

Conceptual rendering of potential Pulse stations near the Harlem Avenue Station along the Metra BNSF Line in Berwyn, Illinois developed for the RTA/Pace Central Harlem Avenue Corridor Plan. Rendering produced by the Lakota Group.

P-3 Transit-Supportive Development Engagement

Initiative: Support *Driving Innovation* service development initiatives by establishing clear expectations for level of service and transit amenities that municipalities and the development community can expect for building transit-supportive developments.

IMPLEMENT
NOW

implement
later

further
investigate

Supports Goals:

Accessibility, Equity, Productivity, Safety, Adaptability, Collaboration, Diversity, and Integrity

Overview

Transit systems are dependent on the physical and social characteristics of the regions that they serve. Choices that communities make about infrastructure, development patterns and land use can make or break transit as a successful mode. The aim of this set of initiatives is to encourage community characteristics that are supportive of transit.

ACTION 1 Establish Transit and Land-Use Typologies

Since Pace adopted its *Vision 2020* plan, transit agencies and decision makers have come to better understand the deeply intertwined relationship between land-use policy and transit use. While this is a well-known phenomenon⁶, the role of these factors has been recently supported by robust datasets and other evidence. While land-use is often beyond transit agencies' control, there are still opportunities to advocate for intersectional approaches proven to make transit better for all.

The rural-to-urban transect is a system that helps classify characteristics of the built environment in useful order, from most rural to most urban. Municipalities can have many types of development typologies spread across different landscapes. Using transect cross-sections of urban development help frame potential transit service designs and mobility solutions.

⁶ Zupan, J. and Pushkarev, B. (1977) *Public Transportation and Land-Use Policy, Regional Plan Association* (New York, N.Y.) Indiana University Press

In 2013, Pace published its Transit-Supportive Guidelines which utilizes a transect-like approach to classify the vast area that the agency serves. This innovative document communicates to municipalities in Pace's service area how development and land-use decisions impact Pace's ability to provide effective public transit. However, in the years since its release, transit ridership is declining, and Pace's service area is still growing in ways that both support and hinder fixed-route transit service. Additional measures may help to further assist municipalities to utilize these guidelines and focus regional development in transit-supportive ways.

As land-use patterns continue to affect transit ridership, new mobility services have become increasingly popular. For example, Uber, Lyft, Via and similar services are more frequently used and may directly compete as substitutes for transit⁷. State regulation of for-hire vehicles does not require data sharing, and with some exceptions local municipalities do not have the capacity to take on the administrative burden of managing this growing industry⁸. Thus, the full impacts of these services on Pace's ridership are uncertain.

The Northeastern Illinois regional context presents significant challenges in best meeting the transit needs of residents and visitors. Much of the region needs improvement when it comes to walkability and land-use, as transit customers frequently face missing sidewalks and sprawling developments. Thus, there are few incentives to coordinate these new mobility choices with existing transit services. These are challenging circumstances — most of which are out of Pace's control.

The transect diagram (Figure 5) shows how Pace's array of service options can meet the needs of the various regional land-use and development contexts. It also illustrates that a bulk of Pace's fixed-route service categories currently serve lower-density and less transit-supportive areas.

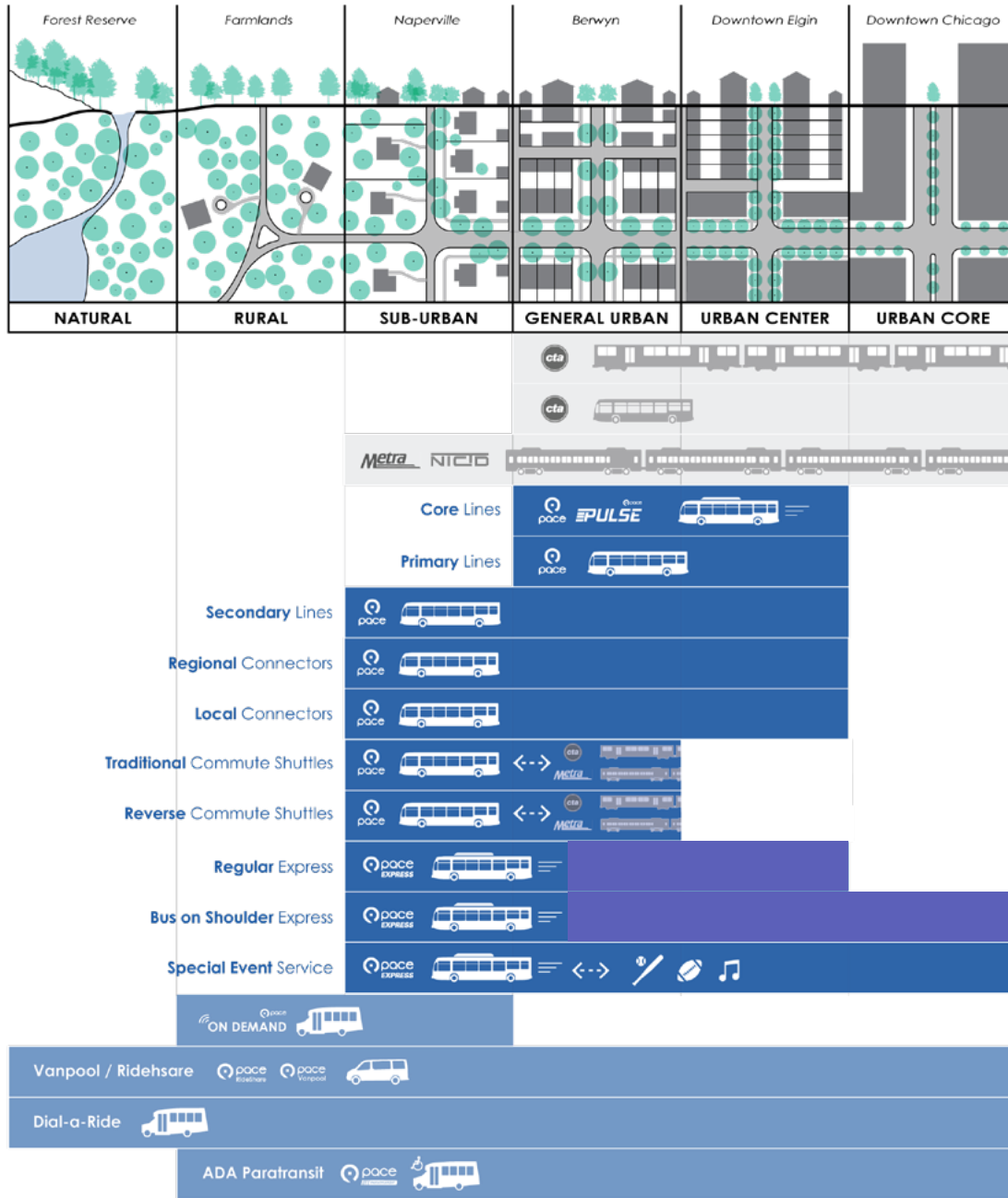
Critical to the approach of the *Driving Innovation* plan is to develop a strategy to help Pace deploy transit resources in the most efficient and equitable manner.

Pace must find the right balance of fixed-route and non-traditional transit services to ensure resources are available to the greatest number of people, and that services meet the needs of communities that most depend on transit.

⁷ Transportation Network Providers and Congestion in the City of Chicago (2019) <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/mayor/Press%20Room/Press%20Releases/2019/eTNPCongestionReport.pdf>

⁸ Baron, D. (2017) "When Ridesharing Comes to Main Street" http://www.deckandbaronlaw.com/news_pdf/baronDec17REPRINT.fTNPCongestionReport.pdf

Figure 5: Existing Pace Transit Typology by Urban Transect



Note - The top portion of the above illustration is modeled on the "Rural-to-Urban Transect" concept as featured in the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) Public Square Journal, and developed by DPZ Partners (cnu.org, 2017).

The specific municipalities displayed in the column headers are used for illustrative / example purposes only.

Innovative Approaches to Transit Supportive Development



Above: Two land-use approaches are depicted above. The left photo shows a typical suburban development pattern, while the right photo illustrates how infill development in the same area can be achieved and provide an environment more conducive to transit. (plusurbia.com)



Left: Pace's Transit Supportive Guidelines, completed in 2013, has provided municipalities, roadway agencies and developers with the tools to promote better bus infrastructure and design and strategies for making such complementary with planned developments.

Below: Other land use concepts, such as the Missing Middle Housing (illustrated by Opticos Design, Inc.), promote a gradation of architectural forms that can help streamline urban environments from detached single-family residential all the way up to mid-rise.

This particular blend of housing, land use, and urban form is relevant to the vast majority of Pace's service area. (missingmiddlehousing.com, 2020)



ACTION ITEM 2 Update Pace’s Transit-Supportive Guidelines

Pace will update and expand the 2013 Transit-Supportive Guidelines (TSG) framework to provide municipalities, roadway agencies and developers clear guidance for how to properly design for and access Pace services and promote transit-supportive land uses. An expanded TSG program will provide a blueprint for communities to upgrade from one service category to another, based on the emerging Pace Service Standards Framework.

This process is intended to help manage expectations for how service is aligned with development. It will purposely incentivize higher-intensity land use and development patterns for communities that desire better public transit. The approach taken is also intended to increase awareness and attention to traditional fixed-route bus corridors as viable areas for investing in transit-oriented development (TOD).

Metra and CTA rail stations are typically targeted and invested in as TOD sites in Northeastern Illinois given the presence of station infrastructure and the potential for high-frequency, high-speed transit. Pace’s fixed-route services are also increasingly moving toward this pattern of high-frequency and high-speed characteristics, with substantial passenger stations and infrastructure to anchor nearby development opportunities.

Examples of this include the Barrington Road Station and Pulse Milwaukee Line, along with planned projects such as future Pulse lines and expressway-based services and passenger facilities. Furthermore, even smaller-scale pedestrian and bus stop improvements along regular fixed routes with relatively good frequency can be enticing for development.

Pace will continue to coordinate with partner agencies such as RTA, CMAP, IDOT, county DOT’s and municipalities to assist in communicating Pace’s priority corridors as target areas for TOD and transit-supportive infrastructure.



P-5 | Potential COVID-19 Impacts

Many traditional forms of land use are primed for re-purposing. Suburban shopping malls have received renewed attention as the replacement of in-person shopping with online retail activity has accelerated during the pandemic. Office spaces have been similarly scrutinized, as many workers have permanently shifted to working remotely. Both provide examples of where Pace currently invests significant resources to serve. Pace will closely monitor how to adjust service in conjunction with the initiatives of this plan that are aimed at transit-supportive land use and the changes unfolding.



ACTION ITEM 3 Establish Transit Friendly Streets Standards

All transit users are pedestrians during their journeys. Thus, transit friendly street designs must facilitate transit access for pedestrians, bicyclists and others, as well as ensure effective transit service operations. Pace will create specific guidance for municipalities, counties and state highway departments related to transit.

Transit Friendly Streets standards could be a component of Pace's Transit Supportive Guidelines (TSG), or a stand-alone document. Whereas Pace's TSG provides a broader variety of guidance covering land use, bus infrastructure design, roadway design strategies and a proposed framework tied to Pace Service Standards, the Transit Friendly Street standards would be more narrowly focused on and provide greater detail for roadway geometry solutions.

The goal of the standards is to balance the competition for public space and prioritize moving people over any single mode of transportation. This may mean updating the geometric alignment of a street to make transit access and use more efficient and convenient⁹. This document will set a new vision and consistent standard for how transportation decision-makers across the Pace service area can leverage the immense potential of transit to create active and efficient streets across the transect of uses¹⁰. Recommended design and traffic management strategies include:

- Provide Adequately Sized and Maintained Sidewalks
- Provide Amenities for Pedestrians and Transit Riders
- Create Priority Lanes for Transit Vehicles
- Initiate Traffic-Calming Measures for Automobiles
- Redesign Intersections and Modify Signalization

Pace will work closely with IDOT to ensure coordinating with the department's Complete Streets Policy, as well as the Active Transportation Alliance to ensure its standards are holistic, actionable and complementary to the efforts these and other organizations and agencies in the region are implementing. Pace will also utilize CMAP's sidewalk inventory data to assist in coordinating plans for improved and accessible transit infrastructure.

⁹ Seattle DPD - Transit Friendly Design Guidelines. <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/Vault/AuroraAvenueUrbanDesign/TransitFriendlyDesignGuidelines.pdf>

¹⁰ NACTO Transit Street Design Guide. <https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/>



Applying Design Standards for Transit Streets

Many national resources exist to help transit providers, roadway agencies, consulting firms, counties and municipalities apply universal standards of design for building and maintaining transit infrastructure in the public right-of-way.

Among the more prominent resources are the *Transit Street Design Guide* written by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the *Guide for Geometric Design of Transit Facilities on Highways and Streets* written by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Both publications apply best practices across North America for determining things like how far back a bus shelter should be placed from a street curb, the length of time a pedestrian should have to cross a street, geometric designs for traffic lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and many other topics.

