Transit Signal Priority (TSP) utilizes existing vehicle location and wireless communications technologies to advance or extend green times at signalized intersections. When a TSP-equipped bus is late, it automatically requests extra green time so it can proceed through the intersection. The result: reduced delays at traffic signals, and increased service reliability and travel speeds for bus riders.
WHO WILL BENEFIT?
Almost 50 percent of the region’s transit riders can benefit from faster, more dependable bus service. With TSP-equipped buses, bus riders will experience fewer traffic signal delays, enabling them to get to their destinations on time. This will be accomplished with minimal interruption to the flow of regular traffic. In fact, traffic signal synchronization will be improved along these corridors as part of the TSP program. As bus service improves, ridership numbers are expected to grow as people see bus transit as a more attractive travel option, thus helping to reduce the region’s gridlock and improving air quality.

WHERE AND WHEN DID IT START?
TSP is an important component of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) systems being developed and deployed in the Chicago region. Starting in 2016, a regional TSP system that works for both Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and Pace buses is being deployed on roadways maintained by Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), or other local departments of transportation.

In 2016, CTA and CDOT installed TSP on South Ashland Avenue between Cermak Road and 95th Street. Pace has already implemented optimized signal timing in the following corridors:
- 95th Street
- 147th Street/Sibley Blvd.
- 159th Street
- Cicero Avenue
- Grand Avenue (in Lake County)
- Roosevelt Road

Signal optimization is the first phase of TSP installation and allows buses to travel faster.

WHO IS LEADING THIS EFFORT?
The Regional Transportation Authority of Northeastern Illinois (RTA) is leading the comprehensive planning and coordination of this regional program. Leading implementation and construction are the CTA, Pace, IDOT, CDOT and other local and county transportation agencies. Working with the Federal Transit Administration and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, the RTA is ensuring that a seamless and integrated TSP system is implemented across the different transit and highway jurisdictions.

WHAT IS IT GOING TO COST?
The RTA’s $40 million program for TSP deployment includes approximately $36 million in federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds and $4 million in RTA funding. These funds are being combined with other federal grants to the CTA and Pace for specific corridors.

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?
CTA and CDOT are installing TSP equipment on Western Avenue in 2018. More information is available at: transitchicago.com/ashlandwesternx/

In 2018, Pace will implement TSP on Milwaukee Avenue as part of the Pulse Milwaukee Line project. More information is available at: pulse.pacebus.com/index.php/service-lines/milwaukee