

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Metra launching two surveys

*Agency wants customer feedback about BNSF schedule, weekend service*

CHICAGO (Feb. 21, 2019) – Metra today launched two online surveys to gather customer feedback in two areas – the BNSF Line schedule, and weekend service.

A new BNSF Line schedule was adopted last June to accommodate the federally mandated Positive Train Control (PTC) safety system, which was just being implemented on the line. Initializing the new system adds to the time it takes to turn a train around for a trip in the opposite direction, and that added time had to be built into the schedule. Now, after several months of experience with the PTC system, Metra and BNSF Railway believe it's possible to make minor modifications to improve the schedule. Before we do that, however, we want to hear from customers.

“We can promise that we will consider every concern and suggestion, but although we will try our best, we cannot promise that we can address every concern or suggestion,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski.

The brief BNSF survey, at [metrarail.com/BNSF2019](http://metrarail.com/BNSF2019), asks questions about customers' riding habits, including origin and destination stations, their usual trains, their preferred arrival times in the morning, preferred departure times in the evening and their use of any connecting service. It also asks them to identify the most important scheduling feature that Metra could address to improve their experience and contains room for them to provide any general comments.

The BNSF survey will remain open through March 17. Metra will then consider the feedback with a goal of unveiling a new schedule later this year.

The survey about weekend service asks how and why customers are riding – or not riding – on weekends so Metra can identify ways to improve weekend service and boost weekend ridership. Ridership on Saturdays has fallen about 9 percent in the last 12 months, and ridership on Sundays has dropped by about 7.5 percent.

The weekend survey, at [metrarail.com/weekend](http://metrarail.com/weekend), asks customers questions about their frequency and purpose of weekend trips on Metra, or asks them to identify factors that led them to stop riding Metra on weekends. It also asks them to rank suggested service improvements that would cause them to ride or ride more frequently on weekends, and to identify improvements that would make it easier for them to use the Metra system.

The survey also attempts to gauge their interest in weekend express trains, which could result in some stations losing some service (because express trains would skip some stations). The survey asks if they would be willing to travel (and how far) to another station to board a faster train, or whether losing service at their regular station would prevent them from using Metra on weekends.

The weekend survey also will remain open until March 17. Metra hopes to use the results to explore weekend options later this year.

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***About Metra***

*Metra is one of the largest and most complex commuter rail systems in North America, serving Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, Kane and McHenry counties in northeastern Illinois. The agency provides service to and from downtown Chicago with 242 stations over 11 routes totaling nearly 500 route miles and approximately 1,200 miles of track. Metra operates nearly 700 trains and provides nearly 290,000 passenger trips each weekday.*

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