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April 11, 2013

Mr. Robert Kiely
City Manager
City of Lake Forest
220 E. Deerpath Road
Lake Forest, IL 60045-1914

Subject: Amtrak Station Stop in Lake Forest

Dear Mr. Kiely,

The Lake County Transportation Alliance (LCTA) is a public-private partnership which seeks to build consensus around needed transportation improvements of all modes of transportation in Lake County. www.lcta1.com

The Executive Committee of the LCTA received a copy of the attached Fact Sheet entitled "Lake County Amtrak Hiawatha Service Station Stop in Lake Forest." This proposed stop would be in west Lake Forest at Everett Rd and IL Rte 43.

Based on the Fact Sheet, some of the items discussed on this request were:

- What is the best location for a stop in Lake County? The station should have easy access to residents and businesses and available parking for the new users. Lake Cook Rd station was mentioned as a prototypical good example with both but not centralized in Lake County.
- Is Metra in support and would there be any disruptions to the existing Metra Milwaukee North commuter service?
- Any new stop should service all of Lake County. Gurnee has been talked about as a location for years.
- An existing Metra station stop should be used, e.g. Gurnee is north of the branch off of the Metra Milwaukee North commuter service to Fox Lake.
- There is no Amtrak stop in Lake County now.
- It was noted that there is no agency undertaking a comprehensive study nor is there any other municipality in Lake County undertaking such a study.

Therefore, the LCTA Executive Committee voted that I send a letter of support for an Amtrak Hiawatha Service Station Stop in west Lake Forest. We applaud the City of Lake Forest for completing preliminary work on the potential for an Amtrak station stop in Lake County and trust that the issues mention above be adequately reviewed.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Martin G. Buehler".

Martin G. Buehler
Executive Director, LTCA

Cc: LCTA President Suzanne Zupec

One Voice...One Transportation Future

Lake County Amtrak Hiawatha Service Station Stop in Lake Forest

PURPOSE AND NEED:

- Regional area businesses are expanding in Lake County and creating new employment opportunities
- Traffic congestion on I-94 between Wisconsin and Illinois is causing long commute times
- **No existing passenger rail alternative currently serves the Lake County market**

BENEFITS:

- Improved employee access benefits new and expanding businesses in Lake County
- Alternative to driving for area residents, especially young people and senior citizens
- Lake County Illinois residents can travel to destinations in Wisconsin including Milwaukee and Milwaukee Airport
- Amtrak and the states would benefit from additional revenues on state-supported Amtrak trains
- City of Lake Forest is responsive to the needs of the community

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

City of Lake Forest has requested that the AMTRAK HIAWATHA SERVICE trains currently operating between Chicago and Milwaukee each day make an additional station stop at Lake Forest to accommodate the identified passenger travel demand.

RELATED ISSUES:

- Critically important that on time performance of METRA commuter service not be impaired
- Strong desire to avoid degrading overall trip time of existing Amtrak Hiawatha Service
- Chicago-Milwaukee rail corridor is already very busy with Metra, Amtrak and CP Rail freight
- CP Rail freight trains must maintain current access to rail freight yards/connections in Chicago
- Economic health of the Lake County needs the passenger rail alternative as option to driving
- Amtrak, Metra, IDOT and WisDOT have all cooperated in the process to develop the requested new station stops and minimize adverse effects to rail operations in this busy rail corridor
- City of Lake Forest has been awarded a grant to construct a new pedestrian underpass to improve passenger safety at the Lake Forest Telegraph/Everett Road passenger station
- Additional ridership at Lake Forest will help to support the continued growth in the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRI) and High Speed Rail (HSR) programs now underway in Chicago and the surrounding states.
- Employer-provided shuttle service is already operating between Metra stations and multiple business locations and could also serve Amtrak trains.

DESIRED ACTION:

Request that Senator Durbin express his strong support for the requested additional daily Amtrak Hiawatha Service station stops in Lake Forest to serve the economic needs of Lake County.