



USDOT Region V Regional University Transportation Center Final Report

181CSUY2.2

:

**A STUDY OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY AND FACULTY/STAFF USE OF AN
IMPROVED 95TH STREET METRA STOP**

By

Daniel Block

Professor of Geography and Coordinator of the Fred Blum Neighborhood Assistance
Center

Chicago State University

dblock@csu.edu



DISCLAIMER

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY

181CSUY2.2

Final Report, July 17, 2017

A Study of Potential Community and Faculty/Staff Use of an Improved 95th Street Metra Stop

Introduction

The CSU NEXTRANS team extended its work on potential benefits to Chicago State University staff, faculty and students, as well as the surrounding community of an improved 95th Street Metra stop by performed an electronic survey of staff and faculty on their transportation patterns and a focus group on community transportation needs and the 95th Street stop. The focus group was performed in partnership with Endeleo, a local community development organization.

Findings

The staff/faculty survey had an N of 119 out of a population of approximately 650, for a confidence interval of about + or – 8%. 71% of respondents were female. 66% were over 45 and 36% were over 55. Findings of the transportation study include: 1) Staff/faculty generally drive alone to school (80%), which is fairly similar to the student rate of 77%. 2) 16 staff/faculty stated they used Metra...although most likely not every day; 3) 60% of respondents stated they had considered using Metra, a much larger percentage than for students. 3) The mean commuting time for staff/faculty was 38 Minutes, which is slightly longer than for students. 4) for staff/faculty using public transportation the mean commuting time was 71 minutes, which is significantly longer than for students taking public transportation; for those not driving alone the mean commuting time was 33 minutes. 5) Convenience issues were cited by over fifty percent of respondents as a major reason why they did not take Metra. 6) Only 18% of respondents felt safe on public transportation at night, and only 14% felt safe waiting for public transportation at night. This is a major issue given that 42% of respondents worked at least some evenings. 7) In general, staff and faculty are satisfied with their current commute.

The community member focus group included 11 community members recruited by Endeleo, a local community development organization. Questions were developed by the CSU team with consultation with Endeleo. The community members were focused on similar issues to the survey recipients, such as the safety of the stop, the darkness of the stop (which must be accessed by a set of stairs in an underpass), and the infrequency of the service. On the positive side, community members were hopeful that an improved stop could anchor one end of an economic development corridor on 95th Street.

Recommendations

1. Raising the number of Metra commuters at CSU at Chicago State is possible, and given the interest, staff and faculty would be major part of this effort. Safety and the convenience of the Metra stop to the university would have to be improved, however.
2. While many CSU employees have an interest in commuting on the Metra, many work evenings at least some days each week. This combined with general safety worries related to public transportation are challenges for increasing use of Metra.
3. While the sample size is somewhat small, the mean commuting time for public transportation users was 71 minutes, much more than the mean in general of 38 minutes. An improved Metra stop and schedule could help decrease these times for some of these public transportation commuters.
4. Next Steps:
 - a. Study relationships between distance to CSU, reported commute time, and possible commute time with improved station
 - b. Further explore data including issues such as the role of children and errands in commuting patterns
 - c. Work with Endeleo and potentially other community partners to develop further plans towards improving of the Metra stop and other public transportation nodes in the Chicago State region.

Contacts

For more information:

Daniel Block
Chicago State University
9501 S. King Dr., Chicago, IL 60628
Voice: 773-995-2310
Fax: 773-995-2030
dblock@csu.edu
www.csu.edu/nac/

NEXTRANS Center
Purdue University - Discovery Park
3000 Kent Ave.
West Lafayette, IN 47906

nextrans@purdue.edu
(765) 496-9724

www.purdue.edu/dp/nextrans