

Transcript of Strategic Planning & Service Delivery Committee

Date: December 13, 2023

Case: Chicago Transit Authority Citizens Advisory Board Meeting, In Re:

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1	BEFORE THE CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD
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7	COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND
8	SERVICE DELIVERY
9	Chicago, Illinois
10	Wednesday, December 13, 2023
11	9:17 a.m.
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22	Job No.: 510700
23	Pages: 1 - 23
24	Reported By: Courtney Petros, RPR, CSR

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Committee on Strategic Planning and Service
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     Delivery, held at:
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5
            CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY
6
            567 West Lake Street
7
            Chicago, Illinois 60661
            312.681.3137
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13
        Before Courtney Petros, a Certified Shorthand
14
     Reporter and Registered Professional Reporter in
     and for the State of Illinois.
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1	APPEARANCES
2	BOARD MEMBERS:
3	REV. DR. L. BERNARD JAKES, VICE CHAIRMAN
4	NEEMA JHA
5	MICHELE LEE
6	REV. JOHNNY L. MILLER
7	ROSA Y. ORTIZ
8	
9	ALSO PRESENT:
10	DORVAL R. CARTER, Jr., CTA PRESIDENT
11	KENT RAY, GENERAL COUNSEL
12	GEORGETTE GREENLEE, SECRETARY
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1	PROCEEDINGS					
2	MS. GREENLEE: Good morning. My name is					
3	Georgette Greenlee. I'm secretary of the Board of					
4	the Chicago Transit Authority. We are going to					
5	begin our Committee for Strategic Planning and					
6	Service Delivery committee meeting, which was					
7	scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. And I will turn					
8	it over to Director Ortiz.					
9	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Thank you. Good morning.					
10	I am Rosa Ortiz, and I am the Vice Chair of the					
11	Strategic Planning Committee. I would like to					
12	call the order the December 13th meeting of the					
13	Committee on Strategic Planning and Service					
14	Delivery.					
15	Georgette, please call the rote.					
16	MS. GREENLEE: Rosa Ortiz.					
17	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Here.					
18	MS. GREENLEE: Michele Lee.					
19	DIRECTOR LEE: Here.					
20	MS. GREENLEE: Neema Jha.					
21	DIRECTOR JHA: Here.					
22	MS. GREENLEE: I would also like to note					
23	for the record that Director Jakes is here as well					
24	as President Carter.					

1	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Thank you.				
2	Director Miller, the chairman of this				
3	committee, is suffering from a personal illness				
4	but wishes to participate in this meeting				
5	remotely. Is there a motion to permit Director				
6	Miller to participate in this Strategic Planning				
7	Committee remotely.				
8	DIRECTOR LEE: So moved.				
9	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Second?				
10	DIRECTOR JHA: Second.				
11	MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director				
12	Lee and seconded by Director Jha that Director				
13	Miller be allowed to participate remotely in the				
14	Committee Meeting for Strategic Planning and				
15	Service Delivery. We'll take the roll.				
16	Director Jha.				
17	DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.				
18	MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.				
19	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.				
20	MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.				
21	DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.				
22	MS. GREENLEE: The motion passes.				
23	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Thank you.				
24	Director Miller, you have been authorized				

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    to attend the meeting remotely.
2
            DIRECTOR MILLER: Thank you.
3
            DIRECTOR ORTIZ: You're welcome.
4
            MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.
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            DIRECTOR MILLER: Okay. Good morning.
6
     I'm Director Miller. I'd like to call to order
7
    the October -- I mean -- sorry -- the December
8
     13th, 2023, Strategic Planning meeting.
            Georgette, would you call the roll,
9
10
    please.
11
            MS. GREENLEE:
                           Sure.
12
            Director Jha.
            DIRECTOR JHA:
13
                           Here.
            MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.
14
15
            DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Here.
16
            MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.
17
            DIRECTOR LEE: Here.
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            MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.
            DIRECTOR MILLER: Here.
19
20
            MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller, you have a
2.1
    quorum.
22
            DIRECTOR MILLER: Thank you.
                                           I'd like to
    have a motion to -- I'd like to have a motion to
23
24
    amend the meeting minutes of the May 10th, 2023,
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1	meeting.					
2	DIRECTOR LEE: So moved.					
3	DIRECTOR JHA: Second.					
4	MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director					
5	Lee, seconded by Director Jha that the minutes of					
6	the meeting of May 10th, 2023, be approved. We'll					
7	take a roll call vote.					
8	Director Lee.					
9	DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.					
10	MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.					
11	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.					
12	MS. GREENLEE: Director Jha.					
13	DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.					
14	MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.					
15	DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.					
16	MS. GREENLEE: The motion to approve the					
17	minutes passes.					
18	DIRECTOR MILLER: Our next order of					
19	business is a presentation entitled Bus Vision by					
20	Mike Connelly. Mike.					
21	MR. CONNELLY: Good morning, Directors.					
22	I'm Mike Connelly, your chief planning officer.					
23	With me today is Jennifer Henry, the director of					
24	strategic planning here at CTA.					

On the purchasing agenda for today's Board meeting is an item at D1 which is a no-cost time extension for our contract with Jarrett Walker and Associates for the Bus Vision stipend. I wanted to share with you an update on the recently completed Bus Vision framing report and give you a preview of next year's activity.

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Hopefully that pulled that up. Yes.

Bus Vision is a three-phase initiative to take an unprecedented look at our bus system as a vital part of the mobility landscape of the City of Chicago. The written framing report completed as phase one summarizes the existing system both prepandemic and with the COVID-19 influence.

The next phase, began early in 2024, will be a rollout of the phase one report and an engagement in an almost yearlong dialogue to examine the choices for system improvements.

Phase three late next year will outline what we have heard in phase two and propose actions to improve the bus system. This process will be guided by the written report which brings attention to the choices which need to be made given our available resources.

This pair of maps from the framing report indicates the reach of the rail system and the reach of the bus system. The left map is actually the rail system. That's a half-mile walkshed from each of the rail stations on our rail line. The right map shows the half-mile walkshed for all of the bus stops on our system, which extends into the Cook County near suburbs as well as the city.

2.1

The right map demonstrates the full coverage of the bus network with over 70 percent of the residents of the Cook County service area and the city service area within walking distance of a bus stop.

The pandemic threw into high relief the needs of our essential workers who ride transit. These essential workers continue to ride bus service at very high rates. They are those who are not able to work from home, they are those who are usually lower income, and they are more likely to be black and brown. They lack alternative transportation options coming from a one-car or a no-car household.

The Bus Vision report concludes that the CTA bus system is very well-designed. It provides

1 a comprehensive mobility grid across our service 2 The Bus Vision effort is really the first area. 3 wide-ranging study of our bus system. Other past 4 efforts were aimed at where to cut service. 5 one is aimed at how to improve the bus system. 6 want to consider what we could do if the resources 7 were increased. 8 You know that the plan of action for 9 Regional Transit or PART recommended not only 10 enough funding to close the financial gap but additional funding for creating the system that we 11 12 This Bus Vision will help us outline what that system could be. Frequent service is 13 important for ridership growth, it's important to 14 15 the quality of transit service, and it's essential to our riders. 16 17 We began this study prior to the pandemic as a result of ridership losses we were 18 experiencing in 2018 and 2019. The consultant 19 20 contract was signed and notice to proceed given in 2.1 March of 2020, just as the pandemic imposed a 22 stay-home order. 23 The pandemic has certainly had an 24 influence on our study, mostly serving to delay

what we're about to enter into, the public process
of talking to our customers and noncustomers about
the system.

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2.4

Much of the underlying base information has not changed, and it represents CTA both before and after the pandemic. The ridership impacts, which we have been sharing with you all along, are the element that has changed over time.

Additionally, the pandemic emphasized the importance of the bus to our customers and clearly highlighted the population segments with essential jobs who kept riding during the deep pandemic times.

The next portions of the study examine demographic and equity considerations of public transit in our city and the underlying conditions, which indicate that transit can help reduce inequity. It cannot solve the challenge of the City of Chicago by itself.

I believe that this material will resonate in our future discussions with our allies in the state legislature, with our allies at City Hall, throughout the advocacy community, and with our core riders.

Persistent segregation and the legacy of redlining has had a deep impact on the housing patterns in Chicago. The left map graphs in color the number of jobs within two miles of residents' living space. Green is for many jobs available and the deepest red indicating areas with the fewest jobs nearby.

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The further away from jobs you are is normally also a strong indicator of how far you are from most services, including retail, schools, and medical centers. The right map displays income differentials by census tracking with dark blue for the high income and deepest red for the lowest income areas.

not just rooted in our communities and in our housing patterns. Income inequity continues to impact the way our city lives, the way our city works, and the way our city moves. The locations of jobs and racial residency partners are not within CTA's control, but understanding them is essential to looking at how we will reshape transit here in the area.

The right map also indicates that these

1 impacts, both good and bad, extend out into the 2 areas of Cook County beyond the city border, as 3 does our transit service, which includes both the 4 City of Chicago and 35 suburbs. 5 Two more maps from the vision framing 6 The left one shows access to jobs by 7 transit within a 45-minute commute. It clearly 8 illustrates the effect of our rail system and 9 emphasizes the reasons why CTA is committed -- so 10 committed we are -- to the Red Line Extension. 11 The right map shows areas in green where access to 12 public transit is multiplied and multiplied the 13 number of jobs reachable within 45 minutes. 14 The darkest green shows the highest 15 increase in job access due to the presence of the 16 transit system. There's a clear advantage shown 17 in that darkest green area, which shows that 18 transit makes jobs 50 times more available in 19 Englewood, West Englewood, and Chicago Lawn.

But the green extends across the south and west sides of the city. This is certainly a result of where the jobs are and where low income residents live. This data clearly demonstrates the impact an effective transit system can and

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does have.

So powerful, available transit does make a difference. But while Bus Vision can address some of this, the challenges in Chicago are more than our transit system can solve itself.

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2.4

We will begin the public outreach in the new year. The intention is to publish the study, kick off a series of public meetings, and discuss with our riders what the bus system can be. We will add a dedicated website for this initiative and conduct a set of surveys. Both government community relations and our communications department will be close partners as we move forward in this effort.

The framing report completed in phase one does not say do this or do that. It looks at the system, provides an honest assessment, and outlines choices, which the service area as a whole will need to consider as we create the bus system for the future of the Chicago area.

Answers will come in the next phase after we open a dialogue with our customers and noncustomers alike about what the transit system is and what it should be. Our ultimate goal is to

1	improve the CTA travel experience.					
2	We're looking forward to your input and to					
3	the dialogue. Thanks for listening and I'll be					
4	glad to try to answer any questions that you may					
5	have.					
6	DIRECTOR MILLER: Thank you, Mike. Thank					
7	you, Mike.					
8	Is this modeled after any other major city					
9	or are we the lead in this initiative?					
10	MR. CONNELLY: There are other cities					
11	which have done this type of study. But, again,					
12	across the country, this firm that we're using has					
13	provided this service for several other major					
14	metropolitan areas.					
15	PRESIDENT CARTER: Mr. Chairman, I just					
16	want to make a couple of additional comments to					
17	the presentation that Mike just gave on this.					
18	DIRECTOR MILLER: Okay.					
19	PRESIDENT CARTER: A couple things to keep					
20	in mind, as Mike indicated, we have never					
21	undertaken this kind of a comprehensive study of					
22	our entire bus system the way we are talking about					
23	today, one.					
24	When we talk about creating a world-class					

transit system, we talk about a number of factors that go into that. There are also organizations that currently rank the, you know, overall benefit of a transit system throughout the world.

2.1

One area where we actually rank very high from a world-class transit perspective is our bus system. And the reason for that is both the geographic coverage, as Mike indicated, 70 percent of the entire population is within, you know, walking distance of a bus stop. The other is the fact that we operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The exercise that we're undertaking right now is really looking to see how we improve that even more, and that's important for a couple of reasons.

One, the future for major ridership growth, in my opinion, is in our bus system. And the reason for that is that I have a lot more flexibility of what I can do with bus than what I can do with rail. The rail system operates the way it operates. The only thing that I can really change on the rail system is frequency. But other than that, it goes where it goes. I'm not moving

1 rail lines around to accomplish anything. 2 The reality, though, is that a city over 3 time changes very dynamically in terms of where 4 people want to go and what they want to do. And 5 as your bus system that has historically been sort 6 of the backbone iron horse of an agency's transit 7 system in general -- and, in fact, in CTA's 8 history, our bus system has carried way more 9 customers than our rail system has. 10 That has tended to change over time in terms of modern history. But if you look over the 11 12 agency as a whole, our bus system was the workhorse moving people in the city as a whole. 13 14 The other point I wanted to make is that 15 the reason this is so unique is that, usually, 16 when we go out to the public to get public input 17 on bus service, we are proposing a particular set 18 of options, whether it's service cuts or whether 19 it's adjustment to service. We, as an internal 20 agency, go out and say we're going to modify this 2.1 route to do A, B, and C. Give us your input and 22 feedback on that. 23 This is a situation where we're not coming 24 out here with some preset layers of this is what

This is where we're really going

2 out to the public first and saying tell us what 3 you'd like to see, talk to us about what you are 4 willing to view as the future of our bus system as 5 a whole, and let's talk to you about what the 6 impacts of those decisions are going to be. And 7 then we're going to take that feedback and turn it 8 into a series of recommendations that we'll come 9 back to the public and the Board with in phase 10 three. 11 So it is a very different public 12 engagement process than we historically do. the timing of it, coming out of a pandemic with 13 14 all the travel pattern changes that we know is 15 occurring in our system, is perfectly aligned for 16 this type of a conversation. 17 When we started this work, it was before 18 the pandemic hit. We were basically doing it 19 because it was something we felt we needed to do 20 because we've never done it in the history of the 2.1 organization. 22 The pandemic has added another set of 23 urgency around why this is important. And we're

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we want to do.

just fortunate enough to be perfectly positioned

1 to go into this kind of a conversation really as 2 we come out of the pandemic to really focus on 3 what we want the future of our public 4 transportation system to look like. 5 It will be beneficial not only in terms of 6 what we may do right now, but it will also be very 7 beneficial for the conversation we're going to 8 have in Springfield about what the funding should be for CTA. Because I have no doubt that some of 9 what will come out of this will be issues for 10 11 which there are financial resources that we 12 identify to pay for. But at least we will have gone in with 13 knowledge of what the community wants, what we can 14 15 provide them, and then have the broader 16 conversation about what we need to ultimately get 17 to where we want to be. That aligns perfectly 18 with the bigger conversation that I want to have about our financial needs going forward, which 19 20 ultimately feed into what the future of CTA is 2.1 going to look like going forward. 22 So all of this is sort of coming together 23 in sort of a perfect storm of opportunity for 2.4 which we want to be sure that the public has an

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    active and engaged role in the conversation.
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            DIRECTOR MILLER: Wow.
                                    Thank you,
3
    President Carter. Thank you, Mike. Sounds very
4
     interesting. Look forward to continuing the study
5
    and participation. I have no further questions.
6
           MS. GREENLEE: Okay. We'll take questions
7
     from the other directs.
8
            Director Jha.
9
           DIRECTOR JHA: No questions. Thank you.
10
           MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.
           DIRECTOR ORTIZ: I'm just really excited
11
12
    about the study. I think it definitely reflects a
     lot of the needs that we saw from the pandemic
13
    about who really uses the buses, how important
14
15
    they are to the way we function as a city. So
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     looking forward to all the findings from there.
17
            I anticipate there's going to be a lot of
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     thoughtfulness about how we reach our constituents
    our clients, our service -- both providers and
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20
    recipients. So in terms of languages and how we
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    reach out to our various populations, I look
22
     forward to hearing all those details when
23
    appropriate.
                  Thank you.
2.4
           MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.
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1	DIRECTOR LEE: No questions. Just thank					
2	you for the update. And I'm really excited as a					
3	frequent bus rider myself you know, Mike, I					
4	really enjoy the buses so I'm looking forward					
5	to also working with the community to move					
6	forward. So, thank you.					
7	MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.					
8	DIRECTOR JAKES: No questions.					
9	MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller, there are					
10	no further questions.					
11	DIRECTOR MILLER: If there are no further					
12	questions, move for adjournment.					
13	DIRECTOR LEE: So moved.					
14	DIRECTOR JHA: Second.					
15	MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director					
16	Lee, seconded by Director Jha that the meeting be					
17	adjourned. We'll take a roll call vote.					
18	Director Jha.					
19	DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.					
20	MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.					
21	DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.					
22	MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.					
23	DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.					
24	MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.					

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            DIRECTOR MILLER:
                                Yes.
2
            MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Miller, the motion
3
     to adjourn passes.
4
            DIRECTOR MILLER: Thank you, Georgette.
     We'll now adjourn.
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6
             (Off the record at 9:36 a.m.)
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1	CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER
2	
3	I, Courtney Petros, Registered
4	Professional Reporter and Certified Shorthand
5	Reporter, the officer before whom the foregoing
6	proceeding was taken, do hereby certify that the
7	foregoing transcript is a true and correct record
8	of the testimony given; that said testimony was
9	taken by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting
10	under my direction; that reading and signing was
11	not requested; and that I am neither counsel for,
12	related to, nor employed by any of the parties to
13	this case and have no interest, financial or
14	otherwise, in its outcome.
15	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed
16	this 14th day of December, 2023.
17	
18	
19	Count Potras
20	COURTNEY PETROS, RPR, CSR
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9:18 about 11:1, 11:2, 14:23, 15:22, 15:24, 16:1, 18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	1:23 fter	15:4, 15:8, 23:12	18:18
about 11:1, 11:2, 14:23, 15:22, 15:24, 16:1, 18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	1:23 fter	15:4, 15:8, 23:12	18:18
11:1, 11:2, 14:23, 15:22, 15:24, 16:1, 18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	fter	23:12	
11:1, 11:2, 14:23, 15:22, 15:24, 16:1, 18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15			because
15:24, 16:1, 18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	1.0/ 11.21/	anything	18:19, 18:20,
18:3, 18:5, 19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	5:8	17:1	19:9
19:8, 19:16, 19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	gain	appropriate	been
19:19, 20:12, 20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	5:11	20:23	5:11, 5:24,
20:14, 20:18 access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	gency	approve	7:4, 11:7, 17:5,
access 13:6, 13:11, 13:15	7:12, 17:20	7:16	21:15
13:6, 13:11, 13:15	gency's	approved	before
13:15 ag	7:6	7:6	1:1, 2:13,
	genda	area	11:5, 18:17,
		9:11, 9:12,	23:5
accomparion .	:⊥ imed	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	began
		10:2, 12:23,	8:15, 10:17
	0:4, 10:5	13:17, 14:18, 14:20, 16:5	begin
10.1/ 10.20/	ligned	14:20, 10:5 areas	4:5, 4:7, 14:6
10,12	8:15		believe
	ligns	12:6, 12:14,	
	9:17	13:2, 13:11, 15:14	11:20 beneficial
40010110			
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	4:23	around	19:5, 19:7
active		17:1, 18:23	benefit
	:6, 11:7,	assessment	16:3
	8:14, 19:22,	14:17	bernard
~ · /	0:16, 20:22	associates	3:3
accuarry	llies	8:4	beyond
3.3, ±3.3	1:21, 11:22	attend	13:2
aaa	llowed	6:1	bigger
1 1 · 1 ·	:13	attention	19:18
aaaca	lmost	8:23	black
10.22	:17	authority	9:20
	long	1:1, 2:5, 4:4	blue
10.11, 10.10	1:7	authorized	12:13
additionally	lso	5:24	board
11:9	:9, 4:22,	available	1:1, 3:2, 4:3,
address 12	2:9, 12:24,	8:24, 12:5,	8:1, 18:9
14:3	6:2, 19:6, 21:5	13:18, 14:2	border
adjourn	lternative	away	13:2
22:3, 22:5	: 20	12:8	both
adjourned	mend	В	8:13, 11:5,
21:17	:24	back	13:1, 13:3,
	nother	18:9	14:11, 16:7,
	3 : 22	backbone	20:19
	nswer	17:6	brings
	5 : 4	bad	8:22
11.17	nswers	13:1	broader
14	4:21	± 🗸 • ±	19:15
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	Conducted on Dec	15, 2025	
brown	certify	color	continues
9:20	23:6	12:3	12:17
bus	chair	come	continuing
7:19, 8:4, 8:6,	4:10	14:21, 18:8,	20:4
8:9, 8:10, 8:21,	chairman	19:2, 19:10	contract
9:3, 9:7, 9:10,	3:3, 5:2,	coming	8:3, 10:20
9:13, 9:16,	15:15, 22:2	9:21, 17:23,	control
9:23, 9:24,	challenge	18:13, 19:22	12:21
10:2, 10:3,	11:18	comments	conversation
10:5, 10:12,	challenges	15:16	18:16, 19:1,
11:10, 14:3,	14:4	committed	19:7, 19:16,
14:9, 14:19,	change	13:9, 13:10	19:18, 20:1
15:22, 16:6,	16:23, 17:10	committee	cook
16:10, 16:18,	changed	1:7, 2:1, 4:5,	9:8, 9:11, 13:2
16:20, 17:5,	11:5, 11:8	4:6, 4:11, 4:13,	core
17:8, 17:12,	changes	5:3, 5:7, 5:14	11:24
17:17, 18:4,	17:3, 18:14	communications	correct
21:3	chicago	14:12	23:7
buses	1:1, 1:9, 2:5,	communities	could
20:14, 21:4	2:7, 4:4, 8:12,	12:16	10:6, 10:13
business	11:19, 12:3,	community	counsel
7:19	13:4, 13:19,	11:23, 14:12,	3:11, 23:11
C	14:4, 14:20	19:14, 21:5	country
call	chief	commute	15:12
	7:22	13:7	
4:12, 4:15,	choices	completed	county
6:6, 6:9, 7:7,		8:6, 8:12,	9:8, 9:11, 13:2
21:17	8:18, 8:23, 14:18	14:15	couple
cannot	cities	comprehensive	15:16, 15:19,
11:18	15:10	10:1, 15:21	16:15
carried	city	concludes	courtney
17:8	_	9:23	1:24, 2:13,
carter	8:11, 9:8,		23:3, 23:20
3:10, 4:24,	9:12, 11:16,	conditions	coverage
15:15, 15:19,	11:19, 11:22,	11:16 conduct	9:10, 16:8
20:3	12:18, 12:19, 13:2, 13:4,		covid
case		14:11	8:14
23:13	13:21, 15:8,	connelly	create
census	17:2, 17:13, 20:15	7:20, 7:21,	14:19
12:12	clear	7:22, 15:10	creating
centers	13:16	consider	10:11, 15:24
12:11		10:6, 14:19	csr
certainly	clearly	considerations	1:24, 23:20
10:23, 13:21	11:10, 13:7,	11:15	cta
certificate	13:23	constituents	3:10, 7:24,
23:1	clients	20:18	9:24, 11:5,
certified	20:19	consultant	13:9, 15:1,
2:13, 23:4	close	10:19	19:9, 19:20
	10:10, 14:13	continue	cta's
		9:16	12:21, 17:7

	4: -1	22:4	1
currently	dialogue		employed
16:3	8:17, 14:22,	directors	23:12
customers	15:3	7:21	engaged
11:2, 11:10,	difference	directs	20:1
14:22, 17:9	14:3	20:7	engagement
cut	differences	discuss	8:17, 18:12
10:4	12:15	14:8	englewood
cuts	different	discussions	13:19
17:18	18:11	11:21	enjoy
D	differentials	displays	21:4
d1	12:12	12:11	enough
8:2	direction	distance	10:10, 18:24
dark	23:10	9:12, 16:10	enter
12:12	director	doing	11:1
darkest	4:8, 4:9, 4:17,	18:18	entire
13:14, 13:17	4:19, 4:21,	done	15:22, 16:9
data	4:23, 5:1, 5:2,	15:11, 18:20	entitled
13:23	5:5, 5:8, 5:9,	dorval	7:19
day	5:10, 5:11,	3:10	equity
16:11, 23:16	5:12, 5:16,	doubt	11:15
days	5:17, 5:18,	19:9	essential
16:11	5:19, 5:20,	dr	9:15, 9:16,
december	5:21, 5:23,	3 : 3	10:15, 11:11,
1:10, 4:12,	5:24, 6:2, 6:3,	due	12:22
6:7, 23:16	6:4, 6:5, 6:6,	13:15	even
decisions	6:12, 6:13,	during	16 : 15
18:6	6:14, 6:15,	11:12	examine
dedicated	6:16, 6:17,	dynamically	8:18, 11:14
14:10	6:18, 6:19,	17:3	excited
deep	6:20, 6:22, 7:2,	E	20:11, 21:2
11:12, 12:2	7:3, 7:4, 7:5,	each	exercise
deepest	7:8, 7:9, 7:10,	9:5	16:13
12:6, 12:13	7:11, 7:12,	early	existing
definitely	7:13, 7:14,	8:15	8:13
20:12	7:15, 7:18,	effect	experience
	7:23, 15:6,	13:8	15:1
delay 10:24	15:18, 20:2,	effective	experiencing
	20:8, 20:9,	13:24	10:19
delivery	20:10, 20:11,		extend
1:8, 2:2, 4:6,	20:24, 21:1,	effort	13:1
4:14, 5:15	21:7, 21:8,	10:2, 14:14	extends
demographic	21:9, 21:11,	efforts	9:7, 13:20
11:15	21:13, 21:14,	10:4	extension
demonstrates	21:15, 21:16,	element	8:3, 13:10
9:9, 13:23	21:18, 21:19,	11:8	F
department	21:20, 21:21,	emphasized	
14:13	21:22, 21:23,	11:9	fact
details	21:24, 22:1,	emphasizes	16:11, 17:7
20:22		13:9	

		_	
factors	19:8	graphs	6:17, 6:19,
16:1	further	12:3	7:24, 12:23,
far	12:8, 20:5,	green	17:24
12:9	21:10, 21:11	12:5, 13:11,	hereby
feed	future	13:14, 13:17,	23:6
19:20	11:21, 14:20,	13:20	hereunto
feedback	16:17, 18:4,	greenlee	23:15
17:22, 18:7	<u>19:3, 19:20</u>	3:12, 4:2, 4:3,	high
felt	G	4:16, 4:18,	9:14, 9:17,
18:19	gap	4:20, 4:22,	12:13, 16:5
fewest	10:10	5:11, 5:18,	highest
12:7	gave	5:20, 5:22, 6:4,	13:14
financial	15:17	6:11, 6:14,	highlighted
10:10, 19:11,	general	6:16, 6:18,	11:11
19:19, 23:13	3:11, 17:7	6:20, 7:4, 7:10,	historically
findings	geographic	7:12, 7:14,	17:5, 18:12
20:16	16:8	7:16, 20:6,	history
firm	georgette	20:10, 20:24,	17:8, 17:11,
15:12	3:12, 4:3,	21:7, 21:9,	18:20
first	4:15, 6:9, 22:4	21:15, 21:20,	hit
10:2, 18:2	give	21:22, 21:24,	18:18
flexibility	8:6, 17:21	22:2	home
16:20	given	grid	9:18
focus	8:24, 10:20,	10:1	honest
19:2	23:8	growth	14:17
foregoing	glad	10:14, 16:18	hopefully
23:5, 23:7	15:4	guided	8:8
fortunate	go	8:22	horse
18:24	16:2, 17:4,	Н	17:6
forward	17:16, 17:20,	half-mile	hours
14:14, 15:2,	19:1	9:4, 9:6	16:11
19:19, 19:21,	goal	hall	household
20:4, 20:16,	14:24	11:22	9:22
20:22, 21:4,	goes	heard	housing
21:6	16:24	8:20	12:2, 12:17
framing	going	hearing	I
8:6, 8:12, 9:1,	4:4, 17:20,	20:22	identify
13:5, 14:15	18:1, 18:6,	held	19:12
frequency	18:7, 19:7,	2:2	illinois
16:23	19:19, 19:21,	help	1:9, 2:7, 2:15
frequent	20:17	10:12, 11:17	illness
10:13, 21:3	gone	henry	5 : 3
full	19:13	7:23	illustrates
9:9	good	here	13:8
function	4:2, 4:9, 6:5,	4:17, 4:19,	impact
20:15	7:21, 13:1	4:21, 4:23,	12:2, 12:18,
funding	government	6:13, 6:15,	13:24
10:10, 10:11,	14:11		

: a a b -			
impacts	17:21	K	legacy
11:6, 13:1,	intention	keep	12:1
18:6	14:7	15:19	legislature
importance	interest	kent	11:22
11:10	23:13	3:11	let's
important	interesting	kept	18:5
10:14, 16:15,	20:4	11:12	likely
18:23, 20:14	internal	kick	9:19
imposed	17:19	14:8	line
10:21	iron	kind	9:5, 13:10
improve	17:6	15:21, 19:1	lines
8:21, 10:5,	issues	know	17:1
15:1, 16:14	19:10	10:8, 16:3,	listening
improvements	item	16:9, 18:14,	15:3
8:18 includes	8:2	21:3	live
	itself	knowledge	13:23
13:3	11:19, 14:5	<u>19:14</u>	lives
including	J	L	12:18
12:10 income	jakes	lack	- living
	3:3, 4:23,	9:20	12:5
9:19, 12:12,	21:7, 21:8	lake	locations
12:13, 12:14,	jarrett	2:6	12:19
12:17, 13:22 increase	8:3	landscape	look
13:15	jennifer	8:11	8:10, 17:11,
increased	7:23	languages	19:4, 19:21,
10:7	jha	20:20	20:4, 20:21
indicate	3:4, 4:20,	late	looking
11:17	4:21, 5:10,	8:19	12:22, 15:2,
indicated	5:12, 5:16,	lawn	16:14, 20:16, 21:4
15:20, 16:8	5:17, 6:12,	13:19	looks
indicates	6:13, 7:3, 7:5,	layers	14:16
9:2, 12:24	7:12, 7:13,	17:24	losses
indicating	20:8, 20:9,	lead	10:18
12:6	21:14, 21:16,	15 : 9	10:10 lot
indicator	21:18, 21:19	least	16:19, 20:13,
12:9	job	19 : 13	20:17
inequity	1:22, 13:15	lee	low
11:18, 12:17	jobs	3:5, 4:18,	13:22
influence	11:12, 12:4,	4:19, 5:8, 5:12,	lower
8:14, 10:24	12:5, 12:7,	5:20, 5:21,	9:19
information	12:8, 12:20, 13:6, 13:13,	6:16, 6:17, 7:2,	lowest
11:4	13:18, 13:13,	7:5, 7:8, 7:9,	12:14
initiative	johnny	20:24, 21:1,	<u>M</u>
8:9, 14:10,	3:6	21:13, 21:16,	
15:9	jr	21:22, 21:23	made
input	3:10	left	8:23
15:2, 17:16,	3.10	9:3, 12:3, 13:6	major
10.2, 17.10,			15:8, 15:13,

	Conducted on I
16:17	6:20, 6:22,
make	7:14, 7:15, 7:18, 15:6,
14:2, 15:16,	7:18, 15:6,
17:14	15:18, 20:2,
makes	21:9, 21:11,
13:18	21:24, 22:1,
many	22:2, 22:4
12:5	mind
map	15:20
9:3, 9:6, 9:9,	minute
12:3, 12:11,	13:7
12:15, 12:24,	minutes
13:11	6:24, 7:5,
maps	7:17, 13:13
9:1, 13:5	mobility
march	8:11, 10:1
10:21	modeled
material	15:8
11:20	modern
mean	17:11
6 : 7	modify
medical	17:20
12:11	more
meeting	9:19, 13:5,
4:6, 4:12, 5:4,	13:18, 14:4,
5:14, 6:1, 6:8,	16:15, 16:19,
6:24, 7:1, 7:6,	17:8
8:2, 21:16	morning
meetings	4:2, 4:9, 6:5, 7:21
14:8 members	most
3:2	12:10
metropolitan	mostly
15:14	10:24
michele	motion
3:5, 4:18	5:5, 5:22,
mike	6:23, 7:16, 22:2
7:20, 7:22,	move
7:20, 7:22, 15:6, 15:7,	14:13, 21:5,
15:17, 15:20,	21:12
16:8, 20:3, 21:3	moved
miles	5:8, 5:11, 7:2,
12:4	7:4, 21:13,
miller	21:15
3:6, 5:2, 5:6,	moves
5:13, 5:24, 6:2,	12:19
6:4, 6:5, 6:6,	moving
6:18, 6:19,	16:24, 17:13
TI.	

 12, 2022
much
11:4
multiplied
_
13:12
myself
21:3
N
name
4:2
near
9:8
nearby
12 : 7
need
8:23, 14:19,
19:16
needed
18:19
needs
9:15, 19:19,
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
20:13
neema
3:4, 4:20
neither
23:11
network
9:10
never
15:20, 18:20
new
14:7
next
7:18, 8:7,
8:15, 8:19,
11:14, 14:21
no-car
9:22
no-cost
8:2
noncustomers
11:2, 14:23
normally
12:9
note
4:22
notice
10:20
•

```
number
12:4, 13:13,
16:1
         0
occurring
18:15
october
6:7
officer
7:22, 23:5
okay
6:5, 15:18,
20:6
one
8:13, 8:16,
10:5, 13:6,
14:15, 15:23,
16:5, 16:17
one-car
9:21
only
10:9, 16:22,
19:5
open
14:22
operate
16:11
operates
16:21, 16:22
opinion
16:18
opportunity
19:23
options
9:21, 17:18
order
4:12, 6:6,
7:18, 10:22
organization
18:21
organizations
16:2
ortiz
3:7, 4:8, 4:9,
4:10, 4:16,
4:17, 5:1, 5:9,
5:18, 5:19,
```

5:23, 6:3, 6:14,	participation	4:11, 4:13, 5:6,	provide
6:15, 7:10,	20:5	5:14, 6:8, 7:22,	19:15
7:11, 20:10,	particular	7:24	provided
20:11, 21:20,	17:17	please	15:13
21:21	parties	4:15, 6:10	providers
other	23:12	point	20:19
10:3, 15:8,	partners	17:14	provides
15:10, 15:13,	12:20, 14:13	population	9:24, 14:17
16:10, 16:23,	passes	11:11, 16:9	public
17:14, 20:7	5:22, 7:17,	populations	11:1, 11:15,
otherwise	22:3	20:21	13:12, 14:6,
23:14	past	portions	14:8, 17:16,
out	10:3	11:14	18:2, 18:9,
13:1, 17:16,	pattern	positioned	18:11, 19:3,
17:20, 17:24,	18:14	18:24	19:24
18:2, 18:13,	patterns	powerful	publish
19:2, 19:10,	12:3, 12:17	14:2	14:7
20:21	pay	prepandemic	pulled
outcome	19:12	8:14	8:8
23:14	people	presence	purchasing
outline	17:4, 17:13	13:15	8:1
8:19, 10:12	percent	present	Q
outlines	9:10, 16:8	3:9	quality
14:18	perfect	presentation	10:15
outreach	19:23	7:19, 15:17	questions
14:6	perfectly	preset	15:4, 20:5,
over	18:15, 18:24,	17:24	20:6, 20:9,
4:8, 9:10,	19:17	president	21:1, 21:8,
11:8, 17:2,	permit	3:10, 4:24,	21:10, 21:12
17:10, 17:11	5 : 5	15:15, 15:19,	quorum
overall	persistent	20:3	6:21
16:3	12:1	preview	R
P	personal	8 : 7	racial
pages	5 : 3	prior	12:20
1:23	perspective	10:17	rail
pair	16:6	proceed	9:2, 9:4, 9:5,
9:1	petros	10:20	13:8, 16:21,
pandemic	1:24, 2:13,	proceeding	16:23, 17:1,
9:14, 10:17,	23:3, 23:20	23:6	17:9
10:21, 10:23,	phase	process	rank
11:6, 11:9,	8:13, 8:15,	8:21, 11:1,	16:3, 16:5
11:12, 18:13,	8:16, 8:19,	18:12	rates
18:18, 18:22,	8:20, 14:15,	professional	9:17
19:2, 20:13	14:21, 18:9	2:14, 23:4	ray
part	plan	propose	3:11
8:11, 10:9	10:8	8:20	reach
participate	planning	proposing	9:2, 9:3,
5:4, 5:6, 5:13	1:7, 2:1, 4:5,	17:17	J.2, J.J,

Conducted on December 13, 2023				
20:18, 20:21	relief	right	segregation	
reachable	9:14	9:6, 9:9,	12:1	
13:13	remotely	12:11, 12:24,	series	
reading	5:5, 5:7, 5:13,	13:11, 16:13,	14:8, 18:8	
23:10	6:1	19:6	service	
reality	report	role	1:8, 2:1, 4:6,	
17:2	8:6, 8:12,	20:1	4:13, 5:15,	
really	8:16, 8:22, 9:1,	roll	9:11, 9:12,	
10:2, 16:14,	9:23, 13:6,	5:15, 6:9, 7:7,	9:17, 10:1,	
16:22, 18:1,	14:15	21:17	10:4, 10:13,	
19:1, 19:2,	reported	rollout	10:15, 13:3,	
20:11, 20:14,	1:24	8:16	14:18, 15:13,	
21:2, 21:4	reporter	rooted	17:17, 17:18,	
reason	2:14, 23:1,	12:16	17:19, 20:19	
16:7, 16:19,	23:4, 23:5	rosa	services	
17:15	represents	3:7, 4:10, 4:16	12:10	
reasons	11:5	rote	serving	
13:9, 16:16	requested	4:15	10:24	
recently	23:11	route	set	
8:5	reshape	17:21	14:11, 17:17,	
recipients	12:22	rpr	18:22	
20:20	residency	1:24, 23:20	several	
recommendations	12:20	S	15:13	
18:8	residents	said	share	
recommended	9:11, 12:4,	23:8	8:5	
10:9	13:23	saw	sharing	
record	resonate	20:13	11:7	
4:23, 22:6,	11:20	say	shorthand	
23:7	resources	14:16, 17:20	2:13, 23:1,	
red	8:24, 10:6,	saying	23:4	
12:6, 12:13,	19:11	18:2	should	
13:10	result	scheduled	14:24, 19:8	
redlining	10:18, 13:22	4:7	shown	
12:2	retail	schools	13:16	
reduce	12:10	12:10	shows	
11:17	rev	second	9:6, 12:15,	
reduced	3:3, 3:6	5:9, 5:10, 7:3,	13:6, 13:11,	
23:9	ride	21:14	13:14, 13:17	
reflects	9:15, 9:16	seconded	sides	
20:12	rider	5:12, 7:5,	13:21	
regional	21:3	21:16	signature-b7fzp	
10:9	riders	secretary	23:18	
registered	10:16, 11:24,	3:12, 4:3	signed	
2:14, 23:3	14:9	see	10:20, 23:15	
related	ridership	16:14, 18:3	signing	
23:12	10:14, 10:18,	segments	23:10	
relations	11:6, 16:17	11:11	situation	
14:12	riding		17:23	
	11:12			
	1			

		·	
solve	15:21, 20:4,	terms	transcript
11:18, 14:5	20:12	17:3, 17:11,	23:7
some	suburbs	19:5, 20:20	transit
14:3, 17:24,	9:8, 13:4	testimony	1:1, 2:5, 4:4,
19:9	suffering	23:8	9:15, 10:9,
something	5 : 3	th	10:15, 11:16,
18:19	summarizes	4:12, 6:8,	11:17, 12:23,
sorry	8:13	6:24, 7:6, 23:16	13:3, 13:7,
6:7	sure	thank	13:12, 13:16,
sort	6:11, 19:24	4:9, 5:1, 5:23,	13:18, 13:24,
17:5, 19:22,	surveys	6:2, 6:22, 15:6,	14:2, 14:5,
19:23	14:11	20:2, 20:3,	14:23, 16:1,
sounds	system	20:9, 20:23,	16:4, 16:6, 17:6
20:3	8:10, 8:13,	21:1, 21:6, 22:4	transportation
south	8:18, 8:21, 9:2,	thanks	9:21, 19:4
13:20	9:3, 9:4, 9:7,	15:3	travel
space	9:24, 10:3,	thereafter	15:1, 18:14
12:5	10:5, 10:11,	23:9	true
springfield	10:13, 11:3,	thing	23:7
19:8	13:8, 13:16,	16:22	try
started	13:24, 14:5,	things	15:4
18:17	14:9, 14:17,	15:19	turn
state	14:20, 14:23,	think	4:7, 18:7
2:15, 11:22	15:22, 16:1,	20:12	two
stations	16:4, 16:7,	thoughtfulness	8:20, 12:4,
9:5	16:18, 16:21,	20:18	13:5
	16:23, 17:5,	three	type
stay-home	17:7, 17:8,	8:19, 18:10	15:11, 18:16
10:22	17:9, 17:12,	three-phase	typewriting
stipend	18:4, 18:15,	8:9	23:9
8:4	19:4		
stop	T	threw	<u>U</u>
9:13, 16:10		9:14	ultimate
stops	take	throughout	14:24
9:7	5:15, 7:7,	11:23, 16:4	ultimately
storm	8:10, 18:7,	time	19:16, 19:20
19:23	20:6, 21:17	8:2, 11:8,	under
strategic	taken	17:3, 17:10	23:10
1:7, 2:1, 4:5,	23:6, 23:9	times	underlying
4:11, 4:13, 5:6,	talk	11:13, 13:18	11:4, 11:16
5:14, 6:8, 7:24	15:24, 16:1,	timing	understanding
street	18:3, 18:5	18:13	12:21
2:6	talking	today	undertaken
strong	11:2, 15:22	7:23, 15:23	15 : 21
12:9	tell	today's	undertaking
study	18:2	8:1	16:13
10:3, 10:17,	tended	together	unique
10:24, 11:14,	17:10	19:22	17:15
14:7, 15:11,		tracking	·
		12:12	

		13, 2023	
unprecedented	15:22, 16:22,	workers	2019
8:10	17:8, 20:15	9:15, 9:16	10:19
update	we'll	workhorse	2020
8:5, 21:2	5:15, 7:6,	17:13	10:21
urgency	18:8, 20:6,	working	2023
18:23	21:17, 22:5	21:5	1:10, 6:8,
uses	we're	works	6:24, 7:6, 23:16
20:14	11:1, 15:2,	12:19	2024
using	15:12, 16:13,	world	8:15
15:12	17:20, 17:23,	16:4	23
usually	18:1, 18:7,	world-class	1:23
9:19, 17:15	18:23, 19:7	15:24, 16:6	24
v	we've	wow	16:11
various	18:20	20:2	3
20:21	website	written	312.681
vice	14:10	8:12, 8:22	2:8
3:3, 4:10	wednesday	<u>Y</u>	_
	1:10		_ 35 13:4
view	week	year	36
18:4 vision	16:12	8:19, 14:7	
	welcome	year's 8:7	22:6
7:19, 8:4, 8:6,	6 : 3		4
8:9, 9:23, 10:2,	well-designed	yearlong	45
10:12, 13:5,	9:24	8:17	13:7, 13:13
14:3	west	•	_ 5
vital	2:6, 13:19,	.3137	50
8:11	13:21	2:8	13:18
vote	whereof	0	510700
7:7, 21:17	- 23:15	00	1:22
<u> </u>	whether	4:7	567
walker	17 : 18	1	- 2:6
8:3	whole		- - 6
walking	14:19, 17:12,	10	
9:12, 16:10	17:13, 18:5	6:24, 7:6	60661
walkshed	wide-ranging	13	2:7
9:4, 9:6	10:3	1:10, 4:12, 6:8	7
want	willing	14	70
10:6, 10:12,	18:4	23:16	9:10, 16:8
15:16, 17:4,	wishes	17	9
18:1, 19:3,	5:4	1:11	9
19:17, 19:18,	within	19	1:11, 4:7, 22:6
19:24	9:12, 12:4,	8:14	
wanted	12:21, 13:7,	2	_
8:4, 17:14	13:13, 16:9	2018	
wants	witness	10:19	
19:14	23:15		
way	work		
12:18, 12:19,	9:18, 18:17		
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	9.10, 10:1/		
L	•		