



**TO:** Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Jim Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** December 2023 Ridership Trends

**DATE:** January 17, 2024

This memo describes ridership patterns in 2023, including ridership and service recovery by line and service period. The data in this report is preliminary.

In December 2023, Metra provided 2.3 million passenger trips, a -16% decrease from November. The large decrease follows current trends where ridership remains stable in the first half of December and declines toward the end of the month because of the holidays and time off of work and school. For the first three weeks of December, ridership levels were comparable to levels seen throughout the fall period and then decreased significantly the last two weeks of the month. Compared to November, December had one less weekday, one additional Saturday, and one additional Sunday.

**Estimated Passenger Trips by Month**

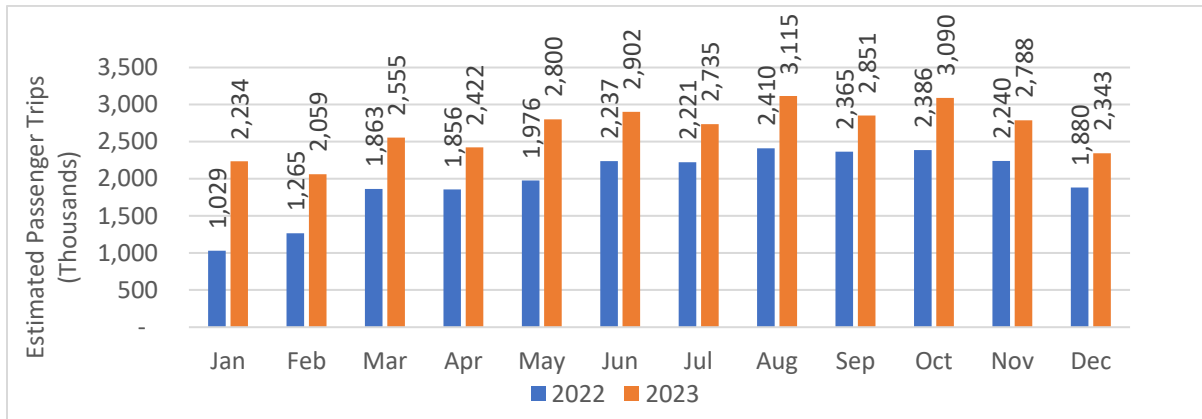


Exhibit 1

**Estimated Passenger Trips by Line (December 2022 vs. December 2023)**

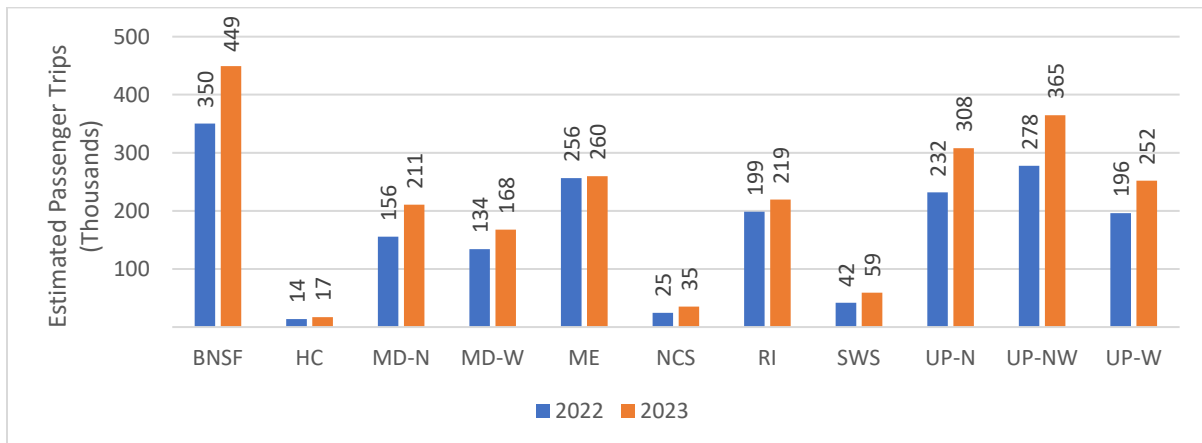


Exhibit 2

## Weekday Riders

December average weekday ridership was 132,700, which was -13% lower than November and 55% of 2019 levels. The large decrease is due to the decline in ridership that occurred around the holiday period toward the end of the month. For the first three weeks of December, weekday ridership was approximately 155,000, which was slightly lower than November.

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

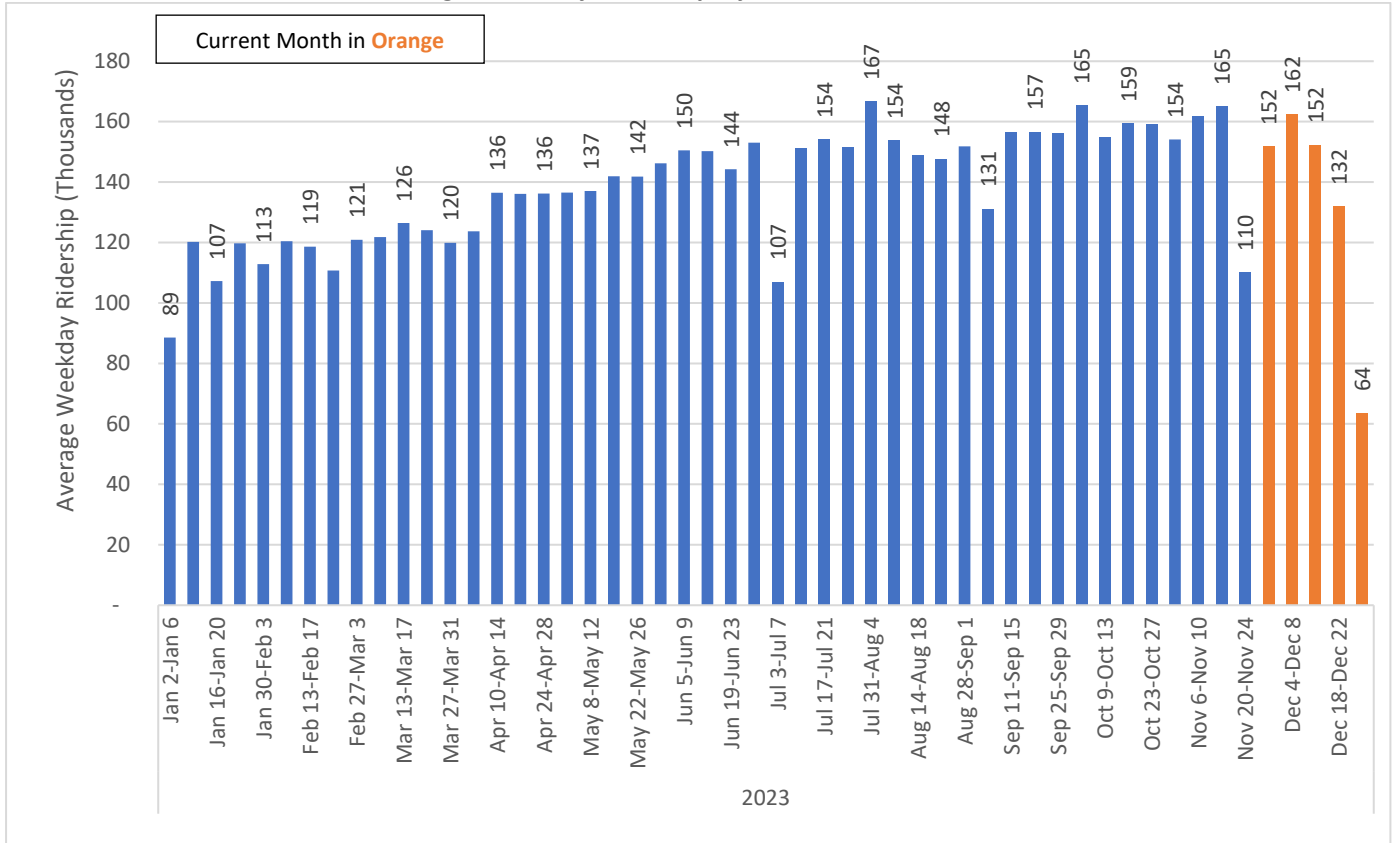


Exhibit 3

	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%

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

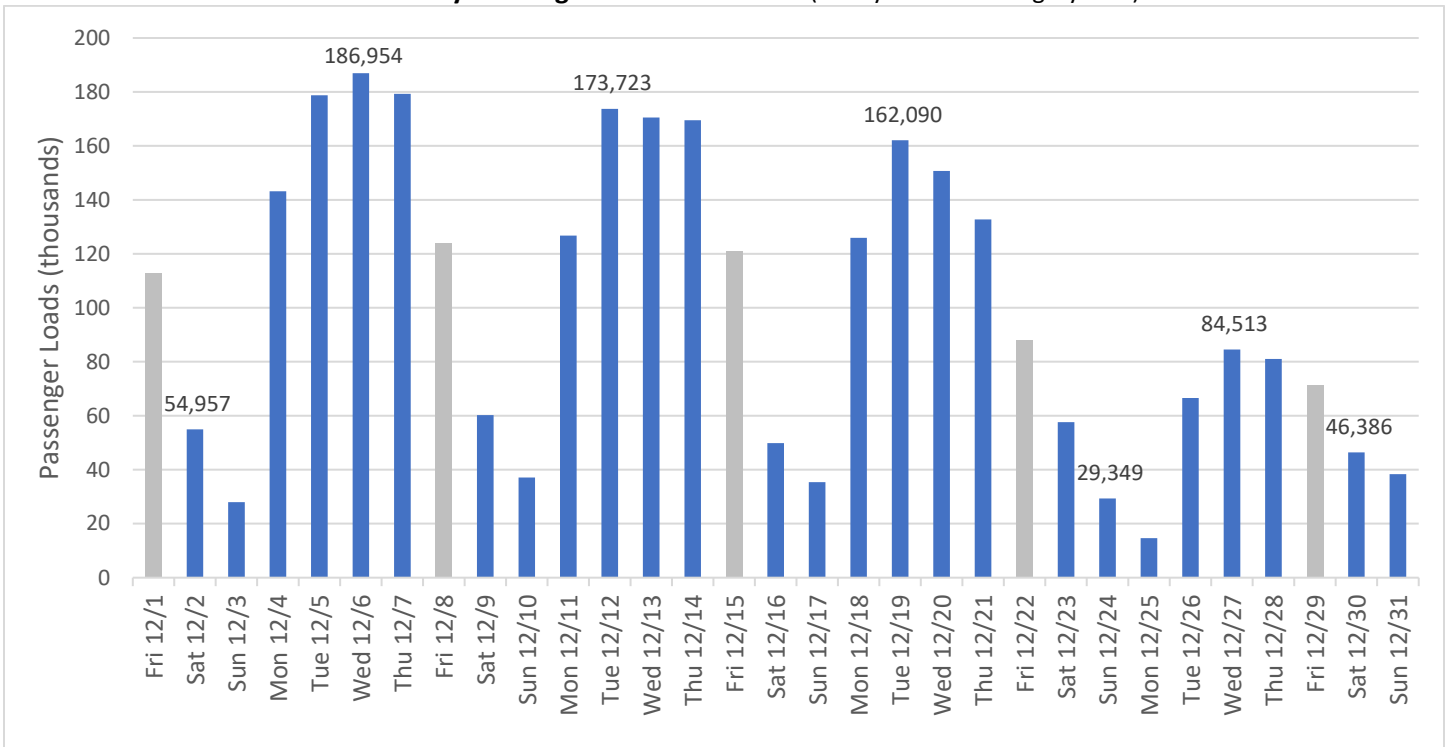


Exhibit 4

**December Ridership Highlights**

- Sunday ridership on the UP-N exceeded 100% recovery, the third line to do so after the UP-NW and ME.
- Evening ridership on the UP-NW reached 106% of pre-COVID levels, exceeding 100% for a second consecutive month.
- Family fares were available from December 18 to December 29. Free rides were available on New Year’s Eve for all trains with starting runs after 6 pm.

**Service Status**

Metra continues to restore service in different capacities on its lines, as ridership recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Schedules for four lines (BNSF, Metra Electric, Rock Island, and Union Pacific North) were redesigned to standardize stopping patterns and to increase midday service as part of a 2021 pilot schedule initiative. The UP-NW 2022 pilot schedule was further enhanced in April 2023 which included implementing hourly midday service, a level not reached even in the pre-COVID schedule. These lines have demonstrated a stronger midday recovery compared to the overall recovery of those lines and compared to the system’s midday as a whole. For example, the Union Pacific Northwest and Metra Electric each have recoveries of 78% and 91% during the midday compared to the system’s recovery of 71%.

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 (Dec 2023 as a percentage of Dec 2019)**

Line	Peak	Rev Peak	Midday	Evening	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
BNSF	44%	51%	52%	53%	<b>46%</b>	62%	59%
HC	45%	-	-	-	<b>43%</b>	-	-
MD-N	49%	49%	65%	51%	<b>51%</b>	70%	76%
MD-W	39%	60%	57%	55%	<b>43%</b>	66%	71%
ME	46%	91%	81%	84%	<b>55%</b>	109%	107%
NCS	35%	28%	54%	0%	<b>36%</b>	-	-
RI	42%	75%	70%	56%	<b>47%</b>	67%	65%
SWS	43%	51%	45%	22%	<b>42%</b>	-	-
UP-N	69%	81%	100%	106%	<b>77%</b>	97%	107%
UP-NW	56%	88%	78%	80%	<b>64%</b>	109%	104%
UP-W	60%	87%	75%	76%	<b>65%</b>	98%	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>84%</b>

Exhibit 5

**Monthly Pass Sales**

Metra sold over 34,000 monthly passes in December; a decrease of -19% compared to November. December typically sees lower ridership from monthly passes due to riders taking increased time off of work while school is out of session.

**Monthly Pass Sales**

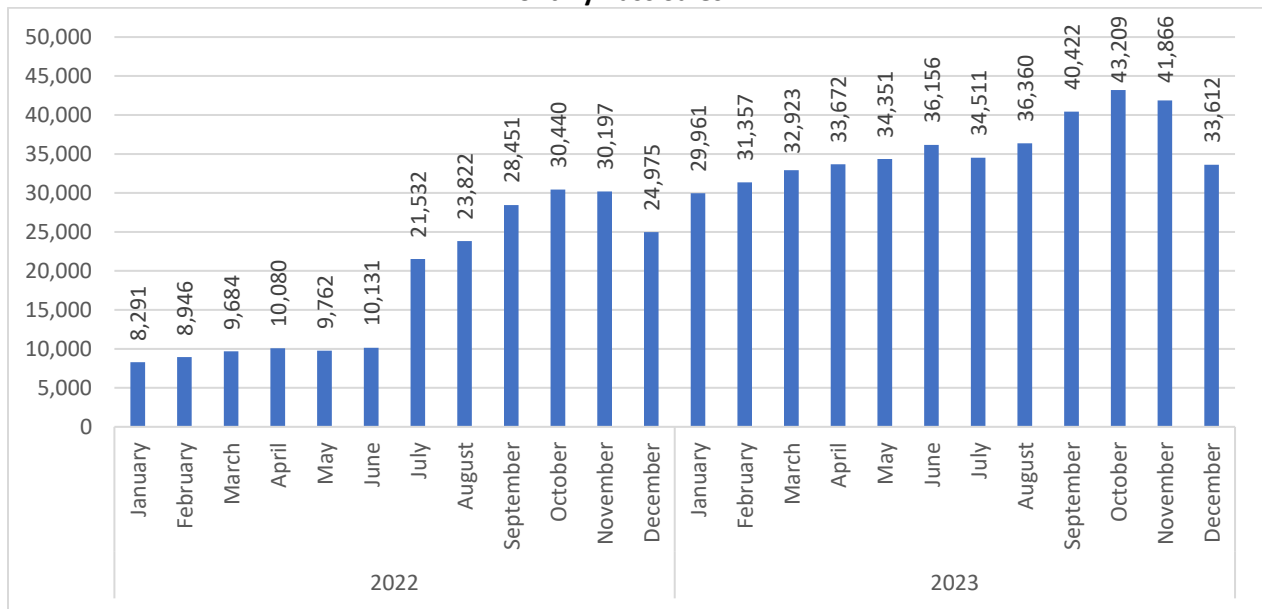


Exhibit 6

### Ridership by Ticket Type

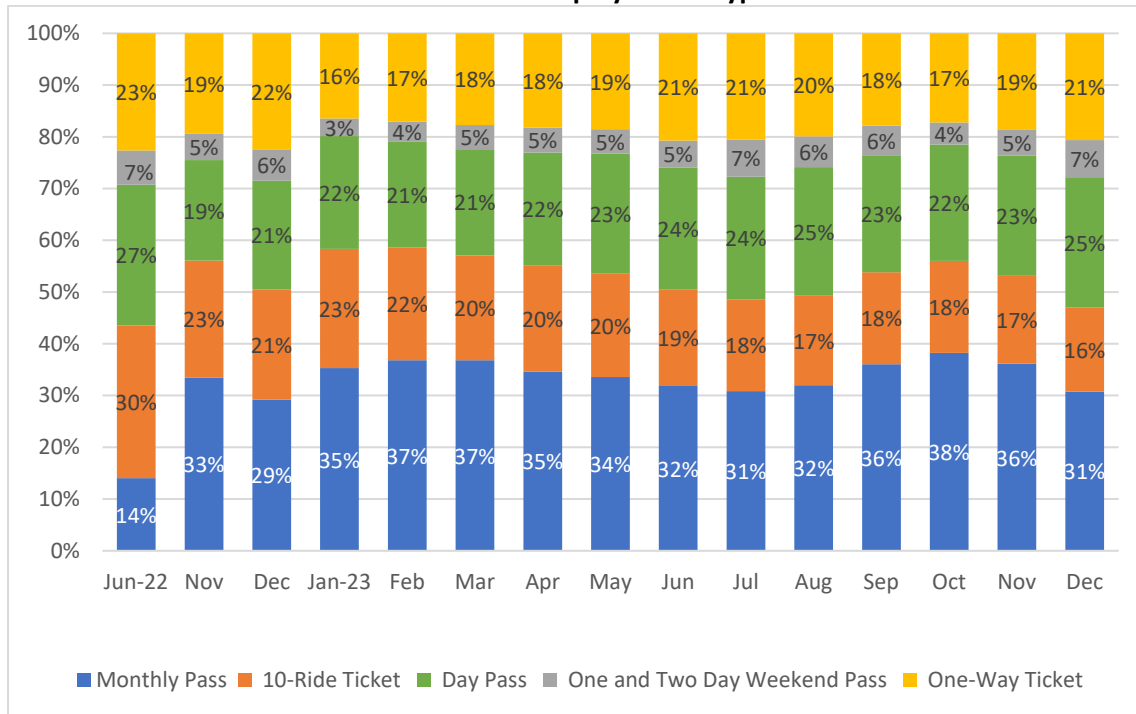


Exhibit 7

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			
	Dec 2019	Dec 2023	Dec 2019 Share	Dec 2023 Share	Dec 2019	Dec 2023	Dec 2019 Share	Dec 2023 Share
Monthly Pass	73	34	6%	4%	3,129	709	54%	30%
10-Ride Ticket	143	37	12%	4%	1,427	374	25%	16%
One-Way Ticket	860	475	73%	50%	860	475	15%	20%
Weekend Pass	107	-	9%	0%	267	-	5%	0%
One Day Weekend Pass	-	79	0%	8%	-	132	0%	6%
Two Day Weekend Pass	-	17	0%	2%	-	33	0%	1%
Day Pass	-	307	0%	32%	-	582	0%	25%
\$6 Day Pass	-	92	0%	10%	-	174	0%	7%
\$10 Day Pass	-	215	0%	23%	-	408	0%	17%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	66	38	1%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,750</b>	<b>2,343</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Exhibit 8

**Ridership by Sales Channel (thousands)**

Sales Channel	Ticket Sales				Ridership			
	Dec 2019	Dec 2023	Dec 2019 Share	Dec 2023 Share	Dec 2019	Dec 2023	Dec 2019 Share	Dec 2023 Share
Conductor	200	83	18%	9%	280	94	5%	4%
Commuter Benefit	33	6	3%	1%	1,106	101	19%	4%
Ventra App	610	760	53%	80%	2,598	1,803	46%	77%
Ticket Agent	267	80	23%	8%	1,485	267	26%	11%
Ticket Vending Machine	32	21	3%	2%	172	41	3%	2%
RTA Ride Free Permit	-	-	0%	0%	66	38	1%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,142</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,708</b>	<b>2,343</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, 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.

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