



Moving into the Future

The Weekly Newsletter from America's Most Efficient Suburban Transit Agency

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Pace is the suburban public transit agency for northeastern Illinois's six-county metropolitan region. As the 6th largest bus agency in the U.S., Pace operates fixed bus routes, vanpools and paratransit services in nearly 250 municipalities consisting of 5.2 million residents. Visit the Route Finder for bus route information.

State Auditor General releases major report *Fiscally responsible Pace pleased with findings*

A [report](#) released today by the Illinois [Auditor General](#) William Holland showed Pace to be an operationally efficient and fiscally responsible agency. The report also highlighted the need for additional operating and capital funding for the region's transit agencies.

Upon receiving the news that the suburban transit agency is as good as or better than its peers in 24 of 29 categories, Pace officials are obviously pleased by the findings. Pace "rates highly in its peer group for all aspects of cost-efficiency and productivity of its labor resources."

Pace Board Chairman Richard Kwasneski said it validates Pace's continuing efforts to be efficient and financially sound. "Each year Pace has balanced its budget, closely monitored its services and made good use of its resources. I hope this news helps our constituents understand that we always act with their best interests in mind." On behalf of the Pace Board and staff, Kwasneski expressed his thanks to the Auditor General's office for their thorough and objective work. He felt they did a good job identifying the issues the agencies are facing, and added Pace plans to act on their recommendations for improvement.



Pace's vanpool program is the most efficient form of transit service in all of northeastern Illinois.

Holland's findings also justified the RTA-led [Moving Beyond Congestion](#) campaign, which calls for \$400 million annually in new operating funding and a 5-year, \$10 billion capital program. "[T]he Northeastern Illinois Mass Transit agencies are in serious financial trouble. Current revenue sources—mainly the sales tax and fares charged to passengers—are not sufficient to fund current operations, let alone system expansions," the report says. "While we identified some opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness through increased coordination, decreased redundancy and improved operations, these savings are relatively minor—in the tens of millions of dollars—compared to the current funding deficit and unmet future needs—which are in the hundreds of millions of dollars."

Regarding the audit's recommendations for a universal fare card and reducing duplication of services, Pace officials say they'll continue to be cooperative as they have been in the past with the [Regional Transportation Authority](#) and the other transit agencies. They're eager to work out what's best for the public on these issues or any measures that would improve the effectiveness of the region's mass transit

system.

According to the Auditor General's report, not only did Pace outperform most of its peers, but many of these "peer" agencies have a central business district as a focus and market base in their respective geographic areas. The Pace system covers a sprawling area of 3,446 square miles, nearly the size of Connecticut and 15 times the size of the City of Chicago. The report's highlights for the agency include:

- Pace had the greatest increase in miles passengers rode--58.2%--between 1985 and 2005 compared to Metra with an increase of 19.3% and the CTA with a decline of 10%.
- The 48% recovery ratio on Pace's [vanpool program](#) is higher than any other Pace, CTA or Metra service.
- The agency was cited for its high level of balanced performance measures, and the good job it has done to create an age-diverse fleet by staggering the purchase of replacement vehicles.
- As measured in 2005 dollars, Pace passenger revenue increased 41.8% from 1985 to 2005 while passenger revenue *declined* by almost 16% at CTA and around nine percent at Metra.
- Pace increased vanpool service about 70% faster than the average transit system in the peer group. It operates about 30% more vanpool service than peer group systems when measured by miles and peak vehicles.

Additionally, the report noted that rapid population growth in the suburbs may be fueling the increase in passenger miles for both Pace and Metra; Pace carried passengers 173 million miles in 1985 and 273 million miles in 2005. The population of the five collar counties--DuPage, Kane, Lake McHenry and Will--has grown from approximately two million residents to three million in the past twenty years, meaning more people now live in the collar counties than in the City of Chicago.

Pace Factoid

The Auditor General found Pace's paratransit operation to exceed the performance of that of its peer agencies in all four cost-effectiveness categories.

"Moving into the Future" is a weekly newsletter provided by Pace Suburban Bus to update interested parties on the services Pace provides and the progress it makes to constantly improve. Forward to others as you wish. For best results, please print in landscape format. Please submit feedback or remove yourself from the mailing list by calling 847-228-2421 or e-mail your request to govt.affairs@pacebus.com.

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