



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 Chicagoland'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.

What does Moving Beyond Congestion mean for North Cook County?

This item is the third in a recurring series on the potential impacts of the Moving Beyond Congestion plan. Each week, Pace will highlight a different portion of its service area and provide a detailed analysis of the improvements the riding public will see if Pace receives the infusion of capital and operating dollars that transit agencies hope to receive this year from the Illinois General Assembly.

North Cook County, from Evanston to Elgin, is the beneficiary of some of Pace's greatest concentrations of bus service, and is one of Pace's highest-ridership areas. The wide range of housing densities across the area also makes it challenging to serve with any single form of public transportation. With that knowledge, Pace undertook a restructuring of the bus route network in the [north shore region](#) of Cook County. Pace implemented improvements to bus routes, eliminated duplication with CTA service and added new services to meet current commute patterns.

As part of the [Moving Beyond Congestion](#) plan, RTA and Pace hope to bring even further transit improvements to north Cook County. If the legislature authorizes RTA to collect new funding, residents and employees in north Cook County would see:

- More frequent service on [Route 208 Golf Road](#), seven days a week. Golf Road is also one of two suburban corridors in Illinois to be authorized by federal legislation to receive funding for [Bus Rapid Transit](#) service. Route 208 travels between Woodfield Mall and Evanston.
- Enhanced service on express routes [606 Northwest Limited](#) and [600 Northwest Limited](#), as well as [Route 626](#), which travels from Skokie's Yellow Line CTA station to the high-employment Lake-Cook Road corridor. Route 600 would provide reverse-commute service for the first time.
- New express service from Rosemont CTA station to Lake-Cook Road, and along the "northwest corridor" west of O'Hare Airport.
- A Dial-A-Ride program without arbitrary borders throughout northern Cook, and with expanded operating hours, while lessening the financial burdens of our current local government funding partners.



Commuters in Evanston will enjoy expanded service to destinations to the west if Pace receives additional funding from the state legislature this year.

- Locally-based circulator services, like the one soon to be implemented in the Village of Wheeling, which will provide commuters with rush hour connections to their local Metra station and residents with a mid-day circulator for short-distance trips to many of the area's retail, medical and social destinations.
- New service on Rand Road between Des Plaines and Wauconda. Along Rand Road, buses could take advantage of [transit signal priority](#), which lowers travel times for passengers and reduces Pace's operating costs.



Pace Board member Al Larson of Schaumburg is excited about the proposals. "The recent [North Shore Initiative](#) clearly demonstrated the need for additional mass transit services," he said. "The adoption and implementation of Moving Beyond Congestion will provide funding to address those needs."

Pace board member Vern Squires of Wilmette added: "As is true throughout the six-county area served by Pace, traffic congestion is getting worse and worse while, at the same time, the cost of driving an automobile is increasing. Increased availability of public transit is the only long-term solution."

Workers at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge can already take Pace service to their jobs. Greater transit availability will become a reality for more of north Cook County if the state legislature provides additional transit funding.

Residents interested in supporting Moving Beyond Congestion can visit the [plan's Web site](#) and can [contact their state legislators](#) to register their support.

Pace region suffers nation's highest gas prices

Use of clean, efficient public transit saves more money than ever

Chicago is a city with many distinctions--a [world-renowned orchestra](#), [Millennium Park](#), deep-dish pizza, the world's [largest auto show](#) and the U.S. choice to host the 2016 [Olympic Games](#). But now, yet another distinction can be added to that list: [the highest gas prices in the nation](#). As of Monday, May 21, the cost of regular unleaded gasoline in Chicago was \$3.59. Many commuters in northeastern Illinois are understandably looking for alternative ways to get around.

[Pace](#) has a wealth of transit options that can take people to and from their destinations. With [240 fixed route buses](#) throughout the six-county service area, people can connect to places from [Addison](#) to [Zion](#) and all destinations in between. Not only are all buses wheelchair-accessible (and have been since 2004), but all are equipped with [bicycle racks](#) for those who want to use their bikes this summer to get to and from bus routes. And the price is right—a one-way fare of [\\$1.50](#) means that a round trip on Pace costs less than a single gallon of gas! Seniors and the disabled pay even less.

Those who don't live close to Pace fixed routes can still take advantage of public transit to lower their commuting costs. The [traditional vanpool](#) program enables 5 to 13 people to travel in a Pace van for a low monthly fee, and the [Employer Shuttle](#) program enables companies to utilize vans to transport people the work site to park-and-ride lots, [CTA](#) and [Metra](#) facilities and other places. For those who currently drive to or from Metra stations, an option is the [Metra Feeder](#) program which allows a group of train riders to park a Pace van at a Metra station, either to start their trip or travel the "last mile" from train to work. Those interested in discovering if there is an existing vanpool to join can access Pace's [Vanpool Finder](#).

High gas prices can hit younger people particularly hard. Fortunately, they have a low-cost way of getting around this summer—the [Pace Summer Haul Pass](#). For only \$40, students of high school age and younger can get unlimited rides on Pace buses throughout June, July and August. Additionally, those looking to avoid even higher costs for gas and parking at major events can take advantage of Pace's special events

services to [Cubs games](#), [White Sox games](#) and [Six Flags Great America](#) in Gurnee.

While Pace might be able to attract more riders due to historically high gas prices, the cost of fueling Pace's 650 buses and 600 paratransit vehicles also has a [negative impact on Pace's budget situation](#). At a time when transit agencies in northeastern Illinois are seeking new funding to stave off service cuts or fare increases, these gas prices make [financial support from the General Assembly](#) more crucial than ever.

Pace Factoid

The Pace garage in Des Plaines, Northwest Division, was constructed in 1962.

"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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