

Rocky Donahue

Executive Director

2020 was a hard year. Pace faced many challenges, and you may have, too. But recent developments leave me feeling good about 2021.

To start, we now have several highly effective vaccines to stop the spread of Covid-19. Many of Pace's front-line workers—people like your bus operator—have already been vaccinated. I'm looking forward to the day I am eligible. When you're eligible, I hope you join me in getting the vaccine.



The federal government is also giving us a hand. A big drop in ridership has affected Pace's budget and necessitated service cuts we never wanted to make. Relief funding from Washington has kept the essential core of our system running, providing a way for medical staff, grocery store workers, and you to get where you need to go. We need more help to get us through the pandemic, but we are hopeful our legislators recognize that and act quickly.

The recent executive order mandating masks on transit also helps. It is now federal law: You must wear a mask when using Pace. I have a fitted mask for extra protection when I ride. Some of my colleagues at Pace wear two masks. However, you do it, masking up keeps our system safe.

We appreciate the riders that have stuck with Pace throughout last year, and we welcome back returning riders. If you're just coming back, you will find dozens of new buses, better service on South Halsted, Paratransit, On Demand technology improvements, and new ways to pay with Ventra. Work on new Pulse lines and expanded facilities has continued throughout the pandemic, so when all this is over, our system will be better than ever. You can learn about all this and more at our website (also newly improved), PaceBus.com.

Sincerely,



Why should you get vaccinated?

Building defenses against COVID-19 is a team effort. And you are a key part of that defense.

Protect yourself, your coworkers, your family and your community. Help end the global pandemic. COVID-19 vaccination will help reduce spread. **It all starts with you!**



You Must Wear A Mask on Pace Buses and at Pace Facilities—It's the Law!

The TSA issued a security directive effective February 1, 2021. This directive was issued to implement the requirements of an executive order issued on January 21, 2021, and to enforce the requirements of a CDC order mandating masks.

The TSA's new security directive states that you must wear a mask over the mouth and nose when boarding, alighting, or traveling on a bus and when at a transportation center. Children under the age of 2 and people with disabilities who cannot wear a mask are exempted.

All Pace riders are required to wear masks while on buses and at Pace facilities. Failure to comply may result in denial of boarding or removal from the vehicle.



The safety of our passengers and personnel is our top priority

Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pace has implemented the following protocols to keep our drivers and riders safe while onboard:

- Deep clean and sanitize vehicles daily.
- Clean high-touch surfaces throughout the day.
- Provide riders with hand sanitizer.
- Provide operators with PPE and thermometers for taking their temperature before reporting to work.
- Separate operators from passengers using temporary and permanent barriers.
- Limit the number of people on each vehicle, with a goal of one rider per ADA Paratransit vehicle and up to 15 riders per fixed route bus.
- Temporarily waive TAP fares.

What do you think?

Pace works hard to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for our customers. Let us know if you have any questions or comments to help us make your ride more enjoyable.

FAIR TRANSIT SOUTH COOK

Partnership with Cook County Launches Fair Transit South Cook

The new year brought a new pilot project to our region! The Fair Transit South Cook County Pilot was launched on January 4, 2021, by the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (CCDOH), Pace, and Metra to improve transit service options, lower costs and spur economic growth with improved access to a rich workforce.

Phase 1 of the three-year pilot project includes reduced Metra fares on the Metra Electric and Rock Island lines and more frequent service on Pace's busiest route, Route 352 Halsted. Pre-pandemic, Route 352 Halsted provided nearly 7,000 trips per day and the service continued to be heavily used throughout 2020. It connects Pace's busiest transportation center in Harvey with the CTA's 95th Street Red Line station. In addition to the expansion of service being tested in the pilot, Pace plans to make South Halsted Street one of the next Pulse rapid transit lines.



Progress on Pulse Dempster Line

After a full year of success on the Pulse Milwaukee Line, Pace staff continues to make progress on what will be the second Pulse line to open—the Dempster Line.

Pace initiated the planning phase several years ago and met with agencies and local municipalities to develop initial design concepts and preliminary station locations. A Dempster Line Project Definition Report was developed and outlines preliminary service and operating plans and project cost estimates. Coordination continued during the environmental analysis and advanced conceptual design, which was completed in February 2018.

The project is currently in the final design phase, and though subject to change, construction is anticipated to begin in 2021.

In 2017, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning approved a \$10 million grant for construction of the Dempster Line. That construction grant is funded through the Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) 2018-2022 program.

Progress Continues on Priority Capital Projects

In 2020, Pace partnered with **Orland Square Mall** to build a new passenger boarding facility on mall property. It provides a more comfortable waiting area for riders and better access for dozens of buses offering transit service to the busiest mall in south Cook County.

The engineering has been completed on an expanded **South Division campus**. A new bus acceptance facility and customer relations office will be constructed next to Pace's South Division garage in Markham. This new facility will be Pace's largest and will be a major investment in workforce development in a historically underserved part of the region.

In downtown Joliet, adjacent to the newly reconstructed Union Station, Pace and the City are constructing a bus transit center to be part of **Joliet's Multi-Modal Facility**. Funding from Rebuild Illinois, the state's capital program and an inter-governmental agreement between Pace and the City of Joliet make this exciting project possible.

The **Harvey Transportation Center** is more than 20 years old and due for an overhaul. Pace is partnering with Metra and the City of Harvey to better integrate the bus and train facilities at this location to provide a more seamless experience for passengers. Wayfinding and bus tracker signage has already been installed. The infrastructure will be enhanced in the coming years to connect bus and rail service.

Pace will spend \$20 million over the next five years to **modernize the communication technology and infrastructure used by ADA Paratransit riders and administrators**. Improvements to real-time information systems are already close to implementation, with Trapeze upgrades and Ventra integration coming along on schedule. Thanks to the state legislators who made this funding possible.

Ventra Card is now on iPhone and Apple watch!



Add your Ventra Card to iPhone or Apple Watch to pay for CTA and Pace rides using transit value or passes. Just tap and go—no need to carry a separate transit card, open apps, or even wake the device. To learn more, visit Ventrachicago.com.

Transit Driver Appreciation Day is March 18! Don't forget to thank our HEROES MOVING HEROES!

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