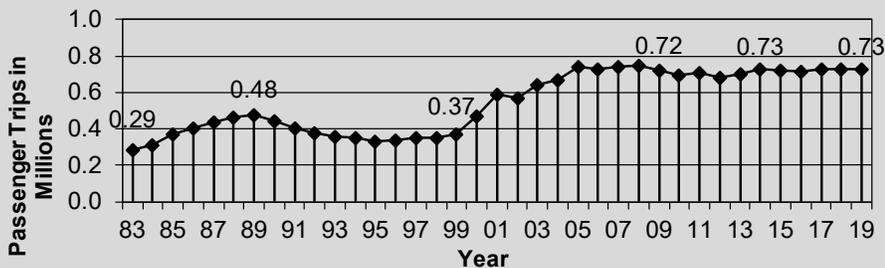


# Heritage Corridor

## Line at a Glance

- › Average Trip Length (2019) : 27.3 miles
- › Average Fare Paid (2019) : \$5.27
- › Number of Stations: 7
- › Route Length: 37.2 miles
- › Number of Weekday Trains (Dec 2019): 7
- › On-Time Performance (2019): 87.9%
- › 77% of HC riders drive to their boarding station.
- › 2% fewer people live along the HC than did in 2010.
- › 14% more people work along the HC than did in 2010.

**Figure 1: Annual HC Ridership**



The data included in this document predates the onset of COVID-19, which has greatly impacted Metra's riders and operations. This information is presented to inform the public about Metra's historic and recent operational environment but may not be illustrative of Metra's current or future operations. For the latest information, visit Metra's Operations and Ridership Data webpage at [metrarail.com](http://metrarail.com).



### Schedules as of Dec 2019

- › 3 trains in the AM Peak
- › 1 train in the Midday
- › 3 trains in the PM Peak
- › 0 trains in the Evening
- › 0 trains on Saturdays
- › 0 trains on Sundays



- › Lowest ridership and least serviced line
- › New Romeoville Station Opened in 2018



- › Pace I-55 Bus-On-Shoulder routes complement HC Service

## Chicago to

# Joliet

	HC (\$m)	System (\$m)
Rolling stock	\$30	\$2,978
Track and structure	\$8	\$1,567
Signal, electrical, and communications	\$26	\$1,137
Facilities and equipment	\$12	\$685
Stations and parking	\$11	\$1,120
Acquisitions, extensions, and expansions	\$1	\$603
Support activities	\$14	\$431
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$102</b>	<b>\$8,521</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Notes: 1) Excludes South Shore, preventative maintenance, new lines, and pending grants. 2) Prior expenses not adjusted for inflation. 3) Data subject to budget revisions, audit adjustments, etc. 4) Project costs without specific locations have been allocated to entire lines where appropriate

Time of Day	Inbound	Outbound
AM Peak	1,414	--
Midday	--	89
PM Peak	--	1,246
Evening	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,414</b>	<b>1,335</b>

Source: 2018 Weekday Station Boardings and Alightings by Time-of-Day and Direction

## ON COVID-19 AND HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The information presented in this chapter is representative of Metra’s operations prior to the onset of COVID-19, which upended almost every aspect of daily life. While Metra’s pre-COVID services may not be replicated in the same manner going forward, the transportation services Metra continues to provide are essential to the vitality of the Chicago region.

There are certain elements of Metra’s situational and operational environment that are unlikely to change in the short or medium term. These are: the location and capacity of each rail line, the location and physical characteristics of each station, the general characteristics of the communities around each station, Metra’s history in each community, and Metra’s mission to provide safe, reliable, efficient commuter rail service that enhances the economic and environmental health of northeast Illinois. On the other hand, there are operational and situational factors that are likely to be quite different. These may be: the number of riders, the time and duration of peak travel demand, the public’s perception of the relative safety of various transportation modes, the way riders access and depart from stations, and the location preferences of people and businesses.

The challenges posed by the pandemic were significant and likely will result in the emergence of a very different operational environment. Even so, understanding Metra’s past performance, pre-COVID service levels, and established community baselines is vital to making informed decisions about the reality that is taking shape. Through this process Metra will continue to achieve Metra’s mission, realizing its vision, and pursuing its strategic goals.

## In this section

- 1 – Annual Passenger Trips
- 2 – HC Overview
- 3 – Present and Future Demand
- 4 – Station Characteristics
- 4 – Mode of Access and Parking
- 6 – Reverse Commute and Non-Downtown Markets
- 6 – Major Capital Projects
- 8 – HC Corridor Demographics
- 8 – HC Corridor Household Data
- 8 – HC Corridor Employment Data
- 9 – ADA Accessibility
- 9 – Major Trip Generators

*As part of a regional transportation network, Metra provides safe, reliable, efficient commuter rail service that enhances the economic and environmental health of northeast Illinois.*

- Metra’s Mission Statement

## HC OVERVIEW

Metra’s Heritage Corridor (HC) Line extends southwest from Chicago Union Station (CUS, or “Union Station”) in downtown Chicago to Joliet. The line serves portions of Cook and Will Counties with service to five intermediate stations along its 37-mile route. The HC is Metra’s smallest line in terms of train service, number of stations, and ridership.

Metra operates HC trains on track owned by Canadian National (CN), Amtrak, and Union Pacific (UP). CN, UP, and BNSF freight trains, as well as 10 daily Amtrak trains use the same route as the HC. Amtrak’s Lincoln Service stops at both the Joliet and Summit Metra stations. Joliet is also the terminal station

for Metra's Rock Island Line, and the only suburban transfer station serving multiple Metra lines and Amtrak routes.

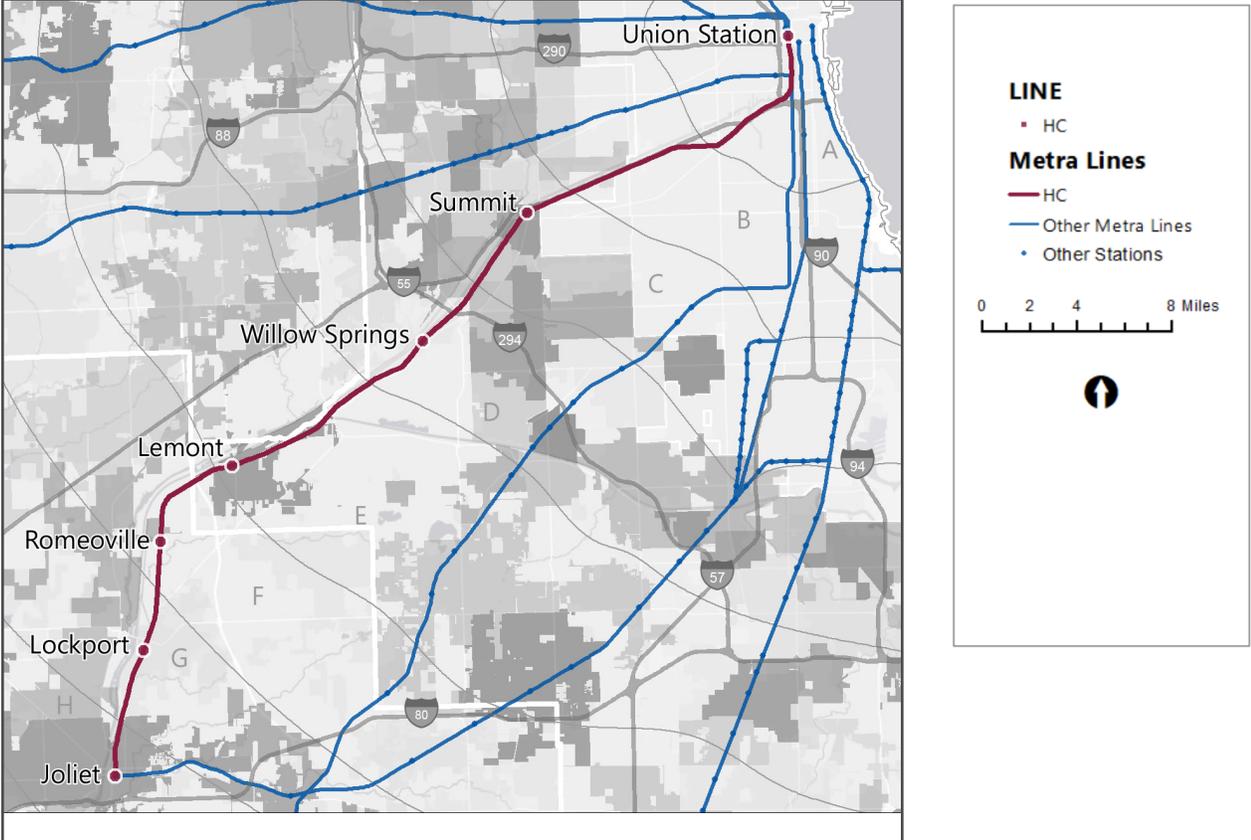
Intense freight activity in the eastern portion of the route makes HC trains particularly vulnerable to delays. The HC crosses four major at-grade interlockings (in Chicago: Brighton Park with CSX and Norfolk Southern, Corwith with BNSF, LeMoyné with the Belt Railway of Chicago; in Summit/Bedford Park: Argo with the Indiana Harbor Belt and CSX), and encounters heavy traffic near two rail yards. These conflicts have constrained commuter service on the HC to seven trains per weekday, with six of these serving peak-period, peak-direction commuters. Grade separation of the four crossings would eliminate conflicts with freight traffic at these locations.

The Milwaukee District's Western Avenue Yard provides midday servicing of HC trains, which are stored overnight at the Joliet Yard, a half mile east of Joliet Station. The Joliet Yard is shared with the Rock Island Line.

**PRESENT AND FUTURE DEMAND**

In 2018, almost 2,750 boardings took place each weekday on the HC, an increase of 199% since 1983. A number of indicators suggest that demand for commuter rail service will continue to rise in the HC corridor. The corridor has been growing rapidly in recent decades, and demographic forecasts

**FIGURE 2: METRA STATIONS ON THE HC LINE**



**TABLE 3: HC STATION CHARACTERISTICS**

Station	Accessibility <sup>1</sup>	Fare Zone	Mile Post	Responsibility and Maintenance			Boardings				Weekday trains as of Dec 2019
				Platform	Depot	Parking	1983 <sup>2</sup>	2006 <sup>2</sup>	2016 <sup>2</sup>	2018 <sup>2</sup>	
Union Station	●	A	0.0	--	--	--	499	1,421	1,222	1,333	7
Summit	●	C	11.9	Multiple	Metra	Multiple	44	64	100	101	7
Willow Springs	●	D	17.5	Multiple	Metra	Multiple	84	97	115	148	7
Lemont	●	E	25.3	Multiple	Multiple	Multiple	130	381	489	455	7
Romeoville <sup>3</sup>	●	F	29.2	Metra	Muni	Muni	--	--	--	148	7
Lockport	●	G	32.9	Multiple	Multiple	Multiple	55	552	412	344	7
Joliet	●	H	37.3	Multiple	Multiple	Multiple	106	391	209	220	7
<b>TOTAL HC</b>							<b>918</b>	<b>2,910</b>	<b>2,547</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>7</b>

**TABLE 4: 2019 MODE OF ACCESS AND COMMUTER PARKING AT HC METRA STATIONS**

Station Name	Mode of Access (2019)					Station Parking (2019)		
	Walk/Bike	Drive <sup>4</sup>	Dropped Off <sup>5</sup>	Transit	Other	Capacity	Effective Use <sup>6</sup>	Observed Use <sup>7</sup>
Union Station <sup>8</sup>	30%	39%	12%	14%	6%	0	--	--
Summit	24%	68%	8%	0%	0%	128	54%	54%
Willow Springs	19%	68%	13%	0%	0%	65	90%	90%
Lemont	9%	75%	16%	0%	0%	341	89%	80%
Romeoville	1%	84%	14%	0%	1%	173	77%	71%
Lockport	5%	76%	19%	0%	0%	402	60%	57%
Joliet <sup>9</sup>	1%	87%	10%	2%	1%	939	62%	62%
<b>TOTAL HC<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2,048</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>SYSTEM TOTAL</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>91,558</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>63%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Accessibility information is displayed using a three dot system. A complete dot means the station is fully accessible. No dot means that the station is inaccessible. A hollow dot means the station is partially accessible. Customers who use wheelchairs at partially accessible stations will be able to access train platforms from the street. However, ramps, ticket windows, buildings and shelters may not fully conform to ADA guidelines.

<sup>2</sup> Metra, "Commuter Rail System Station Boarding/Alighting Counts," Fall 2006, Spring 2014, and Fall 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Station opened in February 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Includes carpool drivers

<sup>5</sup> Includes carpool passengers

<sup>6</sup> Effective use: all sold permit spaces are assumed to be used, even if unoccupied during parking survey

<sup>7</sup> Observed use: spaces physically occupied during parking survey

<sup>8</sup> Includes riders from all lines at stations

<sup>9</sup> Parking also serves RI trains.

<sup>10</sup> Does not include Union Station MOA

Sources: Metra, Origin-Destination Survey, Fall 2019; Metra Station and Parking Capacity and Use Survey, 2018

Note: The data included in this document predates the onset of COVID-19, which has greatly impacted Metra's riders and operations. This information is presented to inform the public about Metra's historic and recent operational environment but may not be illustrative of Metra's current or future operations. For the latest information, visit Metra's Operations and Ridership Data webpage at metrarail.com.

anticipate continued growth in population and employment. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) forecasts that all HC station marketsheds will increase in population, households, and employment, as shown in Tables 5, 6, and 7. The HC corridor is projected to attract 170,000 new residents between 2020 and 2050, a 30% increase. Projected population growth is especially significant near the southwest portion of the HC in Will County. Over 85,000 jobs are projected to be added in the corridor by 2050, a 28% rise.

With improved service frequencies, as well as midday and reverse-commute trains, the HC would be better able to serve the transportation needs of the growing market in the corridor. An upgraded HC would also be able to attract riders living near the HC who currently drive to more distant stations on the BNSF, SouthWest Service, or Rock Island lines in order to take advantage of improved service levels. Increasing the utility of the HC would reduce travel times for these riders and reduce congestion on adjacent Metra lines.

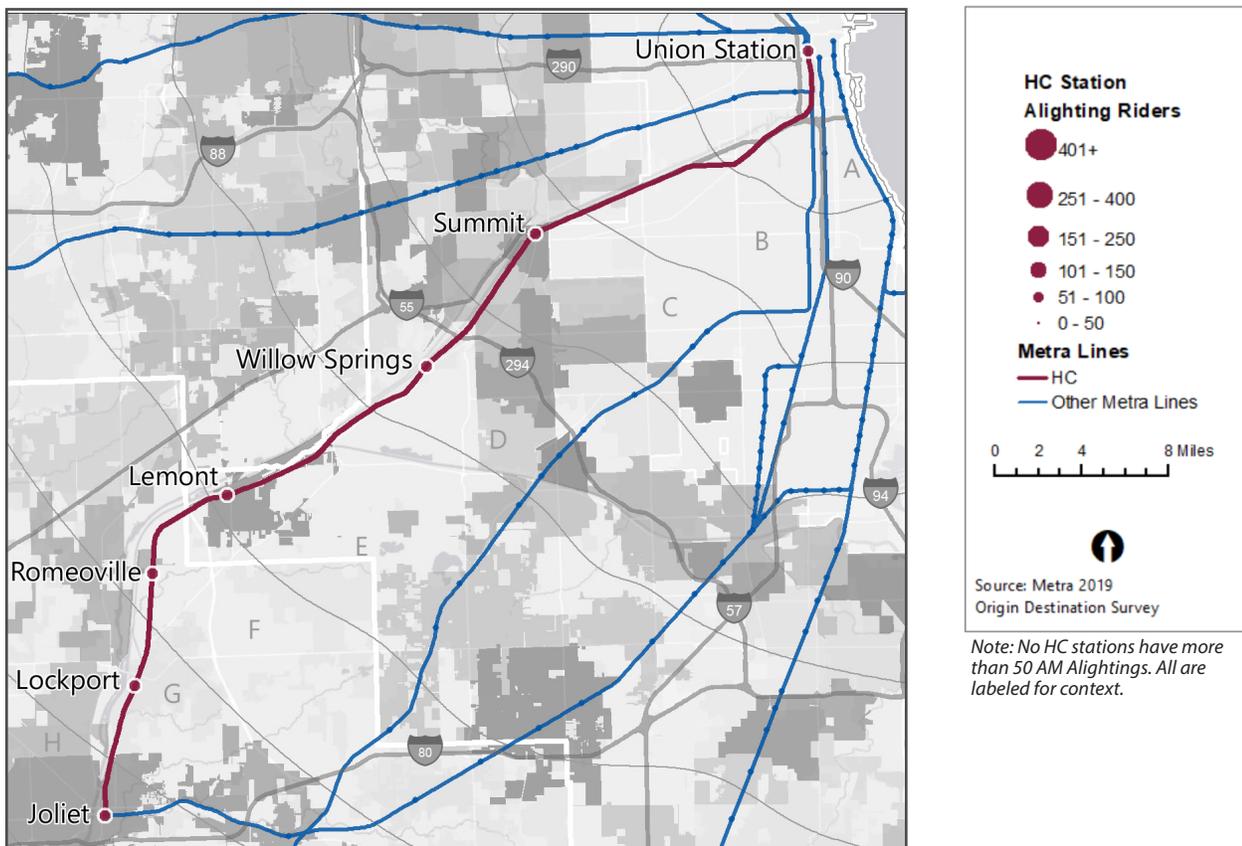
Currently, 2,000 parking spaces serve the riders of the HC. According to parking counts conducted in 2019, the average rate of effective utilization at all stations on the line is 66%. Parking utilization at the Lemont and Willow Springs stations is above 85%, which indicates high parking demand.

## Terms Defined

“Peak-Direction Trains” are those that travel in the direction with the most demand from riders. During the “AM Peak,” trains travelling toward the Loop are “Peak-Direction” while trains travelling away from the Loop are “Peak-Direction” during the “PM Peak.”

“Effective Parking Utilization” is calculated by assuming that all parking pass holders will need a parking space at the same time. This ensures that there is always a space for those who hold a parking pass.

FIGURE 3: NON-DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS DURING AM PEAK



## REVERSE-COMMUTE AND NON-DOWNTOWN MARKETS

Although Metra’s primary market involves commuters who follow the traditional suburb-to-CBD trip pattern, on many lines Metra has seen a demand for city-to-suburb reverse-commute options (Metra’s primary commuter market is discussed in the Central Business District Market chapter). However, due to the limited schedule of the HC, reverse-commute trips are not possible and the number of riders alighting at suburban stations in the morning is extremely small.

Factors that increase reverse-commute trip patterns are the growth of employment in the suburbs as well as growth of population in the city and inner ring suburbs (see Tables 5, 6, and 7). Employment growth in the suburbs along the line is projected to be strong during this period. These opportunities are likely to draw commuters from beyond the immediate downtown Chicago station area. Employment along the entire HC is expected to increase 28% between 2020 and 2050, with the most substantial growth projected in station marketsheds near the southern end of the HC. The data suggests that with connecting bus service and a more robust train schedule, the HC may be able to attract commuters traveling from the city and inner suburbs to employment centers in outlying suburbs. However, due to the HC’s current, limited schedule, a significant reverse-commute market is unlikely

## MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS ALONG THE HC

Since 1985, Metra has invested \$89 million (in year of expenditure dollars) in improvements to the HC corridor. Table 1 indicates the amount of investment in different asset categories. This amount includes costs of a track and signal upgrade project completed in 2002, new warming houses at Summit and Willow Springs, and restoration of the historic depots at Lemont and Lockport (the oldest depots in the Metra system). American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants funded platform improvements at Lockport and Joliet Stations.

Due to capacity constraints on the HC, Metra has had limited opportunities to adjust the service schedule on the line. In April 1999, the number of trains was increased from four to six, which led to a 31% increase in boardings between 1999 and 2002. A seventh daily train, departing Chicago in mid-afternoon, was added in 2016.

In 2018, a new station opened near 135th Street and New Avenue in Romeoville. This new station was funded by the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program and a grant awarded to the village of Romeoville from the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP).

Also in 2018, a new multimodal transportation center opened in Joliet, to accommodate Metra, Amtrak, Pace, intercity and shuttle buses, bicycles,

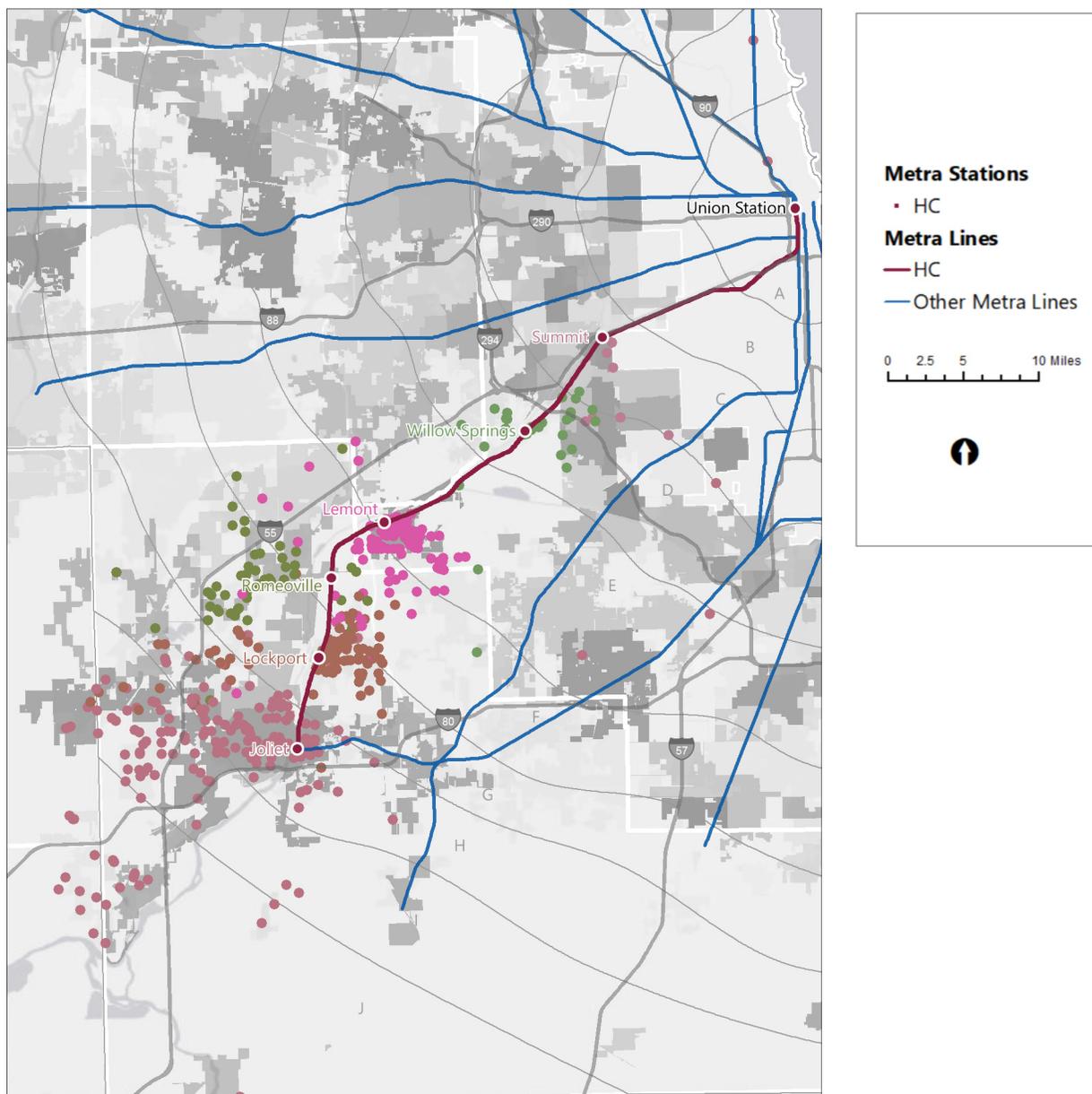
### Terms Defined

“Reverse Commuting” refers to riders who regularly travel in the opposite direction of most commuters. For Metra riders, this refers to people who are travelling away from the Loop during the AM Peak and toward the Loop during the PM Peak.

“Alighting Riders” are those who get off the train. They are the opposite of a “boarding rider.”

taxis, and intercity passenger rail (existing Amtrak service, as well as planned high-speed rail service between Chicago and St. Louis) and streamline transfers between the services. A new bus station is planned to be added to the transportation center, and will be built once funding is available. The HC platform portion of the project now allows passengers to approach the platform through two new pedestrian tunnels, instead of crossing freight tracks to board the train. The tunnels have both stairs and an elevator for ADA access to the platform. Major funding for the transportation center was provided by the state with additional funding from Joliet and BNSF.

FIGURE 4: ORIGINS OF RIDERS USING NON-CBD HC STATIONS



**TABLE 5: HC CORRIDOR POPULATION**

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Population in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station	A	0.3	2,895	4,834	4,851	67%	0%
Summit	C	18.4	69,374	71,254	79,733	3%	12%
Willow Springs	D	32.1	48,030	48,637	56,895	1%	17%
Lemont	E	43.7	72,363	69,581	83,158	-4%	20%
Romeoville	F	50.5	85,929	84,514	117,893	-2%	39%
Lockport	G	51.8	77,048	85,923	118,830	12%	38%
Joliet	H	120.3	222,749	202,200	276,118	-9%	37%
<b>HC TOTAL</b>		<b>317.0</b>	<b>578,388</b>	<b>566,943</b>	<b>737,478</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>30%</b>
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	8,523,863	8,672,509	10,354,840	2%	19%

**TABLE 6: HC CORRIDOR HOUSEHOLDS**

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Households in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station	A	0.3	1,859	2,872	2,642	54%	-8%
Summit	C	18.4	25,930	26,272	30,732	1%	17%
Willow Springs	D	32.1	18,042	19,446	23,815	8%	22%
Lemont	E	43.7	23,539	24,671	31,050	5%	26%
Romeoville	F	50.5	29,017	27,953	41,911	-4%	50%
Lockport	G	51.8	27,136	30,571	45,035	13%	47%
Joliet	H	120.3	78,417	72,710	106,521	-7%	47%
<b>HC TOTAL</b>		<b>317.0</b>	<b>203,940</b>	<b>204,495</b>	<b>281,706</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>38%</b>
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	3,100,987	3,341,064	4,140,227	8%	24%

**TABLE 7: HC CORRIDOR EMPLOYMENT**

Station	Fare Zone	Area Sq. Mi.	Employment in Zone			Percent Change	
			2010	2020	2050	2010 vs 2020	2020 vs 2050
Union Station	A	0.3	67,495	82,500	89,365	22%	8%
Summit	C	18.4	24,272	27,357	36,216	13%	32%
Willow Springs	D	32.1	21,934	28,803	34,656	31%	20%
Lemont	E	43.7	23,932	31,765	39,332	33%	24%
Romeoville	F	50.5	36,209	47,627	63,982	32%	34%
Lockport	G	51.8	23,598	24,159	34,586	2%	43%
Joliet	H	120.3	70,126	63,078	92,999	-10%	47%
<b>HC TOTAL</b>		<b>317.0</b>	<b>267,566</b>	<b>305,289</b>	<b>391,136</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>28%</b>
REGION TOTAL		3,748.0	4,141,355	4,231,961	4,945,892	2%	17%

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Metra has evaluated separating the HC’s four major at-grade crossings as long-term improvements, due to the cost, complexity and service disruptions involved with these projects. Several improvements have been completed in this corridor as part of the CREATE Program in order to improve operations without construction of more costly flyovers. The improvements included the installation of a modern remote-controlled signal system and replacement of the crossing diamonds at Brighton Park. Engineering and environmental study are underway at several other CREATE projects in this corridor.

**HC ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Since 1985, Metra has completed access improvements at all of the non-downtown HC stations. As part of the ARRA-funded work mentioned above, HC platforms at Joliet were made accessible to disabled riders in 2011, and all HC stations, including the new Romeoville station, are compliant with the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**TABLE 8: MAJOR TRIP GENERATORS ACCESSIBLE ALONG THE HC CORRIDOR**

Generator Type	Name	Comments	Municipality
<b>Colleges and Universities</b>	Joliet Junior College	15,000 students	Joliet
	University of St. Francis	1,700 students	Joliet
<b>Culture and Entertainment</b>	Chicagoland Speedway/Route 66 Raceway	NASCAR racetrack; cap. 55,000	Joliet
	Harrah’s Joliet Hotel & Casino	Riverboat casino & hotel; 200 rooms	Joliet
	Rialto Square Theatre	Performing arts venue; cap. 2,000	Joliet
	Silver Cross Field	Home of the Joliet Slammers minor-league baseball team; cap. 6,000	Joliet
<b>Government</b>	Argonne National Laboratory	Science and engineering research center; 3,200 employees, plus scholars and students	Argonne
	Stateville Correctional Center		Joliet
	City of Joliet	City administrative offices	Joliet
	Will County Government/ Courthouse	County administrative offices and courthouse	Joliet