

DATE: November 13, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Jim Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director

SUBJECT: October 2024 Ridership Trends

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

In October 2024, Metra provided 3.4 million passenger trips, an 11% increase from September. Compared to September, October had three more weekdays, the same number of Saturdays, and two less Sunday/holidays. Compared to October 2023, October 2024 ridership increased 10%. October 2024 had one more weekday, the same number of Saturdays, and one less Sunday/holiday compared to the prior year.

Trips by Month

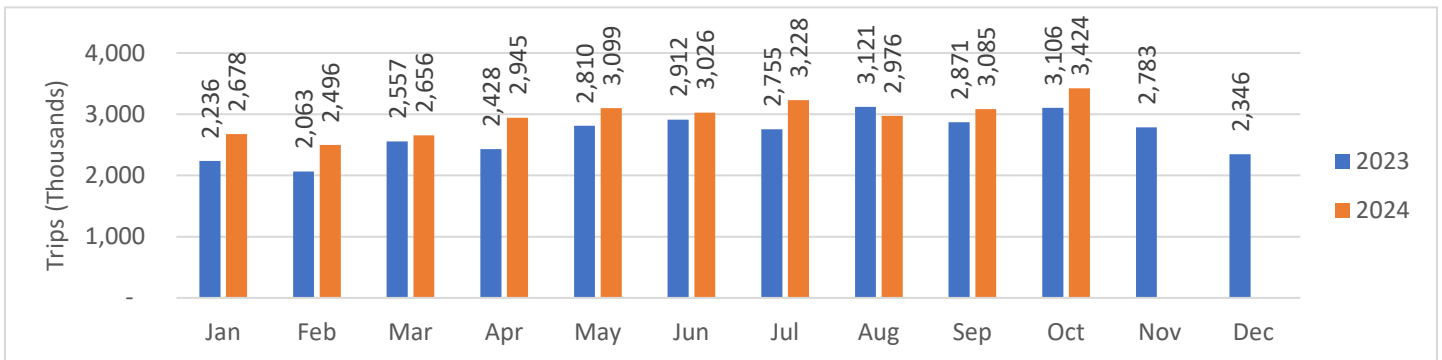


Exhibit 1

Trips by Line (October 2023 vs October 2024)

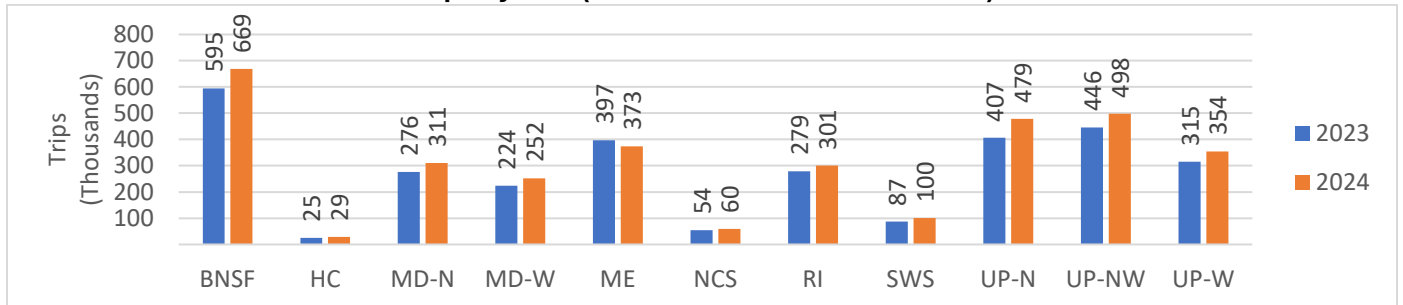


Exhibit 2

Weekday Passenger Loads

October average weekday passenger loads were 178,900, which was 63% of 2019 levels.

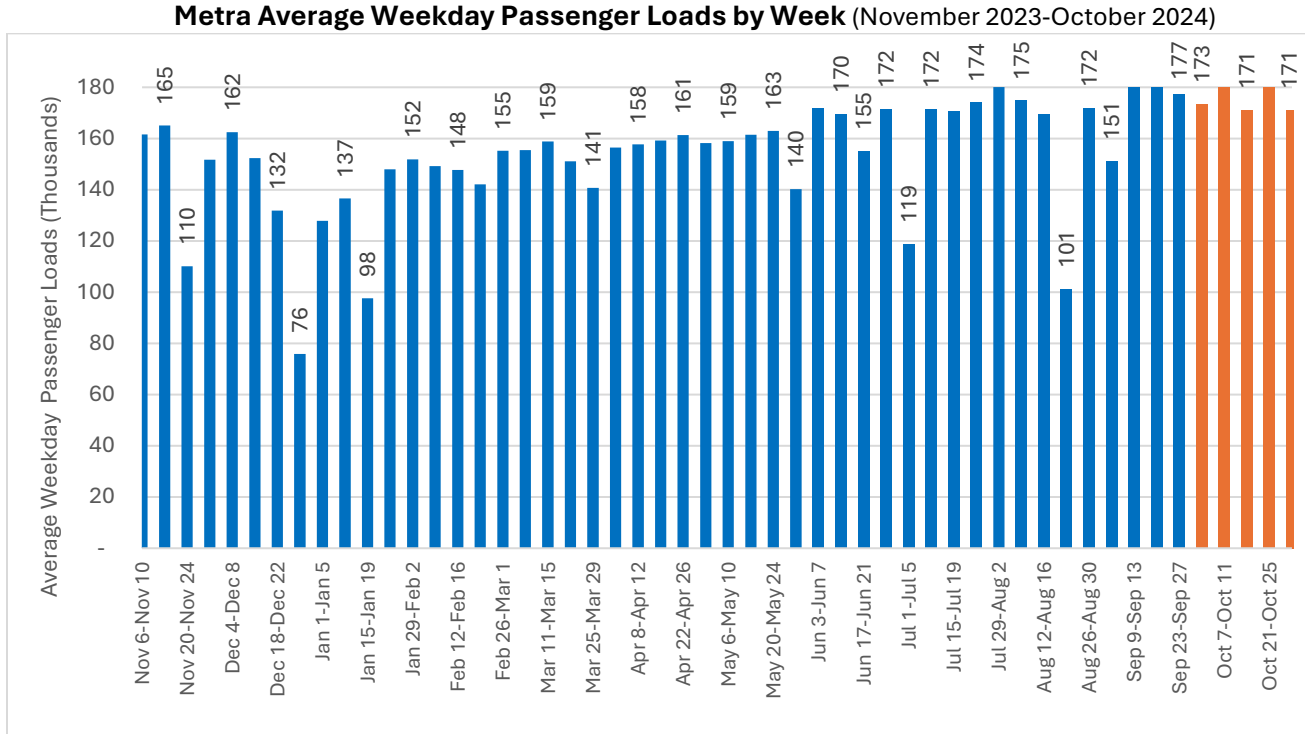


Exhibit 3

	2023		2024									
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Avg Weekday Passenger Loads Chg. from Prior Month	-4%	-13%	0%	+13%	0%	+6%	+1%	+4%	0%	-6%	+13%	0%

Daily Passenger Loads for Month (Fridays shown with grey bars)

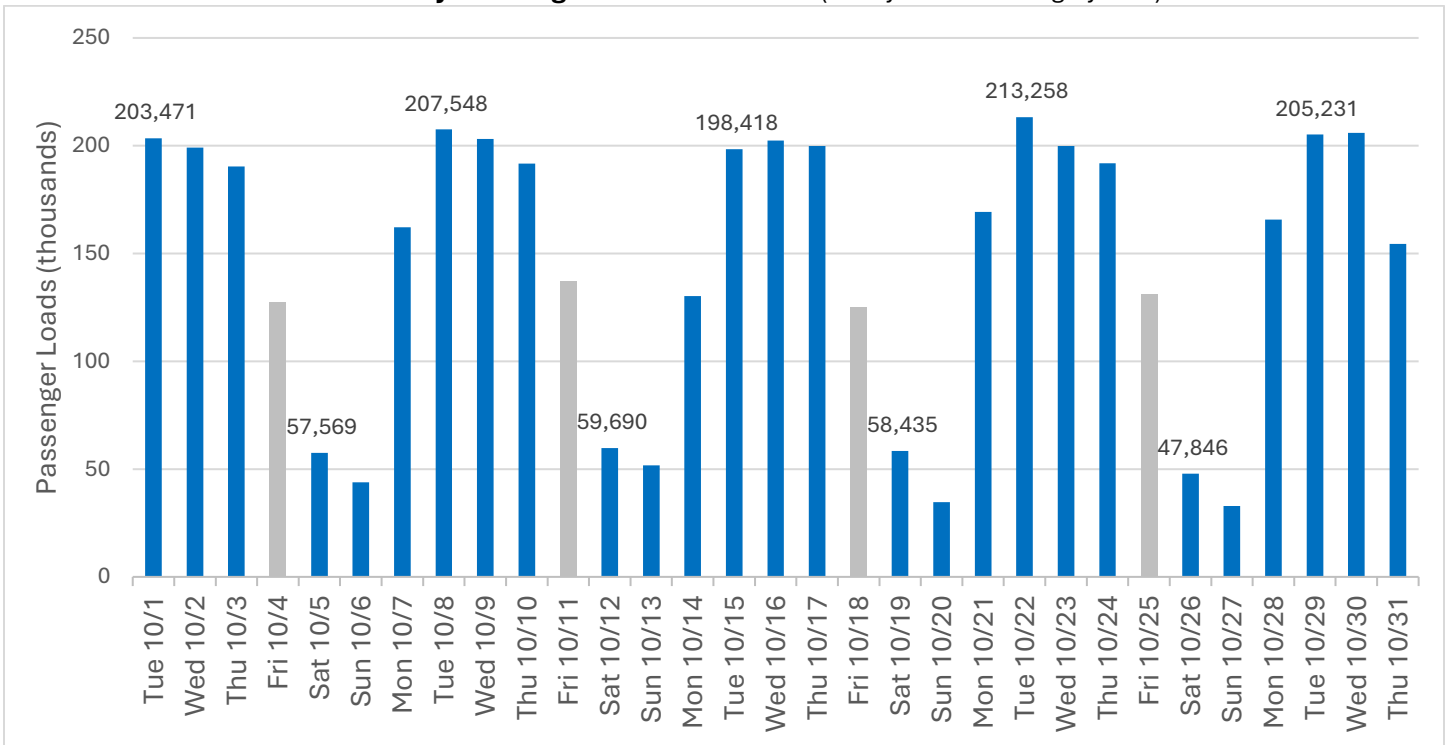


Exhibit 4

October Ridership Highlights

- In October, Metra provided 3.4 million trips which is the highest number of trips provided in a single month post-pandemic.
- The MD-N, UP-NW, and UP-W lines had a combined total of six extra trains for the Chicago Marathon. Ridership reached 51,700 on Sunday October 13, a 39% increase over other Sundays in October.
- Tuesday, October 22 became Metra’s second highest ridership day of the year with 213,300 passengers. Monday, October 21 was Metra’s highest performing Monday year-to-date, with 169,300 passengers.

Staff continue to monitor new policies related to fares and ticket purchasing changes. The table below provides a summary of the changes along with initial observations.

Long Term Policy Changes	Initial Observations
UIC UPASS+	Over 4,100 students continued enrollment in the UPASS+ program in October, recording 112,300 rides.
Day Pass 5-Pack replaces 10-Ride Ticket	The Day Pass 5-Pack made up about 14% of ridership in October 2024, compared to the 10-Ride Ticket share of 17% in October 2023.
Ticket Windows Close	Metra closed ticket windows in February 2024. In October, the Ventra app was used for 82% of all rides and vending machines were used for 9% of all rides.
Bicycles always allowed on trains after Feb 1, provided space is available	Metra carried 34% more bikes in October 2024 compared to last year.
Access Card	In October, the Access Card program recorded 15,000 trips, accounting for 7% of all Metra reduced fare trips.
Discount for Outer Zone Trips	The share of Metra trips not going downtown increased to 9% in October 2024, up from 8% compared to October of 2023.

Service Status

Metra continuously evaluates its service to improve operations and ridership outcomes as well as to move toward a regional rail service model as described in Metra’s 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, [My Metra, Our Future](#). Over the past two years, Metra has looked for opportunities to enhance schedules to standardize stopping patterns and to increase midday service levels, as has been done for five lines (BNSF, Metra Electric, Rock Island, Union Pacific North, and Union Pacific Northwest). These lines have demonstrated a stronger midday recovery than other lines. In May 2024, Metra implemented a new weekend schedule for the BNSF Line to achieve near hourly service in both directions on both Saturday and Sunday. Having the same level of service for both Saturday and Sunday is a first for Metra and something that will be considered for other lines going forward when feasible.

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

Line	Peak	Rev Peak	Midday	Evening	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
BNSF	57%	67%	95%	90%	63%	101%	113%
HC	53%	-	-	-	50%	-	-
MD-N	58%	50%	74%	47%	58%	97%	85%
MD-W	47%	64%	79%	77%	52%	87%	90%
ME	41%	134%	97%	91%	57%	101%	88%
NCS	38%	30%	94%	-	41%	-	-
RI	47%	113%	80%	56%	51%	93%	80%
SWS	50%	65%	58%	26%	50%	-	-
UP-N	70%	95%	119%	115%	83%	110%	118%
UP-NW	60%	71%	99%	91%	67%	103%	97%
UP-W	66%	101%	88%	81%	71%	106%	108%
Total	56%	82%	94%	83%	63%	101%	101%

Exhibit 5

Monthly Pass and UPass Sales

In August 2024, Metra began a pilot program with the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), introducing a new mobile-only UPass ticket. The ticket allows for unlimited rides during the designated month, delivered monthly to student devices, with a validity period aligned to the academic calendar. The chart below shows the quantity of each pass type. Staff will continue to monitor this new program and report results as more data becomes available.

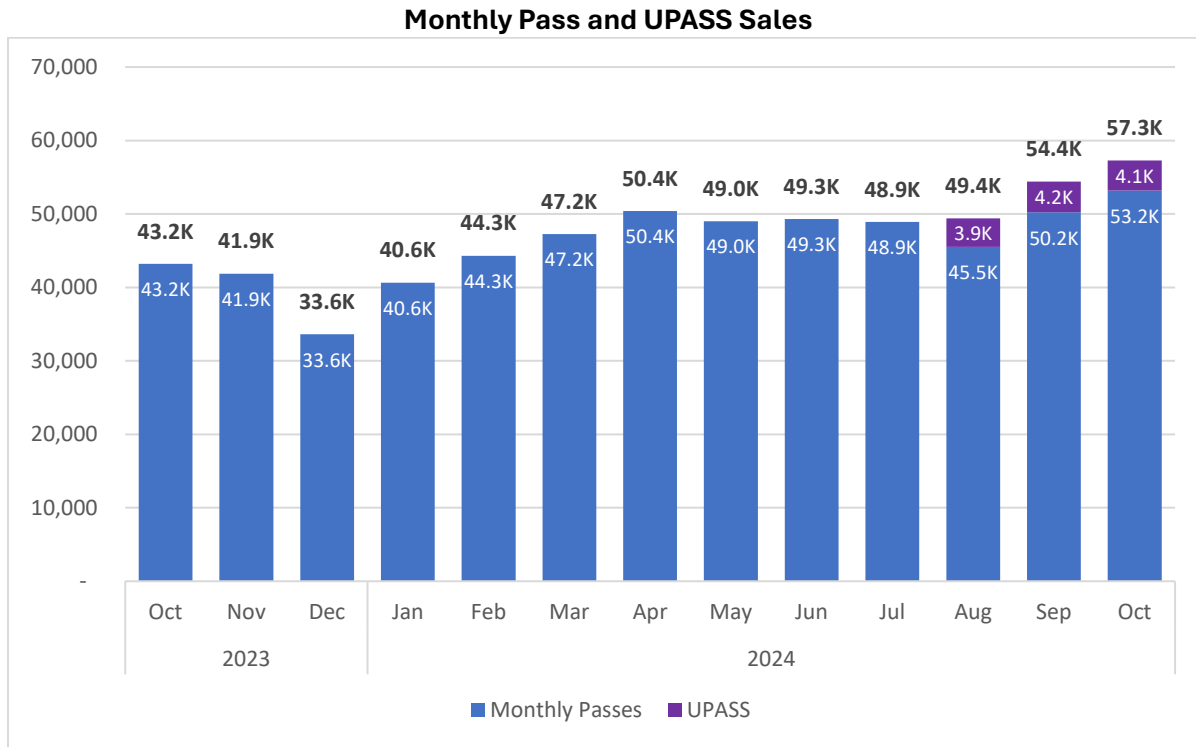


Exhibit 6

Ridership by Ticket Type

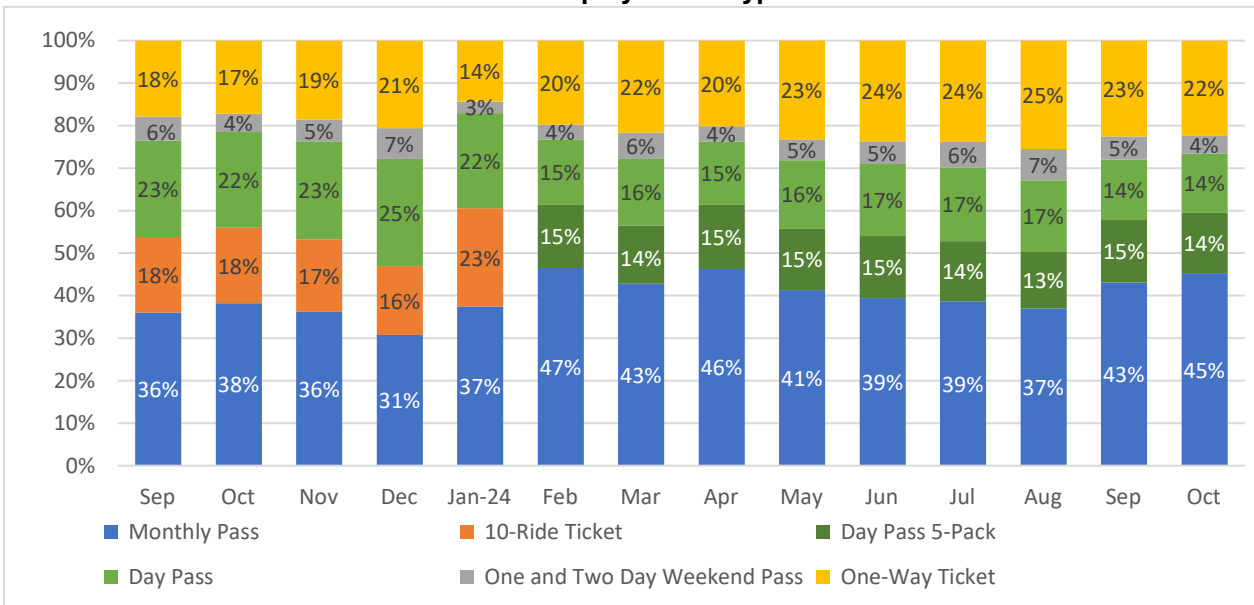


Exhibit 7

Note: Exhibit 7 excludes RTA ride free trips. UPASS tickets are included with Monthly Pass.

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			
	Oct 2023	Oct 2024	Oct 2023 Share	Oct 2024 Share	Oct 2023	Oct 2024	Oct 2023 Share	Oct 2024 Share
Monthly Pass	43	57	4%	5%	1,164	1,529	37%	45%
10-Ride Ticket	54	-	5%	0%	541	-	17%	0%
Day Pass 5-Pack	-	51	0%	4%	-	483	0%	14%
Day Pass	358	247	33%	21%	685	469	22%	14%
One Way	535	756	50%	64%	535	756	17%	22%
One Day Weekend Pass	63	67	6%	6%	104	117	3%	3%
Two Day Weekend Pass	14	12	1%	1%	30	24	1%	1%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	47	46	2%	1%
Total	1,067	1,190	100%	100%	3,106	3,424	100%	100%

Exhibit 8

Ridership by Sales Channel (thousands)

Sales Channel	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	Oct 2023	Oct 2024	Oct 2023 Share	Oct 2024 Share	Oct 2023	Oct 2024	Oct 2023 Share	Oct 2024 Share
Conductor	96	95	9%	8%	106	102	3%	3%
Commuter Benefit	6	5	1%	0.4%	123	133	4%	4%
Ventra App	845	965	81%	81%	2,422	2,819	79%	82%
Ticket Agent	93	-	9%	0%	360	-	12%	0%
Vending Machine	9	125	1%	11%	10	324	0%	9%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	47	46	2%	1%
Total	1,048	1,190	100%	100%	3,068	3,424	100%	100%

Exhibit 9

Note: Values in Exhibits 8 and 9 do not add to total ridership due to Group Sales, Marketing Sales, and Refund Adjustments, 2024 data are preliminary and subject to revision as data are continuously reviewed throughout the year. UPASS tickets are included with Monthly Pass.

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