June 1, 2015

METRA TO BOOST WEEKEND SERVICE ON ROCK ISLAND LINE

Weekend Express Trial Schedule Will Shave Approximately 20 Minutes From Trips

Starting June 6, 2015, and lasting through November 29, 2015, Metra will launch a trial program to enhance weekend service on the Rock Island Line by adding express trains that will speed the trip between suburban stations and downtown Chicago by approximately 20 minutes.

On weekdays, the Rock Island Line has trains that use the Beverly Branch, as well as express trains that use the mainline tracks to bypass Beverly. Under the current weekend schedule, all trains on Saturdays and Sundays use the Beverly Branch to and from downtown Chicago. This creates a slower trip for riders who board between Joliet and Blue Island.

Under the new trial service, which is timed to coincide with the months of peak weekend ridership, 6 mainline express trains will be added to the schedule in each direction on Saturdays and Sundays, creating speedier service for suburban riders without affecting service to those along the Beverly Branch.

The service improvement is being funded with a $313,000 grant from the RTA's Innovation, Coordination, and Enhancement (ICE) program. That money is being matched with $313,000 in Metra funds.

“We have heard from riders over the years that they’re discouraged from riding on weekends because it takes too long to get to downtown Chicago”, said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. “We’re expecting that this significant enhancement – cutting 20 minutes from the schedule – will encourage more people to come on board, where they’ll discover we have fast, reliable, comfortable, and safe service. Many thanks to the RTA for helping us fund this project.”

New timetables will be available shortly on Rock Island trains and stations. The new schedule can also be found at www.metrarail.com.

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City Manager