



WINTER 2023-24

# ONBOARD

with  pace Suburban Bus



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

## Building upon Pace's successes

From innovative new services to our zero-emissions commitment, Pace accomplished great things in 2023. As we welcome a new year, we are working to achieve so much more in 2024.

Pace's 2024 budget includes free fares for ADA paratransit riders on fixed-route buses and dedicates resources to improve frequency and add trips in high-demand areas. Our ReVision project will examine Pace's entire network, identifying ways to better serve our communities.

We will start construction on a new transit hub in Harvey and an ADA paratransit

transfer center in Calumet City. We will strengthen regional connections through expanded On Demand service, additional partnerships with rideshare companies, and planning for three new Pulse lines.

And we can't wait to receive nearly two dozen zero-emission buses in 2024 as part of our Project Zero commitment to sustainability. As you can read in this newsletter, Pace is positioned well for another year of serving our riders with excellence.



**Richard A. Kwasneski**  
*Chairman*

## Delivering improvements for our customers

Pace strives to provide our passengers with safe, affordable, and efficient transit options. In 2023, Pace advanced these goals through infrastructure and service investments. We received our first electric-powered bus and added charging equipment at our Southwest and Heritage divisions. We continued growing our family of services through the new Pace Connect rideshare program and the Pace VanGo vanpool program.

Our second-ever rapid transit line, Pulse Dempster, started service. We expanded On Demand service in western Lake County and the Naperville-Aurora area. Our passengers now can access more of our

services on the Transit trip planning app. We also broke ground on projects aimed at modernizing facilities and improving passenger amenities. This included the start of construction on a new transfer facility at the Northwest Transportation Center in Schaumburg. And we emphasized creative recruitment efforts to ensure our staff of bus operators can continue delivering quality service.

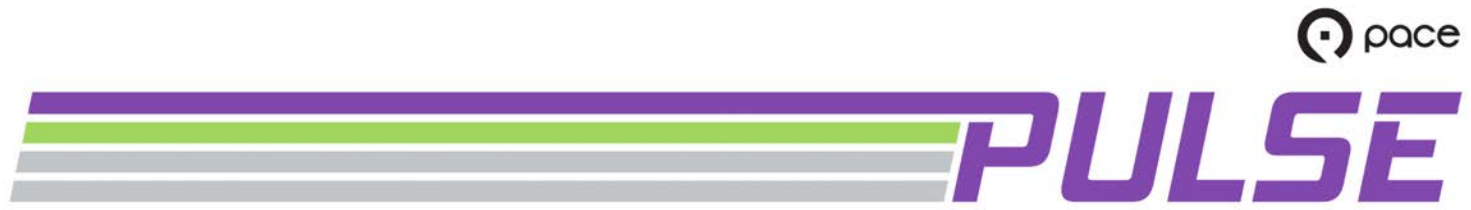
These are just a few examples of the many successes Pace experienced in 2023. We look forward to even more accomplishments that can deliver the safe and efficient service our riders deserve.



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## Pace Celebrates Pulse Dempster Daily Service Launch

*State, county, and local officials join Pace to commemorate launch of second Pulse line featuring 50-minute trips between Evanston and O'Hare*



L-R: Pace Director Chris Canning; Pace Director David Guerin; Cook County Commissioner Josina Morita; Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen; Cook County Commissioner Maggie Trevor; Pace Chairman Rick Kwasneski; Pace Executive Director Melinda Metzger; Senator Ram Villivalam; Pace Director Linda Soto; Representative Michelle Mussman.

Recently Pace welcomed state, county, and local leaders to celebrate the launch of the newest addition to Pace's growing rapid transit network, the Pulse Dempster Line, which offers passengers a fast and reliable service. The service began daily operations on Sunday, October 29, 2023.

Pulse provides premium bus service with limited stops, modern stations, and frequent service. **Pulse Dempster's purple-branded buses will run every 15 to 20 minutes**, ensuring riders along Dempster Street in the northern suburbs reach destinations from Evanston to O'Hare International Airport more quickly.

Thanks to cutting-edge Transit Signal Priority (TSP) technology that leverages traffic signal timing adjustments with no impact to general traffic flow, buses navigate through congestion more efficiently to stay on schedule and reduce travel times for commuters. Pulse Dempster buses communicate directly with traffic control to minimize red lights and lengthen green lights every day.

Pulse Dempster buses come equipped with modern amenities for passengers on board, including free Wi-Fi service, as well as easy-to-find branded stations with heated shelters and real-time bus tracker information. Pulse Dempster also improves ADA accessibility, featuring raised bus platforms at all stations that conveniently melt ice and snow during inclement weather.

New and returning riders can look out for Pulse stations and temporary stops with Pulse signs while construction continues on the new line. Visit [PaceBus.com/Pulse](https://PaceBus.com/Pulse) for updates, schedules, and exciting developments.

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## ReVision is Pace's Network Revitalization & Service Restructuring Plan

Pace is soon launching ReVision—an initiative that will reimagine our entire bus route network, with the goal of making all of Pace's transportation options work most effectively for current and future riders. Pace's strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*, specifically mentions the need for implementing and innovating fixed-route transit in the highest demand markets, while exploring the potential to harness

technology and new or enhanced mobility solutions to provide more effective coverage services in lower-demand areas.

**We'll need to hear from you! Stay up-to-date! Sign up for email/text alerts about the project. Visit: [PaceBus.com/ReVision](https://PaceBus.com/ReVision).**



## Pace On Demand is now integrated in the Transit app

*Pace On Demand app now available and On Demand trips are now shown in the Transit app's trip plans*

As of November 8, Pace On Demand service was integrated into the Transit app. Now, when you use the Transit app to plan a trip with an origin or destination inside one of the ten On Demand zones, you will see Pace On Demand service as one of your transit options. On Demand customers are now able to book rides via our new Pace On Demand app in addition to booking online or by calling. Visit [PaceBus.com/OnDemand](https://PaceBus.com/OnDemand) for details.

**Download both the Transit and On Demand apps today!**



## Pace's Round Lake Area On Demand Service Expansion

As of August 28, the Round Lake Area On Demand service has a new, larger service area! The expansion doubles the size of the current service zone in northwestern Lake County to include portions of Fox Lake, Long Lake, Ingleside, and Round Lake Heights.

The new zone is enhancing the area's overall transit network by providing new connections with Pace Routes 570 and 806 and with Metra's MD-North and NCS lines. Visit [PaceBus.com/OnDemand](https://PaceBus.com/OnDemand) to learn more.



## Pace's VanGo service is now in Itasca

VanGo is a reservation-based service, in which drivers/riders reserve a van for the next business day. This new pilot program provides a first-mile/last-mile transit option for commuters traveling round-trip from either the Lake-Cook Metra Station (in Deerfield), the Lake Forest (UP-N) Metra station, Palatine (UP-NW) Metra station and now also from the Itasca Metra station and CTA Blue Line Rosemont station to nearby work locations. Learn more at: [PaceBus.com/vango](https://PaceBus.com/vango).





## New Pace Connect Service Offers Late-Night Rides



*Third shift workers now have an easier way to get home*

Earlier in the Summer, Pace and local officials celebrated the launch of Pace Connect, a new transit service designed to provide a “first and last mile” transit option during late night hours in two designated zones. The service, which is funded in part thanks to grants received from RTA and Cook County, provides crucial transportation connections geared towards third shift workers.

Pace Connect is a new late-night ride hailing service near O’Hare Airport and Harvey Area. For only \$2 or less per trip, anyone can take a ride within a designated zone to accommodate first/last mile transportation needs during times when fixed route public transportation isn’t readily available.

Pace Connect, powered by Via, is open to the general public. All rides need to be individually reserved and can be booked via the Pace Connect app or by phone at a moment’s notice. The service easily connects you with nearby transit stations, your work, or your home.

Visit the Pace Connect page for more information, including maps of the zones and daily hours of service: [PaceBus.com/connect](https://PaceBus.com/connect).

## Pace’s Budget Update

The Pace Board of Directors has now approved the agency’s 2024 Operating Budget, 2025-2026 Two-Year Financial Plan, and 2024-2028 Five-Year Capital Program. Thank you to those who offered input at the public hearings in October.

**Pace’s 2024 budget is balanced, with no fare increases or service reductions for Suburban Service or Regional ADA Paratransit. As a result, in 2024, Pace will offer FREE fares on the Pace fixed-route bus system to ADA-certified customers with a valid RTA ADA Paratransit Permit ID Card.**

Also included in the budget are resources to improve frequency and add trips where there is demand as well as an additional 15% subsidy to provide continued support to dial-a-ride.

## Project Update



### Northwest Transportation Center

A new ADA Paratransit Transfer Facility is being built at our Northwest Transportation Center in Schaumburg. A groundbreaking ceremony was held over the Summer with construction work continuing into the winter, weather permitting. We apologize for any disruptions to operations and customers as construction continues. We are looking forward to having a beautiful new ADA Paratransit facility with upgraded indoor waiting area once all the work is complete!

## 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**

Submit comments online at Pace’s self-service feedback center at [PaceBus.com/contact](https://PaceBus.com/contact).

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Melinda J. Metzger, Executive Director

