



TO: Board of Directors

DATE: February 21, 2024

FROM: Jim Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director

SUBJECT: January 2024 Ridership Trends & 2023 Annual Ridership Statistics

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

In January 2024, Metra provided 2.7 million passenger trips, a 14% increase from December 2023 and a 20% increase from January 2023. Compared to December, January had two additional weekdays, one less Saturday, and one less Sunday.

Annual data for 2023 is also included, starting on page 7.

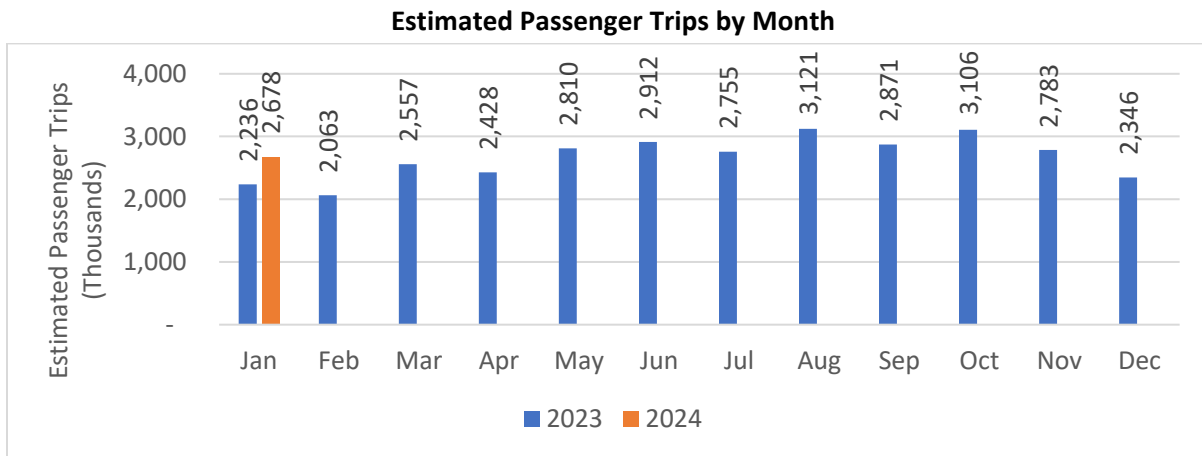


Exhibit 1

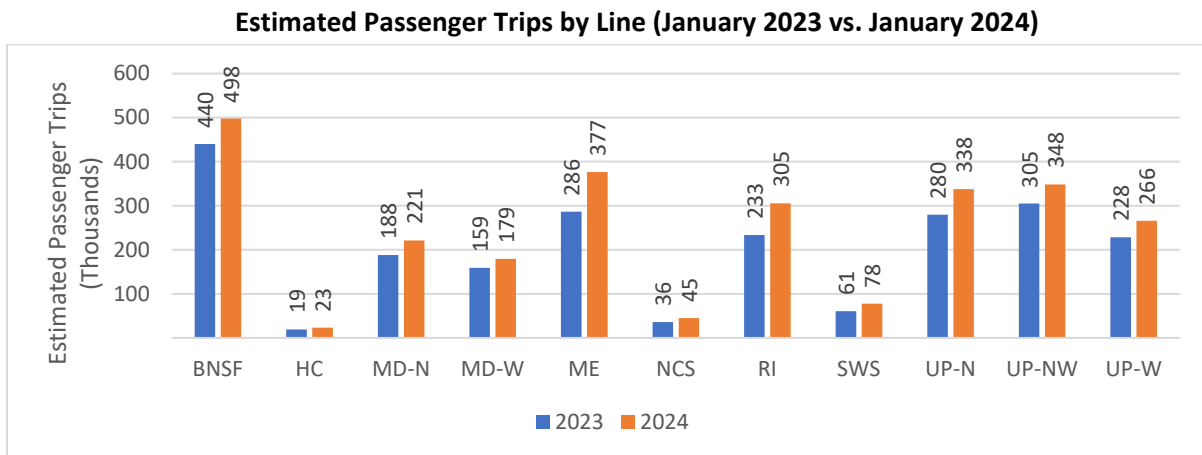


Exhibit 2

Weekday Riders

January average weekday ridership was 132,500, which was nearly unchanged from December and 54% of 2019 levels. Weekday ridership was negatively impacted by several days of severe winter weather and extreme cold temperatures throughout the month. Weekday ridership was also significantly lower on Monday January 15th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, for which Metra ran a weekday schedule. On this day temperatures were as low as -8 degrees Fahrenheit, and ridership fell to 25,200 passengers, below average Saturday ridership for the month (32,400).

Average Weekday Ridership by Week (February 2023-January 2024)

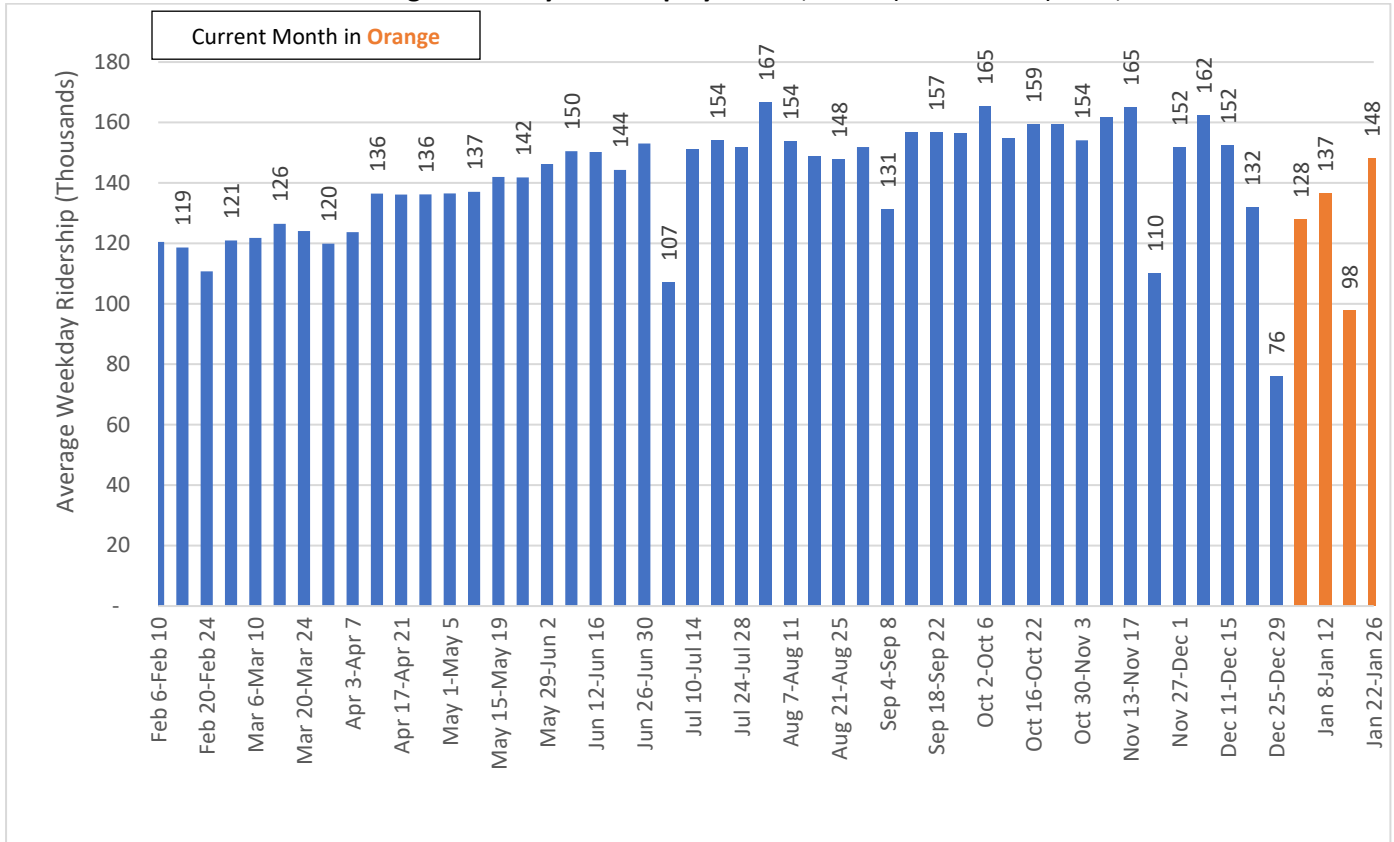


Exhibit 3

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

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

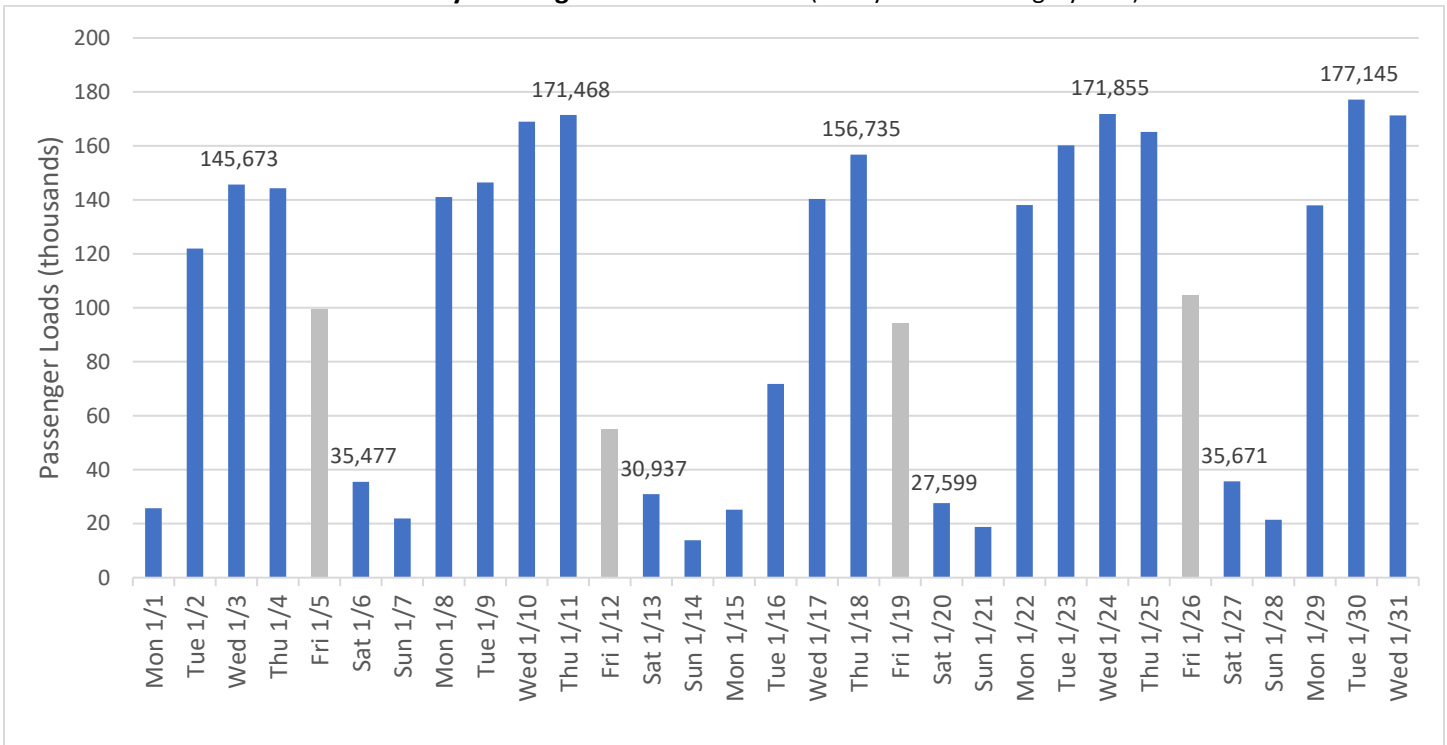


Exhibit 4

January Ridership Highlights

- The South Cook Pilot concluded Jan 31. It offered reduced fares for all riders on the Metra Electric Line and Rock Island Line. In January, these lines accounted for 25% of all Metra ridership.
- Jan 31 was the final day for Metra customers to buy 10-ride tickets. In 2023, Metra sold an average 49,400 10-ride tickets each month. This total reached over 61,000 10-rides in January 2024, suggesting a potential excess of 11,600 tickets that were purchased before the fare change took effect. These tickets can be used until April 30th.
- Metra operated with a Sunday/holiday schedule on New Year’s Day.
- Effective January 1, the State of Illinois required certain employers to offer pre-tax commuter benefits. Compared to Jan 2023, ridership using a pre-tax benefit program increased by 15% (fare media sales and sales using Ventra benefit value).

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 compared to the individual weekday recovery for each of those lines. For example, the Union Pacific Northwest and Metra Electric each have recoveries of 77% and 88% during the midday compared to weekday recoveries of 54% and 56%.

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 (Jan 2024 as a percentage of Jan 2019)

Line	Peak	Rev Peak	Midday	Evening	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
BNSF	48%	44%	65%	47%	49%	64%	59%
HC	50%	-	-	-	48%	-	-
MD-N	51%	40%	63%	38%	50%	52%	61%
MD-W	41%	50%	65%	57%	45%	55%	59%
ME	44%	147%	88%	87%	56%	101%	97%
NCS	40%	31%	79%	-	42%	-	-
RI	44%	84%	80%	70%	48%	58%	56%
SWS	45%	36%	53%	19%	44%	-	-
UP-N	68%	73%	95%	84%	73%	85%	84%
UP-NW	50%	60%	77%	58%	54%	81%	72%
UP-W	62%	63%	59%	64%	62%	72%	77%
Total	50%	64%	74%	58%	54%	73%	71%

Exhibit 5

Monthly Pass Sales

Metra sold over 40,000 monthly passes. January marked the final month of the \$100 Super Saver Monthly Pass. Introduced in July 2022, total sales of the monthly pass quadrupled by the end of the promotion. Staff will monitor sales trends following the fare change effective February 1, 2024.

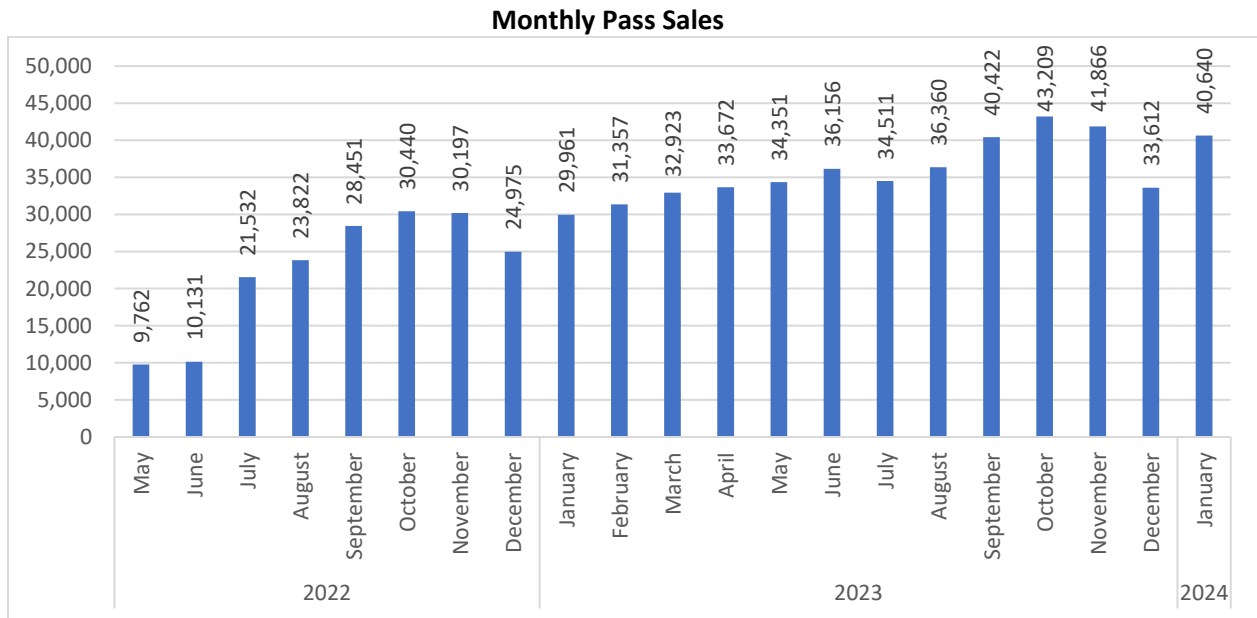


Exhibit 6

Ridership by Ticket Type

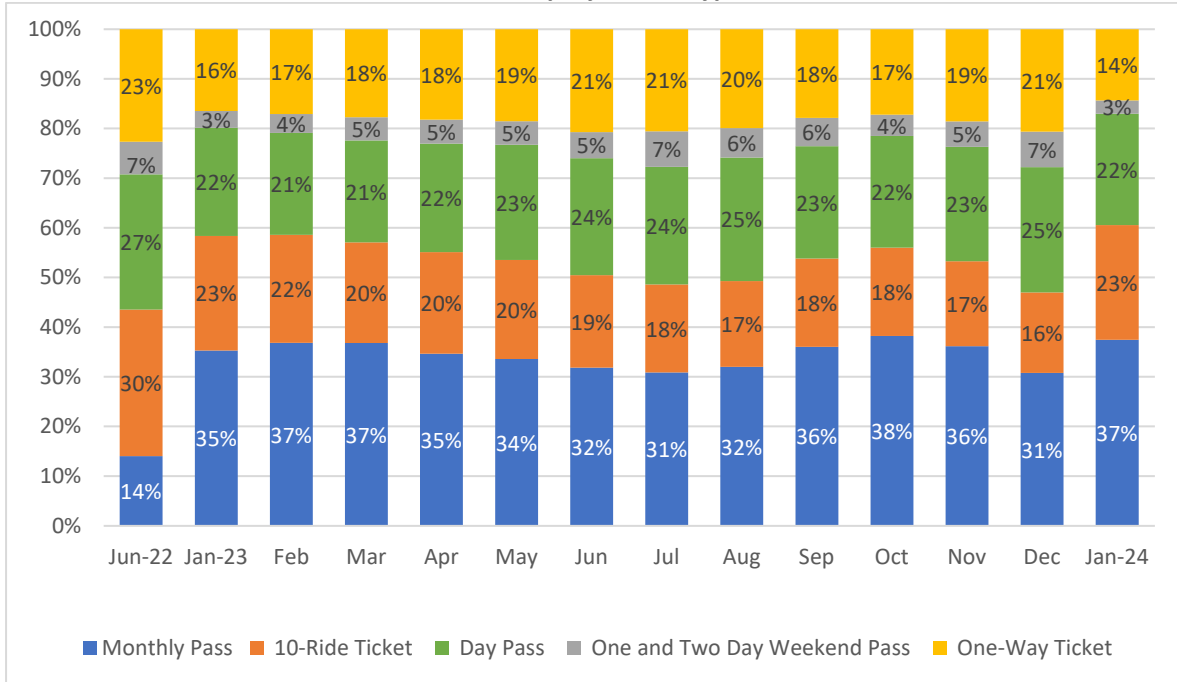


Exhibit 7

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			
	Jan 2019	Jan 2024	Jan 2019 Share	Jan 2024 Share	Jan 2019	Jan 2024	Jan 2019 Share	Jan 2024 Share
Monthly Pass	83	41	9%	5%	3,550	989	61%	37%
10-Ride Ticket	145	61	16%	7%	1,451	610	25%	23%
One-Way Ticket	613	379	68%	45%	614	379	11%	14%
Weekend Pass	57	-	6%	0%	143	-	2%	0%
One Day Weekend Pass	-	34	0%	4%	-	55	0%	2%
Two Day Weekend Pass	-	8	0%	1%	-	16	0%	1%
Day Pass	-	310	0%	37%	-	591	0%	22%
\$6 Day Pass	-	109	0%	13%	-	208	0%	8%
\$10 Day Pass	-	200	0%	24%	-	384	0%	14%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	63	37	1%	1%
Total	899	833	100%	100%	5,820	2,678	100%	100%

Exhibit 8

Ridership by Sales Channel (thousands)

Sales Channel	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	Jan 2019	Jan 2024	Jan 2024 Share	Jan 2024 Share	Jan 2019	Jan 2024	Jan 2019 Share	Jan 2024 Share
Conductor	157	58	17%	7%	203	62	3%	2%
Commuter Benefit	36	4	4%	0%	1,217	96	21%	4%
Ventra App	455	697	51%	84%	2,461	2,135	42%	80%
Ticket Agent	222	55	25%	7%	1,687	295	29%	11%
Ticket Vending Machine	28	20	3%	2%	195	52	3%	2%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	63	37	1%	1%
Total	898	833	100%	100%	5,826	2,678	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; 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.

2023 Annual Ridership Statistics

The following section shows Metra's annual ridership statistics for 2023.

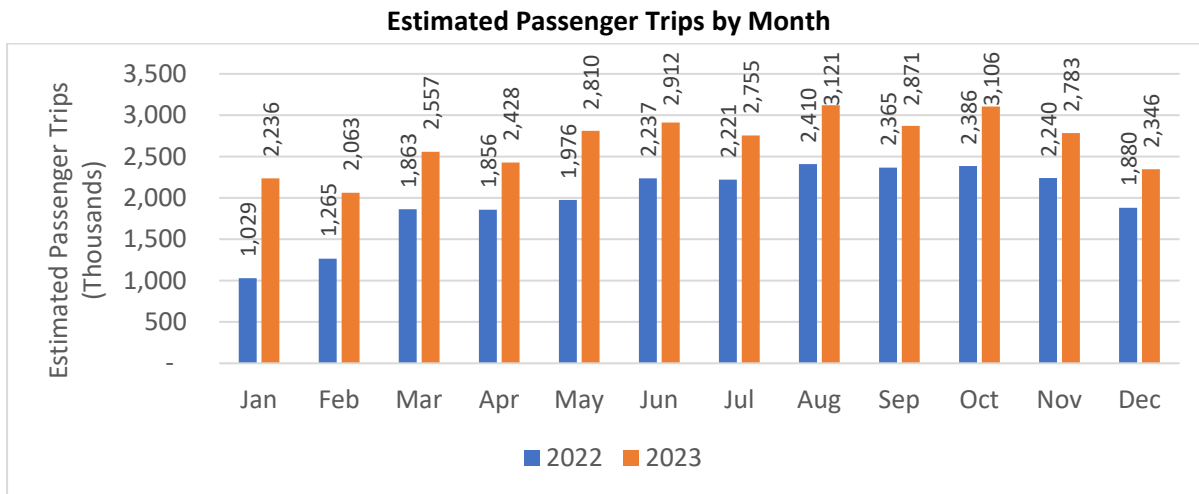


Exhibit 1

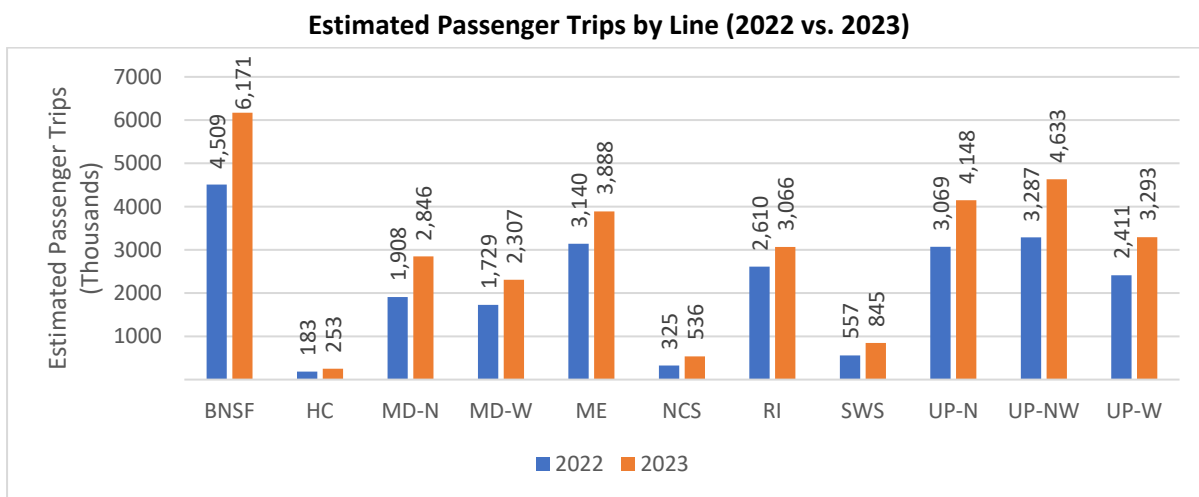


Exhibit 2

Weekday Riders

Annual average weekday ridership was 139,900, which was 44% higher than the annual average weekday ridership in 2022 and 51% of 2019 levels. Average weekday ridership began the year at 113,800 in January and reached 152,200 in October.

Average Weekday Ridership by Week (January 2023-December 2023)

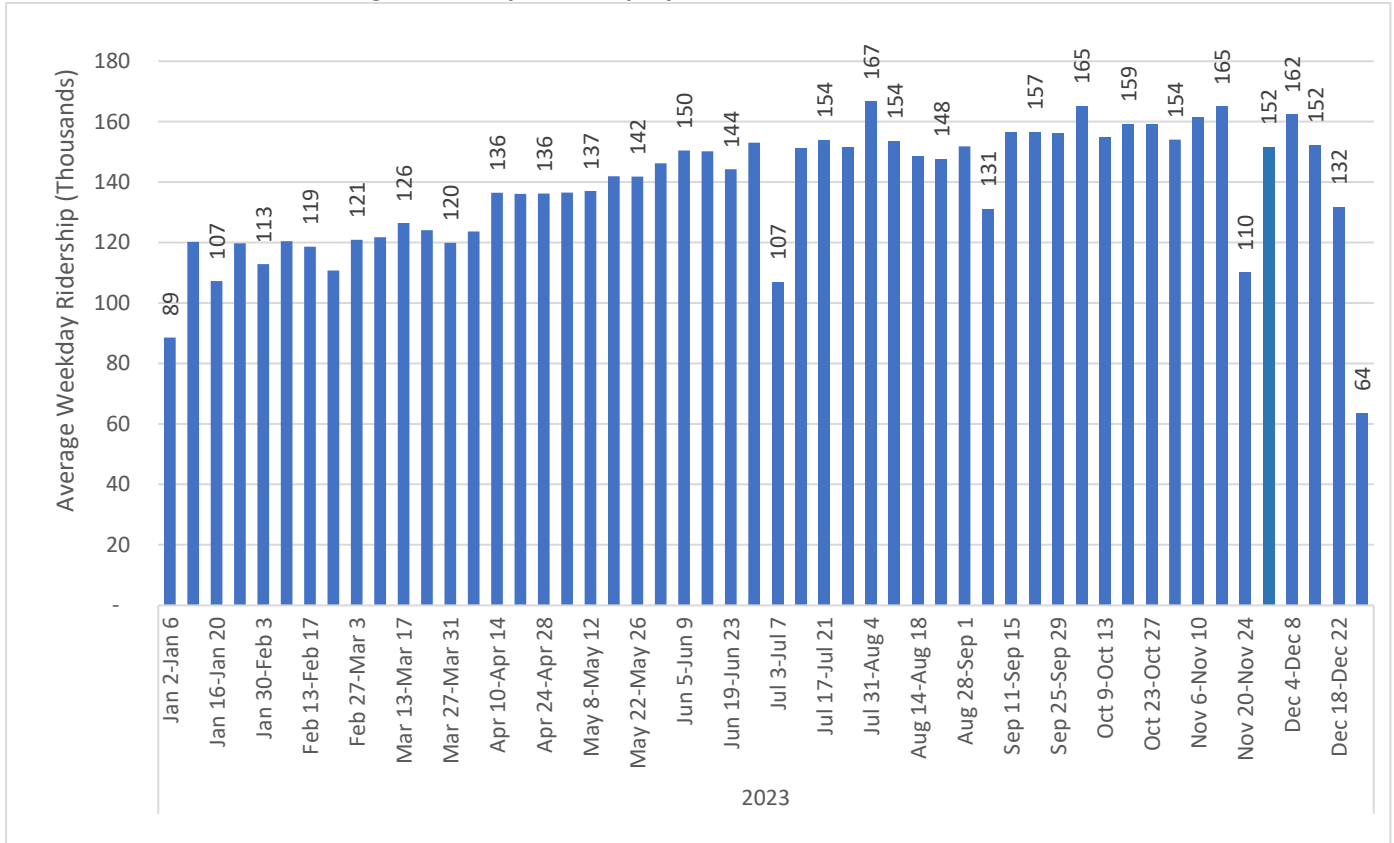


Exhibit 3

	2023											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avg Weekday Load Chg. from Prior Month	10%	3%	5%	9%	6%	5%	-2%	8%	-2%	+3%	-4%	-13%

Ridership Recovery by Time of Day

In 2023, weekday ridership recovered to 51% of 2019 levels. Off-peak periods recovered to higher levels than the peak period due to the off-peak periods being impacted less by the increase in work-from-home and hybrid work schedules seen since the COVID-19 pandemic. Weekend ridership recovery was over 80%, demonstrating that Metra continues to be a popular travel option for large, downtown events. For example, the Thursday of Lollapalooza this summer saw Metra’s highest post pandemic ridership day with 194,700 trips.

Ridership Recovery by Line & Service Period (2023 as a percentage of 2019)

Line	Peak	Rev Peak	Midday	Evening	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
BNSF	44%	47%	60%	47%	46%	68%	69%
HC	44%	-	-	-	42%	-	-
MD-N	49%	40%	63%	42%	49%	69%	73%
MD-W	38%	48%	59%	55%	41%	68%	75%
ME	42%	133%	88%	88%	55%	120%	115%
NCS	38%	28%	70%	-	39%	-	-
RI	42%	92%	73%	59%	47%	72%	74%
SWS	39%	35%	37%	17%	37%	-	-
UP-N	59%	63%	85%	87%	65%	91%	90%
UP-NW	51%	62%	76%	70%	56%	89%	98%
UP-W	56%	68%	58%	61%	57%	82%	82%
Total	47%	61%	70%	60%	51%	82%	84%

Exhibit 4

Monthly Pass Sales

Metra sold 428,400 monthly passes in 2023, an increase of 98% compared to the 216,300 monthly passes sold in 2022.

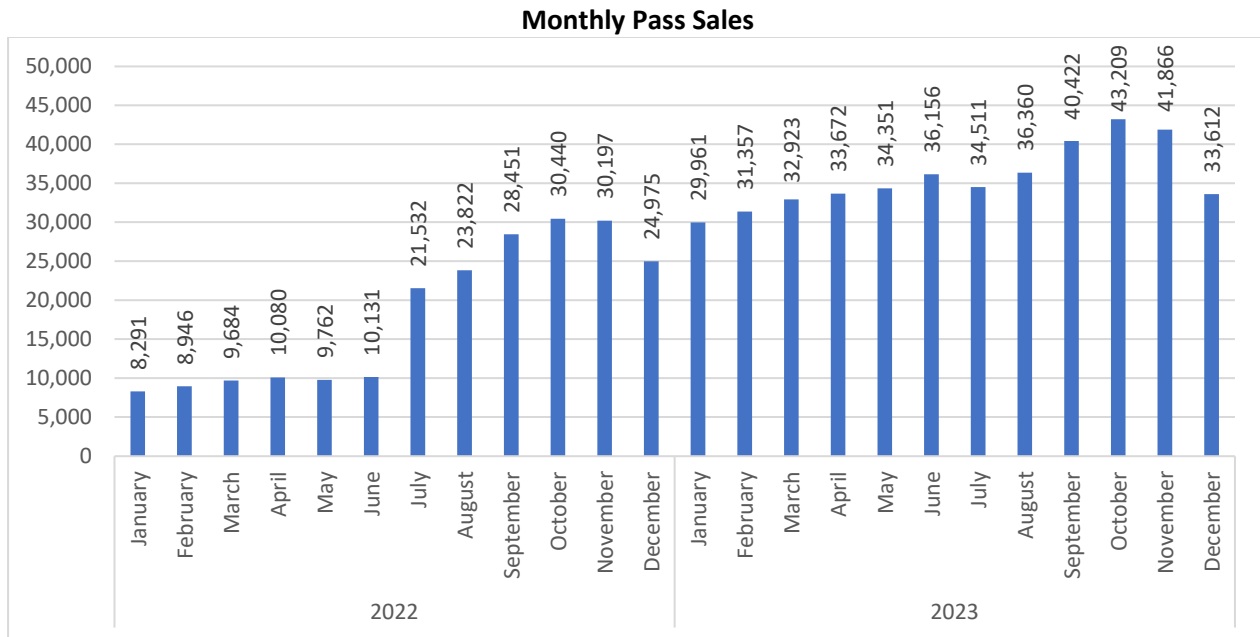


Exhibit 5

Annual Ridership by Ticket Type

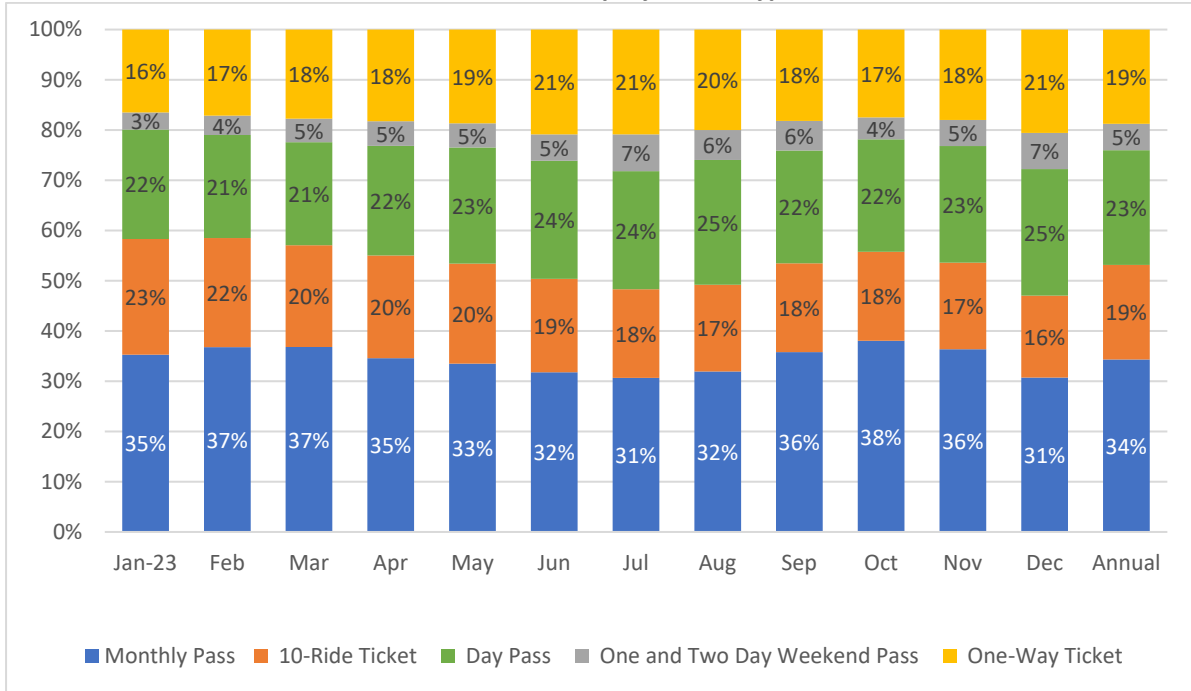


Exhibit 6

Note: Exhibit 7 excludes free trips

Ticket Sales

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

Annual Ridership by Sales Channel (thousands)

Sales Channel	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	2019	2023	2019 Share	2023 Share	2019	2023	2019 Share	2023 Share
Conductor	2,305	1,106	17%	9%	2,926	1,234	4%	4%
Commuter Benefit	419	68	3%	1%	14,136	1,260	19%	4%
Ventra App	6,837	9,152	52%	78%	32,900	24,490	45%	77%
Ticket Agent	3,262	1,142	25%	10%	20,544	4,130	28%	13%
Ticket Vending Machine	399	209	3%	2%	2,368	367	3%	1%
RTA Ride Free Permit			0%	0%	857	489	1%	2%
Total	13,223	11,677	100%	100%	73,731	31,970	100%	100%

Exhibit 7

Note: Values in Exhibits 8 and 9 do not add to total ridership due to Group Sales, Marketing Sales, and Refund Adjustments; 2019 data may not match previously reported totals due to late-reporting sales and refunds; 2023 data are preliminary and subject to revision as data is continuously reviewed throughout the year. Sales of incremental tickets are not included.

Prepared by: Daniel Miodonski, Senior Manager, Operations Planning & Analysis
 Steven Mannella, Manager, Transportation Planning, Operations Planning & Analysis
 Cody Wolcott, Principal Transportation Planner, Operations Planning & Analysis