



FEBRUARY 2022

# ONBOARD

with  pace Suburban Bus

**Melinda J. Metzger**  
*Interim Executive Director*

## Looking Towards a Bright Future



Sincerely,  
Melinda J. Metzger

After leading Pace’s operations since the agency’s inception almost four decades ago, I thought I’d seen it all. The past two years proved me wrong. The challenges we’ve faced were unprecedented, but thanks to our dedicated team we continued to safely provide essential transportation to those who count on Pace while continuing to modernize our service to ensure we meet our passengers’ needs today and in the coming years.

As we close 2021, it is a time for transition in several ways. The growth in ridership we’ve seen in the last half of the year should only continue on an upward trend as more companies bring back employees to offices, more residents get vaccinated against COVID-19, and community events get back on the calendar. We are reimagining service by thinking “outside the bus.” In 2022, we will explore alternative services where traditional buses may not be the best solution. We will continue to integrate

new technology to improve our passenger experience, especially for our riders with disabilities. We will begin acting on our new strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*. In everything we do, we will continue to prioritize safety and service.

Pace has also undergone a leadership transition. Rocky Donahue retired as Pace’s Executive Director on December 31, 2021.

In November, the Pace Board of Directors named me as Pace’s interim Executive Director, and I assumed that role on January 1, 2022. This appointment is an honor and a privilege. I’ve spent my entire career serving the people of our region and embrace the opportunity to lead the agency as we reimagine our service to support our region’s recovery and adapt to the new needs of those who rely on Pace. We are confident that the worst is behind us, and that we have nowhere to go but up.



847-364-PACE  
PaceBus.com



We’re Driven For You



## Thank You For Riding!

Please also take a moment to thank your bus driver for their dedication to getting you safely to your destination.

## Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Brings the Largest Federal Investment in Public Transit in History

On November 6, 2021, Congress passed the bipartisan infrastructure law called the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*. In total, the law provides \$89.9 billion in guaranteed funding for public transit over the next five years — the largest Federal investment in public transit in our country's history. The legislation will expand public transit options across every state in the country, replace thousands of aging transit buses with clean, zero-emission vehicles, and improve accessibility for the elderly and people with disabilities.

The RTA region is expected to receive more than \$3.5 billion. Pace has numerous capital infrastructure projects in the pipeline that this investment will accelerate, including the transition

to a zero-emission fleet, new Pulse rapid transit lines along 95th Street and Halsted Street, and technology enhancements for fixed route and ADA Paratransit services. The transportation landscape is changing, and our capital infrastructure program will power Pace as we reimagine our transit system to meet the new needs of our region and bring people back to public transportation.

This opportunity will help Pace provide a truly equitable, efficient and environmentally sound transit system. We are grateful to our representatives in Congress, all of whom voted in favor of the bill.

## Pace Begins Journey to Zero Emissions

Public transportation is actively engaged in emissions reductions and environmental stewardship. According to APTA, the “leverage effect” of public transportation reduces the nation's carbon emissions by 37 million metric tons annually — equivalent to the electricity used by 4.9 million households.

Every time a Pace bus picks someone up, we are taking a car off the road. Every time we take a car off the road, we reduce pollution. The average bus trip produces 33% fewer emissions per passenger mile than a comparable car trip; at rush hour, the savings increase to 82% with a full bus.

In 2021, a major achievement for our agency and our region was the publication of our new strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*, which included a commitment to a zero-emission bus

fleet by 2040. As our state and nation prioritize climate stewardship, we look forward to working with government officials to secure the infrastructure funding to make this plan a reality.

In 2022, Pace will begin electric vehicle demonstrations and invest \$10 million in an electric bus pilot in Waukegan, which includes the conversion of Pace North Division to an electric charging station and the purchase of at least six electric buses. Pace has also applied for a federal grant that could provide additional funding for electric buses.

These efforts will ensure Pace's transition to zero-emissions is done thoughtfully, without service disruptions, all while remaining a good steward of the taxpayer dollar. Learn more about Pace's future plans in the agency's new strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*.



## How to Ride Safe During the Winter Months

Using public transportation during the winter months can be stress-free with a little preparation. Pace's safe and reliable service connects you with where you need to go, but inclement weather can add challenges, including longer trip and wait times. With that in mind, please consider these helpful tips when traveling with us.

### Avoid Unnecessary Travel

During extreme cold or inclement weather, avoid travel unless you must make an essential trip. If you use ADA Paratransit service, use TripCheck to cancel your reservation as soon as possible if you decide not to travel.

### Plan Extra Time for Your Commute

It is always a good idea to allow extra time for your commute, especially during heavy snow and ice. Expect delays as buses may fall behind schedule due to the weather and its effects on traffic and road conditions.

### Plan Ahead

Make sure to confirm that your destination is open to avoid making unnecessary trips.

### Be Cautious When Waiting for the Bus

While waiting for your bus to arrive, please wait where you are safe from traffic and where the bus driver can see you. Avoid standing too close to the curb as it is always dangerous, but even more so during inclement weather. DO NOT stand in the street and avoid stepping on ice.

### Remember to Dress Warm

What you wear can make a difference on how the cold weather affects you. We recommend you dress in layers. Watch the local news to stay up to date with the weather forecast.

### When the Bus Arrives

Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before boarding. Melting snow and ice can make the floors in the bus slippery. Please hold on to handrails when boarding and exiting the bus.

### Stay Informed

Please sign up for text or email alerts about the route(s) you ride at PaceBus.com to stay informed of service changes or important news. Also, follow us on social media for up-to-date information.

### COVID-19 Safety Protocols

- Pace recommends you get vaccinated.
- Always wear a mask onboard buses and at Pace facilities.
- Please stay home if you are sick.
- Wash and/or sanitize your hands frequently.







## Pace Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary of Bus on Shoulder

On November 15, 2021, Pace celebrated the 10-year anniversary of its bus on shoulder service. Since state law was changed in November 2011, which gave permission to Pace buses to bypass stalled traffic on the shoulder of I-55, more than 4 million trips have been provided on the I-55 express routes and ridership grew 600% in the first seven years since the operational change was implemented.

The phenomenal success of the I-55 bus on shoulder service led to the creation of the “flex lane” on I-90, which similarly allows Pace buses

to bypass slow traffic in a bus-only lane in the northwest suburbs, as well as a bus-only shoulder on I-94/Edens Expressway on the north shore. An additional flex lane is in the works as part of the ongoing reconstruction of I-294/Tri-State Tollway.

To celebrate, we curated a Spotify playlist of songs that capture the feeling of flying past traffic. But we don’t want to jam alone. Submit a song suggestion on Facebook or Twitter using #RockingTheShoulder for a chance to have it featured on our Traffic Jams playlist. Using the hashtag gives Pace permission to share your entry and tag you on its own social media channels.

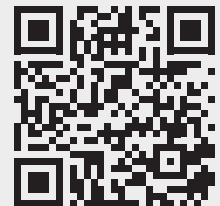
Even with a perfect playlist for driving the fast lane, we felt something was missing. So, we partnered with a local artist to create an original song, “Rocking The Shoulder,” to celebrate decades more of Bus on Shoulder and other service innovations to support mobility.



Hear the song and submit your own playlist suggestions:  
[www.pacebus.com/traffic-jams](http://www.pacebus.com/traffic-jams)

## RTA Wants Your Feedback!

Public transit is essential to our region’s economic, environmental and social health. It is a core part of any regional equity, mobility or accessibility solution. The pandemic highlighted both the importance of transit and long-standing challenges that must be addressed. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is developing the next Regional Transit Strategic Plan for northeastern Illinois, and they need your help.



## 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.

847-364-PACE  
[PaceBus.com](http://PaceBus.com)



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