



2012 budget calls for higher fares

The Metra Board of Directors on Oct. 14 took a painful but necessary step to balance our 2012 operating budget and restore Metra to a more sound financial footing. They voted to release



Alex Clifford
Metra CEO

for public comment a 2012 budget that contains an overall fare increase of 25.1 percent. The board knows, and I know, that such a large increase will have a significant impact on our riders. But we also know that we are required to balance our budget, and that our failure to take action would have irresponsibly left Metra on the wrong track.

As I have outlined for you before, our deficit is a result of several factors, including a spike in diesel fuel prices, the demands of meeting new federal regulations, higher insurance premiums and a variety of other rising costs.

Meanwhile, proceeds from the regional transportation sales tax have fallen short of expectations due to the faltering economy.

In addition, we have made the decision to stop diverting funds from our capital budget to our operating budget. That practice simply is not sustainable given our critical capital needs.

We were able to reduce the deficit by \$17.5 million through a variety of steps, including locking in the price of 75 percent of our fuel needs, making administrative cuts and finding other operational efficiencies. Those actions reduced the size of the needed fare increase by 7 percentage points. However, it still left a projected budget gap of \$53.6 million that will have to be covered by a fare increase.

Under our proposal, one-way tickets would increase an average of 15.7 percent. Ten-ride tickets would go up an average of 30 percent, and monthly passes would increase an average of 29.4 percent. You can view the new

fare chart on the next page.

In addition to the fare increases, several fare policies would change. One-way tickets would only be valid for 14 days, instead of a year, and they would no longer be refundable. The ten-ride ticket discount would be reduced so that riders would get 10 rides for the price of nine, rather than 10 for the price of eight. Ten-ride tickets would remain valid for a year, but would only be refundable within three months of the date of purchase. The 10-ride tickets could be refunded on a pro-rated basis, but there would be a \$5 handling fee.

Monthly passes would be valid through the end of the month (instead of noon on the first weekday of the following month) and refunds would be subject to a \$10 fee.

Also, the Metra subsidy for the Link-Up and PlusBus tickets would be eliminated and riders would have to pay the full costs of those passes. Metra contributes \$6 to Link-Up and \$8.54 to

PlusBus. The new prices will be set after consultation with the CTA and Pace. Young adult fares on weekends and holidays also would be eliminated.

The fare increase and other changes would begin on Feb. 1, 2012.

Public hearings on the proposed budget will be held Nov. 2 and Nov. 3 throughout the six-county region. (See details below.) If you cannot make it to a public hearing, comments can be emailed to onthebilevel@metrarr.com (put "2012 budget" in the subject field) or faxed to 312-322-7094. In order to include your comments for review by our board, they must be received by Nov. 4.

Following the public comment period, the Metra Board will vote on a final budget at its Nov. 11 meeting.

You can view our 2012 Proposed Program & Budget Book, PowerPoint presentations and other budget-related documents, at www.metrarail.com

Proposed 2012 budget public hearing schedule

Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2011
4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Kane County
Geneva City Hall
City Council Chambers
22 S. First Street
Geneva

McHenry County
Woodstock City Hall
City Council Chambers
121 W. Calhoun Street
Woodstock

Suburban Cook (North)
Arlington Heights Village Hall
Board Room
33 S. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights

Suburban Cook (South)
Homewood Village Hall
Village Board Room
2020 Chestnut Road
Homewood

Thursday, Nov. 3, 2011
4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

City of Chicago
Metra
547 W. Jackson Blvd.
13th Floor Board Room
Chicago

DuPage County
Clarendon Hills Village Hall
Village Board Room
1 N. Prospect Avenue
Clarendon Hills

Lake County
Grayslake Village Hall
Village Board Room
10 S. Seymour Avenue
Grayslake

Will County
Joliet City Hall
Council Chambers
150 W. Jefferson Street
Joliet

Proposed 2012 Adult Fares

Ticket	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	M
Monthly	78.25											
A Ten-Ride	24.75											
One-Way	2.75											
Monthly	85.50	78.25						Weekend: \$7.00				
B Ten-Ride	27.00	24.75						On-Board Surcharge: \$3.00				
One-Way	3.00	2.75										
Monthly	121.00	85.50	78.25									
C Ten-Ride	38.25	27.00	24.75									
One-Way	4.25	3.00	2.75									
Monthly	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25								
D Ten-Ride	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75								
One-Way	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75								
Monthly	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25							
E Ten-Ride	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75							
One-Way	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75							
Monthly	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25						
F Ten-Ride	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75						
One-Way	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75						
Monthly	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25					
G Ten-Ride	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75					
One-Way	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75					
Monthly	192.25	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25				
H Ten-Ride	60.75	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75				
One-Way	6.75	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75				
Monthly	206.50	192.25	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25			
I Ten-Ride	65.25	60.75	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75			
One-Way	7.25	6.75	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75			
Monthly	220.75	206.50	192.25	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25		
J Ten-Ride	69.75	65.25	60.75	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75		
One-Way	7.75	7.25	6.75	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75		
Monthly	235.00	220.75	206.50	192.25	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	85.50	78.25	
K Ten-Ride	74.25	69.75	65.25	60.75	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	27.00	24.75	
One-Way	8.25	7.75	7.25	6.75	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.00	2.75	
Monthly	263.50	249.25	235.00	220.75	206.50	192.25	178.00	163.75	149.50	135.25	121.00	78.25
M Ten-Ride	83.25	78.75	74.25	69.75	65.25	60.75	56.25	51.75	47.25	42.75	38.25	24.75
One-Way	9.25	8.75	8.25	7.75	7.25	6.75	6.25	5.75	5.25	4.75	4.25	2.75