

Bus on Shoulders officially permanent; Quinn signs bill



Pace Chairman of the Board Richard Kwasneski addresses the crowd at a bill signing ceremony with Governor Pat Quinn.

Governor Pat Quinn has signed legislation making Pace's Bus on Shoulders program permanent. It also paves the way for shoulder operations on other highways and tollways in the region.

Pace's Bus on Shoulders program launched in 2011 as part of a five year pilot project with support from IDOT, RTA and the Illinois State

Police. It began with Routes 755 and 855, which connect Chicago with the southwest suburbs via Interstate 55, the Stevenson Expressway. The original legislation permitted Pace buses to use select portions of the shoulder during periods of heavy congestion and established guidelines for travel, such as limiting speeds in the shoulder to the lesser of 35mph or 15mph over the speed at which traffic is flowing in the regular travel lanes.

Since that time, combined average daily ridership on the routes has grown by more than 226%, and on-time performance has increased from 68% to a consistent 92-93%. "When we began this project in 2011, we set out to do three things: increase ridership, improve on-time

performance, and operate safely," said Pace Chairman of the Board Richard Kwasneski. "We've achieved all of these benchmarks and are grateful to Governor Quinn, the General Assembly, our project partners IDOT and RTA and our customers for their support throughout the planning and implementation process. Thanks to this legislation, we can take what we have learned on I-55 and bring express bus service to the shoulders of other highways and tollways in the region."

Other highways in the pipeline for program expansion include I-90 and the Elgin-O'Hare Expressway in partnership with the Illinois Tollway, and the Edens, Bishop Ford and Eisenhower expressways and I-57 in collaboration with IDOT.

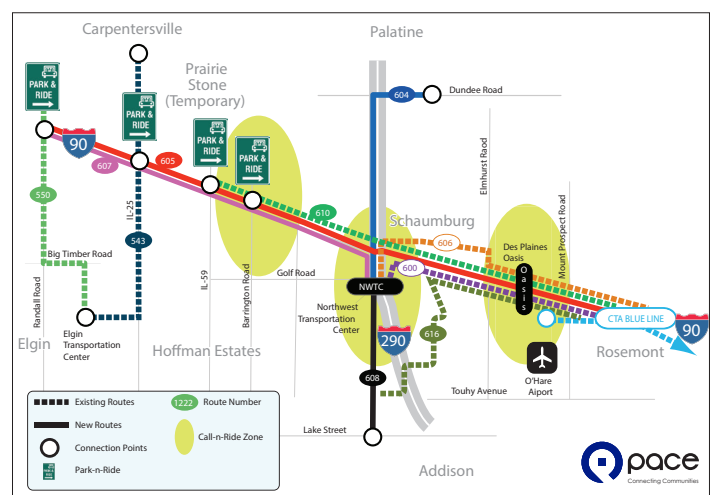
Pace, Tollway team up for I-90 Park-n-Ride facilities

The respective boards of Pace and the Illinois Tollway approved an agreement governing the development of new Park-n-Ride facilities on I-90 in coordination with the Tollway's \$2.5 billion I-90 Rebuilding and Widening Project and Pace's I-90 Market Expansion Project.

The agreement features three new Park-n-Ride facilities at Randall Road, Route 25 and Barrington Road. Initially, 225 vehicles can be accommodated, with

space to expand that to 450. New express bus service to and from areas adjacent to the Park-n-Rides will debut in late 2016, around the time construction finishes on I-90 and the new parking facilities.

The Tollway's I-90 Rebuilding and Widening Project is providing \$240 million to integrate transit in partnership with Pace, as well as future transit expansion plans. When construction is complete, the new I-90 will feature



wider inside lanes and shoulders to handle bus traffic and flexible design to provide dedicated and relia-

ble transit service, as well as the technology to support bus-only lanes if needed in the future.

Pace releases stable 2015 agency budget; no fare increases or service cuts on the horizon

Public comment period opens with budget public hearings set for late October

A preliminary look at Pace's proposed 2015 budget shows another stable year ahead for suburban bus customers and riders on the region's ADA paratransit service with no fare increases or service cuts necessary in order to balance the agency's operating budgets for those services.

The RTA Board formally approved the 2015 budget funding marks for Pace, CTA and Metra at its meeting on September 12, confirming the figures used in Pace's preliminary budget that were presented to the Pace Board of Directors earlier this week.

"We are glad to once again be in a solid financial position and propose an annual budget that does not negatively impact our customers,"

said Pace Board Chairman Richard Kwasneski. "We have worked to maximize efficiency throughout our operations and will potentially benefit from a projected improvement in sales tax funding as the economy continues to improve."

Expenses on the agency's preliminary 2015 Suburban Services (comprised of fixed route bus, vanpool, and non-ADA dial-a-ride services) budget are \$223.2 million, an increase of 7.9% over the 2014 budget driven largely by a full year of service increases implemented this year. The preliminary ADA Paratransit budget for 2015 estimates expenses at \$172.2 million, an increase of 7.0% over 2014 caused by continued ridership growth as the number of

eligible riders continues to rise. Both operating budgets are expected to finish the year under budget.

Pace's 2015 capital budget is estimated at \$68.7 million. Highlights of the capital program include the purchase of 75 fixed route buses and 190 vanpool vans along with infrastructure improvements to support enhanced express bus service.

Budget materials will be available in print and online following the October Pace Board meeting.

Public hearings on the proposed 2015 budget will take place between October 20-30, and details will be posted soon.

Pace reaches out to public for input on transportation needs along 95th Street

Pace, with cooperation from the Southwest Conference of Mayors, has initiated a corridor analysis study of 95th Street from Western Avenue on the east to

LaGrange Road on the west. The primary goal of the project is to develop a plan to improve transportation and economic opportunities along the corridor through

increased transit efficiency and connectivity.

Whether you are a bus/train rider, driver, pedestrian or bicyclist who travels in

this corridor, your opinion will help shape potential transit improvements. Visit PaceBus.com/95thStreet before October 11, 2014, to take the survey.

Back for the 2014 Season – Pace's Soldier Field Express

Now that football in Chicago is officially underway, Pace is happy to once again provide service to take fans from the suburbs to the gridiron! The only defense every Bears fan should think about on game day should be on the field, not on the roads to Soldier Field.

For only \$4.00 per person each way, riders can catch the ultimate touchdown from Schaumburg, Elk Grove, Lombard, Palos Heights, Oak Lawn, Bolingbrook, and Burr Ridge. Free parking is available at each location. For schedule details and other information, please visit PaceBus.com.

New service starting October 2014 – Madison Stadium Express

With the increase in attendance and popularity of Chicago's championship hockey and basketball teams, Pace will launch new service to take fans directly to the United Center. This new service will operate for most events at the stadium on Saturdays and Sundays only. Service will be provided to Blackhawks and Bulls games, as well as concerts and other live family events.

For only \$4.00 per person each way, fans can ride the service from Schaumburg, Buffalo Grove, Bolingbrook and Burr Ridge. Free parking is available at each location. Please visit PaceBus.com for schedule details.