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Name: Lynnette Ciavarella

Organization: Metra

Title: Senior Division Director, Strategic Planning & Performance

Pronouns: She

Telephone number: (312) 322-8022

Email: lciavarella@metrarr.com

Address: 547 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60661

Name: Shanta Williams

Organization: Metra

Title: Assistant Deputy Executive Director, External Affairs

Pronouns: She

Telephone number: (312) 322-6725

Email: swilliams@metrarr.com

Address: 547 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60661

For which project type are you applying? (Choose one – You may apply for more than one type of assistance by completing a separate application form.) Transit Station Activation Project (pilot program)

Transit Station Activation Project

Describe your proposed activation project:

Metra is proposing station activation activities to celebrate the completion of station reconstruction projects at various locations. These activities will commemorate the opening of one new station and the re-opening of several stations that had extensive rehabilitation.

The specific activities, and refined cost estimates, will be determined closer to the celebration date, but could include coffee & donuts, food vendors, live music using local musicians, children's face painting, clowns / balloon artists, safety presentations, children's games or activities (such as beanbag tosses or coloring pictures of trains), meet and greet booths with community organizations or elected officials, Instagram-like photo opportunities, educational information from our transit ambassadors, poetry performances, and transit promotion give-aways.

Where will the project take place? (State the name of the transit station or stop and the specific location where the activation project will take place. Please also note the name of the property owner if not on Service Board property.)

Metra is proposing station activation activities at six stations:

- Peterson Ridge Station, Union Pacific North Line, Chicago
- 79th Street Station, Metra Electric, Chicago
- 147th Street / Sibley Station, Metra Electric, Harvey
- 103rd Street Station, Metra Electric, Chicago
- Homewood Station, Metra Electric, Homewood
- 87th Street Station, Metra Electric, Chicago

Metra owns both the station and railroad right-of-way where the events will occur. If additional space for the station opening celebrations is needed, Metra will secure approval from the associated property owner (if necessary).

How much funding are you requesting? Please detail the expenses (estimates are fine).

Metra is requesting \$60,000 total: \$10,000 for each of the six proposed station events. Detailed cost estimates have not yet been developed as specific activation activities may vary by location. Metra's past experiences with station opening celebrations have been less than this per station estimate, but Station Activation funding would allow Metra to expand our efforts beyond our typical efforts to better connect the newly opened or reopened station with the community.

Metra will adhere to the reimbursement policy to document expenses.

What is the timeline for this activation? (i.e. What is your thinking about the time of day, day of the week, month, for your proposal)

We anticipate all station activation activities to occur on weekend afternoons when the public (and performers) would be less likely to have schedule conflicts. Depending on the activity and availability of participants and performers, the activation events would have a duration of two to three hours.

The new Peterson Ridge Station is scheduled to open in May 2024. We anticipate having the station activation activity during the summer -- as soon as possible after an award announcement.

The 79th Street, 147th Street / Sibley, 103rd Street, and the Homewood stations are all scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2024, and the station activation events would occur soon after their completion.

The 87th Street Station rehabilitation is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2025, with the activation event occurring afterwards.

Will the project process include activities in which the general public will be invited to participate? If so, please describe:

The general public will be invited to participate in the event; these will be public events open to all area residents. Metra's Community Relations Department has established relationships with local community organizations and elected officials with whom they can promote the station activation events to the public. In addition, events will be publicized on our web site and through social media.

Is your organization currently in communication with the relevant transit agency and/or property owner? Do you anticipate needing assistance in making contact?

Metra is the operator of the commuter rail system. We will reach out to Pace and CTA in order to inform them of these events and coordinate with them, as appropriate.

Describe any experience you have with implementing something similar to your proposal:

Metra has conducted numerous ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies in the past, but those events are typically focused on celebrating accomplishments with elected officials who have financially or politically supported the project. The six proposed station activation events will be more public facing and promotional to raise awareness of the completed projects and the improved rider experience for the public.

Metra has conducted similar activities in our rail service yards for employee-only events.

What resident or community support do you have or would like to gain for the proposed activation? Metra ridership, including the traditional rush hour work commutes, has been impacted by increased levels of remote work that began during the COVID pandemic. We seek every opportunity to reach occasional and new riders to use our service for both peak trips and off-peak, non-work trips.

We would like community residents near the six stations to gain an improved awareness of user experience upgrades at these stations, an awareness of improved ADA access to stations, and educate the public of how easy it is to use Metra to travel. In addition, we would like to increase awareness to the public of our new fare structures which makes Metra more affordable, to demonstrate how to purchase Metra tickets as we move away from physical ticketing, and how to navigate the Metra system.

Is there any additional information you want us to know? The station activation activities are consistent with Metra's strategic plan, My Metra, Our Future. Station activation supports the plan's goals to ensure that the Metra experience is safe, easy and enjoyable for all customers and to innovate to become more efficient and effective.

Please upload a map of where specifically the activation will take place: <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/16099766326>

Closing Questions

How did you find out about the call for projects? (Select all that apply) Other: RTA outreach

What resources did you find helpful as you apply for the call? (Select all that apply) Web page FAQ

How difficult was it to fill out this application? Very easy
