

Oswego officials to make renewed push for Metra station

By **Linda Girardi**
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Oswego Village President Gail Johnson intends to renew talks to bring a Metra commuter station to the village.

"Somehow, we have just fallen off the radar," Johnson said.

Village Board members this week set aside time in a workshop session to establish priorities for the village to complete within the next six months to several years into the future.

The proposed Metra station is listed as a high priority on a list of "upcoming projects." Johnson said she has reached out to the mayors in Yorkville, Montgomery, Plano and Sandwich as well as the Kendall County Board, about having the Metra governing board make the topic of new stations an important talking point at their meetings.

"We need to let Metra know we are still interested," the village president said. "We know it is important to Oswego. All of the conservative estimates have put us in 2040 at 60,000 residents. As the biggest municipality in Kendall County, we have to drive it. It will be good for our community and the region."

Carrie Hansen, interim village administrator, said Metra's original feasibility study to extend commuter service along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe line was done in the early 2000s. She said other studies were authorized in 2012 and most recently within the last couple of months.

"We need as a village and a region to get us back on the RTA Board's radar and keep pounding it. We need to be clear, concise and consistent in our messaging," she said. "We need to impress upon them how serious we are."

The village in March locked in a purchase of a 15-acre parcel for a future Metra commuter parking lot at the northwest corner of Orchard Road and Mill Street. The land acquisition was part of a planned unit development agreement for 98.3 acres of land located on the west side of Orchard Road north of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railway. The Metra lot would go on that property.

Oswego experienced a dramatic growth spurt between 2000 and 2010 when the population increased 127.8 percent from 12,726 to 30,355 residents. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning has projected Oswego's population will increase to 48,000 by 2025 as well.

Girardi is a freelance reporter