

FALL 2024

ONBOARD



Melinda J. Metzger
Executive Director



Richard A. Kwasneski
Chairman



Throughout 2024, Pace has continued delivering on its commitment to accessible public transportation for all. Early this year, we enhanced mobility options for riders with disabilities by allowing certified ADA Paratransit passengers to ride any Pace fixed route for free. We also launched the Rideshare Access Program (RAP), which subsidizes rides for ADA Paratransit-certified passengers using Uber and UZURV—offering a flexible, convenient transit option.

Pace’s newest rapid transit line, Pulse Dempster, has been met with great enthusiasm, and work continues on Pulse Cermak, Halsted, and 95th Street lines. Additionally, our recommended trip-planning app, Transit, has become a one-stop mobile resource which includes more Pace services and up-to-date information on departures, bus tracking, and service alerts.

These successes highlight how much work Pace has done to strengthen our system. But our work is far from done. Throughout our 40-year history, we have shown that we can meet challenges responsibly and innovatively. We will continue advocating for the investments necessary to deliver solutions that meet our riders’ evolving needs.

As we look ahead, we invite you to share feedback on the transit improvements you’d like to see. Pace’s network revitalization initiative, ReVision, needs your input to shape the future of public transit in northeastern Illinois. See the next page for details.

Pace celebrated its 40th anniversary this summer, and we couldn’t have reached this milestone without you, our passengers. Pace is honored to provide the safe and affordable transportation our region relies on, and we are incredibly grateful to the passengers who have joined us on this journey.

Since our inception in 1984, Pace has evolved from a growing bus network to a mobility leader, offering a family of services and leveraging technology to meet the ever-changing needs of the communities we serve. We’ve had much to celebrate this summer, including the unveiling of our first electric paratransit vehicle, a ribbon cutting with Governor JB Pritzker on our new South Campus Office Building in Markham, and the reinstatement of many trips on our popular Bus on Shoulder Express service.

Throughout our 40-year history, we have strived to deliver exemplary service to help you reach your destinations safely and efficiently. Your support has been vital to our success, and we are committed to continuing to provide the essential transit service you rely on while building the world-class transportation system our region deserves. Here’s to the next 40 years!



Pace's Network Revitalization Plan Update



What is the Pace ReVision plan?

ReVision is an opportunity to rethink Pace's entire network of services, building on the principles of accessibility, equity and productivity defined in the *Driving Innovation* strategic plan.

ReVision kicked off at the end of 2023 and it is now in its initial stage, currently conducting interviews with transit professionals from both internal and external sources, as well as local government officials, to gather their expectations and ideas. Most recently, on April 22 and 23, Pace hosted two public workshops at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills and at Harper College in Palatine to gather feedback from our regional stakeholders and hear their ideas on how to improve public transportation service.

Over the coming months, public engagement will kick off through online posts and public advertisements to encourage participation in surveys and other channels for sending suggestions.

ReVision is a two-year project to develop proposals for a reimagined Pace bus and demand-response network that will help guide service changes in the years ahead. We're looking forward to hosting more public engagement opportunities in the future.

This project aims to reassess and redefine the locations and frequencies of Pace routes, as well as the suitability of various transit services in different regions of Chicago. ReVision will merge a thorough technical analysis with an ongoing regional dialogue reflecting the values and priorities that stakeholders, riders, and the public desire the network to embody.

Reshaped suburban transit services will reflect improvements through the Pace ReVision Network Revitalization effort. The process will incorporate crucial public ideas depending upon participation and valuable input. Pace encourages ideas and suggestions which you can share with us at revision@pacebus.com.

To learn more about ReVision, visit: PaceBus.com/ReVision.



Ride Kind Campaign begins

Our new Ride Kind marketing campaign launched in May! The campaign highlights our operators by showcasing each driver's personality and the value each one provides to the communities we serve. Keep an eye out for the photos of our operators on our buses and bus shelters, as well as online! These ads are a nice reminder to treat your driver courteously. They too are a part of your community.



Pace Awarded Community Project Funding



Pace is grateful for the tremendous support we received from the Illinois congressional delegation in the FY24 federal budget. Five Members of Congress submitted on Pace's behalf Community Project Funding grants. That funding will go towards improving services for Pace riders throughout the six-county region. For instance, the transit signal priority (TSP) grants allow Pace buses to shorten red lights or lengthen green lights to keep buses on schedule and helps Pace deliver on its promise of fast and frequent bus service in high-ridership corridors.

The five Community Project Funding awards are:

- Congressman Jonathan Jackson (District 1)—\$840,000 to implement TSP technology along portions of Western Avenue serving Dixmoor, Blue Island, and Evergreen Park in Cook County.
- Congresswoman Delia Ramirez (District 3)—\$840,000 to implement TSP technology along Harlem Avenue in western Cook County.
- Congressman Brad Schneider (District 10)—\$840,000 to implement TSP technology at certain intersections along Washington Street in Waukegan.
- Congressman Bill Foster (District 11) — \$1 million to purchase five battery-electric paratransit vehicles for McHenry County.
- Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (District 14)—\$826,779 to purchase a battery-electric bus for I-55 express service.

We cannot thank all our local representatives enough for their support and continued investment in Pace.

Zero Emissions facility plan finalized



As part of our ongoing effort to transition to a zero-emissions fleet by 2040, we've had to examine our existing facilities and assess what improvements are needed to ensure our buildings can support battery electric vehicles.

Our newly finalized Zero Emissions Bus Facility Plan highlights the crucial modifications, improvements, and funding needed for us to reach our Project Zero goal. The work is just beginning. The facility plan is a living document that will be constantly evaluated as our transition develops and new vehicle technology advances.



STAY INFORMED

Passengers are encouraged to sign up for text or email alerts at PaceBus.com. Also, follow us on social media for up-to-date information.



Pulse Dempster and team honored in Des Plaines



The Des Plaines Chamber of Commerce and Industry awarded Pace its Community Enhancement Award for our work related to the Pulse Dempster line. The downtown Des Plaines station provides an example of all the Dempster Line's amenities, which will be fully available to riders once construction is complete.

While station construction is ongoing, the Pulse ridership has increased. Our most recent data shows the average weekday ridership on the Dempster Corridor is up 26.1%. That increase in ridership is above the general increase in ridership that happened on overall Pace fixed route service during the same time period. More than 60% of the riders on the Dempster Corridor are riding Pulse buses.

During their annual awards ceremony on March 7th, the chamber recognized Pace for incorporating the community's expression in the new Pulse stations and customizing the stations to fit the needs of Des Plaines riders. They noted how all the Pulse stations in Des Plaines are designed in a way that enhances the streetscape and beautifies corridors and intersections.

It was truly an honor to be recognized by the Des Plaines community. The award reflects the hard work of our staff who launched Pulse Dempster in a thoughtful and thorough manner. This new service could not have happened without the dedication of all our staff!

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://www.pacebus.com/contact).



PACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Celebrating 40 Years!



Illinois House of Representatives Honors Pace's 40th Anniversary

On May 22, 2024, the Illinois House of Representatives unanimously approved a resolution which honored Pace's 40th anniversary. House Resolution 816 was sponsored by Representative Rita Mayfield of Waukegan, who chairs the House's Appropriations-Public Safety Committee.

"On behalf of the whole Pace team, we thank Chair Mayfield and the Illinois House for acknowledging how far we've come in the past 40 years," said Executive Director Melinda Metzger. "It's an honor to have those critical stakeholders recognize the value we bring to commuters and businesses throughout the six-county region."

The resolution mentions a number of Pace success stories from the past four decades, including the assumption of responsibility for operating ADA Paratransit services in Chicago as well as the suburbs after a change in State law in 2005, the I-55 Bus-on-Shoulder service that began in 2011, and the Pulse rapid transit program which began in 2019.

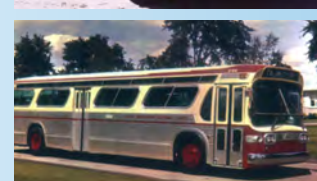
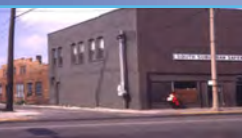
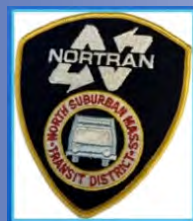
The resolution continues: "Pace has proven to be a consistent reformer, ensuring its services meet the needs of the commuting public...and amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the suburban transit provider

especially demonstrated both how essential it was to transit-dependent commuters in northeastern Illinois and how compassionate its leadership was while navigating the evolving crisis to ensure public health and safety."

The resolution closes by looking to the future of transit in suburban Chicagoland: "we congratulate Pace, its Board of Directors, and its employees on providing 40 years of safe, equitable, efficient, and environmentally responsible transportation in the six-county region of northeastern Illinois, and we wish the suburban transit provider continued success in the decades ahead."



(L-R) Pace Executive Director Melinda Metzger, Illinois State Representative Rita Mayfield, and Pace Chairman Rick Kwasneski pose with a copy of House Resolution 816, which was passed by the Illinois General Assembly on May 22, 2024, to honor Pace's 40 Year anniversary.



Celebrating Pace's 40 Years of History



Our journey began in 1984 when we took control of four properties that were operated by the privately owned American Transit Enterprise under contract with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). Those properties would soon become home to Pace's West, North, South, and Southwest Divisions. We would go on to inherit two mass transit districts that would eventually become our Heritage and Northwest Divisions, as well as three city transit agencies that would become our Fox Valley, River, and North Shore Divisions.

In our early history, we focused heavily on replacing aging buses with new equipment and aging facilities with modernized ones. We relocated our Headquarters from Marina City in Chicago to suburban Arlington Heights, built out our Park-n-Ride facilities, and opened our regional transportation hubs in Harvey and Schaumburg. Project by project, we established Pace's presence throughout the six expansive and diverse counties we still serve today.

By the 1990s, we turned our focus on strengthening our family of services. We launched our Vanpool Program

and then worked to develop it into one of the largest Vanpool programs in the country. We operated ADA Paratransit service in the suburbs and took over paratransit service in the City of Chicago in 2006, making Pace the sole provider of ADA paratransit service for the region. We now have one of the largest programs in the country.

Pace's vision for the future

Now well into the 21st Century, we've remained focused on delivering premier suburban transit service that can serve generations to come. In 2011, we gained a competitive advantage over cars on the Stevenson Expressway when a change to state law allowed our buses to start using bus-on-shoulder service. To this day, we are the only agency in the state who can use expressway shoulders for transit service. The success of that pilot program has allowed us to expand bus-on-shoulder service along the Edens and I-90, as well as hopefully on I-294 in the future.

We've seen additional service enhancements since then. In 2019, we launched our first-ever rapid

transit line — Pulse Milwaukee — which allowed us to tap into Transit Signal Priority technology to extend green lights and shorten red lights to deliver efficient and timely bus service for our riders. We've since followed up that success with Pulse Dempster, which launched last year. Our riders have gravitated to both Pulse lines, reinforcing that when we build rapid bus service, riders will choose it time and time again.

And we aren't done. We are well underway with our Project Zero transition to a zero-emissions fleet with our first battery-electric bus going into service this past January. We've launched new service innovations in recent months with the implementation of our Ride-share Access Program and VanGo services, as well as our ongoing expansions of our On Demand service.

Historic capital funding is helping modernize our facilities and transportation centers like never before. And we continue to see strong post-pandemic ridership gains. Pace is excited for the tremendous momentum leading us into the next 40 years!

40 Years of Memories

Long-time Pace Staff Reflect on the Past Four Decades

What led you to stay with one organization for this long?

"For me, among many other less significant reasons, there have been two major paradigms. The first was the management team that I met and began with and those who I've subsequently have had the absolute privilege to work an entire career and my lifetime with. Incredible commitment, intelligence, loyalty, faith in humanity, and worth every minute and effort that I have. The second is the fact I fell in love with the industry of Public Transportation. We are pouring ourselves out to a service that really matters to other people. Many of the customers we serve would not be able to have the mobility they need to lead a productive and hopefully happy life. I believe in that call to service. That is our mission, one that I value very highly."

-Brett Burkhardt, North Regional Manager

What are your memories from the summer of 1984, as Pace was just getting underway?

"I remember working in the original dispatch office. Everything was calculated/reconciled by hand and was time consuming. Pace quickly brought in computers and streamlined the way the office operated."

-Darlene Portillo, Driver, Dispatcher Supervisor, Safety Training Manager and Division Manager

What led you to stay with one organization for this long?

"I had the chances to go to other places, but I was content and enjoy my work. I could walk to work from my home. I know many of my passengers and enjoy being on the route with my passengers. I have freedom!"

- Charles Parrish, Bus Operator, Line Instructor for about 25 years

What are your memories from the summer of 1984, as Pace was just getting underway?

"What a joy and relief to be a part of a new well-organized and winning team organization."

-Pixley Hodges, Bus Operator, Line Instructor and Million Miler



1984

Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transit Authority established.



1985

"Pace" brand name adopted at March 6th meeting of Board of Directors.



1990

Lift-equipped buses introduced.



1991

Vanpool Incentive Program established.



1993

ADA Paratransit complementary to regional fixed routes implemented.



1999

PaceBus.com launched.



2002

Entire fixed route fleet converted to ADA accessible vehicles.



2005

Legislation gives Pace responsibility for ADA Paratransit Service throughout the region.



2006

Ride DuPage Coordinated ADA Paratransit Service implemented.



2008

First Call-n-Ride introduced in West Joliet.



2009

Pace opens new headquarters building.



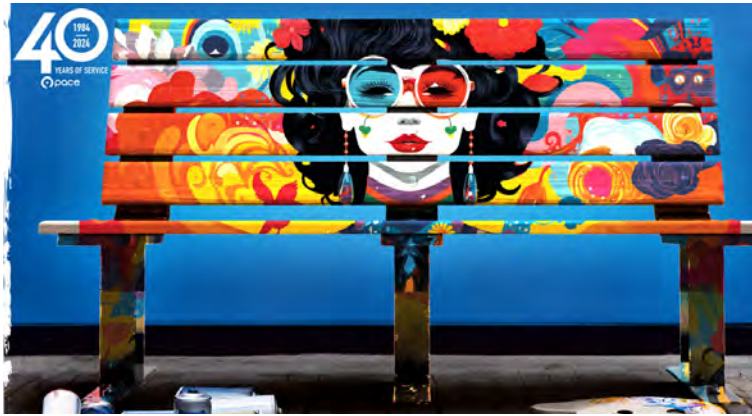
2011

Bus-on-Shoulder launched on the Stevenson Expressway (I-55).

40th Anniversary Activities

Making Your Art Bring People to a Stop

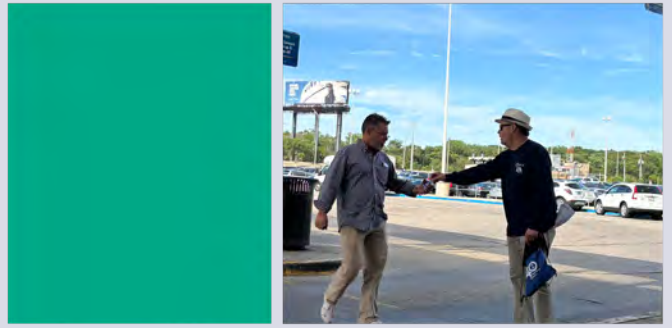
To celebrate our 40th year anniversary of providing public transportation to Chicagoland riders, we have enlisted artists within the six counties to create works of art on 40 benches for use at Pace bus stops. You'll have the chance to see some of their creations later this fall as you wait for your Pace bus. If you're interested in decorating a bench, visit [PaceBus.com/40benches](https://www.pacebus.com/40benches).



Look out for Pace's transit ambassador team, out on buses this summer, as we thank our riders with 40th anniversary-branded items.



Activate Joliet was a free community event on August 3, 2024 funded by a Station Activation Award from the RTA.



To celebrate Pace's anniversary Pace's Transit Ambassadors greeted and thanked our riders and distributed bottles of water at several transit centers on several occasions in July.



To mark the special occasion, we also added 40th year anniversary bus decals on our fleet.

