3. Ready	
Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.		Install and maintain human-scale lighting and safe sidewalks in and around stations/stops.	Varies across region, desire to standardize and improve across region	CTA, Metra, Pace, Municipalities	RTA, CMAP	Short				3. Ready	
Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.		Provide public restrooms at all major transit centers.	Does not exist	CTA, Metra, Pace		Long				3. Ready	May be significant feasibility challenges in certain locations. Adjust language to be more achievable? Many Metra stations have fewer than 100 people coming to them per day even pre-pandemic. Metra's ability to implement this strategy would be challenging. Maybe doing this at high-ridership stations or only "provide at major transit centers." Ongoing maintenance & operational challenges. Allow for more room for agencies to determine what will make the most sense for them. Make less specific. This is also an issue for public health, not just a matter of convenience--some people have conditions that significantly impact their health if they aren't able to use a restroom. Metra has restrooms on trains themselves. May be more relevant to CTA rail stations, many of which have restrooms already but are only accessible to staff.
Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.		~~Increase the cleanliness of stations and stops.~~	~~Exists but desire to improve~~	~~CTA, Metra, Pace~~	~~Municipalities~~	~~Short~~				4. Remove	First strategy is a specific action to make this happen. This could be a performance measure to measure that strategy's impact.
Invest in stations and stops to create comfortable, accessible, and safe waiting environments, prioritizing historically underserved communities.		~~Support the integration of stations and stops into the communities through transit-oriented development.~~	~~Exists but desire to improve~~	~~CTA, Metra, Pace, Municipalities~~	~~RTA, CMAP~~	~~Medium~~				5. Reassign	Duplicative with WG2 goals/strategies

Figure 9. Screen capture of the spreadsheet used by the RTA team between Meetings #4 and #5 to refine and categorize draft strategies in need of additional discussion.

Meeting #5

Goals

- Continuing to build team relationships
- Refining strategies

Agenda

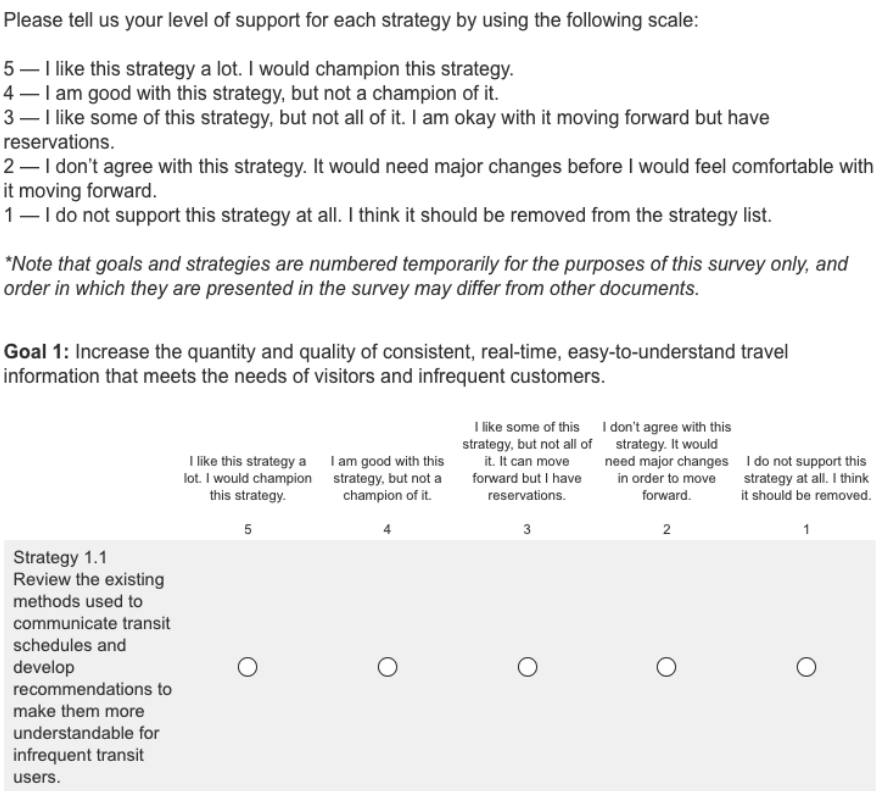
- Welcome
- Where We Are in the Process
- CMAP Mobility Recovery Presentation
- Breakout Groups: Refine Strategies
- Report-Out + Discussion
- Q&A + Close Out

Inputs

- Breakout Group Google Spreadsheet with refined strategy statements, set up so that WG members can discuss goals flagged for refinement or reconciliation.

Outputs

- Completed Google Spreadsheet with lists of comments on refined strategies
- Content for survey to determine level of support for strategies



Please tell us your level of support for each strategy by using the following scale:

5 — I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy.
4 — I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.
3 — I like some of this strategy, but not all of it. I am okay with it moving forward but have reservations.
2 — I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes before I would feel comfortable with it moving forward.
1 — I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed from the strategy list.

**Note that goals and strategies are numbered temporarily for the purposes of this survey only, and order in which they are presented in the survey may differ from other documents.*

Goal 1: Increase the quantity and quality of consistent, real-time, easy-to-understand travel information that meets the needs of visitors and infrequent customers.

	I like this strategy a lot. I would champion this strategy.	I am good with this strategy, but not a champion of it.	I like some of this strategy, but not all of it. It can move forward but I have reservations.	I don't agree with this strategy. It would need major changes in order to move forward.	I do not support this strategy at all. I think it should be removed.
	5	4	3	2	1
Strategy 1.1 Review the existing methods used to communicate transit schedules and develop recommendations to make them more understandable for infrequent transit users.	○	○	○	○	○

Figure 10. Screen capture of the Strategies Support Survey used by the RTA team between Meetings #5 and #6 to gauge working group member support for draft strategies.

Meeting #6

Goals

- Continuing to build team relationships
- Refining strategies
- Developing potential performance metrics
- Thanking all who participated, making clear the next steps and additional opportunities to stay involved in the process

Agenda

- Welcome
- Strategy Updates + Discussion
- Performance Measures
- Next Steps in Strategic Plan Process

Polling Questions (Zoom Poll)

- How do you feel about the goals and strategies overall?
- Overall, did the working group process make you feel heard and listened to?

Inputs

- Lists of refined strategies that RTA flagged as needing additional clarification from WG members
- Google Doc spreadsheets with existing performance measures for each proposed strategy, and room for WG members to add new performance measures and/or provide general comments on metrics

Outputs

- Completed Google Doc forms with lists of comments on existing and potential new performance measures for each strategy

Goal	Existing Measures	Potential New Measures	Notes
Improve the reliability and speed of transit trips to better compete with driving.	**Regional and/or Agency Measures**: • on-time performance; • average daily percent of fleet unavailable; • miles between major mechanical failures; • average speed; • unlinked passenger trips **Agency Measures**: • bus bunch/gap intervals; • rail delays; • slow zone %	• *Travel time competitiveness (transit v. car)* • *Travel time savings via transit* • *% of bus routes with bus-only lanes/transit priority measures* • *Share of trips in single-occupancy vehicles* • *Share of commute / discretionary trips made by transit*	David: Transit ridership seems like a rather indirect measure of transit reliability and speed. Jared: reliability for the rider (bus show up on time) or the operator side (bus function properly)? Riders don't care about equipment. Greg: satisfaction of the SB operators - can affect service and reliability [Melissa - could fit somewhere else better?, re: fully staffing] Emily: customer satisfaction metric (i.e. busses are faster/more reliable in priority lanes) Rochelle: impact of weather on reliability (mostly in winter) Emily: CTA does track major weather events - impacts on ridership, including gas prices, etc. Jared: more likely to ride in the winter - better experience than driving. Service may be worse and expectations are lower. Melissa - connecting weather events to ridership and to reliability. W. Robert: Competitiveness is a major consideration - not sure how to measure, but that's why people drive Rochelle: lower speed limits (school zones) impacts speed/longer trips Greg: can we track from the time someone gets on and then transfer to identify total trip length. Emily: speed is a good metric Rochelle - you used to know when your transfer time ends, from a fare perspective

Figure 11. Example of Google Docs used during Meeting #6 to brainstorm performance measures.