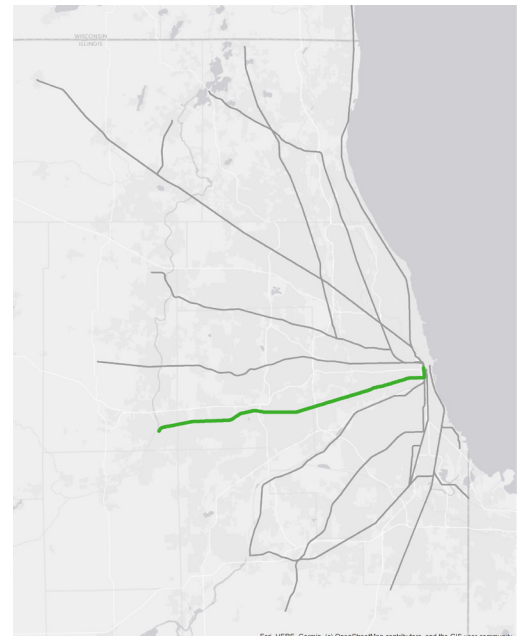




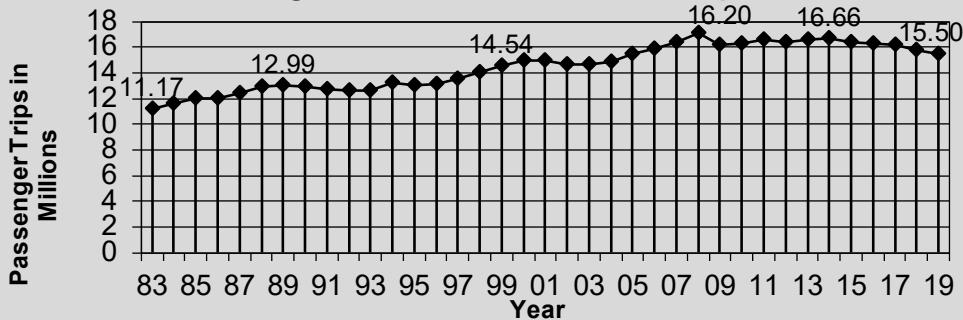
BNSF Line



Line at a Glance

- › Average Trip Length (2019): 23.3 miles
- › Average Fare Paid (2019): \$5.10
- › Number of Stations: 26
- › Route Length: 37.5 miles
- › Number of Weekday Trains (Dec 2019): 97
- › On-Time Performance (2019): 95.0%
- › 55% of BNSF riders drive to their boarding station.
- › 4% more people live along the BNSF than did in 2010.
- › 9% more people work along the BNSF than did in 2010.

Figure 1: Annual BNSF Ridership



The data included in this document predates the onset of COVID-19, which has greatly impacted Metra's riders and operations. This information is presented to inform the public about Metra's historic and recent operational environment but may not be illustrative of Metra's current or future operations. For the latest information, visit Metra's Operations and Ridership Data webpage at metrarail.com.



Schedules as of Dec 2019

- › 41 trains in the AM Peak
- › 11 trains in the Midday
- › 31 trains in the PM Peak
- › 14 trains in the Evening
- › 30 trains on Saturdays
- › 20 trains on Sundays



- › Highest ridership line
- › 64% of riders board at the six westernmost stations
- › Route 59 and Naperville are the first and second busiest outlying stations



- › Most robust express service in the system
- › 3rd highest income ridership among lines

Chicago to Aurora

Table 1: Metra Capital Investment History	BNSF (\$m)	System (\$m)
Rolling stock	\$471	\$2,978
Track and structure	\$152	\$1,567
Signal, electrical, and communications	\$121	\$1,137
Facilities and equipment	\$67	\$685
Stations and parking	\$74	\$1,120
Acquisitions, extensions, and expansions	\$8	\$603
Support activities	\$36	\$431
TOTAL	\$929	\$8,521
PERCENTAGE	10.9%	100.0%

Notes: 1) Excludes South Shore, preventative maintenance, new lines, and pending grants. 2) Prior expenses not adjusted for inflation. 3) Data subject to budget revisions, audit adjustments, etc. 4) Project costs without specific locations have been allocated to entire lines where appropriate

Table 2: BNSF 2018 Weekday Boardings	Inbound	Outbound
Time of Day		
AM Peak	24,783	776
Midday	1,525	2,918
PM Peak	1,017	21,192
Evening	487	2,233
TOTAL	27,812	29,119

Source: 2018 Weekday Station Boardings and Alightings by Time-of-Day and Direction

ON COVID-19 AND HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The information presented in this chapter is representative of Metra's operations prior to the onset of COVID-19, which upended almost every aspect of daily life. While Metra's pre-COVID services may not be replicated in the same manner going forward, the transportation services Metra continues to provide are essential to the vitality of the Chicago region.

There are certain elements of Metra's situational and operational environment that are unlikely to change in the short or medium term. These are: the location and capacity of each rail line, the location and physical characteristics of each station, the general characteristics of the communities around each station, Metra's history in each community, and Metra's mission to provide safe, reliable, efficient commuter rail service that enhances the economic and environmental health of northeast Illinois. On the other hand, there are operational and situational factors that are likely to be quite different. These may be: the number of riders, the time and duration of peak travel demand, the public's perception of the relative safety of various transportation modes, the way riders access and depart from stations, and the location preferences of people and businesses.

The challenges posed by the pandemic were significant and likely will result in the emergence of a very different operational environment. Even so, understanding Metra's past performance, pre-COVID service levels, and established community baselines is vital to making informed decisions about the reality that is taking shape. Through this process Metra will continue to achieve Metra's mission, realizing its vision, and pursuing its strategic goals.

In this section

- 1 – Annual Passenger Trips
- 2 – BNSF Overview
- 4 – Station Characteristics
- 5 – Mode of Access and Parking
- 6 – Present and Future Demand
- 7 – Reverse Commute and Non-Downtown Markets
- 7 – Major Capital Projects
- 9 – BNSF Corridor Demographics
- 9 – BNSF Corridor Household Data
- 9 – BNSF Corridor Employment Data
- 10 – ADA Accessibility
- 10 – Major Trip Generators

As part of a regional transportation network, Metra provides safe, reliable, efficient commuter rail service that enhances the economic and environmental health of northeast Illinois.

- Metra's Mission Statement

BNSF OVERVIEW

Metra's BNSF (BNSF) Line extends west from Chicago Union Station (CUS, or "Union Station") to the Aurora Transportation Center, serving portions of Cook, DuPage, and Kane Counties. In addition to CUS, the BNSF Line provides service to 25 stations along its nearly 38-mile route. In 2019, passenger trips on the BNSF totaled 15.5 million, the highest ridership of any line in the Metra system.

The BNSF Line has the region's most efficient track and signal infrastructure, with three tracks throughout its length, high-speed track crossovers every four miles, and the ability to operate in either direction on any track. As a

result, BNSF commuter service operates frequent, high-speed peak-period express trains with a zone-type schedule between most stations and downtown Chicago. This infrastructure also provides the ability to efficiently recycle trains for additional peak-period trips, thus making very effective use of its trains and personnel. The high-density commuter operation shares the tracks with a high-volume freight service and eight daily Amtrak trains. Although subsidized by Metra since 1984, the line is owned by BNSF and is operated by its own employees under a purchase of service agreement with Metra. Naperville Station, LaGrange Road Station, and CUS are also served by Amtrak. Metra owns the passenger coaches and locomotives serving the BNSF.

The BNSF Line serves the rapidly growing communities within the Illinois Technology and Research Corridor along I-88 in southern DuPage County. Rapid residential, commercial, and industrial development in the corridor, particularly in the Naperville-Aurora area, has transformed Route 59 and Naperville into Metra's top two outlying stations in terms of total weekday boardings. In the past 25 years, almost all ridership growth at outlying BNSF stations has occurred from Downers Grove to Aurora.

FIGURE 2: METRA STATIONS ON THE BNSF LINE

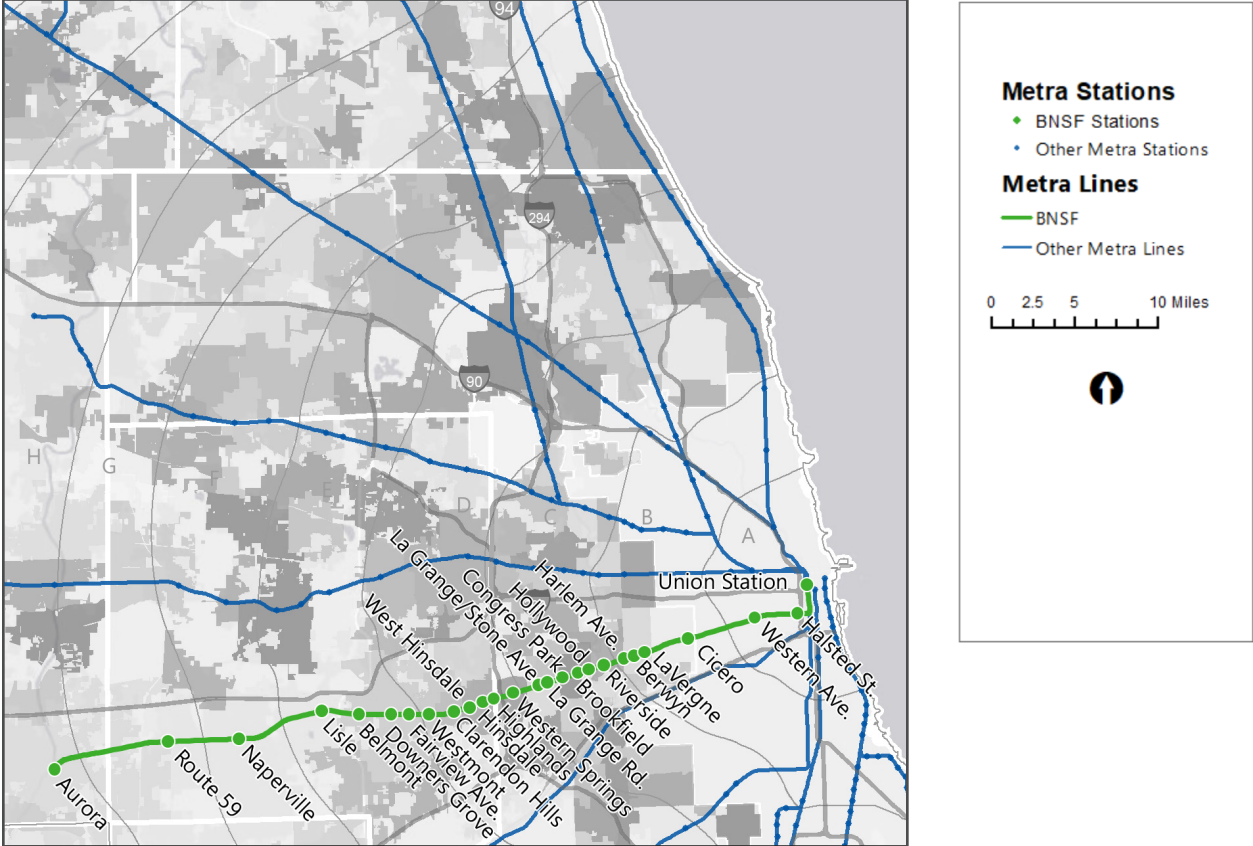


TABLE 3: BNSF STATION CHARACTERISTICS

Station	Accessibility ¹	Fare Zone	Mile Post	Responsibility and Maintenance			Boardings				Weekday trains as of Dec 2019
				Platform	Depot	Parking	1983 ²	2006 ²	2016 ²	2018 ²	
Union Station	●	A	0.0	--	--	--	18,545	26,547	26,615	26,305	97
Halsted St.		A	1.8	BNSF	Multiple	--	36	70	120	115	18
Western Ave.		A	3.8	BNSF	Multiple	--	116	110	69	57	26
Cicero		B	7.0	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	276	246	185	136	39
LaVergne	●	B	9.1	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	235	159	187	174	13
Berwyn	●	B	9.6	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	852	718	632	669	43
Harlem Ave.	●	B	10.1	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	680	530	421	451	37
Riverside	○	C	11.1	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	531	416	499	493	43
Hollywood (Zoo Stop)	●	C	11.8	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	152	133	120	120	24
Brookfield	○	C	12.3	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	708	604	572	546	43
Congress Park		C	13.1	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	129	176	290	368	15
LaGrange Rd.	●	C	13.8	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	1,496	1,352	1,340	1,452	51
LaGrange/Stone Ave.	○	C	14.2	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	1,017	988	1,046	946	39
Western Springs	●	D	15.5	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	1,022	1,093	1,133	1,134	50
Highlands		D	16.4	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	210	176	203	202	19
Hinsdale	●	D	16.9	BNSF	Multiple	Muni	1,155	1,065	1,160	1,155	55
West Hinsdale	○	D	17.8	BNSF	Metra	Muni	338	323	376	306	18
Clarendon Hills	○	D	18.3	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	1,078	799	806	799	51
Westmont	●	D	19.5	BNSF	Muni	Muni	1,305	1,168	1,058	1,083	54
Fairview Ave.	●	E	20.4	BNSF	Muni	Muni	598	403	458	415	51
Downers Grove/Main St.	●	E	21.2	BNSF	Muni	Muni	1,830	2,328	2,376	2,492	60
Belmont	●	E	22.6	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	1,204	1,414	1,472	1,408	52
Lisle	●	E	24.5	BNSF	Muni	Muni	2,330	2,472	1,789	1,895	55
Naperville	●	F	28.5	BNSF	BNSF	Muni	2,571	4,112	4,107	4,015	58
Route 59 ³	●	G	31.6	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	--	5,793	5,781	6,339	57
Aurora	●	H	37.5	BNSF	Multiple	Multiple	834	2,180	1,936	1,856	61
TOTAL BNSF							39,248	55,439	54,751	54,931	97

¹ Accessibility information is displayed using a three dot system. A complete dot means the station is fully accessible. No dot means that the station is inaccessible. A hollow dot means the station is partially accessible. Customers who use wheelchairs at partially accessible stations will be able to access train platforms from the street. However, ramps, ticket windows, buildings and shelters may not fully conform to ADA guidelines.

² Metra, "Commuter Rail System Station Boarding/Alighting Counts," Fall 2006, Spring 2014, and Fall 2018.

³ Station opened in 1989

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TABLE 4: 2019 MODE OF ACCESS AND COMMUTER PARKING AT BNSF METRA STATIONS

Station Name	Mode of Access (2019)					Station Parking (2019)		
	Walk/Bike	Drive ¹	Dropped Off ²	Transit	Other	Capacity	Effective Use ³	Observed Use ⁴
Union Station	30%	39%	12%	14%	6%	0	--	--
Halsted St.	50%	0%	0%	25%	25%	0	--	--
Western Ave.	67%	8%	0%	25%	0%	0	--	--
Cicero	12%	44%	8%	36%	0%	322	19%	19%
LaVergne	42%	39%	17%	0%	3%	169	37%	37%
Berwyn	43%	45%	10%	1%	2%	540	84%	80%
Harlem Ave.	64%	24%	11%	1%	0%	146	81%	35%
Riverside	53%	24%	22%	0%	1%	250	92%	67%
Hollywood (Zoo Stop)	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%	52	100%	35%
Brookfield	46%	34%	20%	0%	1%	209	83%	65%
Congress Park	51%	38%	10%	0%	1%	107	34%	26%
LaGrange Rd.	44%	32%	21%	2%	1%	412	71%	60%
LaGrange/Stone Ave.	49%	34%	18%	0%	0%	514	77%	70%
Western Springs	43%	34%	21%	1%	1%	357	99%	85%
Highlands	46%	45%	8%	1%	0%	86	95%	86%
Hinsdale	32%	37%	28%	1%	2%	336	97%	93%
West Hinsdale	48%	41%	10%	0%	1%	157	95%	39%
Clarendon Hills	42%	36%	18%	4%	1%	339	93%	84%
Westmont	19%	49%	20%	10%	1%	524	97%	72%
Fairview Ave.	40%	49%	11%	0%	0%	288	90%	66%
Downers Grove	26%	49%	18%	6%	1%	893	97%	83%
Belmont	9%	73%	15%	3%	1%	896	90%	86%
Lisle	14%	56%	19%	9%	2%	835	99%	71%
Naperville	13%	53%	21%	12%	2%	1,691	88%	72%
Route 59	7%	78%	12%	3%	1%	4,491	93%	83%
Aurora	4%	75%	17%	3%	2%	1,662	81%	68%
TOTAL BNSF	23%	55%	17%	5%	1%	15,276	86%	73%
SYSTEM TOTAL	26%	54%	16%	4%	1%	91,558	70%	63%

¹ Includes carpool drivers

² Includes carpool passengers

³ Effective use: all sold permit spaces are assumed to be used, even if unoccupied during parking survey

⁴ Observed use: spaces physically occupied during parking survey

Sources: Metra, Origin-Destination Survey, Fall 2019; Metra Station and Parking Capacity and Use Survey, 2018

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PRESENT AND FUTURE DEMAND

The two highest, outlying, weekday-ridership stations, and four of the top ten, are located on the BNSF Line. Close to 55,000 boardings took place each weekday on BNSF trains in 2018. Ridership on the line has increased 39% since 1983. Almost all ridership growth on the BNSF Line during this time occurred at the six outermost stations (Downers Grove to Aurora). Riders at these stations—which accounted for 64% of all weekday BNSF boardings outside the Central Business District (CBD)—are served by a number of express trains that travel non-stop between CUS and Downers Grove. Figure 3 shows the origins of BNSF riders who board at non-CBD stations. Overall passenger ridership on the BNSF Line totaled 15.5 million in 2019.

The parking utilization rate at BNSF stations is the highest of all Metra lines, with 86% effective occupancy of the more than 15,000 total parking spaces counted in 2019. Metra considers station parking areas over 85% occupied to be approaching full capacity and in need of expansion, and 14 of the 23 BNSF stations with parking facilities meet this standard. Three stations have an effective utilization rate greater than 99%. Demand for parking at BNSF stations is expected to increase due to anticipated residential growth, and a lack of available commuter parking along the line could threaten further ridership growth.

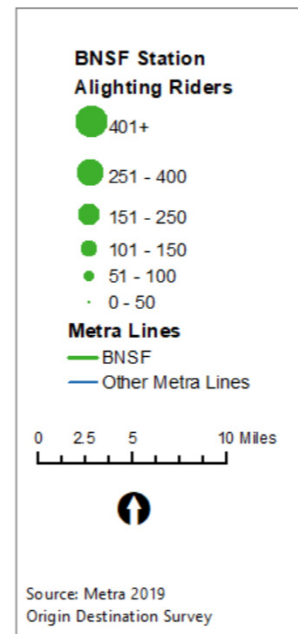
FIGURE 3: NON-DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS DURING AM PEAK



Terms Defined

“Peak-Direction Trains” are those that travel in the direction with the most demand from riders. During the “AM Peak,” trains travelling toward the Loop are “Peak-Direction” while trains travelling away from the Loop are “Peak-Direction” during the “PM Peak.”

“Effective Parking Utilization” is calculated by assuming that all parking pass holders will need a parking space at the same time. This ensures that there is always a space for those who hold a parking pass.



Note: Only stations with alightings greater than 50 are labeled.

A number of indicators suggest that demand for commuter rail service will continue to rise in the BNSF corridor. The corridor has been growing in recent decades, and demographic forecasts anticipate continued growth as shown in Tables 5, 6, and 7, particularly in the area from Downers Grove to Aurora. It is essential that Metra and other public transportation services work to meet the demand related to continued population and employment growth along this corridor to prevent worsening roadway congestion.

REVERSE-COMMUTE AND NON-DOWNTOWN MARKETS

Although Metra’s primary market involves commuters who follow the traditional suburb-to-CBD trip pattern, in recent years Metra has seen a demand for city-to-suburb reverse-commute options (Metra’s primary commuter market is discussed in the Central Business District Market chapter).

Close to two-thirds of AM peak alightings at non-CBD BNSF stations take place at the six stations at the western end of the line, from Downers Grove to Aurora. The three reverse-commute express trains serving these stations, nearby job growth, and Pace service connecting Metra stations to local employers, likely account for this phenomenon. Three additional reverse-commute trains run express to Hinsdale, helping attract another 12% of AM non-CBD alightings to this station. Figure 3 shows AM alightings at non-CBD BNSF stations.

Demographic factors that indicate future potential for increased reverse commuting are projected growth of population and households in the city and inner ring suburbs, as well as projected growth of employment in the suburbs. Significant population and household growth is expected near the CBD, as shown in Tables 5 and 6. Meanwhile, Table 7 shows that employment along the entire BNSF corridor is expected to grow 15% between 2020 and 2050.

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS ALONG THE BNSF

Since 1985, Metra has invested \$929 million (in year of expenditure dollars) in improvements to the BNSF corridor, as shown in Table 1. Metra has completed improvements at a number of BNSF stations since 1985. Grade separation of the BNSF tracks from Belmont Avenue in Downers Grove was completed in 2012, improving traffic flow and increasing safety at this busy crossing. This project also included platform improvements and the addition of a pedestrian underpass at the Belmont Station. A major renovation of Cicero Station, including new shelters and platforms and a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant access ramp, was completed in 2014. Replacement of switches and heaters as well as several bridge repair or replacement projects have also been completed on the BNSF.

Over the years, Metra has partnered with Amtrak, owner of CUS, to complete a number of upgrades to the terminal’s commuter facilities. For more

Terms Defined

“Reverse Commuting” refers to riders who regularly travel in the opposite direction of most commuters. For Metra riders, this refers to people who are travelling away from the Loop during the AM Peak and toward the Loop during the PM Peak.

“Alighting Riders” are those who get off the train. They are the opposite of a “boarding rider.”

information on proposed CUS improvements, see the CBD chapter of this report.

Environmental Analysis and Preliminary Engineering efforts are currently underway on an extension of the BNSF Line west from Aurora to Kendall County through Montgomery, Oswego, and Yorkville, and potentially to Plano and Sandwich. The project is proposed and sponsored by local stakeholders, and the current work is funded by a previous congressional earmark. The proposal would extend Metra service outside of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) six-county area, so to bring it to fruition, both capital funding

FIGURE 4: ORIGINS OF RIDERS USING NON-CBD BNSF STATIONS

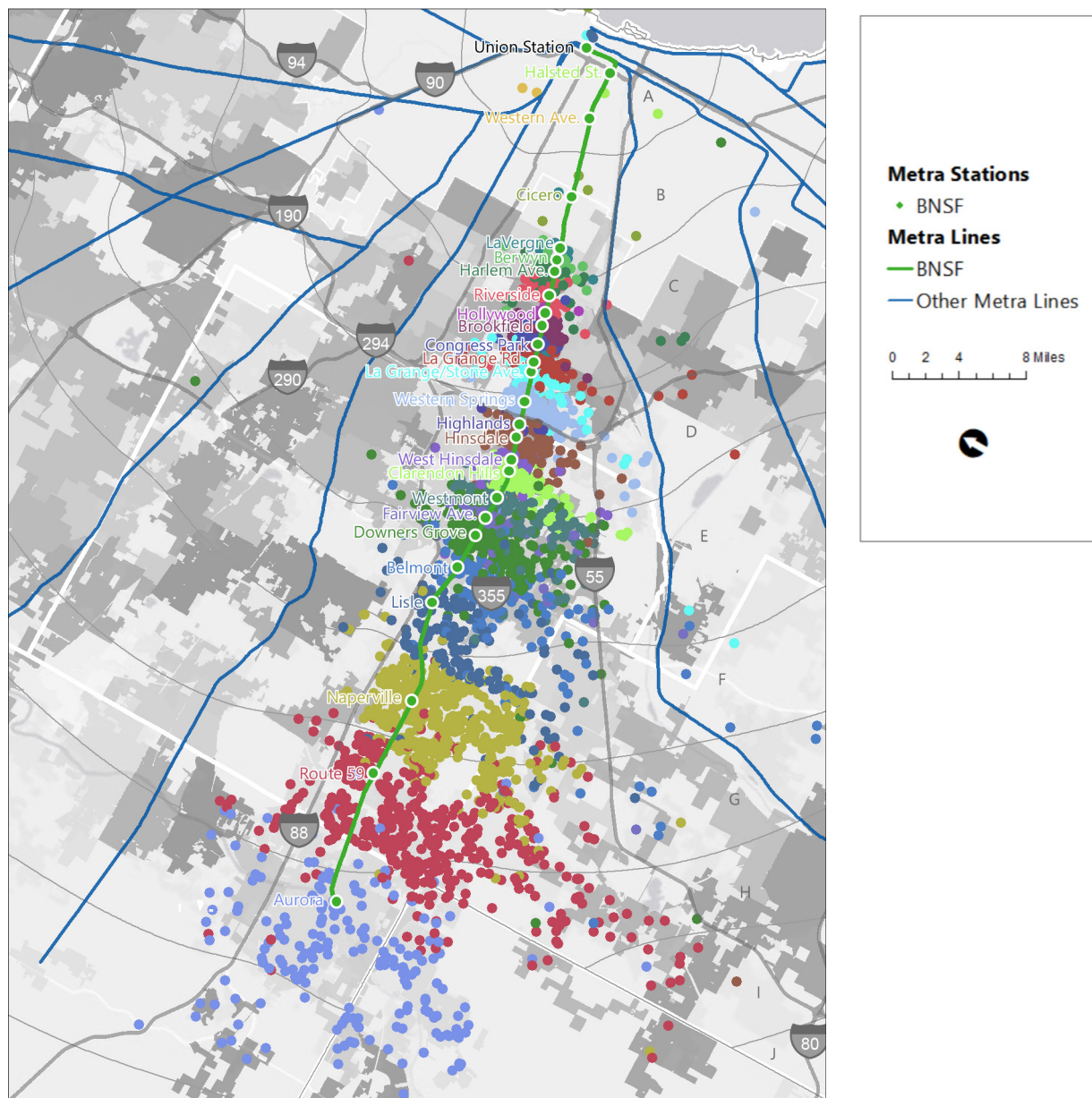


TABLE 5: BNSF CORRIDOR POPULATION

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Population in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station, Halsted St., Western Ave.	A	12.2	176,765	164,637	193,654	-7%	18%
Cicero, LaVergne, Berwyn, Harlem Ave.	B	24.2	242,689	254,291	292,778	5%	15%
Riverside, Hollywood (Zoo Stop), Brookfield, Congress Park, LaGrange Rd., Stone Ave./LaGrange	C	18.8	78,129	83,448	95,077	7%	14%
Western Springs, Highlands, Hinsdale, West Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, Westmont	D	33.2	97,548	106,480	118,910	9%	12%
Fairview Ave., Main St./Downers Grove, Belmont, Lisle	E	44.0	139,944	138,205	152,658	-1%	10%
Naperville	F	39.1	119,715	113,138	124,199	-5%	10%
Route 59	G	45.4	98,768	119,826	139,727	21%	17%
Aurora	H	80.9	195,477	214,206	285,377	10%	33%
BNSF TOTAL		297.8	1,149,035	1,194,231	1,402,380	4%	17%
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	8,523,863	8,672,509	10,354,840	2%	19%

TABLE 6: BNSF CORRIDOR HOUSEHOLDS

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Households in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station, Halsted St., Western Ave.	A	12.2	52,915	56,122	67,118	6%	20%
Cicero, LaVergne, Berwyn, Harlem Ave.	B	24.2	71,886	76,823	91,110	7%	19%
Riverside, Hollywood (Zoo Stop), Brookfield, Congress Park, LaGrange Rd., Stone Ave./LaGrange	C	18.8	31,229	34,300	40,983	10%	19%
Western Springs, Highlands, Hinsdale, West Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, Westmont	D	33.2	38,066	43,229	51,150	14%	18%
Fairview Ave., Main St./Downers Grove, Belmont, Lisle	E	44.0	54,245	57,844	65,948	7%	14%
Naperville	F	39.1	40,707	41,469	46,862	2%	13%
Route 59	G	45.4	34,712	44,152	52,082	27%	18%
Aurora	H	80.9	63,872	70,682	100,078	11%	42%
BNSF TOTAL		297.8	387,632	424,621	515,331	10%	21%
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	3,100,987	3,341,064	4,140,227	8%	24%

TABLE 7: BNSF CORRIDOR EMPLOYMENT

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Employment in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station, Halsted St., Western Ave.	A	12.2	130,586	165,946	183,384	27%	11%
Cicero, LaVergne, Berwyn, Harlem Ave.	B	24.2	70,884	72,228	86,442	2%	20%
Riverside, Hollywood (Zoo Stop), Brookfield, Congress Park, LaGrange Rd., Stone Ave./LaGrange	C	18.8	42,751	43,678	50,377	2%	15%
Western Springs, Highlands, Hinsdale, West Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, Westmont	D	33.2	80,235	80,613	87,236	0%	8%
Fairview Ave., Main St./Downers Grove, Belmont, Lisle	E	44.0	93,101	90,414	99,349	-3%	10%
Naperville	F	39.1	52,999	63,686	69,141	20%	9%
Route 59	G	45.4	46,745	56,688	66,423	21%	17%
Aurora	H	80.9	64,286	60,959	84,986	-5%	39%
BNSF TOTAL		297.8	581,587	634,212	727,338	9%	15%
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	4,141,355	4,231,961	4,945,892	2%	17%

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to build the project and a new stable funding source for operating and maintenance expenses would need to be secured.

BNSF ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Most BNSF stations now comply with ADA accessibility requirements, and approximately 94% of BNSF weekday boardings take place at these accessible stations. Metra’s station compliance program started with designating seven of the busiest BNSF stations, including CUS in downtown Chicago, as “key stations”, all of which were made fully accessible by 2004. Since 1985, Metra has completed access improvements at numerous non-downtown BNSF stations, and 15 outlying stations on the line are now fully accessible to disabled riders. Metra will bring the remaining stations into full ADA compliance as they are rehabilitated, so that eventually all will be accessible.

TABLE 8: MAJOR TRIP GENERATORS ACCESSIBLE ALONG THE BNSF CORRIDOR

Generator Type	Name	Comments	Municipality
Colleges and Universities	University of Illinois at Chicago	24,000 students	Chicago
	Morton College	5,000 students	Cicero
	Midwestern University	1,900 students	Downers Grove
	Illinois Benedictine University	5,300 students	Lisle
	North Central College	2,600 students	Naperville
	Aurora University	4,000 students	Aurora
Culture and Entertainment	Brookfield Zoo	200-acre zoo with 450 animal species	Brookfield
	DuPage Children's Museum	Children's museum; 300,000 visitors annually	Naperville
	Naper Settlement	19th-century living history museum	Naperville
	Hollywood Casino Aurora	Riverboat casino	Aurora
	Paramount Theater	Performing arts venue	Aurora
	RiverEdge Park	Outdoor concert venue	Aurora
Shopping	Chicago Premium Outlets	Over 150 stores	Aurora
	Fox Valley Mall	Super-regional mall	Aurora
Government	Cook County Criminal Courts	Hosts felony trials	Chicago
	Cook County Juvenile Court	Courtrooms and juvenile temporary detention center	Chicago