



# 2017-2021 RTA Interagency Signage Accomplishments

June 2021

175 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1650  
Chicago, IL 60604

(312) 913-3200  
[RTAChicago.org](http://RTAChicago.org)

# Contents

<b>Background.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Signs Installed at Bundle 1 Locations in 2017/2018 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Elgin Transportation Center.....	2
Harvey Transportation Center .....	3
Lake-Cook Road Metra station .....	4
Lisle Metra station .....	5
Mayfair / Montrose stations in Chicago .....	6
Museum Campus / Roosevelt stations in Chicago.....	7
Naperville Metra station .....	8
<b>Signs Installed at Bundle 2 Locations in 2019/2020 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Aurora Transportation Center .....	10
Irving Park stations in Chicago .....	11
Jefferson Park Transit Center in Chicago .....	12
Main Street stations in Evanston .....	13
Oak Park and Harlem/Lake stations.....	14
Waukegan Metra station .....	15
Wheaton Metra station .....	16
<b>Signs Installed at Bundle 3 Locations in 2020/2021 .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Blue Island / Vermont Street Metra stations.....	18
Chicago Union Station.....	19
LaSalle Street Station .....	20
Millennium Station .....	21
Ogilvie Transportation Center .....	22
<b>Conclusions and Next Steps .....</b>	<b>23</b>

# Background

Since 2012, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has been using federal grant funds to implement new wayfinding signage and transit service information at key interagency transit locations throughout the Chicago region. Developed and implemented in conjunction with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace; the purpose of the RTA's interagency sign program is to improve access to and facilitate transferring between transit services at locations where buses and trains come together.

Based on extensive user research and testing, the RTA developed an [Interagency Design Standards Manual](#) for prototype signs and other information products (maps, schedules and route diagrams) that were then fabricated and installed at 4 demonstration locations in 2012:

- Davis Street stations in downtown Evanston (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace)
- Joliet Union Station (Metra, Pace)
- Van Buren Street station in downtown Chicago (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace)
- Western Ave. / 95<sup>th</sup> St. transfer location in Chicago and Evergreen Park (CTA bus, Pace)

Using lessons learned from those prototype signs at the demonstration locations, as well as more limited signage that was subsequently installed near Chicago Union Station and LaSalle Street Station, the RTA then began using a second federal grant to develop and implement signs at 19 key interagency locations. The sign locations were addressed in three separate bundles – each bundle with its own contract – as detailed below.

## Signs Installed at Bundle 1 Locations in 2017/2018

In 2017 and 2018, the RTA's contractor fabricated and installed new signs and maps at the first bundle of interagency transit locations:

- Elgin Transportation Center (Metra, Pace)
- Harvey Transportation Center (Metra, Pace)
- Lake-Cook Road Metra station (Metra, Pace)
- Lisle Metra station (Metra, Pace)
- Mayfair / Montrose stations in Chicago (Metra, CTA rail and bus)
- Museum Campus / Roosevelt stations in Chicago (Metra, CTA rail and bus)
- Naperville Metra station (Metra, Amtrak, Pace)

These outlying locations, focused on stations serving various Metra-operated lines and Metra's BNSF Railway line, are highlighted on the following pages.

**Elgin Transportation Center** (Metra, Pace) – This major transfer center provides connections between the Metra station on the Milwaukee District/West line and Pace’s adjacent Elgin Transportation Center, which is located along the Fox River across Chicago Street from the Metra station. The multiple Pace bus routes at this location, all of which terminate here, provide service throughout the Northwest suburbs.



Signs directing people from Metra platform to Pace buses



Signs at Pace facility near Chicago St. bridge over Fox River



Sign structure with train connections map and neighborhood map at Metra station



**Harvey Transportation Center** (Metra, Pace) – This major transfer center provides connections between the Metra Electric District station, which is located above grade, and Pace’s adjacent Harvey Transportation Center, which is located across Park Avenue from the Metra station. The multiple Pace bus routes at this location, most of which terminate here, provide service throughout the South suburbs.



Sign structure with bus connection maps at the Pace facility



Directional sign to Pace buses on Metra platform



Directional sign at crosswalk between Pace and Metra



Directional sign to Pace buses on Metra platform

**Lake-Cook Road Metra station** (Metra, Pace) – This interagency location is served by Metra’s Milwaukee District/North line, multiple Pace Shuttle Bug bus routes, and one Pace fixed bus route that operates on Lake-Cook Road. The Shuttle Bug routes provide dedicated service between the Metra station and several nearby employment centers.



Directional sign from Metra platform to Pace bus stops



Bus departure times at bus stop



Train connections map and neighborhood map at Metra station



**Lisle Metra station** (Metra, Pace) – This interagency location is served by Metra’s BNSF line, multiple Pace feeder bus routes, and one Pace fixed bus route that operates on nearby Ogden Avenue. The accessible path between the two sides of the station and the bus stops involves an elevator on each side, with a pedestrian tunnel under the tracks providing the connection between the two elevators.



Bus stop sign on North side of station



Directional sign on South side of station



Lowering sign structure into place near the Metra station



Mounting the sign structure to the concrete pavement

**Mayfair / Montrose stations in Chicago** (Metra, CTA rail and bus) – This interagency location provides connections between Metra’s Milwaukee District/North line and the nearby CTA Blue line that operates in the median of the Kennedy Expressway. The Metra platforms here are above street level and the CTA platform is below street level. In addition to the CTA bus route on Montrose Avenue, two CTA bus routes also operate on nearby Cicero Avenue – and one of those routes terminates at Montrose Avenue.



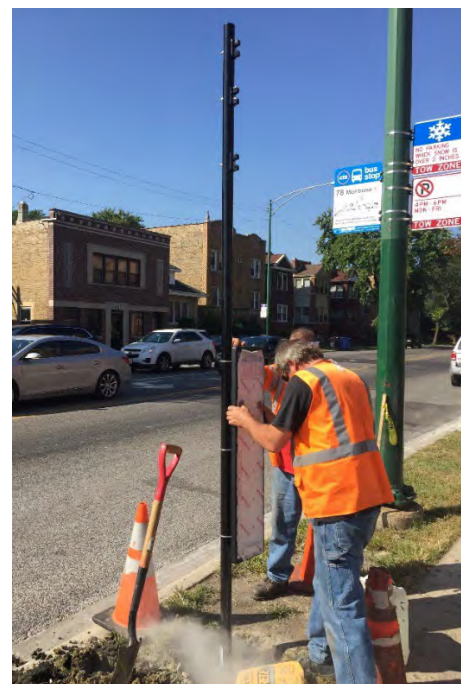
Directional sign at top of stairs to Metra platform



Directional sign at bottom of stairs to Metra platform



Bus stop sign at terminus on Cicero Ave.



Installing a new bus stop sign on Montrose Ave.



**Museum Campus / Roosevelt stations in Chicago** (Metra, CTA rail and bus) – This interagency location involves providing connections between the Metra Electric line and the nearby CTA Green, Orange and Red lines at the Roosevelt station. These stations provide access to the nearby Museum Campus and Soldier Field along the lakefront. Several CTA bus routes also stop on the adjacent streets of Michigan Avenue and Roosevelt Road.



Downtown transit map near CTA station entrance



Downtown transit map on bridge to Metra station



Directional sign on Roosevelt Rd. near the CTA station



Directional sign on Michigan Ave. near the Metra Station



**Naperville Metra station** (Metra, Amtrak, Pace) – This interagency location is served by Metra’s BNSF line, Amtrak service, multiple Pace feeder bus routes, and three Pace fixed bus routes. The accessible path between the two sides of the station and the bus stops involves a ramp on each side, with a pedestrian tunnel under the tracks providing the connection between the two ramps.



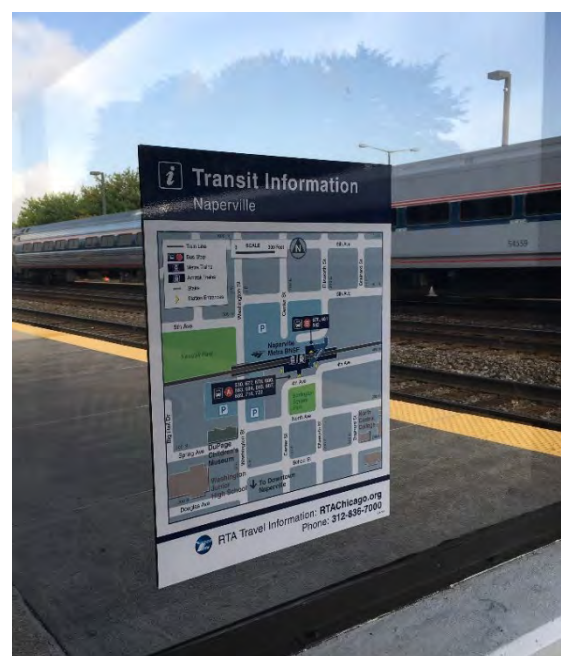
Bus stop signs adjacent to the shared Metra/Amtrak depot



Installing the face plate on the sign structure



Overhead signs at top of stairs to the tunnel under the tracks



Transit map on window with Amtrak train in background



# Signs Installed at Bundle 2 Locations in 2019/2020

In 2019 and 2020, the RTA's contractor fabricated and installed new signs and maps at the second bundle of interagency transit locations:

- Aurora Transportation Center (Metra, Pace)
- Irving Park stations in Chicago (CTA rail and bus, Metra)
- Jefferson Park Transit Center in Chicago (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace)
- Main Street stations in Evanston (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace)
- Oak Park and Harlem/Lake stations (Metra, CTA rail and bus, Pace)
- Waukegan Metra station (Metra, Pace)
- Wheaton Metra station (Metra, Pace)

These outlying locations, focused primarily on Metra's three Union Pacific lines, are highlighted on the following pages.



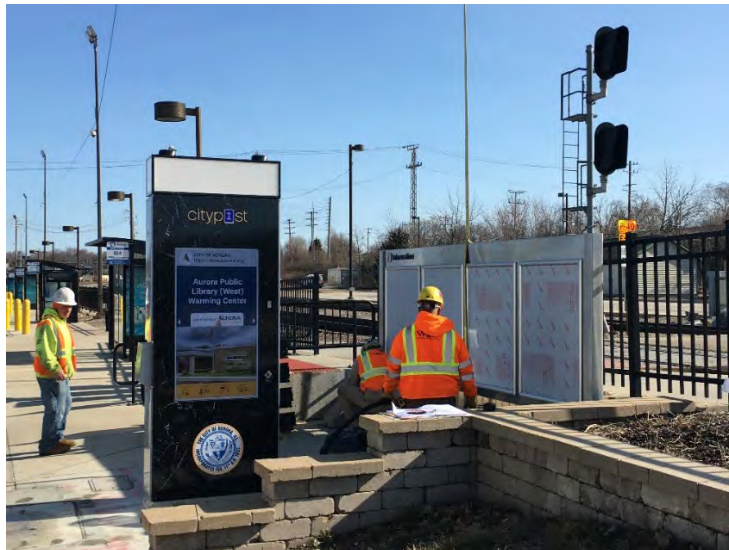
Directional sign above exit from Metra center platform at Jefferson Park Transit Center



**Aurora Transportation Center** (Metra, Pace) – This major transfer center is the terminus of Metra’s BNSF line and serves as a transfer center for 6 Pace bus routes. The City of Aurora recently relocated the Pace transfer center so that the new bus stops are now adjacent to the Metra tracks. The city also recently installed two interactive kiosks that are located adjacent to the new RTA sign structures.



Bus stop sign at new Pace bus shelter



Installing the new sign structure near the Pace bus stops



Installing the new sign structure near the historic Chicago, Burlington & Quincy roundhouse and locomotive shop



**Irving Park stations in Chicago** (CTA rail and bus, Metra) – This interagency location includes nearly adjacent stations on the CTA Blue line and the Metra UP Northwest line, as well as multiple nearby CTA bus stops on Irving Park Road and Pulaski Road. The Metra and CTA stations are separated by a long viaduct under the Kennedy Expressway, and access to the above-grade Metra platforms requires the use of stairs or ramps.



Lifting the sign structure to the Metra platform.



Installing the sign structure on the ramp to/from Metra



Bus stop and route diagram near CTA station entrance



Directional sign under Union Pacific railroad viaduct



## Jefferson Park Transit Center in Chicago (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace) –

This major transfer center includes adjacent stations on the CTA Blue line and the Metra UP Northwest line, plus two terminals for multiple Pace and CTA bus routes. And all of these are located in the middle of, on top of, and next to the Kennedy Expressway; respectively. The bus terminals, which host Pace's new Pulse Milwaukee line, were recently rebuilt by the CTA.



Directional sign above portal at South end of the Metra center platform



Sign frame with location map near the bus terminal



Installing the sign structure on the Metra center platform. The frame is attached to the existing wind break.



**Main Street stations in Evanston** (CTA rail and bus, Metra, Pace) – This interagency location includes adjacent stations on the CTA Purple line and the Metra UP North line. The CTA station entrance and the shared bus stops are located on Chicago Avenue, but the above-grade Metra station is located around the corner on Main Street – past the CTA rail viaduct. The new RTA signage directs people along Main Street to better connect these nearby transit services – including the Northwestern University intercampus shuttle.



Maps and sign outside elevator to the Metra platform



Directional sign between the CTA and Metra tracks



Shared bus stop signs on Chicago Avenue



Directional sign and map outside the CTA entrance



**Oak Park and Harlem/Lake stations** (Metra, CTA rail and bus, Pace) – This major transfer center includes adjacent stations on the Metra UP West line and CTA Green line, plus stops for several Pace and CTA bus routes. The elevated Metra and CTA rail stations share a common entrance at Marion Street, but there are several other entrances, and the bus stops are scattered around the neighborhood on both sides of the railroad viaducts.



Bus stop on Lake Street near Harlem Avenue



Bus connection and neighborhood maps on Metra platform



Directional sign under the CTA viaduct along Harlem Ave.



Train connection map near Marion St. entrance



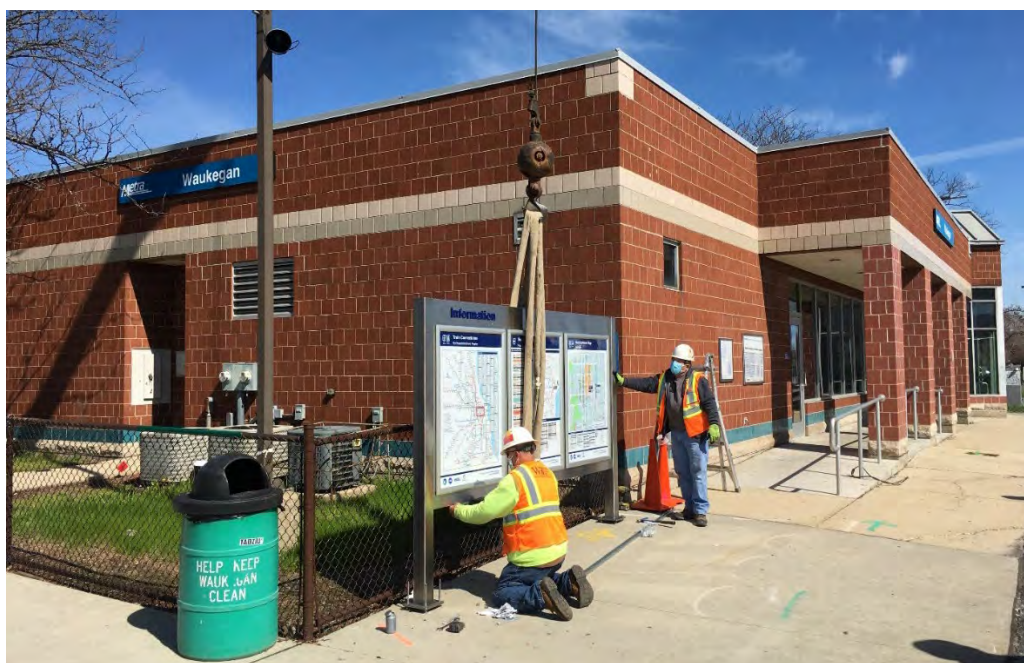
**Waukegan Metra station** (Metra, Pace) – Downtown Waukegan and the Pace bus terminal are located on a bluff above the Metra UP North line, and the transit facilities are further separated by the Amstutz Expressway. Only 3 of the 8 Pace routes directly serve the Metra station, so the new signs and maps here are intended to help Metra passengers make better connections to and from all of the Pace buses – as well as downtown Waukegan.



Pace bus terminal along Sheridan Rd. in downtown Waukegan



Sign directing Metra passengers to buses and downtown



Installing the sign structure with maps near the Waukegan Metra station



**Wheaton Metra station** (Metra, Pace) – This interagency station on the Metra UP West line is served by 5 Pace bus routes. The UP railroad has 3 tracks at-grade to serve both Metra and freight trains, and the Pace bus stops are located on both sides of those busy tracks. The signs and maps at this location help transit passengers make the connections necessary to reach the nearby DuPage County government center and related public services.



Pace bus stop on Front Street near Metra station



Customer using the new Bus Connections map at Wheaton



Directional sign near grade crossing



Train route diagram outside the station building



# Signs Installed at Bundle 3 Locations in 2020/2021

In 2020 and 2021, the RTA's contractor fabricated and installed new signs and maps at the third bundle of interagency transit locations:

- Blue Island / Vermont Street Metra stations (Metra, Pace)
- Chicago Union Station (Metra, Amtrak, CTA rail and bus, Pace)
- LaSalle Street Station (Metra, CTA rail and bus)
- Millennium Station (Metra, CTA rail and bus, Pace)
- Ogilvie Transportation Center (Metra, CTA rail and bus)

The downtown Chicago locations all involve multiple Metra and CTA rail lines and multiple CTA and Pace bus routes. The Bundle 3 locations are highlighted on the following pages.



Installing a large overhead sign in the Suburban Concourse at Ogilvie Transportation Center

**Blue Island / Vermont Street Metra stations** (Metra, Pace) – This interagency location in Blue Island includes Metra’s adjacent Rock Island District and Electric District stations, which are located across Vermont Street from each other. The station area is served by 4 Pace bus routes, but 2 of those routes are several blocks away from the Metra stations on Western Avenue in downtown Blue Island. RTA’s contractor fabricated and installed most of the signs and maps for Blue Island in 2021. In 2022, Metra’s contractor will install the remaining signs and maps as part of a pending construction project to rehabilitate the historic Rock Island District Vermont Street station.



Bus stop signs, maps and new shelter on Vermont St.



Directional sign on Western Ave.



Installing bus stop sign near the grade crossing



Directional sign between the two Metra stations



**Chicago Union Station** (Metra, Amtrak, CTA rail and bus, Pace) – This major transfer center involves the terminus of various Metra lines serving most parts of the Chicago region (BNSF Railway, Heritage Corridor, Milwaukee District, North Central Service, and Southwest Service), as well as various Amtrak routes serving most parts of the country. To compliment the initial signs and maps that RTA previously installed at Union Station, in 2020 the RTA added wayfinding signs along the nearby sidewalks. These new signs guide passengers making connections between Metra and Amtrak trains and other nearby transit services; including other Metra lines at Ogilvie Transportation Center and LaSalle Street Station, CTA trains at the Clinton Blue Line and Quincy Loop stations, CTA and Pace buses at various nearby stops, and intercity buses at the Greyhound station.



Wayfinding sign near the Quincy CTA station



Wayfinding sign along Jackson Blvd. at Clinton Street



Wayfinding sign along Jackson Blvd. at the river



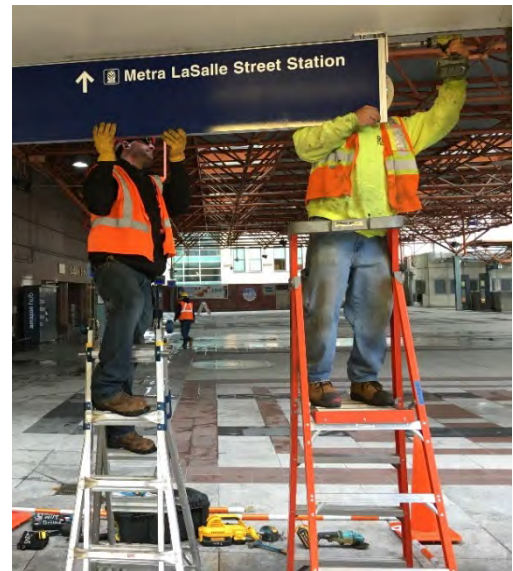
Wayfinding sign at the Northwest corner of Union Station



**LaSalle Street Station** (Metra, CTA rail and bus) – This interagency location includes the terminus of Metra’s Rock Island District line, as well as adjacent CTA stations for the Blue Line subway and the Loop elevated lines (Brown, Orange, Pink and Purple). Several CTA bus routes stop nearby on Jackson Boulevard and LaSalle Street, and CTA Route 36 terminates at an adjacent intermodal facility. Transferring between transit services at this location involves both vertical challenges – between the elevated rail stations, the at-grade bus stops and the CTA subway station – and horizontal challenges to navigate around the Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE) and Chicago Stock Exchange buildings. The RTA’s contractor has fabricated two large overhead signs that will be installed by CTA on the elevated structure along Van Buren Street to direct people to the LaSalle Street Metra Station.



Sign structure with maps near the stairs/elevator to the buses



Installing sign at the top of the stairs/elevator



CTA bus stop at the bus facility on Financial Pl.



Directional sign on the side of the building at 425 S. Financial Pl.



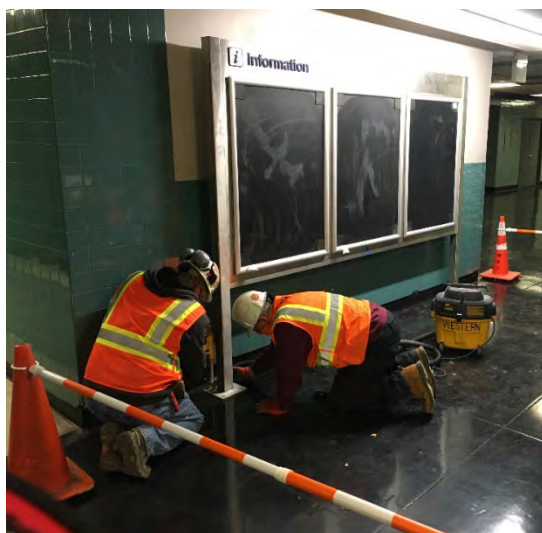
**Millennium Station** (Metra, CTA rail and bus, Pace) – This interagency location, with entrances at both ends of the Metra platforms, is the terminus for the Metra Electric District line and the NICTD South Shore Line. The CTA’s Brown, Green, Orange, Pink and Purple lines all serve the nearby Loop elevated station at Washington/Wabash. In addition, multiple CTA and Pace bus routes stop at several locations along Michigan Avenue, which is adjacent to Millennium Station. The South Water Street entrance provides the only accessible entrance to the Metra platforms, thus requiring wayfinding signs to delineate that accessible path.



Bus stop on Michigan Ave. outside the Cultural Center



Directional signs on Michigan Ave. near entrance



Installing sign structure in the Randolph St. concourse



Directional signs on the Metra platform

**Ogilvie Transportation Center** (Metra, CTA rail and bus) – This major transfer center, with entrances on various streets providing access to the middle and South ends of the platforms, is the terminus for three Metra Union Pacific lines. The CTA's Green and Pink lines serve the nearby elevated station at Clinton Street, and multiple CTA bus routes stop at various locations surrounding the Metra terminal. The adjacent Accenture Tower building provides the only accessible entrance to the above-grade Metra platforms, thus requiring signs to delineate the accessible path.



Directional sign on the Metra platform column



Installing sign over doors from platforms to Accenture Tower



Installing sign above Washington St. sidewalk



Directional sign from Clinton CTA station to Ogilvie



## Conclusions and Next Steps

Installation of the remaining new signs and maps in Blue Island (by Metra's contractor in 2022) will realize the RTA's original vision to develop and implement signs at 19 key interagency locations throughout the region. Those locations combined – including the Metra terminals in downtown Chicago and four satellite cities (Waukegan, Elgin, Aurora and Joliet) – account for a large share of interagency transfers in the RTA region.

Nevertheless, other interagency transit locations in the region may still warrant similar treatment. During 2021, RTA staff is having discussions with staff at the CTA, Metra and Pace – and with staff at various municipalities – to explore continuation of the interagency signage program at additional locations using unexpended funds from the federal grant. The focus of such work is likely to be at locations in the City of Chicago or nearby suburbs in Cook County where Metra stations are served by several Pace or CTA bus. Particular attention will be paid to interagency locations in critical need areas with critical transit services.

If such work is ultimately approved by RTA management and the RTA Board, implementation of new signs and maps at additional interagency locations would most likely begin in 2022. This could be one small but important step to help support recovery of the transit system from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regardless of which agency ultimately installs any additional signs, this work will be guided by the latest version of the [Interagency Design Standards Manual](#) – which has been prepared and updated several times by the RTA in order to share the institutional knowledge developed through this interagency program. To date, the CTA and Pace have utilized these standards to implement signs at several other transit locations in the region – as part of other capital improvement projects.

Finally, it must be noted that the successful implementation of new interagency transit signs throughout the region requires a robust maintenance program to keep the signs up to date and in good condition. Since the outset of the program, the RTA has committed to maintaining all the new signs through a combination of RTA staff work and a multi-year maintenance contract. This work includes not only the periodic replacement of paper products like maps and schedules – to reflect transit route and schedule changes – but also the replacement of damaged signs, general cleaning and graffiti removal. Such work is essential to keep the signs useful for their intended purpose of guiding people through the region's extensive transit network.



RTA maintenance contractors replacing the original stainless map frames at Davis CTA station with new aluminum snap frames.



Inspection of backlit sign to be installed by CTA on elevated structure near LaSalle Street Station.