



*Office of the CEO/Executive Director*

February 7, 2022

Honorable Sandy Hart  
Chair, Lake County Board  
18 North County Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Waukegan, IL 60085

**RE: Canadian National Railroad Double Tracking Improvements – North Central Service Corridor**

Dear Chair Hart:

Metra strongly supports the efforts of the Canadian National Railroad (CNRR) to install double-track rail infrastructure along a 2.2-mile section of Metra's North Central Service (NCS) line between Lake Avenue in the Village of Grayslake and Hook Drive in the Village of Round Lake Beach. Freight interference is routinely a top cause of delay for Metra trains and this project will decrease these occurrences on the NCS, improving on-time performance and overall passenger rail and freight operations in the corridor. This project will also eliminate some conflicts at Grayslake Crossing just south of the project where the Metra Milwaukee District North Line crosses the NCS tracks, thereby improving on time performance and operational fluidity for that line as well.

In 2019, the NCS provided 1.58 million passenger trips. Demand for passenger rail service along the NCS line will likely increase due to substantial job growth forecasted in Lake County by 2050, especially for people traveling from Chicago to the suburbs for work. Metra has been unable to explore expanded reverse-commute service options on the NCS due to infrastructure limitations and freight traffic demands. This double tracking project is a necessary step toward easing rail congestion in the corridor and possibly exploring expanded Metra service in the future to serve the ridership demands.

Moreover, under current single-track conditions, frequent train stoppages and slow train speeds along the NCS cause vehicle delays at rail crossings and on area roads. These conditions can inhibit emergency responses. Aside from benefits to current and future Metra riders, non-users of our system and residents of Lake County will benefit from this double tracking improvement as well.

Canadian National Railroad has been a supportive partner to Metra in the NCS corridor, for example contributing to bridge repair and replacements. We look forward to their continued partnership as they plan, design, and construct the approximately 2.2 miles of double-track at their sole expense.

Sincerely,

James M. Derwinski  
CEO/Executive Director