



**TO: Board of Directors**

**FROM: Jim Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director**

**SUBJECT: March 2024 Ridership Trends**

**DATE: April 17, 2024**

This memo describes ridership patterns in 2024, including ridership and service recovery by line and service period. Data in this report is preliminary.

In March 2024, Metra provided 2.7 million passenger trips, a 6% increase from February. Compared to February, March had the same number of weekdays, one additional Saturday, and one additional Sunday. Compared to March 2023, March 2024 ridership increased 4%. March 2024 had two less weekdays, one additional Saturday, and one additional Sunday.

**Estimated Passenger Trips by Month**

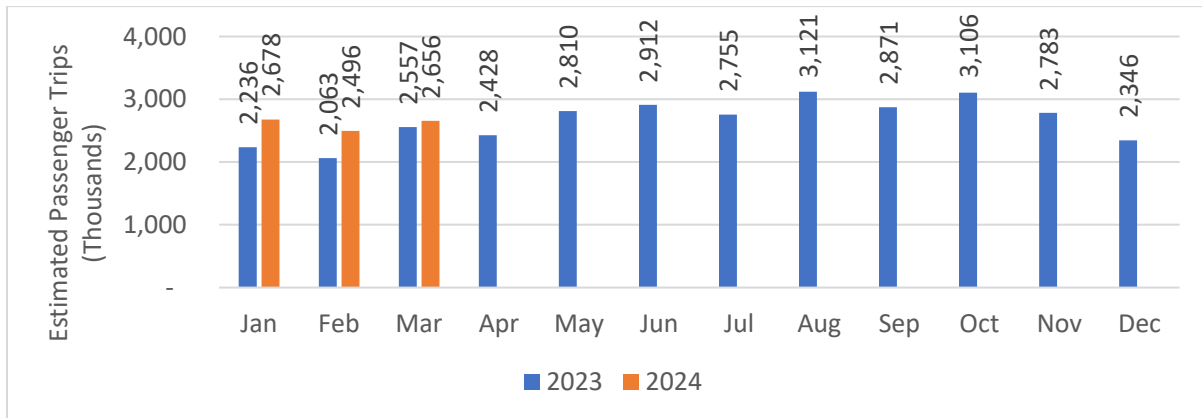


Exhibit 1

**Estimated Passenger Trips by Line (March 2023 vs. March 2024)**

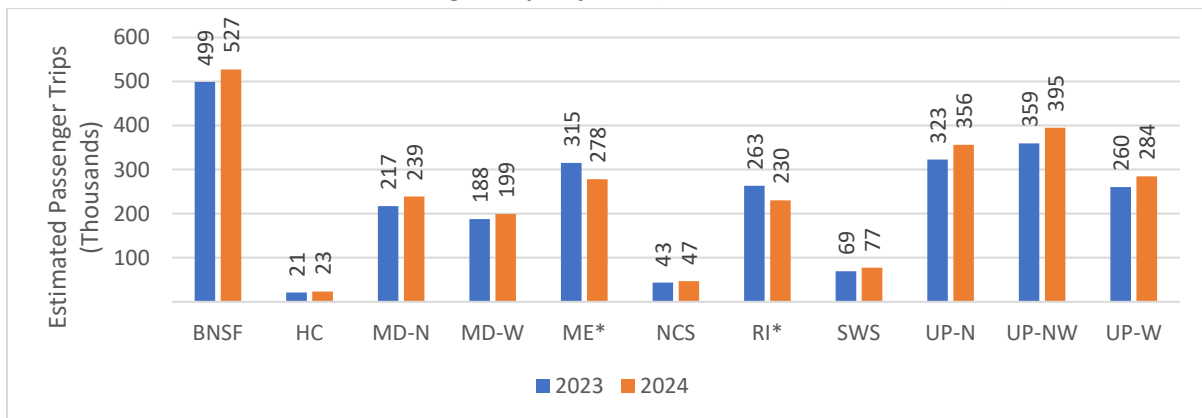


Exhibit 2

\*ME and RI ridership is underreported in Exhibit 2 due to the stockpiling of South Cook-priced 10-Ride Tickets that were sold in January. Based on conductor counts, ME and RI avg weekday ridership was an estimated 5% and 8% higher in March 2024 than in March 2023, respectively.

## Weekday Riders

March average weekday ridership was 149,700, which was 55% of 2019 levels.

**Metra Average Weekday Ridership by Week (April 2023-March 2024)**

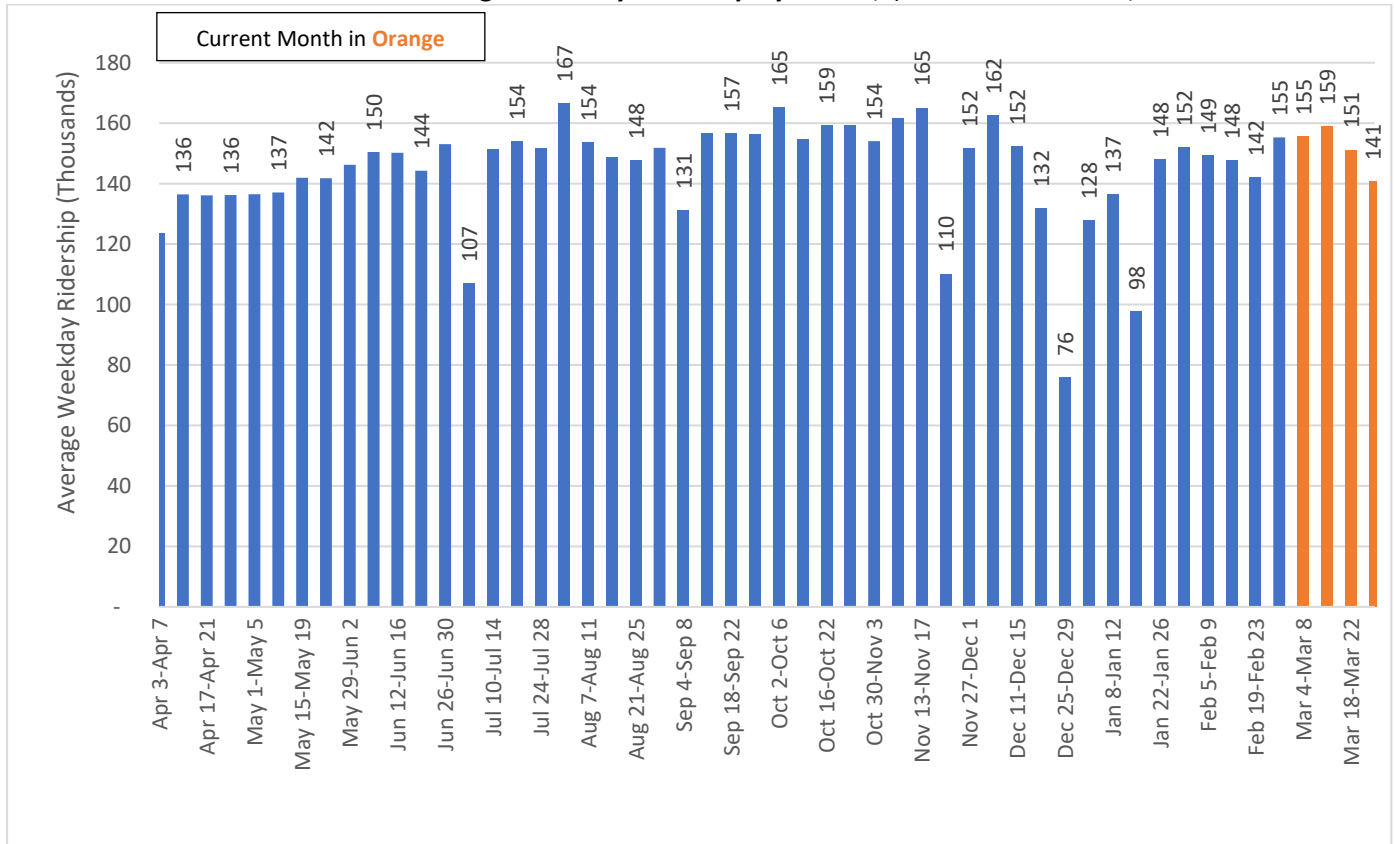


Exhibit 3

	2023									2024		
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Avg Weekday Ridership Chg. from Prior Month	+9%	+6%	+5%	-2%	+8%	-2%	+3%	-4%	-13%	0%	+13%	0%

**Daily Conductor Counts for Month** (Fridays shown with grey bars)

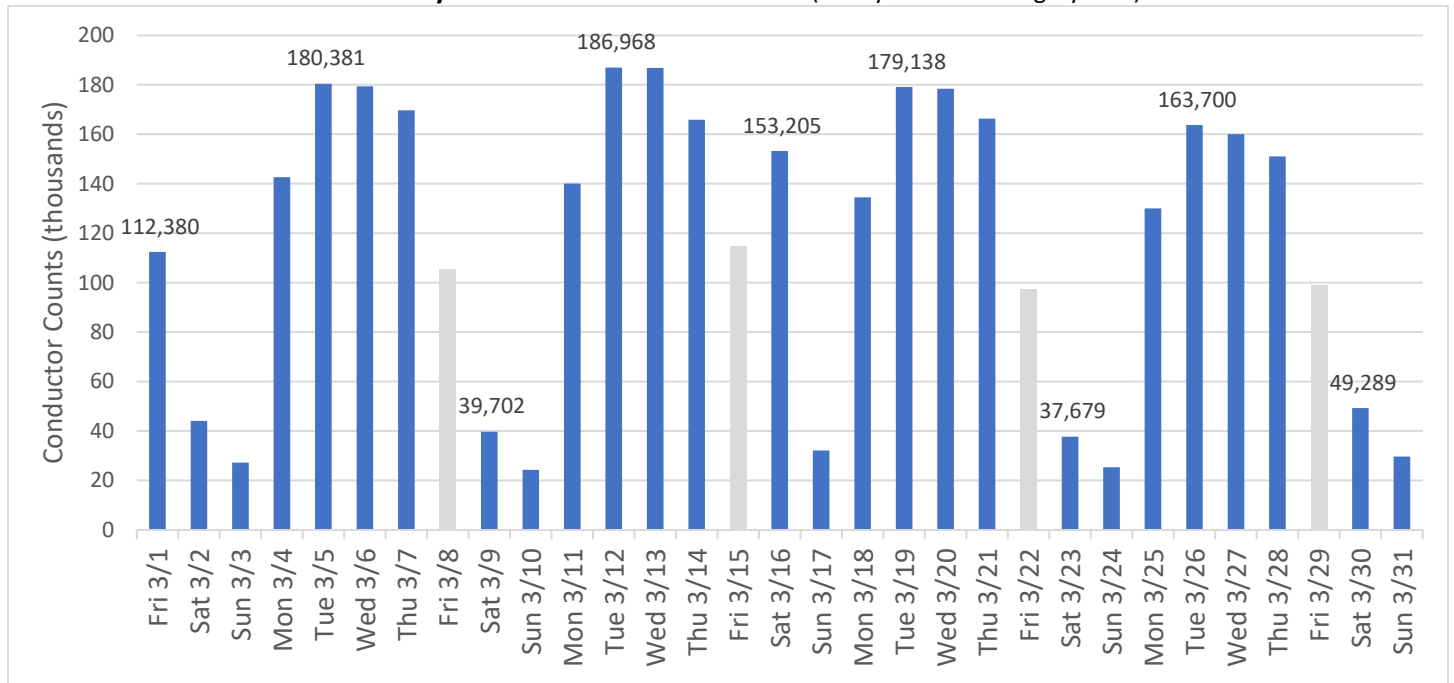


Exhibit 4

**March Ridership Highlights**

- Saturday, March 16, the day of the St. Patrick’s Day Downtown Parade, was one of Metra’s highest Saturday ridership days ever with over 153,200 rides.
- Metra sold over 47,200, Monthly Passes, the highest amount since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Staff continues to monitor new policies related to fares and changes to ticket purchasing that went into effect in February. The table below provides a summary of the changes along with initial observations.

Long Term Policy Changes	Initial Observations
Conclusion of South Cook Pilot	ME and RI ridership is underreported in March due to the stockpiling of South Cook-priced 10-Ride Tickets that were sold in January. Based on conductor counts, ME and RI avg weekday ridership was an estimated 5% and 8% higher in March 2024 than in March 2023, respectively.
Day Pass 5-Pack replaces 10-ride Ticket	The Day Pass 5-Pack made up about 14% of ridership in March 2024, compared to the 10-Ride Ticket share of 20% in March 2023. As previously purchased 10-Ride Tickets continue to be used and expire, we expect use of the Day Pass 5-Pack to increase.
Intermediate Trips Charged Flat Fare	From March 2023 to March 2024, the share of non-downtown trips using the Ventra app increased from 7.6% to 8.5%.
Ticket Windows Close	March marked the second month since Metra closed ticket windows. The Ventra app was used for 82% of all rides and vending machines were used for 10% of all rides.
Bicycles always allowed after Feb 1, provided space is available	Metra carried 53% more bikes in March 2024 than in March 2023.
Access Card	The Access Card became Metra’s newest reduced fare category, making up 5% of reduced fare ticket sales in March and selling 3,408 tickets through the program.

**Service Status**

Metra continues to restore service in different capacities on its lines, as ridership recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Schedules for five lines (BNSF, Metra Electric, Rock Island, Union Pacific North, and Union Pacific Northwest) were redesigned to standardize stopping patterns and to increase midday service that exceeds pre-pandemic levels. These lines have demonstrated a stronger midday recovery than lines that did not receive such schedule redesigns. For example, the Union Pacific Northwest and Metra Electric each have midday recoveries of 91% and 86% compared to midday recoveries for the MD-N and UP-W of 69% and 62%, respectively.

Metra staff continually monitors ridership, operations data, and customer feedback on all lines to explore any opportunities for improvement.

**Ridership Recovery by Line & Service Period (Mar 2024 as a percentage of Mar 2019)**

Line	Peak	Rev Peak	Midday	Evening	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
BNSF	52%	60%	80%	49%	55%	87%	84%
HC	49%	-	-	-	47%	-	-
MD-N	50%	42%	69%	45%	51%	78%	83%
MD-W	41%	46%	67%	53%	44%	92%	75%
ME	39%	137%	86%	86%	52%	115%	121%
NCS	39%	41%	84%	-	41%	-	-
RI	42%	93%	85%	52%	47%	82%	86%
SWS	42%	75%	43%	20%	42%	-	-
UP-N	61%	68%	101%	100%	69%	101%	106%
UP-NW	52%	83%	91%	72%	59%	107%	95%
UP-W	60%	68%	62%	67%	61%	103%	90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>93%</b>

Exhibit 5

**Monthly Pass Sales**

Monthly Pass sales continued to increase in March, surpassing February by approximately 2,900 tickets sold.

**Monthly Pass Sales**

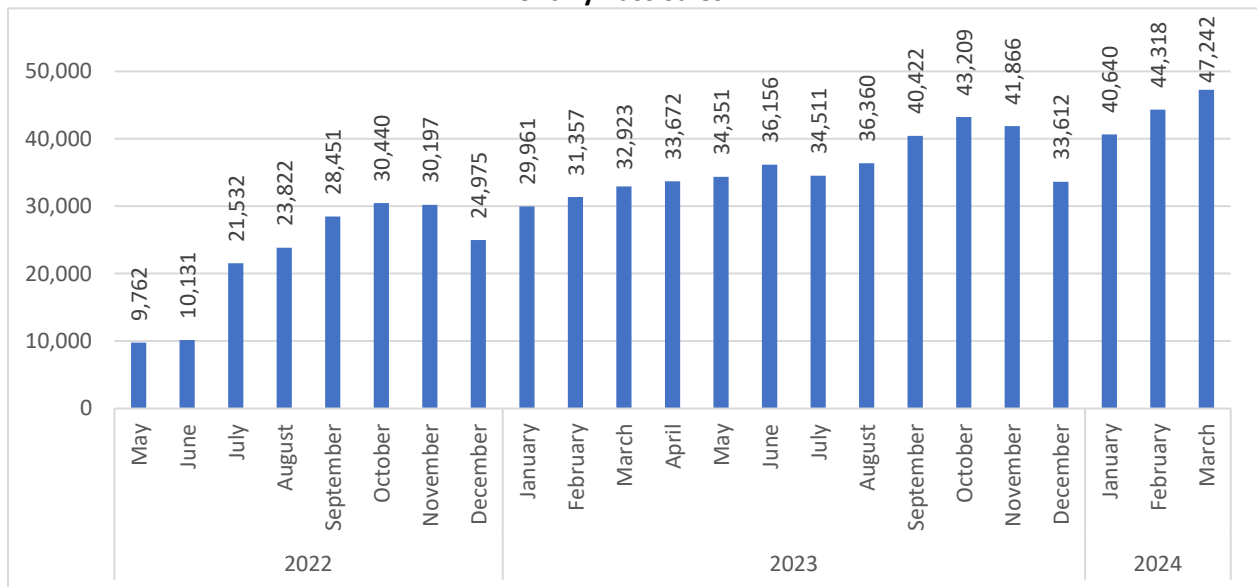


Exhibit 6

### Ridership by Ticket Type

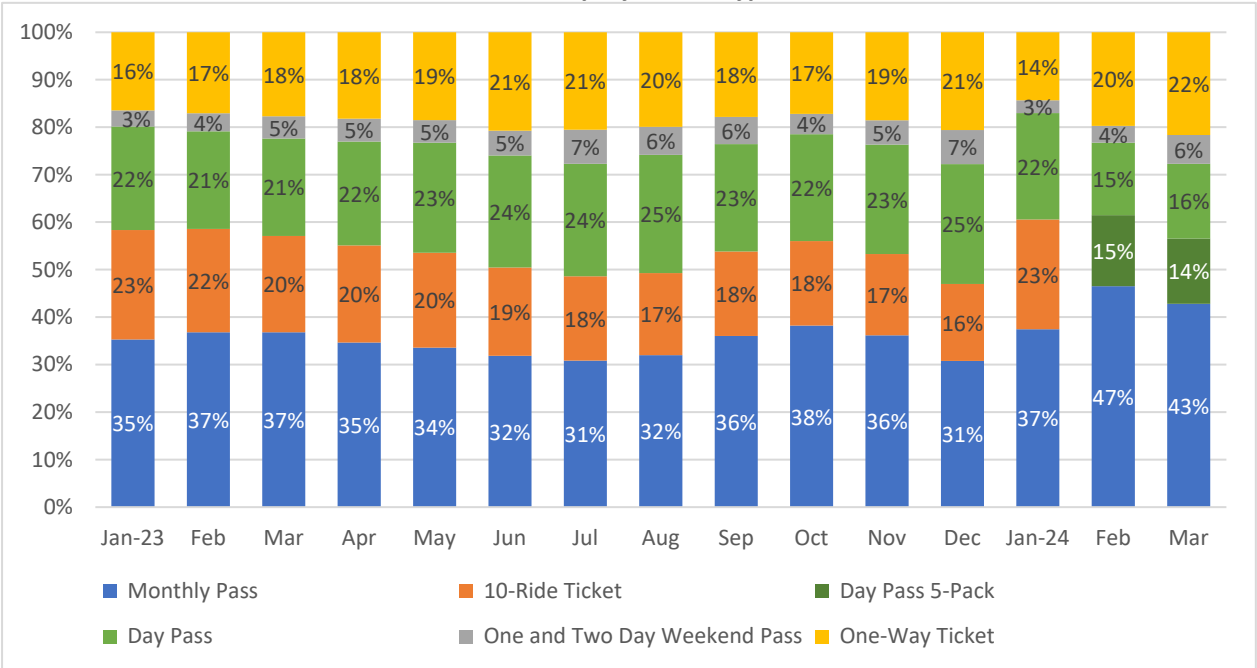


Exhibit 7

Note: Exhibit 7 excludes free trips

### Ticket Sales

The following tables show ticket sales and ridership by ticket type and sales channel.

#### Ticket Sales and Ridership by Ticket Type (thousands)

Ticket Type	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2023 Share	Mar 2024 Share	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2023 Share	Mar 2024 Share
Monthly Pass	33	47	4%	5%	926	1,120	36%	42%
10-Ride Ticket	51	-	6%	0%	510	-	20%	0%
Day Pass 5-Pack	-	38	0%	4%	-	359	0%	14%
Day Pass	270	216	31%	22%	516	412	20%	16%
One Way	448	567	52%	58%	448	567	18%	21%
One Day Weekend Pass	55	85	6%	9%	92	127	4%	5%
Two Day Weekend Pass	13	16	1%	2%	25	30	1%	1%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	40	40	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,557</b>	<b>2,656</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Exhibit 8

**Ridership by Sales Channel (thousands)**

Sales Channel	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2023 Share	Mar 2024 Share	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2023 Share	Mar 2024 Share
Conductor	81	77	9%	8%	90	70	4%	3%
Commuter Benefit	5	4	1%	1%	104	105	4%	4%
Ventra App	672	794	77%	82%	1,916	2,181	75%	82%
Ticket Agent	97	-	11%	0%	382	-	15%	0%
Ticket Vending Machine	14	93	2%	10%	24	259	1%	10%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	40	40	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,556</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Exhibit 9

Note: Values in Exhibits 8 and 9 do not add to total ridership due to Group Sales, Marketing Sales, Refund Adjustments, and adjustments for losses in ridership due to mobile app outages; 2019 data may not match previously reported totals due to late-reporting sales and refunds; 2024 data are preliminary and subject to revision as data is continuously reviewed throughout the year. Sales of incremental tickets are not included.

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