

ONBOARD

with  **pace** Suburban Bus

Our improvements for riders have only just begun!

2025 was a year of transformation for Pace — a story shaped by the people who ride with us, advocate for us, and believe in the power of public transit. Together, we secured the sustainable funding needed to protect and grow our system for decades to come.

At the heart of this story is investment. We invested in our riders, our workforce, and the future of suburban transit. Each step forward was guided by Pace's commitment to safety, service, infrastructure, and technology.

For riders, this meant more reliable buses, expanded On Demand and VanGo options, and stronger ADA Paratransit and Dial-a-Ride programs that ensure everyone can reach jobs, classes, healthcare, and opportunity. For our communities, it meant modernized ADA transfer points, new electric vehicle charging stations, and infrastructure designed to last. And for the future, it meant harnessing technology to move buses faster, improve air quality, keep schedules on track, and give riders the realtime information they need.

This is more than transit. It's connection, opportunity, and progress. Thanks to your dedication and loyalty, Pace enters the next chapter ready to grow with the suburbs and continue delivering safe, reliable, and accessible service for all.



Melinda J. Metzger
Executive Director

Richard A. Kwasneski
Chairman



2026 means more investment with impact

Thanks to the dedication of the Illinois General Assembly, our staff, and the riding public, Pace is proud to present a good-news 2026 budget filled with exciting initiatives. New funding from the legislature means no service cuts, fare increases, or layoffs, and allows us to focus on improving frequency and convenience.

With sustainable funding secured, 2026 marks the shift from planning to delivering our *ReVision* plan — an ambitious effort to reimagine the Pace network for modern travel needs. Riders will feel the difference as we grow service to meet changing demands, starting with a 10 percent increase in fixed-route service across the suburbs by year's end. This growth will bring more frequent buses, stronger weekend coverage, and better connections to jobs, schools, and healthcare.

We will also expand On Demand service hours to better match shift work, retail schedules, and late-evening travel, while ADA Paratransit, Rideshare Access, and Taxi Access riders will see improved scheduling and reduced wait times. Express service for special events will return, and we will continue expanding our Pulse rapid transit network and Bus-on-Shoulder operations.



NEW STATE LAW PROVIDES NEW TRANSIT FUNDING AND REFORM OF RTA SYSTEM

A state law enacted by Governor Pritzker on December 16 marked the culmination of several years of advocacy by transit riders, transit advocates, organized labor, the Pace Board and staff, and many others. It solves the much-discussed “fiscal cliff” which had been facing Pace, CTA, and Metra in 2026 by creating new revenue for the regional transit system, along with reforms to the governance and operations of the transit system.

There are many new policies included in this 1,000-page bill. Here are a few highlights that will have the most impact on Pace riders:

- New funding from the sales tax on gasoline and a general sales tax increase of 0.25% in our region provides Pace more funding than it has today, allowing us to increase frequency on existing routes and add service in places that don’t have adequate bus service today.
- The Regional ADA program, including TAP and RAP, will be funded.
- The RTA will be replaced by the Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA).
- There is no fare increase on Pace, CTA or Metra until at least mid-2027, and after that, fares will be set by NITA, not Pace.
- A newly coordinated regional fare system to replace or improve Ventra after 2028.
- Newly coordinated trip planning and bus tracking technology.
- Pace, CTA and Metra will have “transit ambassadors” riding the system starting July 2027.

Now that new funding is available, it will allow us to finish our *ReVision* work to enhance our system with more frequent bus service, new rapid transit corridors, expanded bus-on-shoulder operations, and provide more innovative mobility solutions for the growing and changing needs of suburban riders.

Pace Riders Report High Satisfaction



We heard you! In 2025, Pace surveyed our riders to gauge your opinions of our service. What is working well? What needs improvement? Now that we’ve obtained the results, we want you to know about some of the key findings. Overall, riders report 84% satisfaction, up from 83% in 2022. 89% of you are likely to continue to ride Pace.

You tell us to keep up the good work in these areas:

- value of service
- total travel time
- service available where you need to go
- bus operator’s courtesy
- responsiveness of customer service representatives

Things you told us need some improvement:

- accuracy of bus tracker data
- accuracy of schedule/route information

And the good news is we are already working on improving those aspects of Pace service.

Thanks again for participating in our 2025 survey! This won’t be the last time you hear from us, as we want to study your opinions over time, so we can always keep improving and meeting your expectations. And you can always tell us what you think at Passenger.Services@PaceBus.com.

PULSE MOMENTUM: Building Faster, More Reliable, More Connected Corridors

The Pulse network continues to expand, with new lines advancing through design and existing lines continuing to serve more riders. Design for the Pulse Halsted and Pulse 95th Street Lines is in motion, bringing faster, more reliable service to communities on the South Side of Chicago and in the South and Southwest Suburbs. Pace is working closely with residents, businesses, and local leaders through the Corridor Advisory Groups to ensure each corridor reflects community identity and improves access to jobs, schools, and key destinations.


Momentum is also building along the Pulse Cermak/22nd Street corridor, where riders and community members from Lombard to Cicero have shared valuable input on station locations and transit-priority roadway treatments. Pace is meeting riders where they are, at business-focused Pulse Talks and school and community events, to better understand local needs and opportunities. To make your voice heard, please fill out the public comment form on the project website: PaceBus.com/pulse-cermak-22nd-street.

Existing Pulse Lines continue to deliver benefits. Ridership on the Pulse Dempster Line corridor has climbed on weekdays and Sundays. Saturday ridership has increased on the Pulse Milwaukee Line corridor, where sidewalk improvements near Golf Mill Shopping Center are also enhancing safety and access for riders.

MORE SERVICE. MORE CONVENIENCE.

To better serve our riders, Pace improved and expanded service on the following six Pace bus routes effective December 7, 2025.

- 606:** enhanced weekday service
- 290:** expanded and improved service
- 223:** increased mid-day service on Saturday
- 215:** improved and expanded Sunday service
- 208:** improved and expanded Weekday, Saturday and Sunday service
- 350:** improved weekday mid-day service frequency and added early morning/late evening trips on all days.

Find additional details on these service expansions at PaceBus.com. 

Lansing Area and Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows On Demand Service Updates

Recently, the Pace Board of Directors made the reservation-based Lansing Area On Demand service permanent. In October 2024, Pace established the Lansing Area On Demand service in the south suburbs as part of a pilot program. During the pilot period, the On Demand service saw an increase in ridership. The permanent service will operate from 6 am to 7 pm to accommodate rider demand and ensure service efficiency. It represents Pace's 11th reservation-based, curb-to-curb shared ride service in northeastern Illinois.

Earlier this summer, Pace also received an Invest in Cook grant from Cook County to support the expansion of Pace's existing Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows On Demand service. The grant helps support the forthcoming expansion of the Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows service, where Pace plans to add a second vehicle, increase service hours, and double the size of the current On Demand zone to include major destinations like Harper College, the Palatine Metra Station, and many more destinations for your convenience. 



THERE'S A NEW RIDE IN TOWN: INTRODUCING VANGO JOLIET



NEW VANGO SELF-SERVICE TRANSPORTATION IS AVAILABLE AT THE JOLIET TRANSIT CENTER. RESERVE YOUR NEXT-DAY RIDE TO WORK FOR ONLY \$5 ROUND TRIP WITH NO COMMITMENTS. LEARN MORE AT [PACEBUS.COM/VANGO](https://PaceBus.com/Vango) OR CALL 847.364.3964.

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



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