

OVERVIEW OF THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS TRANSIT AUTHORITY ACT:
[SB 3438 \(SENATE AMENDMENT 003\)](#)

June 11, 2025

Page

- 1 Sustainable Transit for Northern Illinois Act. Minimum parking requirements banned within 1/2 mile of “public transportation hubs” and within 1/8 mile of “public transportation corridors” where there is frequency of bus service interval of 15 minutes or less during a.m./p.m. peaks
- 6 Electric Vehicle Charging Fee Act. \$0.03/kw fee imposed at public EV charging stations (residential charging exempt). Proceeds used to fund transit capital projects. 90% of proceeds to NITA; 10% to Downstate transit agencies
- 15 Retail Delivery Climate Impact Fee Act. \$1.50 fee imposed on delivery of retail goods subject to sales tax:
▶ Applies only to deliveries by motor vehicles
▶ Deliveries of groceries or drug exempted or anything else exempt from sales taxes
▶ Business w/ <\$500,000/yr. sales exempt
Revenue: 80% to NITA; 20% to Downstate transit
- 21 IDOT establishes Interagency Coordinating Committee on Transit Innovation, Integration, and Reform Act to advise IDOT on strategies and initiatives that improve access to transit and better integrate transit with intercity rail and intercity bus networks in Illinois outside of the Northeast Illinois region—aka Downstate
- 28 IDOT’s performance-based project selection process to prioritize taxpayer investment in State-owned transportation assets that add capacity shall “evaluate project potential for mode shift away from single-occupancy vehicles and commercial motor vehicles.”
- 39 **Bus rapid transit and related technologies:**
“[IDOT], Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, and counties and municipalities in the metropolitan region shall collaborate with and provide support to the Authority in the implementation of bus rapid transit and bus priority service using the expressway, tollway, and other roadway systems in the metropolitan region.” NITA authorized to do transportation technology R&D.
- 40 **IDOT Transit Integration Policy Development Committee:**
▶ Members: Experts from inside/outside IDOT
▶ Purpose: “to better integrate transit policy, planning, and design into Department decisions and highway planning and design
▶ Composed of representatives from inside/outside IDOT
▶ Shall research “global best practices on optimizing roadways for public transportation services”
▶ Shall file report and monitor IDOT compliance with recommendations
- 42 IDOT appoints a Transit Coordination Oversight Officer to oversee IDOT’s implementation of the policies and processes recommended by the Transit Integration Policy Development Committee.
- 43 Transit to Trails Grant Program. Authorizes IDOT to establish a grant program “to award grants...for projects that facilitate travel by public transportation to public outdoor recreation sites for outdoor activities.”

- 45 **Chicago Transit Authority Act:**
- ▶ Allows CTA to provide service throughout the metropolitan region (conforms to Pace’s and Metra’s authorization) [46]
 - ▶ Authorizes CTA to proceed with debt issuances contemplated by the CTA’s existing Full Funding Grant Agreements on the Red Line Extension and Red/Purple Lines Modernization-Phase 1 projects [48]
 - ▶ Primary role for CTA is providing transit service as directed and funded by NITA [50]
 - ▶ CTA Board [77]:
 - Governor appoints 1 director: Also serves on NITA Board
 - Chicago Mayor appoints 3 directors: One also serves on the NITA Board
 - Cook County President appoint 2 directors: One also serves on NITA Board
 - ▶ NITA Board sets role, powers, and responsibilities of CTA Executive Director, NITA Chair and ED involved in selection process for CTA ED, NITA Board must approve CTA ED appointment. [84]
- 99 Local Mass Transit District (Downstate) Act amended to give transit agencies enhanced powers to engage in transit-supportive development or trail-supportive development
- 106 **Northern Illinois Transit Authority Act**
- ▶ RTA lives on via “corporate existence”, primarily for purposes of protecting existing RTA bondholders [107]
 - ▶ Creates Northern Illinois Transit Authority [104], which changes the RTA name, board composition, powers, and duties [107]
 - ▶ Allocation of responsibilities between NITA and operating agencies. [111]
 - ▶ Voting requirements for NITA Board throughout CTA Act and NITA Act [113] – either:
 - 15 of NITA’s 20 Directors or
 - 12 of NITA’s Directors if there are at least 2 affirmative votes from Directors appointed by: (i) Governor; (ii) Chicago Mayor; (iii) Cook County President; and (iv) collar counties
 - ▶ NITA:

has ultimate responsibility for providing the metropolitan region with a high-quality public transportation system and, subject to the requirements of this Act and applicable law and agreements, shall have the final responsibility for allocating duties among the Service Boards and between the Service Boards and the Authority itself. Nothing in this Act shall prevent the Authority from delegating to the Service Boards powers and duties in addition to those expressly assigned to the Service Boards under this Act. [114]
 - ▶ Capital Projects:
 - Service operators propose capital projects for NITA’s consideration after consultation with labor representatives [124]
 - NITA assigns capital project delivery responsibilities to the service operators; NITA retains: *responsibility for larger or comprehensive improvements such as Regionally Significant Projects, as designated by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; new service infrastructure such as a new rail line or a new BRT corridor; large-scale rebuild of existing service infrastructure; new service vehicle or rolling stock purchases; or improvements that will be used by multiple Service Boards. [125]*
 - ▶ Service planning [129]:
 - NITA shall develop “regionally coordinated service plan”
 - NITA may issue RFP to service operatorsService operators propose service plans
 - NITA reviews/approves and rolls them into a regional service plan
 - ▶ Performance audits of NITA and Service Boards by Auditor General every 5 years [132]
 - ▶ NITA responsible for setting fares, administering reduced fare programs, and implementing regional fare collection system [134]
 - ▶ By two years after effective date, NITA shall develop an income-based reduced fare program [140] and fare capping program [141]
 - ▶ Pedestrian access to transit: Local governments must connect bus stops to sidewalks when constructing or reconstructing roadways that have transit service stops. [144]
 - ▶ Transit traffic law enforcement program—e.g., blocked bus lanes; cooperation w/municipalities encouraged but NITA can set up own enforcement program if necessary [152]

► Safety

- NITA Law Enforcement Task Force led by Cook County Sheriff's Office [158] to disband within 3 years [161]
- Required vote on sworn Officer Crime Prevention Program within 1 year [162]
- Creation of NITA Office of Transit Safety and Experience [164]
- Coordinated Safety Response Council including transit safety and law enforcement leadership and community organizations with a report required within 9 months about a long-term safety strategy [167]
- NITA Board: Standing Safety Subcommittee established [172]
- NITA shall adopt safety design & maintenance standards and implement a rider app for real-time reporting of safety issues [173]
- Bus shields mandated to protect bus operators [176]

► Fast Track process for speeding delivery of capital projects [199]

► Transit-supportive development [206]:

- [NITA] shall have the power to acquire, construct, own, operate, or maintain for public service transit-supportive development in the metropolitan region and all the powers necessary or convenient to accomplish the transit supportive development purposes. [207]
- Transit-supportive development opportunity inventory of real estate [208]
- Transit-Supportive Development Incentive Program [210]; funding source not yet defined

► Transit ambassadors [212]

- Employed by operating entities; NITA does training/coordination
- Responsibilities include:
 - Rider assistance—e.g., navigation
 - Liaising w/law enforce, social services, community resources to address unsafe conditions, connect people to social services
 - Monitoring passenger activity and compliance w/law & rules

► Language accessibility [214]

► NITA Board of Directors—appointments and duties [217]

- Chicago Mayor (5)
 - 1 director—also serves on CTA Board
 - 1 director—also serves on Metra Board
 - 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
 - 2 directors
- Governor (5)
 - 1 director—also serves on CTA Board
 - 1 director—also serves on Metra Board
 - 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
 - 2 directors
- President of Cook County Board (5)
 - 1 director—also serves on CTA Board
 - 2 directors—also serve on Metra Board
 - 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
 - 1 director
- Collar Counties (5)
 - DuPage: 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
 - Kane: 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
 - Lake: 1 director—also serves on Metra Board
 - McHenry: 1 director—also serves on Metra Board
 - Will: 1 director—also serves on Pace Board
- All appointments are subject to advice and consent of Chicago City Council, Illinois Senate, Cook County Board, and collar county boards, respectively
- Chair - one of the Governor-appointed directors [224]
- Required training for NITA directors [227]

- ▶ Pace Board of Directors [231]
 - Governor: 1 director (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Chicago Mayor: 2 directors (1 also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Cook County Board President: 3 directors (1 also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Collar Counties: 5 directors
 - DuPage: 1 (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Kane: 1 (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Lake: 1
 - McHenry: 1
 - Will: 1 (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - All appointments subject to advice and consent of Illinois Senate, Chicago City Council, Cook County Board, and collar county boards, respectively
- ▶ NITA's role in selection of and defining roles, powers, and responsibilities of Pace's Executive Director [236]
- ▶ Powers [241/247]:

The Service Boards shall use powers delegated to them by the Authority to oversee the delivery of public transportation in the metropolitan region, provided that the Authority shall retain primary responsibility for setting fares, service standards, schedules, and coordinated fare collection so that the public transportation system in the metropolitan region operates to meet the goals and objectives identified in the approved Strategic Plan.
- ▶ Metra Board of Directors [260]
 - Governor: 1 director (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Chicago Mayor: 2 directors (1 also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Cook County Board President: 3 directors (2 also serve as NITA Board directors)
 - Collar counties: 5 directors
 - DuPage: 1
 - Kane: 1
 - Lake: 1 (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - McHenry: 1 (also serves as NITA Board director)
 - Will: 1
 - All appointments subject to advice and consent of Illinois Senate, Chicago City Council, Cook County Board, and collar county boards, respectively
- ▶ NITA's role in selecting and defining roles, powers, and responsibilities of Metra's Executive Director [264]
- ▶ Metra's powers/responsibilities [267/271]
- ▶ NITA required to implement ~\$50M in service efficiencies [293]
- ▶ Revised fare-box recovery ratio requirement of 25% and then 20% [293]
- ▶ Tax on ground transportation vehicles throughout metropolitan region—10% of gross fare of transportation network service [310]
- ▶ Fixed statutory funding formulas directing sales tax revenue to service boards eliminated [318]
- ▶ "Hold harmless" provision covering allocation of funding to the operating agencies through FY 31; after that funding shall be allocated according to the Service Standards [321]
- ▶ Real Estate Transfer Tax extended from Chicago to entire metropolitan region [324]
 - Suburban Cook County proceeds
 - 50% to the CTA to cover pension obligations
 - 50% for transit operations
 - Collar county proceeds: 100% for transit operations
 - NITA can impose RETT on City of Chicago if Chicago reduces its existing RETT for transit tax
- ▶ Jobs Plan requirements for major rolling stock procurements [348]
- ▶ Diversity reporting requirement [392]

- ▶ CTA, Metra, Pace Executive Directors: Performance reviews and removal for cause [394]
 - NITA Board does annual performance review of the Executive Directors
 - NITA Board can remove Executive Directors for cause, which includes failure to comply with Service Plans, Annual Budget, etc.
- ▶ Dial-a-ride service program [396]
 - Study of DAR services and opportunities for improved coordination
 - NITA can establish a DAR policy and fund a DAR service program
 - Participating DAR service providers must accept NITA terms re: integration into regional transit system
- ▶ Service Standards that guide allocation of transit service across the region adopted by December 31, 2027 [400]:
 - *Shall identify quantitative and qualitative attributes of quality public transit service using metrics drawn from the performance of high-quality transit systems in global metropolitan areas with populations and metropolitan economies comparable to the metropolitan region.*
 - *Shall cover the entire metropolitan region and include the development of transit propensity thresholds for each type of service or mode. Transit propensity metrics shall include, but are not limited to, population density, employment density, low-income populations, disabled populations, zero-car households, intersection density, and the presence of sidewalks. The Authority shall develop weights for each metric and a scoring system to determine transit propensity.*
 - Phased implementation
 - NITA will report on system performance measured against the Service Standards
- ▶ Service performance reporting by all operators compared against service standards [406]
- ▶ Chief Internal Auditor [406]
 - Reports directly to the NITA Board
 - Broad audit authority
- ▶ Transition process [416]
 - IDOT secures consultant to assist in transition process
 - NITA sets up Transition Working Group to advise on transition by April 30, 2026
 - Transition plan assembled after a review of key functions/processes by July 1, 2027
- ▶ ADA Advisory Council established [420]
 - Purpose: Advise NITA Board on issues relating to disabled riders
 - Establish Office of Disability Policy and Planning and develop regional Transit Accessibility Plan [423]
 - NITA provides technical support
 - NITA establishes Office of Disability Policy and Planning
- ▶ Riders Advisory Council established [424]
 - Purpose: Advise NITA Board on issues relating to riders
 - NITA provides technical support
- ▶ Regional Service Councils (3) established [427]
 - Purpose: Give communities, businesses, and other institutions that rely on public transit for workers, customers, etc. a voice on transit issues
 - Three RSCs: North, West, South
 - NITA provides technical support

782 Interest on the Road Fund and the State Construction Account Fund used for transit construction improvements or debt service—90% for NITA; 10% for Downstate mass transit districts

784 Amendments to Downstate Public Transportation Act increasing State support and allowing use of Downstate Capital Improvement Fund monies for intercity rail capital startup projects for connectivity between downstate communities and Chicago

805 Dynamic wireless EV charging pilot program: Highway equipped with charging infrastructure