

# **A Budget in Crisis: Proposed Service Cuts and Fare Increases**

**Special Meeting of ACTC, CAT, CCTFD  
3/26/25**

# Agenda

- How did we get here and what's at stake?
- Bus, light rail, and incline
  - Proposed service reductions
  - Additional impacts
  - Proposed fare increases
- Paratransit
  - Proposed fare increases
  - Proposed service changes
- What happens next?
  - Public comment period

# HOW DID WE GET HERE AND WHAT IS AT STAKE?

# Financial status

- State funding has not kept up with the public transportation needs of Allegheny County, causing PRT to have a structural deficit that will continue to grow each without additional investment.
- PRT would need a \$117 million infusion of funding (with **compounding** annual increases) to support **current service levels** for the next decade.
- This would also require a **proportional growth in the local match**.
- The cost of **doing nothing** today increases the need for an even greater investment tomorrow.

# Summary of Proposed Changes

## Fixed Route (Bus, light rail, incline)

- Up to **40%** decrease in service\*
- **9%** increase in fixed route fares

## ACCESS Paratransit Service

- **20%** increase in paratransit fares
- Decrease in ADA service area by **62%** to minimum requirement

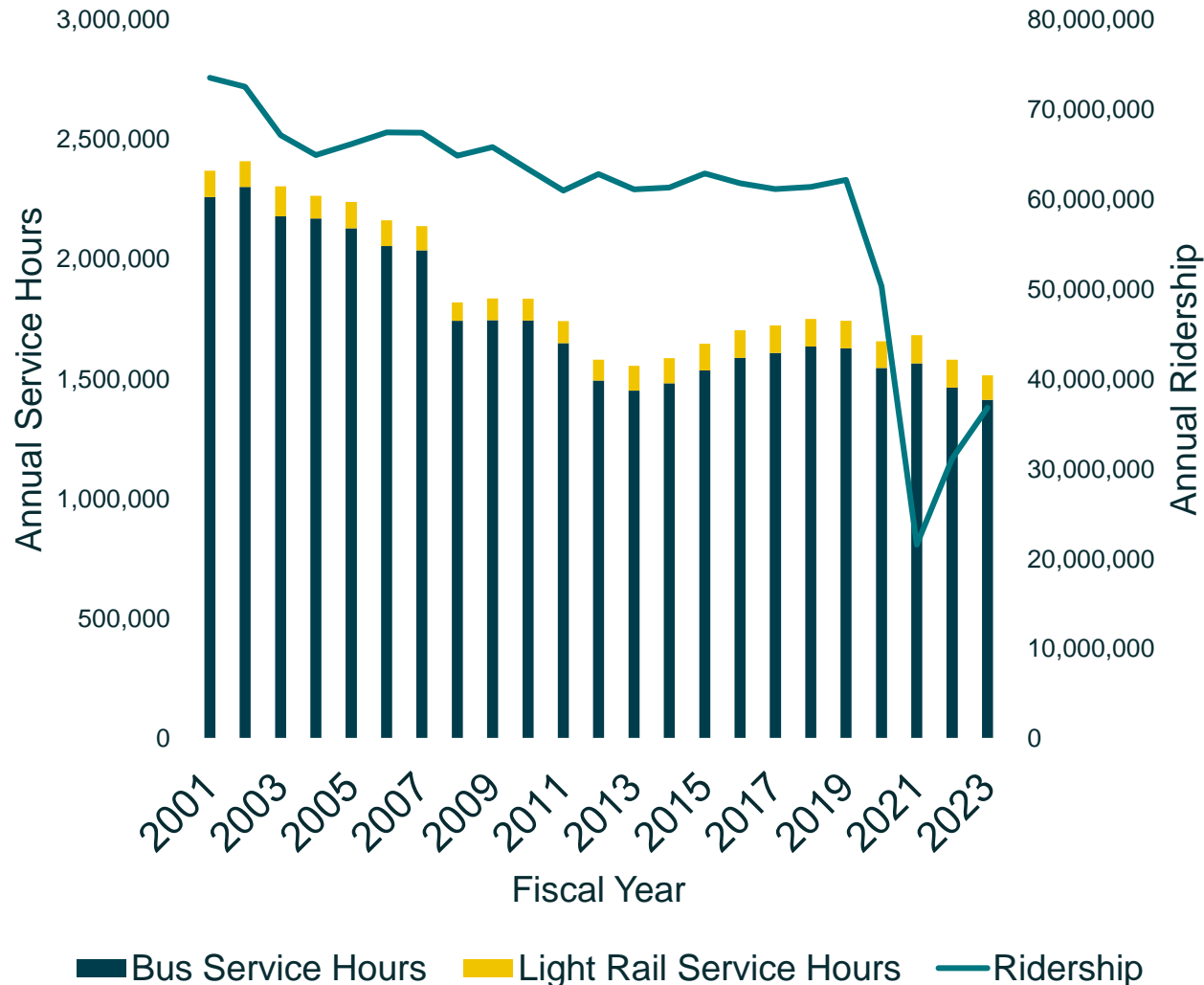
# Proposed service reductions

## Bus, light rail, and incline

**The following slides propose major service changes at a high level; detailed changes are subject to change.**

# Historical Service & Ridership Levels

Historical Annual Trends

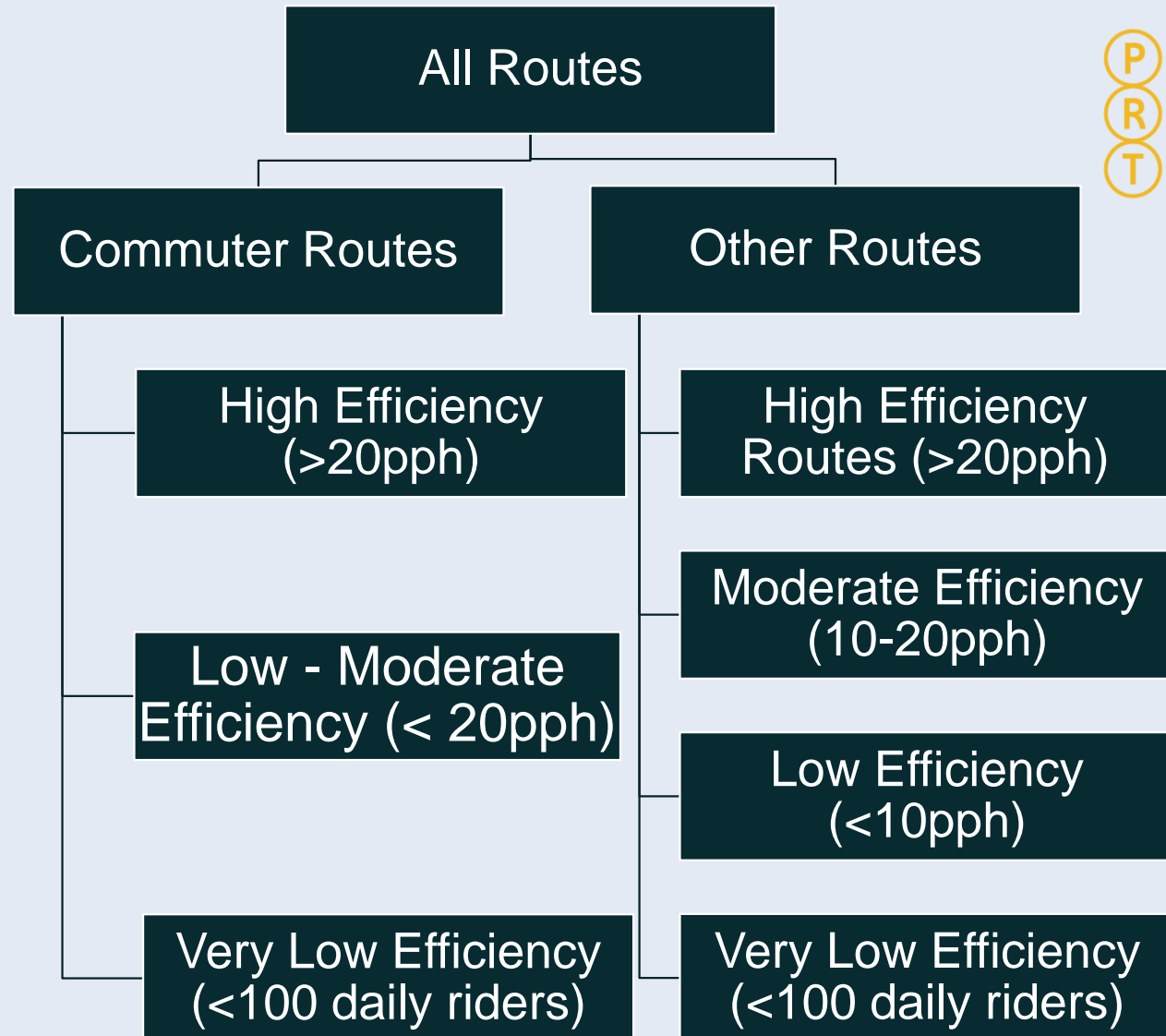


- From FY01 to FY23, **PRT has already lost 36% of its service** and 50% of its ridership over the course of 4 major service reductions:
  - 2002 -4%
  - 2007 -15%
  - 2010-2011 -14%
  - 2020-2023 -14%
- Allegheny County's population only decreased 4% during this period
- Cuts now will mostly impact riders who have no other options.

# Prioritizing Service Changes to Minimize Community Impact

*PPH = Passengers per hour of service provided*

Commuter routes' efficiency is defined differently because they require that the agency own and maintain more vehicles and facility space to maintain due their use only during rush hour, which adds costs for the agency.





# Service Preservation Priorities



## Maintain **High Ridership and High Efficiency** Routes

- Retain robust service on high efficiency routes to avoid a death spiral of ridership decline in Allegheny County



## Minimize Adverse **Equity** Impacts

- Maintain service coverage to the greatest extent possible in communities identified as being high equity areas
- No significant service coverage loss in top 10% equity communities



## Minimize Adverse **Coverage** Impacts

- Focus route eliminations where there is duplicative service
- Turn routes into shorter version that feed into busways, rail, etc.

# Service Reduction Prioritization

1. Eliminate very low efficiency routes (regular and commuter)

2. Eliminate local and commuter routes that have significant service overlaps with other routes

3. Shorten select routes to become “feeders”, including Airport service

4. Eliminate service after 11 pm for all routes, seven days a week

5. Eliminate most low efficiency routes and all low efficiency commuter routes

6. Reduce service frequencies on many routes

7. Eliminate high efficiency commuter routes

8. Eliminate some moderate efficiency routes where there is minimal service equity impact

Highest to Lowest Priorities

Avoid coverage impacts to top 10% equity communities in each step

# #1 – Eliminate Very Low Efficiency Routes (regular and commuter)

Route	Weekday Ridership	Pass/ Revenue Hour
7 – Spring Garden	76	12.5
18 - Manchester	44	6.0
71 – Edgewood Town Ctr.	57	8.2
O5 – Thompson Run Flyer	40	8.1
P13 – Mt. Royal Flyer	74	16.7
Y45 – Baldwin Manor Flyer	77	14.6

Routes with a combination of low ridership (under 100 boardings) and/or low productivity identified for pr

Savings 0.6%  
(Cumulative 0.6%)

# #2 – Eliminate Routes With Substantial Service Duplication/Overlap

Route	Overlaps	Weekday Ridership
65 – Squirrel Hill	61C/D	147
19L – Emsworth Ltd.	16	261
G31 – Bridgeville Flyer	31 and G2	225
P67 – Monroeville Flyer	67	140
P71 – Swissvale Flyer	61B	152
Y1 – Large Flyer	Y46	114

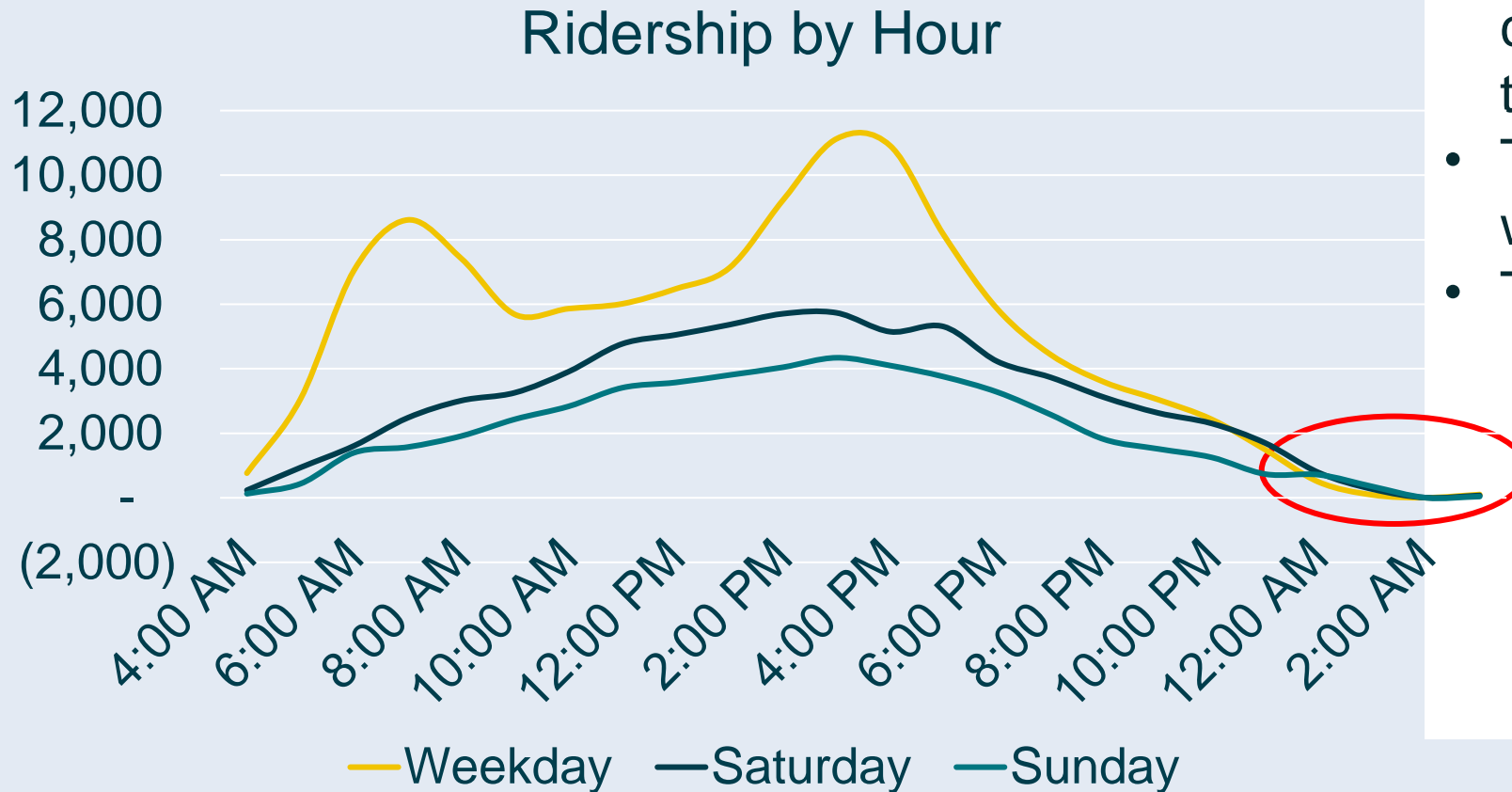
Savings 0.9%  
(Cumulative 1.5%)

# #3 – Shorten Routes to Become Feeders, Including Airport Service

Route	Service Change
28X – Airport Flyer	PIT Airport to Carnegie Station only
44 – Knoxville	Kohne St @ Fisher St (St. Clair) to South Hills Junction only
69 – Trafford	Wilmerding to Wilkinsburg only
RED – Castle Shannon	Overbrook Junction to Allegheny Station only

Savings 2.0%  
(Cumulative 3.5%)

# #4 – End Service at 11 PM



- All transit service (bus, rail, incline) would have last outbound trips beginning no later than 10:59PM, with the conclusion of those trips being the last trip of the day
- This would be for all days of the week
- This would impact:
  - Weekdays: 46 routes with 2,172 boardings (1.8%\*)
  - Saturdays: 44 routes with 2,817 boardings (3.9%\*)
  - Sundays: 31 routes with 1,839 boardings (3.7%\*)

**Savings 4.0%**  
**(Cumulative 7.5%)**

*Routes identified as currently operating past 11 pm include rail lines. Ridership in parentheses does not include Rail ridership as it was not yet available by hour.*

*\*Daily total percentage of ridership impacted for that day of week.*

# #5 – Eliminate Most Low Efficiency Routes (regular and commuter)

Local Route	Weekday Ridership
2 – Mount Royal	450
4 – Troy Hill	353
20 – Coraopolis	339
36 – Banksville	334
40 – Mt. Washington	378
58 – Greenfield	445
<b>Silver Line*</b>	<b>384**</b>

Commuter Route	Weekday Ridership
52L – Homeville Ltd.	277
G3 – Moon Flyer	197
O1 – Ross Flyer	287
P10 – Allegheny Valley Flyer	209
P12 – Holiday Park Flyer	281
P16 – Penn Hills Flyer	353
P7 – McKeesport Flyer	327
P76 – Lincoln Highway Flyer	282

*\*\* Ridership reflects Silver Line boardings south of Washington Junction only*

*Route 89 (a Tier 3 route) has been retained for equity service purposes. An interim step for commuter routes listed for elimination could be turning routes back at busway stations*

**Savings 7.7% (Cumulative 15.2%)**

# #6 – Reduce Frequencies, Moderately Efficiency Routes

## Major Frequency Reductions (33 routes)

- Routes 1, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28X, 31, 44, 54, 56, 64, 69, 74, 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 87, 88, 91, G2, P68, P78, Y46

**Savings 11.3%**  
**(Cumulative 26.5%)**



# #7 – Eliminate Remaining Commuter Routes

Commuter Route	Weekday Ridership
51L – Carrick Ltd.	392
O12 – McKnight Flyer	430
P17 – Lincoln Park Flyer	485
P69 – Trafford Flyer	216

**Savings 1.4%**  
**(Cumulative 27.9%)**

*An interim step for commuter routes listed for elimination could be turning routes back at busway stations*

# #8 – Eliminate Some Moderate Efficiency Routes

Local Route	Weekday Ridership
14 – Ohio Valley	579
26 – Chartiers	739
29 – Robinson	838
38 – Green Tree	670
39 – Brookline	831
41 – Bower Hill	665
43 – Bailey	306
53L – Homestead Park Limited	769
Y47 – Curry Flyer	618
Y49 – Prospect Flyer	732

Routes selected for elimination were routes that do not serve communities with high equity needs.

**Savings 7.1%**  
**(Cumulative 35.0%)**

# Summary of Changes *(measured as change in weekly service)*

P Pittsburgh  
R Regional  
T Transit

## Routes Eliminated (Count: 41 Routes)

2	58	P12
4	65	P13
7	71	P16
14	19L	P17
18	51L	P67
20	52L	P69
26	53L*	P71
29	G3	P76
36	G31	Y1
38	O1	Y45
39	O5	Y47
40	O12	Y49
41	P7	Silver**
43	P10	

**14,191 Boardings\***

## Major Service Reduction (Count: 34 Routes)

1	27	82
6	31	87
8	44	88
11	54	91
12	56	28X
13	64	G2
15	69	P68
16	74	P78
17	75	Y46
21	77	Red***
22	79	
24	81	

**45,850 Boardings\***

## Minor Service Reduction (Count: 20 Routes)

48	61B
51	61C
55	61D
57	71A
59	71B
83	71C
86	71D
89	P1
93	P3
61A	Mon Incline

**58,071 Boardings\***

\*Route 53 has service increases to cover losses on Route 53L.

\*\*Boardings listed for Routes Eliminated include 384 boardings on Silver Line south of Washington Junction. Blue line has service increases to cover losses on Silver line.

\*\*\*Red line boardings not included in 20%+ change, for rail riders could still use the Blue Line.

# Service Reduction Network Impacts

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# Service Coverage Impacts

180,000 residents and 50,000 jobs will lose access to public transit

Population Access			Jobs Access	
Day of Week	2024 Network	-35% Network	2024 Network	-35% Network
Weekday	703,200	520,100 (-26%)	438,600	389,900 (-11%)
Saturday	638,200	510,000 (-20%)	417,700	386,900 (-7%)
Sunday	630,200	510,000 (-19%)	415,100	386,900 (-7%)

Critical Direct Route Losses (weekday):

- Downtown Pittsburgh -30%
- Airport -63%

Hospitals and Educational Institutions – Complete service loss:

- St. Clair Hospital
- CCAC West campus
- Many K-12 schools

1. Source: Remix (population is Census 2020)  
2. Analysis presented in above table reflects a 0.25-mile buffer around all stops

# Other Potential Impacts of Reduced Operating Budget

# Other Direct and Indirect Impacts

## **No funding in budget for overtime special services to meet demand:**

- Steelers, Pirates Penguins, Pitt sporting events
- **2026 NFL Draft**
- Parades, festivals, holidays, races
- Large entertainment events (concerts like Taylor Swift, Kenny Chesney, etc.)

## **Closure of Infrastructure:**

- Collier and Ross Operating Divisions (two of PRT's four bus garages)
- Wabash tunnel
- Three bridges that support the 19L – Emsworth Limited bus and general traffic in Emsworth
- Ten park and ride lots (2,000 parking spaces)
- Twelve light rail stops/station pairs on the Silver Line Library

## **Pause of PRT's community sponsorship programs**

## **Bus Line Redesign project is not implemented**



# Proposed Fare Increases

## Bus, light rail, and incline

# Proposed Fare Increases for Fixed Route Transit

Fare Type	Current Full Fare	Proposed Fare	Proposed Change	Proposed Percentage Change
Cash	\$2.75	<b>\$3.00</b>	+\$0.25	9%
Stored Value Full Fare	\$2.75	<b>\$3.00</b>	+\$0.25	9%
3 Hour Full Fare Pass	\$2.75	\$3.00	+\$0.25	9%
Day Pass	\$7.00	\$7.50	+\$0.50	7%
7 Day Pass Full Fare	\$25.00	\$27.00	+\$2.00	8%
31 Day Pass Full Fare	\$97.50	\$106.50	+\$9.00	9%
Annual Pass	\$1,072.50	\$1,171.50	+\$99.00	9%

# Fare Increase and Service Reduction Revenue Impact

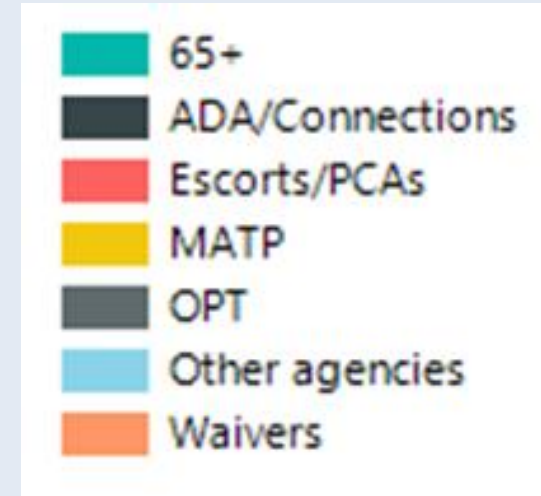
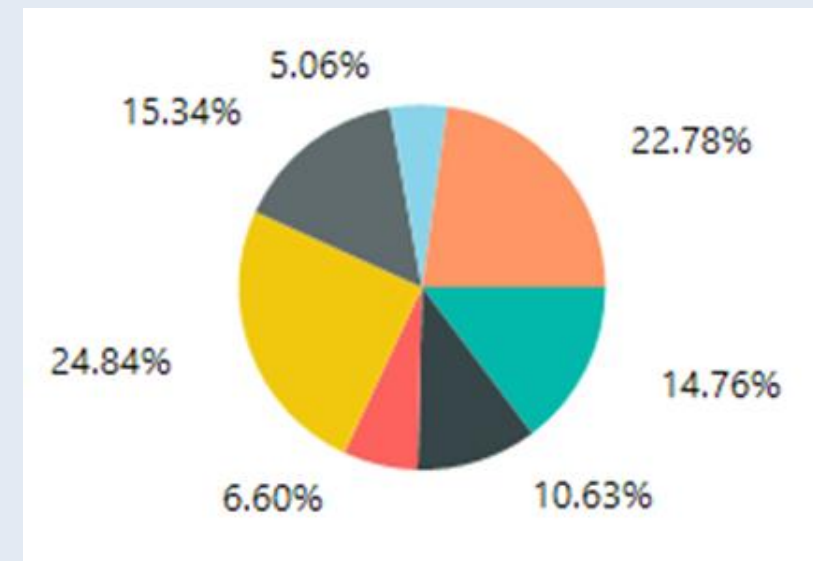
- Fare revenue in 2024 was \$57.1 million
- **PRT assumes a 35% reduction in service will result in a 20% reduction in ridership.**
- With a proposed fare increase of \$0.25 to \$3.00 and proposed service reductions:
  - 2026 Revenue \$53.9 million
  - 2027 Revenue \$49.3 million
- Revenue loss compared to FY 2024
  - 2026 Revenue -\$3.2 million
  - 2027 Revenue -\$7.8 million
- A \$3 base bus\* fare would be **5th highest in the country**

# Paratransit – Changes to Service



# Overview of ACCESS Paratransit Programs

- 65+: Anyone age 65 and over
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Disability, of any age, functionally unable to use fixed route transit
- Connections: Ages 17-64 with a disability; can use fixed route but none available for trip location
- Escorts/Personal Care Assistants (PCAs)
- Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP): Medical assistance insurance eligible trips
- Older Persons Transportation (OPT) – Ages 60+ and Area Agency on Aging eligible
- Waivers – Persons with an intellectual disability, receive budget to cover eligible services



# Paratransit Proposed Fare Increases

- Paratransit operates on a distance-based fare structure at 3 levels (shorter, medium, and longer distances)
- Anyone can use the general fare, but most riders are eligible for a discount through programs and pay 15% with 85% of the fare being covered by a sponsor/PRT (PennDOT, Allegheny County, 140 others)

Distance	Current General Fare	Proposed General Fare	Current Eligible Rider Fare	Proposed Eligible Rider Fare	Change	Percent Change
Shorter	\$21.00	\$26.00	\$3.15	<b>\$3.90</b>	\$0.75	+24%
Moderate	\$26.00	\$30.00	\$3.90	<b>\$4.50</b>	\$0.60	+15%
Longer	\$35.00	\$40.00	\$5.25	<b>\$6.00</b>	\$0.75	+14%

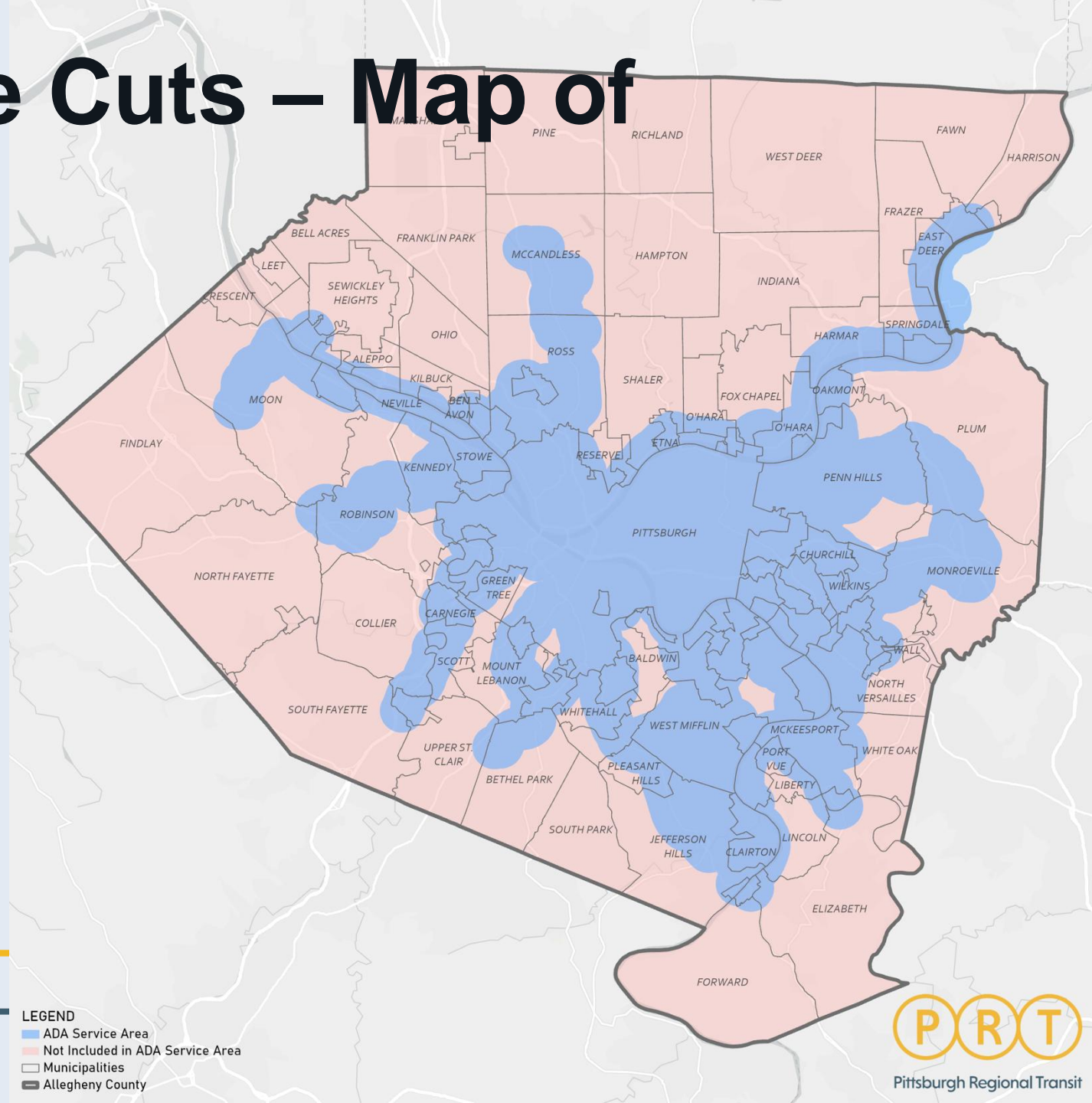


# Paratransit Service Cuts

- ADA law guarantees PRT provide (via ACCESS paratransit) trips for persons with disabilities within origin and destination 3/4 miles of a non-commuter fixed route operating at that time of day/day of week
- PRT's proposed service cuts will make more trips eligible for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) Program which applies when riders are outside this service area
- Riders in the PwD program, however, are NOT guaranteed the same protections as they are under ADA. Their trip times can be changed, and they will likely experience more trip denials
  - **These riders with disabilities lose their service protection and full confidence that paratransit will always be able to get them where they need to go.**

# Paratransit Service Cuts – Map of Impacted Areas

- Riders with disabilities in all but the blue zone lose their service protection and full confidence that paratransit will always be able to get them where they need to go
- **This is a reduction in the ADA service area of -62%**
  - 16% of this is due to the change in fixed route services (pink areas), the rest is due to the change in definition for ADA riders outside the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile area





# What happens next?

# State Funding Recap

- Without additional State funding, PRT will have to cut service and raise fares
- These proposals will go into effect in February 2026 without State action to support transit through additional funding
- PRT needs an additional \$117 million beginning in FY2026 to maintain current levels of transit over the next decade
- PRT will provide lists of PA State House of Representative and Senate Districts by routes should residents wish to contact their state leaders

# Where to Find More Information

Members of the public can find information about proposed changes at:

- Downtown Service Center, 623 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh PA 15222
- PRT's website: [www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis)
- Brochures will be available in early April on buses, light rail vehicles, schedule racks, and at the Monongahela Incline

# Public Comment Period

- Last Thursday, PRT staff requested that the Board consider entering a public comment period from March 31 to June 18 to receive input and testimony on these proposed changes.
- If approved, PRT staff will propose hosting three public hearings during that time.



# Questions?