

SOUNDING BOARD

Got a question? We've got an answer

Sidewalks sidetracked

When will the sidewalk construction outside the Union Station Madison Street entrance be finished? What was the goal for this construction, other than being a barrier to commuters?

Jeff

That wasn't a Metra project, but we're happy to tell you anyway that the work should be done by now. The project was carried out by the owners of the Riverside Plaza buildings, who are obligated to provide a watertight covering over Union Station tracks. The job included work on the expansion joints that run along the sidewalks on Madison, Monroe and Adams between Canal St. and the

Chicago River, and it took a bit longer than normal because the work crossed multiple tracks and so had to be done in stages. (We couldn't close all the tracks at once, obviously.)

We're working on it

Your new website is not functional for mobile devices. When will this be fixed? It is making my use of Metra significantly decline due to this.

George

We know, we're working on it. We now expect the mobile site to be ready in the first quarter of 2010.

Heating issue

The train car I have been sitting in this week has had no heat.

The conductor only said "I guess it doesn't work." The car I was sitting in was the second set of doors from the front, second half of the train car. Just letting you know so someone can look into it and fix it.

Steven

We figured out which car you meant and fixed the heaters.

Crowded BNSF

What is it that you all don't get about the crowded trains from Naperville to Union Station? Is it really necessary to pick up Aurora, Rt. 59 and Naperville at the same time? I stand more than I sit. There are so many people that complain about this, surely you could work this out.

Marlene

We get that the trains are crowded. But we don't have any extra rolling stock to add trains to the route, which is what we'd need to do to bypass the stations you mentioned. (Another train would have to pick riders up at those stations.) The state has been without a capital bond program for more than five years, which means we've been without money to buy more rolling stock. Now we have to play catch up.

One thing we are doing that will help BNSF crowding is that we are upgrading the UP West line so that it can operate much more like the BNSF line. When that's done in a couple years, we believe many west suburban riders who now use the BNSF will migrate to the UP West, freeing up space on the BNSF.

On the Bi-Level

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We can't guarantee all letters will be printed or answered. Please keep letters to less than 200 words and include your first name, hometown and what line you ride. (Names are not required but strongly encouraged.) We reserve the right to edit letter for length and grammar.

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