

# We got there together.

ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT 2025



RED AND PURPLE MODERNIZATION  
(RPM) PHASE ONE PROJECT





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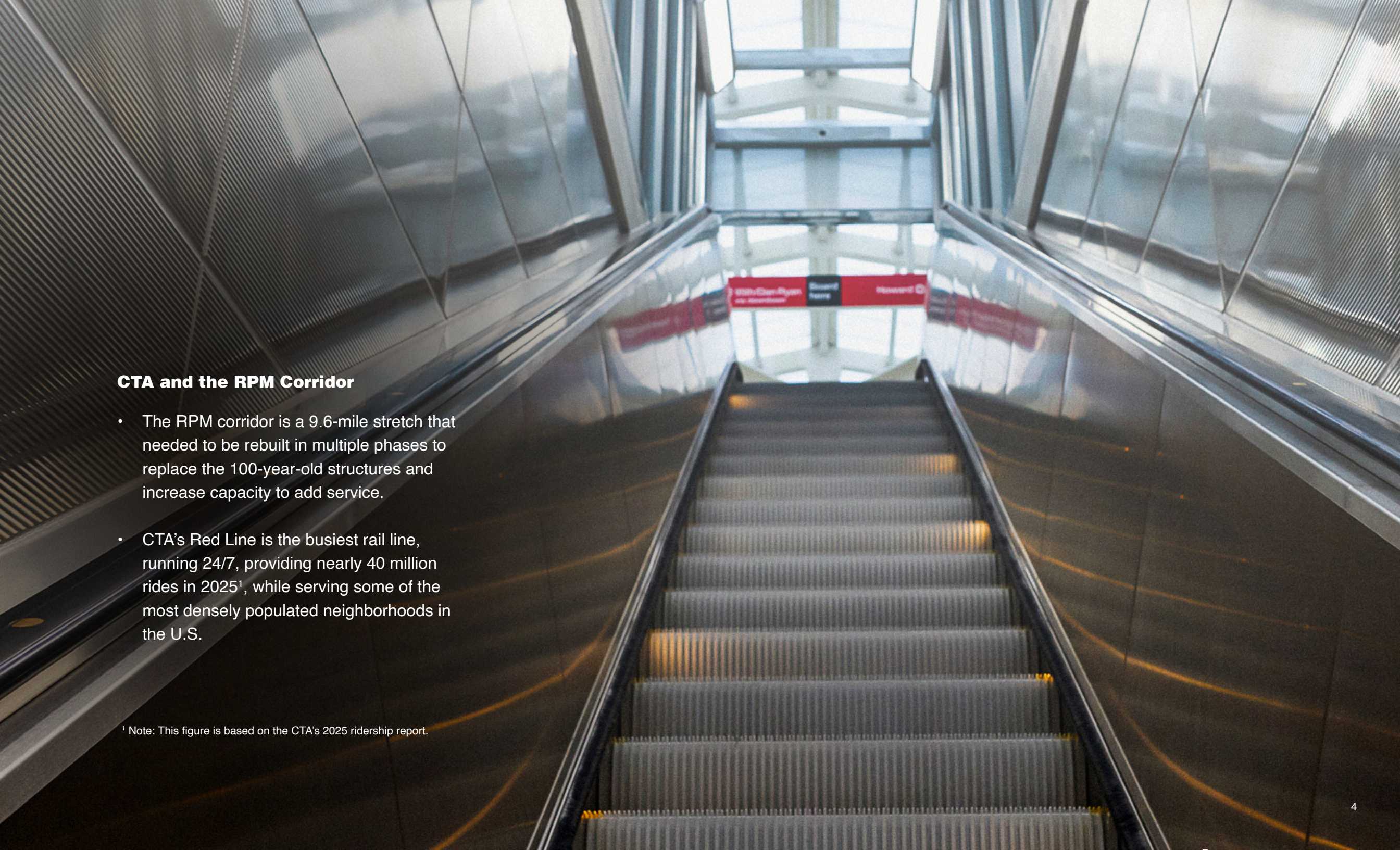
## Background

The Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) Phase One Project (2019-2025) has gone beyond modernizing Chicago's public transportation to strengthen communities, serve riders and stimulate economic growth.

The project integrated the rebuilding of a 100-year-old structure with programs that engender equitable economic and social mobility by ensuring that the project's contractors and workforce were as diverse as CTA's customers and the City of Chicago.

CTA made a commitment to leverage the RPM Phase One Project to invest in all of Chicago's communities to enhance the lives of Chicagoans beyond transportation.

**We got there together.**



**CTA and the RPM Corridor**

- The RPM corridor is a 9.6-mile stretch that needed to be rebuilt in multiple phases to replace the 100-year-old structures and increase capacity to add service.
- CTA's Red Line is the busiest rail line, running 24/7, providing nearly 40 million rides in 2025<sup>1</sup>, while serving some of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the U.S.

<sup>1</sup> Note: This figure is based on the CTA's 2025 ridership report.



## RPM Phase One Project Components

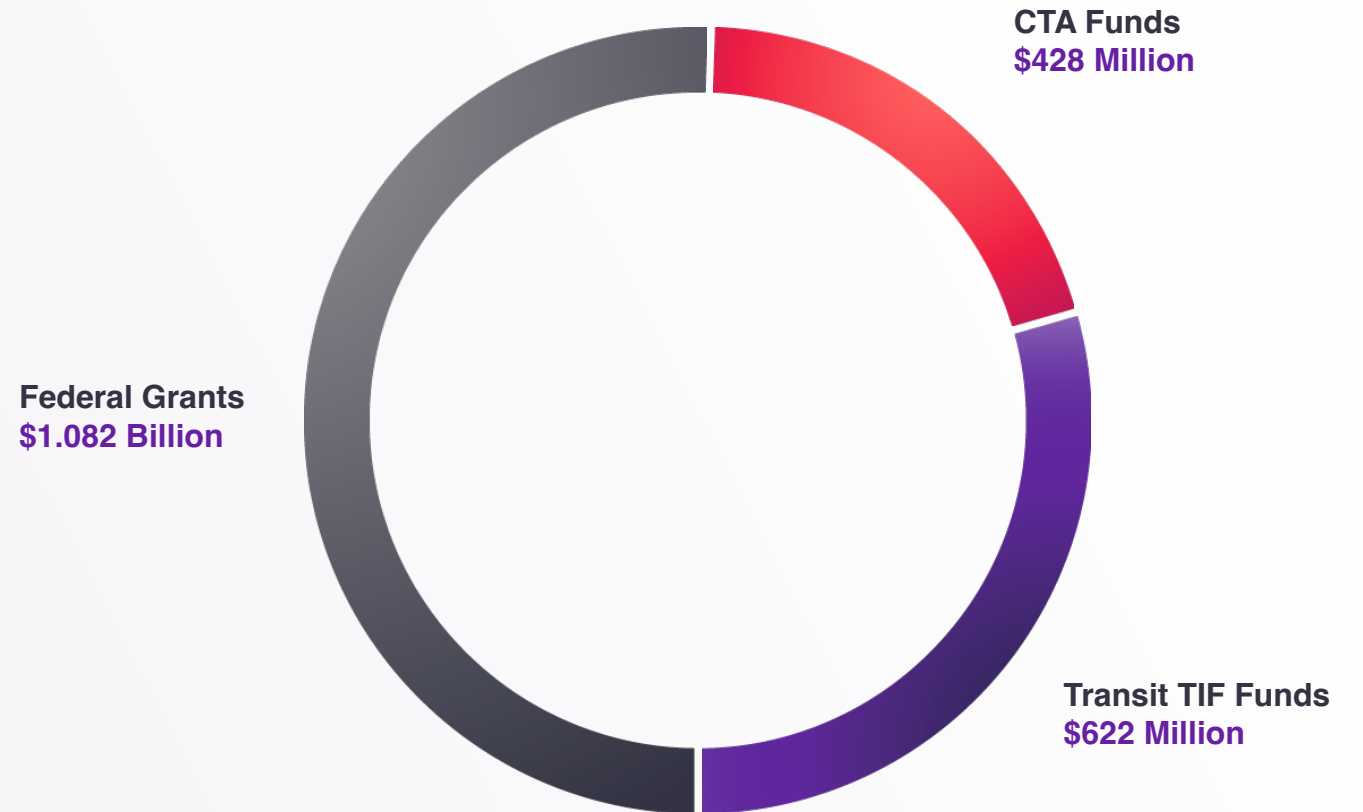
- **Lawrence to Bryn Mawr Modernization (LBMM):** Reconstruction of the Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr Red Line stations into larger, 100-percent accessible stations; and replacement of track structure totaling six track miles (completed).
- **Red-Purple Bypass (RPB):** New Red-Purple Bypass construction (completed) and the reconstruction of Red and Purple Line track structure between Belmont and Newport/Cornelia (completed).
- **Corridor Signal Improvements (CSI):** Installation of a new signal system on 23 track miles between Howard and Belmont that, similar to roadway traffic signals, will improve train flow and service reliability (completed).

### Transit Customer Benefits

- Increased service capacity
- More reliable and comfortable service
- New, modern CTA stations that are fully ADA accessible

### **RPM Phase One Funding**

The \$2.1 billion RPM Phase One Project is the largest completed capital investment project in CTA history, with funding coming from a variety of sources, including \$428 million from the CTA, \$622 million of Transit TIF funding, supported with federal sources including \$957 million Core Capacity funding and a \$125 million Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) grant.





## **Building Small and Diverse Businesses**

To ensure that RPM would serve as a catalyst for equitable economic and social mobility, CTA created goals to ensure the RPM Phase One contractors and workforce were as diverse as CTA's customers and the City of Chicago. Managing these efforts was CTA Diversity Programs, a dedicated team that develops programs and works with various organizations to provide opportunities to small and diverse businesses, as well as diverse Chicagoans.

The CTA Diversity Programs team worked with RPM contractor Walsh-Fluor Design-Build Team to develop Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goals specifically for contractors working on RPM Phase One.

## GOALS VS. COMMITMENTS VS. ACTUALS ACHIEVED

Project Goal	Contractor Commitment <sup>2</sup>	Actual Achieved <sup>3</sup>
20%	20%	20.97%

<sup>2</sup> Commitment is defined as the contractor's contractual obligation

<sup>3</sup> Reflects the total DBE dollars through December 31, 2025.

As of December 31, 2025, 68 SBE and DBE contracts have been awarded, totaling more than \$1.8 billion dollars. Note: No contracts were awarded in 2025.

## SBE & DBE CONTRACTS

Contract Category	Total Contracts	Total Contracts Amount
SBE	12	\$5,643,442
DBE	56	\$1,831,181,268
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>\$1,836,824,710</b>

## **Building Small Businesses Program**

In 2019, CTA piloted its Building Small Businesses (BSB) Program through the RPM Phase One Project, aiming to help small businesses develop their capacity to bid on large projects. The program was designed to help DBEs secure loans for working capital, equipment and other cash-flow needs through events and one-on-one sessions. Since the pilot program's launch, the BSB program has assisted more than 215 small businesses with technical and funding assistance, including helping 51 firms in securing \$21 million in capital funding.



## Success Story

### Mike Seay

President & CEO, Allstate Concrete Cutting Inc.

Mike Seay started Allstate Concrete Cutting Inc. by buying the assets from a business that went through bankruptcy proceedings. With two trucks and two saws, a new business and an opportunity to work on the RPM Phase One Project, Seay has grown his business into a trusted contractor for concrete cutting and coring across the Chicagoland area.

After a meet & greet event with Walsh-Fluor and a bidding process that involved over 700 other businesses, Allstate Concrete Cutting Inc. joined the project when it began in 2019 and has remained involved ever since. Seay and his team have helped handle deep coring (drilling) work to stabilize elevated rail structures, wall sign coring and deck coring for both the RPB Project in Lakeview East and the LBMM Project in Uptown and Edgewater.

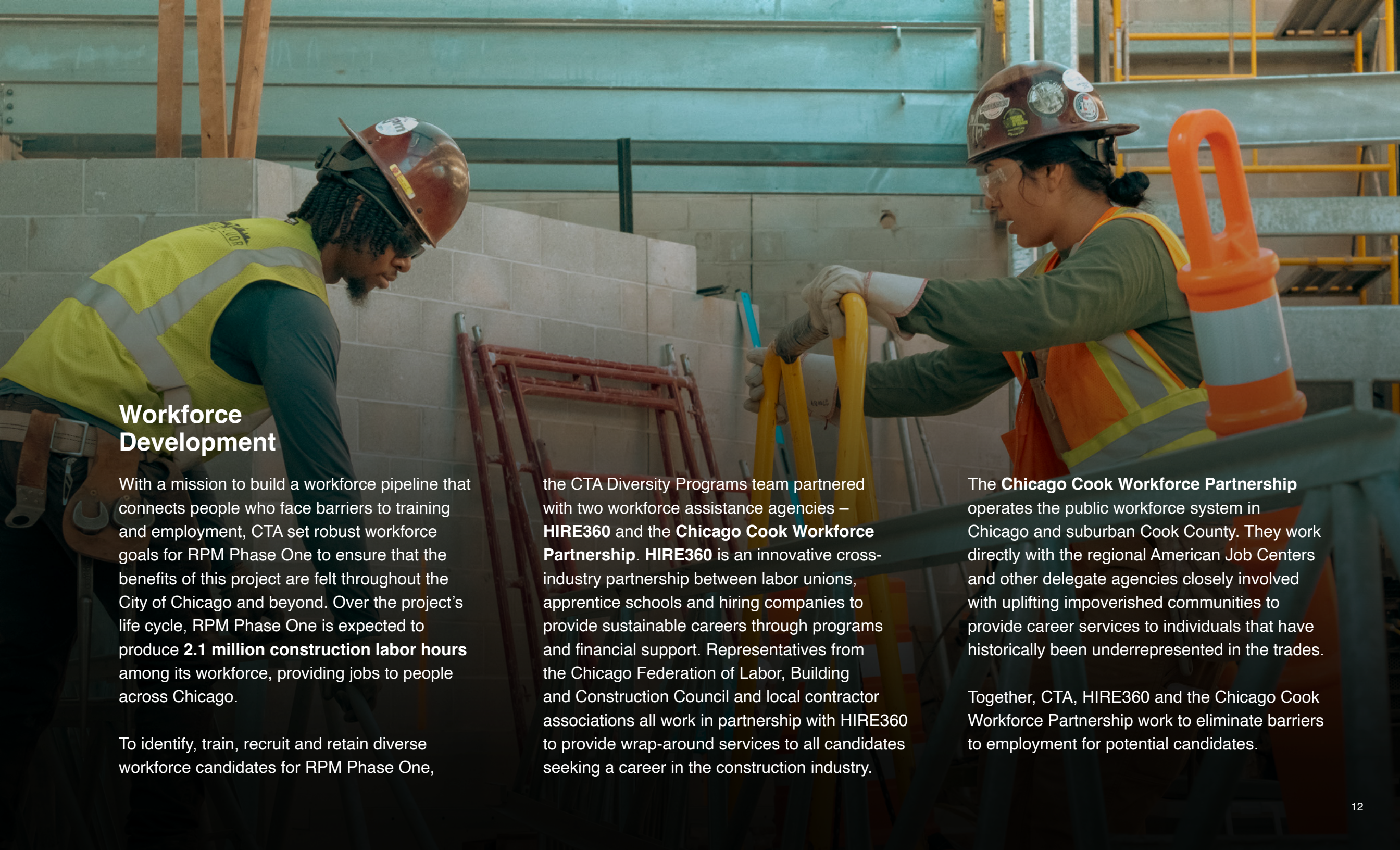




Seay says his company's time on the project has taught him how to effectively work alongside large contractors on complex, fast-moving projects. He credits the CTA, Walsh-Fluor and others involved in the RPM Phase One Project for helping Allstate Concrete Cutting Inc. triple in size and grow into a mid-sized business with a strong future in Chicagoland.

***“My business benefited from the RPM Project in growth. We were able to triple our growth during the project's infancy from 2019 on.”***

— Mike Seay, President & CEO, Allstate Concrete Cutting Inc.



## Workforce Development

With a mission to build a workforce pipeline that connects people who face barriers to training and employment, CTA set robust workforce goals for RPM Phase One to ensure that the benefits of this project are felt throughout the City of Chicago and beyond. Over the project's life cycle, RPM Phase One is expected to produce **2.1 million construction labor hours** among its workforce, providing jobs to people across Chicago.

To identify, train, recruit and retain diverse workforce candidates for RPM Phase One,

the CTA Diversity Programs team partnered with two workforce assistance agencies – **HIRE360** and the **Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership**. **HIRE360** is an innovative cross-industry partnership between labor unions, apprentice schools and hiring companies to provide sustainable careers through programs and financial support. Representatives from the Chicago Federation of Labor, Building and Construction Council and local contractor associations all work in partnership with HIRE360 to provide wrap-around services to all candidates seeking a career in the construction industry.

The **Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership** operates the public workforce system in Chicago and suburban Cook County. They work directly with the regional American Job Centers and other delegate agencies closely involved with uplifting impoverished communities to provide career services to individuals that have historically been underrepresented in the trades.

Together, CTA, HIRE360 and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership work to eliminate barriers to employment for potential candidates.

The following workforce goals ensure candidates from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and economically disadvantaged individuals have access to construction trades opportunities related to RPM Phase One. The goals also allow for and encourage existing workers in the trades to advance and grow within their career fields.

- **WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) GOAL**

This goal targets hiring dislocated and economically disadvantaged workers as defined under the Federal Act.

- **LABOR-APPRENTICE GOAL**

This goal targets hiring apprentices from union's signatory to CTA's Project Labor Agreement. These apprenticeship programs afford new generations of trade workers the opportunity to receive on-the-job training and education relevant to their field while also earning a living wage.

- **ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED AREA (EDA) GOAL**

This goal targets hiring individuals that reside in ZIP codes with a median household income of \$40K or less.

Construction for RPM Phase One has produced 2.8 million labor hours through December 31, 2025, with just under 543,800 labor hours in 2025. Additionally, since the project began, just under \$171.2 million in wages have been paid, with over \$34.6 million in wages paid in 2025.



## RPM WORKFORCE GOALS<sup>4</sup>

(2019-2025)

The following is a summary of RPM Phase One's workforce goals and attainment from 2025. Note: one candidate may meet multiple workforce goals for RPM, therefore, CTA measures goal attainment in labor hours.



	WIOA	APPRENTICES	EDA
Candidate Percentage	10%	15%	35%
Projected Labor Hours	210,000	315,000	735,000

## WORKFORCE GOAL ATTAINMENT<sup>5</sup>

Workforce Category	2025				TOTAL <sup>6</sup>			
	Candidates Percentage	Labor Hours Worked	Hours Percentage	Wages Earned	Candidates Percentage	Labor Hours Worked	Hours Percentage	Wages Earned
WIOA	4.02%	41,060	7.55%	\$2,446,110.68	3.73%	296,231	10%	\$16,391,069.27
APPRENTICES	16.94%	80,486	14.80%	\$3,690,778.39	13.55%	370,299	13%	\$16,279,837.84
EDA	26.63%	166,968	30.70%	\$10,123,039.92	24.12%	869,555	31%	\$50,170,512.82

<sup>4</sup> These goals are reflective of all RPM contracts

<sup>5</sup> The labor hours and wages represented contain data from all RPM contracts

<sup>6</sup> Totals are reflective of totals from 2017 through December 31, 2025

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY GOALS

Workforce	Hiring Goal	Actual Achieved <sup>7</sup> in 2025	Total <sup>8</sup> Actual Achieved
Minority	19.6%	61.18%	58.32%
Female	6.9%	6.6%	7.1%

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY HOURS<sup>9</sup>

Workforce	Hours Worked in 2025	Total Hours Worked	Wages Paid in 2025	Total Wages Paid
Minority	36,038.75	202,612.85	\$20,495,659.67	\$96,762,966.96
Female	332,689.07	1,656,384.71	\$2,066,452.69	\$10,724,869.84

### OVERALL WORKFORCE TOTALS

Metric	2025	2017-2025
Labor Hours	543,798.07	2,840,338.85
Wages Earned	\$34,629,304.25	\$171,187,426.44

<sup>7</sup> Actual Achieved is based off hours worked by each group between 2017 and 2025

<sup>8</sup> Reflects totals from 2017 through December 31, 2025

<sup>9</sup> Totals are reflective of all RPM contracts



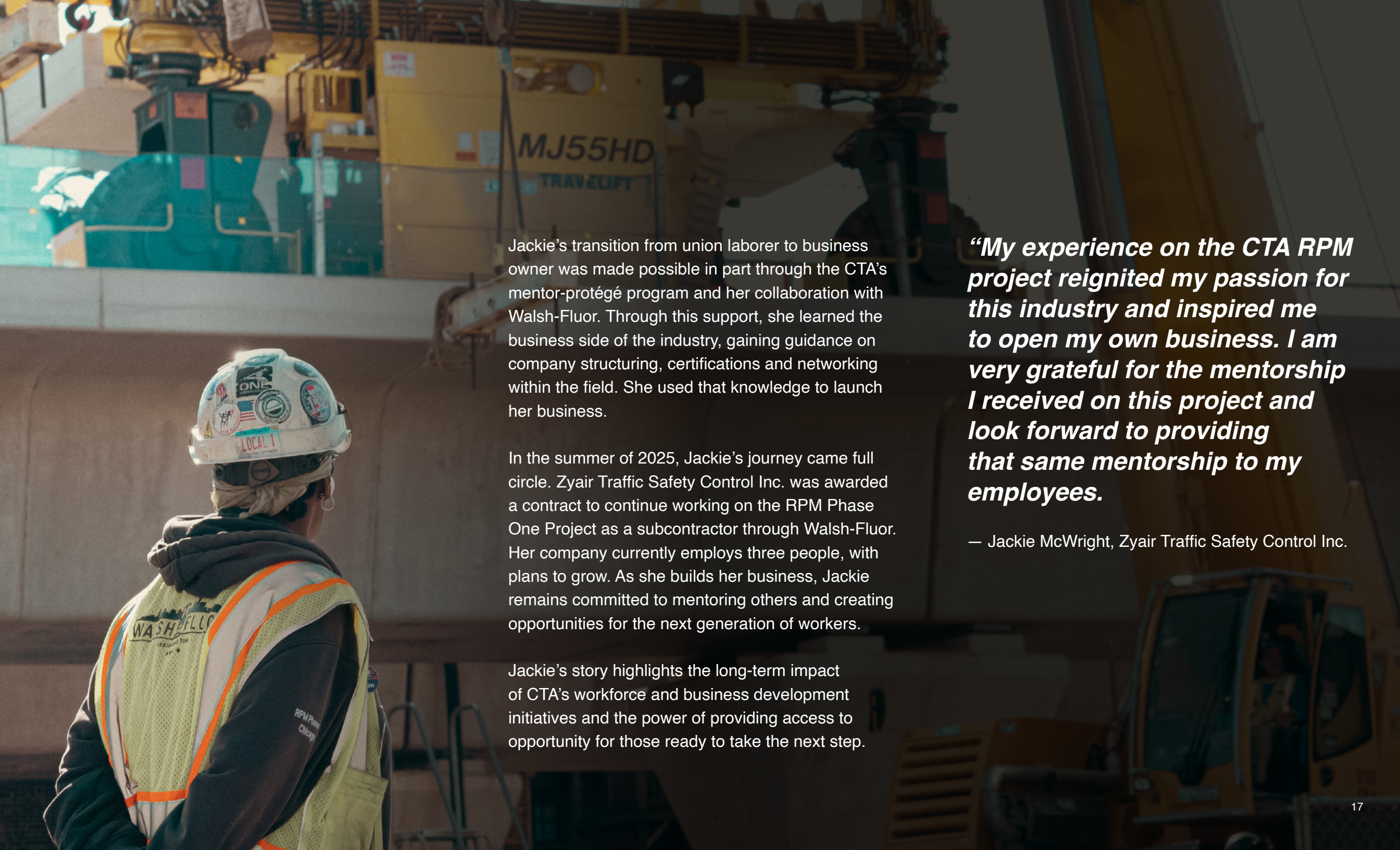
## Success Story

# Jackie McWright

Zyair Traffic Safety Control Inc.

Jackie McWright has served as a construction flagger on the RPM Phase One Project, bringing more than 30 years of union laborer experience to her role. She became a familiar and reliable presence throughout the project, helping to guide pedestrians, drivers and heavy equipment safely through active construction zones. Her professionalism and attention to detail played an important role in maintaining site safety and smooth operations for the project.

In 2025, Jackie transformed those skills and her decades-long experience into business ownership. Through the support and opportunity provided by the RPM Phase One Project, Jackie founded Zyair Traffic Safety Control Inc.



Jackie’s transition from union laborer to business owner was made possible in part through the CTA’s mentor-protégé program and her collaboration with Walsh-Fluor. Through this support, she learned the business side of the industry, gaining guidance on company structuring, certifications and networking within the field. She used that knowledge to launch her business.

In the summer of 2025, Jackie’s journey came full circle. Zyair Traffic Safety Control Inc. was awarded a contract to continue working on the RPM Phase One Project as a subcontractor through Walsh-Fluor. Her company currently employs three people, with plans to grow. As she builds her business, Jackie remains committed to mentoring others and creating opportunities for the next generation of workers.

Jackie’s story highlights the long-term impact of CTA’s workforce and business development initiatives and the power of providing access to opportunity for those ready to take the next step.

***“My experience on the CTA RPM project reignited my passion for this industry and inspired me to open my own business. I am very grateful for the mentorship I received on this project and look forward to providing that same mentorship to my employees.”***

— Jackie McWright, Zyair Traffic Safety Control Inc.



**CHICAGO'S OLDEST COMIC STORE.**



**BOLIVAR & LINCOLN VENEZUELAN**



**KIE-GOL-LANEE OAXACAN RESTAURANT**



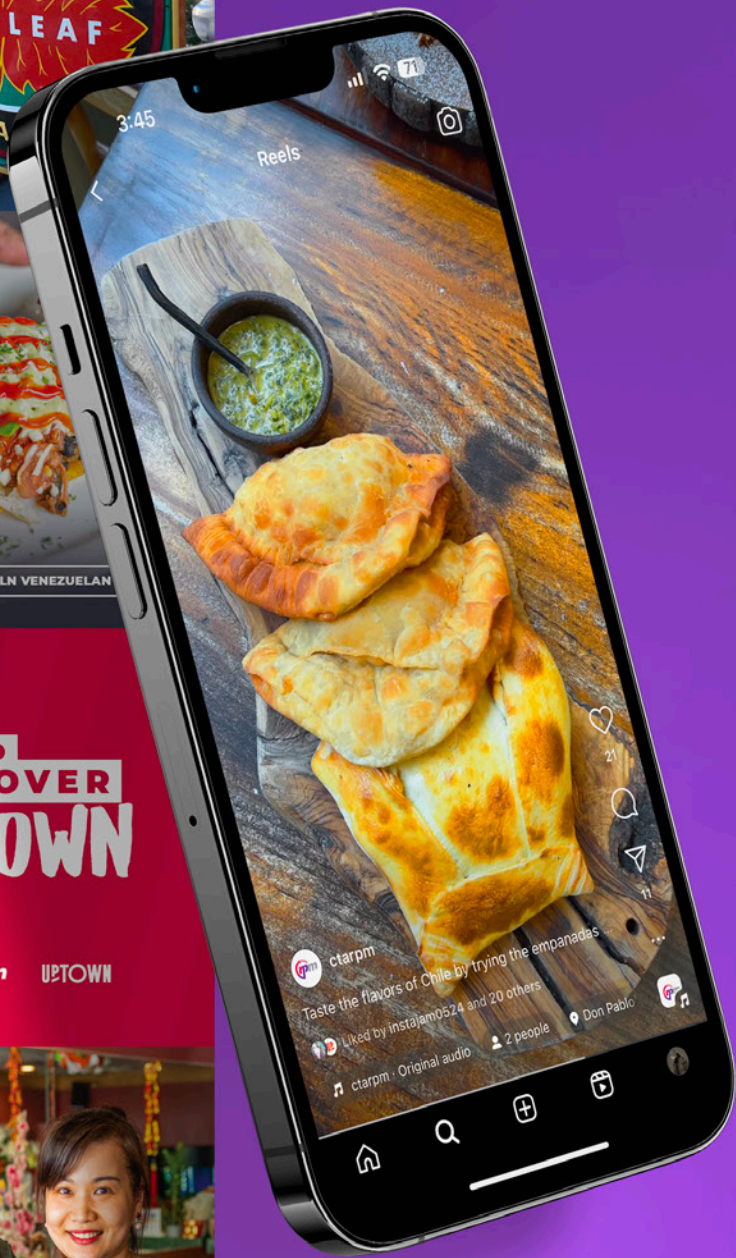
**RIDE TO DISCOVER UPTOWN**

cta rpm UPTOWN



**RIDE TO DISCOVER LAKEVIEW EAST**

cta rpm LAKEVIEW EAST



## Open For Business Program

While CTA expected the RPM Phase One Project would significantly benefit the local economy, the agency recognized that the long-term construction impacts posed challenges to the small businesses within the project footprint. In an effort to minimize disruptions and negative impacts on these businesses, CTA developed, launched and maintained the Open for Business Program. The completely free program aimed to support businesses impacted by RPM Phase One by deploying marketing campaigns with the goal to drive foot and digital traffic to the participating businesses.

From its launch in October 2020 through its conclusion in late 2025, the program ended with 204 active participants. In 2025, the program received seven new participant applications.

Additionally, the program featured 176 businesses in various marketing efforts including a city-wide summer campaign.

Business Category	Active Participants <sup>11</sup>
Shop	51
Eat	74
Play	32
Explore	11
Local Service	70

Note: Some Open for Business participants fall under more than one business category



<sup>10</sup> Total active participants represents the number of businesses and organizations that qualified for and were accepted into the program.

<sup>11</sup> Total active participants as of December 31, 2025



## Project Footprint for Spending

CTA, Walsh-Fluor and other organizations working on the RPM Phase One Project have supported local businesses by patronizing them and encouraging staff to frequent these businesses for lunch breaks, company events and celebrations.

In 2025, Walsh-Fluor spent more than \$2 million locally on office and storage leases, parking, local restaurants and other expenditures.







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