

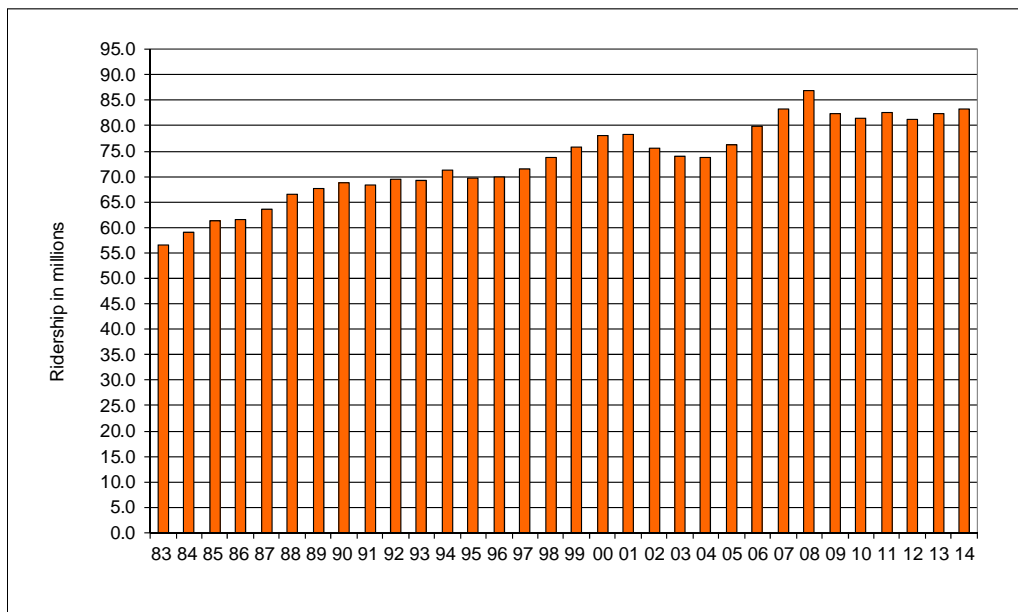


## COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP TRENDS ANNUAL – 2014

This report details the trends that influenced Metra system ridership in 2014, a year that began with harsh weather and ended with higher employment levels and higher ridership. Metra is the Commuter Rail Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, which provides passenger rail service on eleven lines throughout metropolitan Chicago. Ridership is estimated on a monthly basis based on the number and types of tickets sold. These tickets are assumed to be used during the month of purchase or for the valid month in the case of monthly passes.

Metra provided nearly 83.4 million passenger trips in 2014, which is 0.8% favorable to the budgeted forecast of 82.7 million passenger trips. When compared to 2013, ridership increased 1.3%. The 83.4 million passenger trips reported in 2014 is the second highest ridership in Metra's 30-year history. Since beginning with a low of 56.5 million passenger trips in 1983 on the services that would become Metra in 1984, Metra ridership has increased by 48%, averaging 1.5% growth per year.

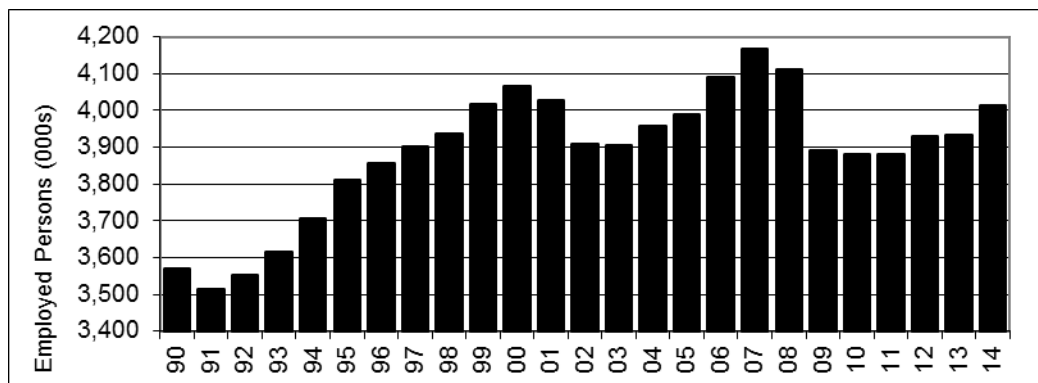
**Metra System Annual Ridership (in millions)**



## **Regional Employment**

Historically, Metra ridership has had a direct relationship with employment levels. Since approximately 86% of passenger trips taken on Metra are for work, the health of the regional economy, especially in terms of employment levels, greatly influences Metra ridership. Regional employment has generally grown since 1990. The economic downturn following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and the 2007 to 2009 economic recession (affecting 2008 through 2010 employment averages) are the exceptions. Average regional employment for 2014 was 2.1% higher compared to 2013. Although regional employment has increased in each of the past three years, employment remains below pre-recession levels. In 2014, approximately 4.01 million persons were employed in the Chicago region. This is comparable to 1999 and 2005 levels.

**Annual Average Regional Employment (in 000s)**

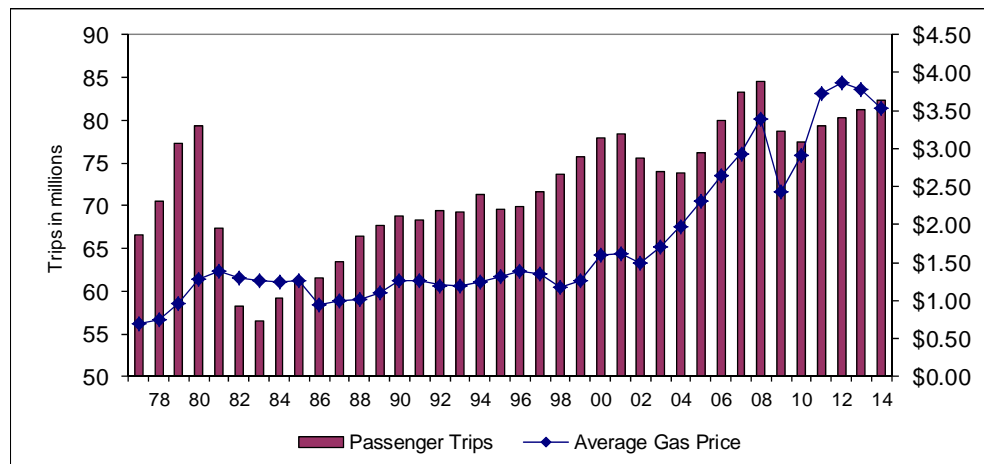


Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security.

## **Consumer Fuel Prices**

Congestion, highway tolls, parking rates, and the cost of automobile ownership and operation are factors that people consider as they choose to travel throughout the Chicago region. Metra ridership has trended along with the average gasoline price as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Regular Gasoline sold in the greater Chicago-Gary-Kenosha region. The average annual gas price in 2014 (\$3.53 per gallon) was \$0.23 lower than in 2013 (\$3.76).

**Annual Passenger Trips (in millions) and Gas Prices**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Winter Weather

Metra ridership is generally impacted in a positive manner during times of severe winter weather as commuters choose Metra over the harsh driving conditions. Following a winter season with normal snowfall amounts, the 2013-2014 winter season was very harsh. It was the snowiest and coldest winter since Metra was formed in 1984. Between November 2013 and March 2014, over 80 inches of snow fell in Chicago. Compared to the last five years, the winter of 2013-2014 had much higher snow accumulations (80.6 inches total and 33.7 inches in January). The 80.6 inches of snow accumulation is the third highest amount to have been recorded.

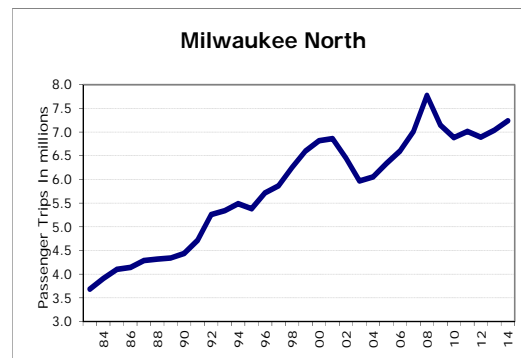
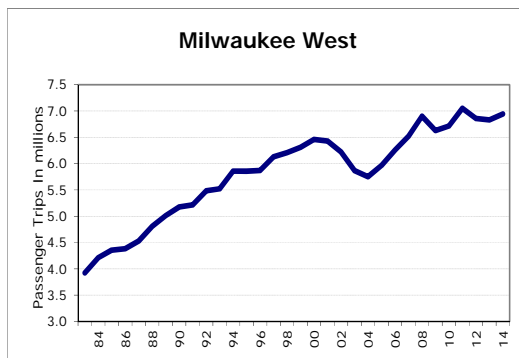
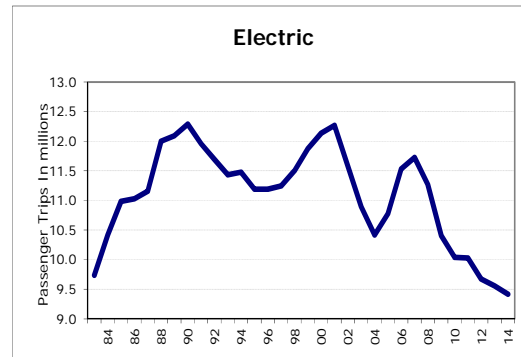
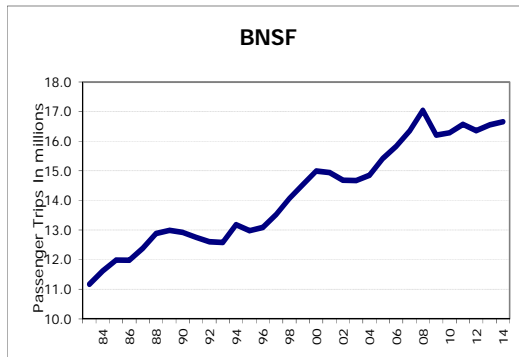
**Chicago Snowfall**

Season	Inches of Snowfall					Diff. from	
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Nov-Mar	Normal
2010-11	trace	16.2	11.1	29.0	1.0	57.3	23.0
2011-12	trace	1.7	12.2	5.6	0.3	19.8	-14.5
2012-13	0.0	0.9	2.6	16.1	10.4	30.0	-4.3
2013-14	0.9	14.2	33.7	19.5	12.3	80.6	46.3
2014-15	2.8	0.0				2.8	-31.5
30-Yr. Avg	1.1	8.0	11.5	9.2	5.0	34.3	

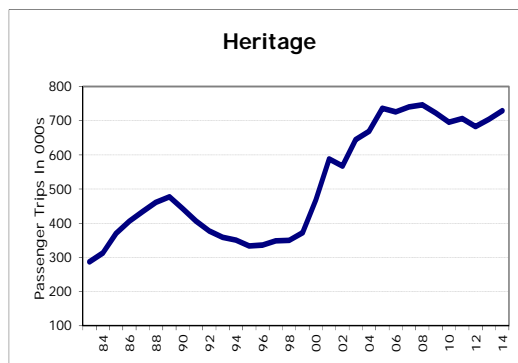
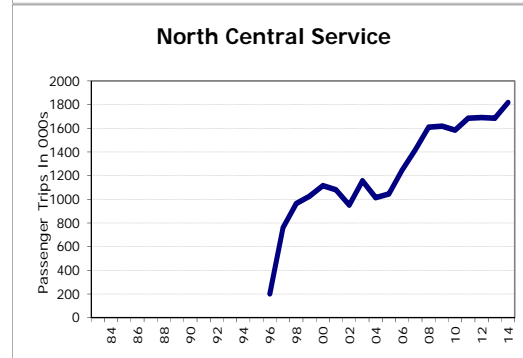
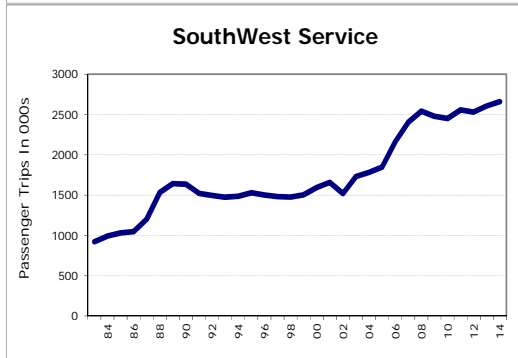
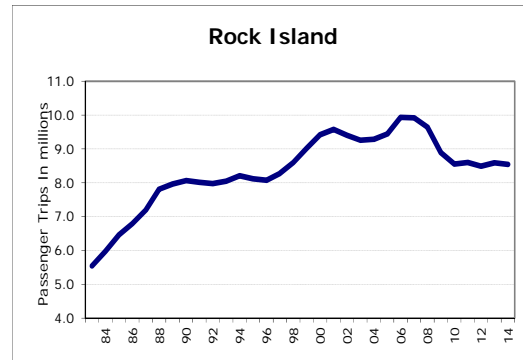
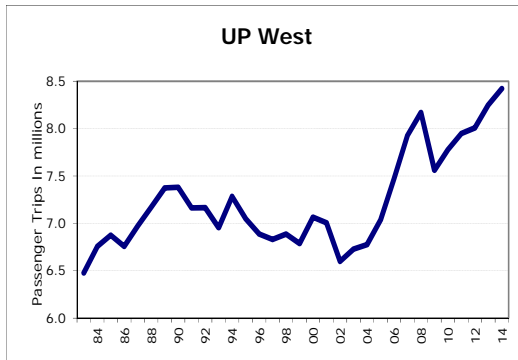
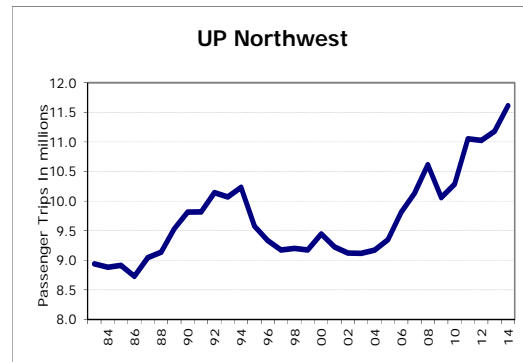
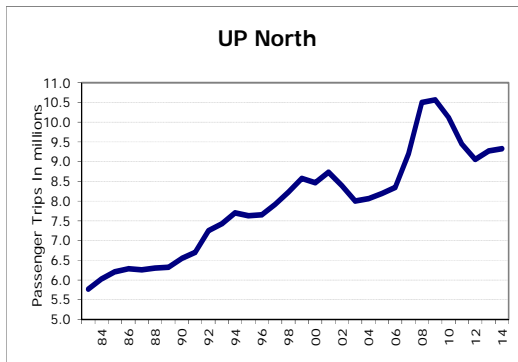
## Ridership by Line

Nine of the eleven lines experienced increases in ridership (reported and free trips) in 2014 compared to 2013. The Metra Electric District's (MED) ridership decreased by 1.5% between 2013 and 2014.

**Annual Rail Line Ridership (Reported Plus Free Trips), 1983 – 2014\***



### Annual Rail Line Ridership (Reported Plus Free Trips), 1983 – 2014\* (cont.)



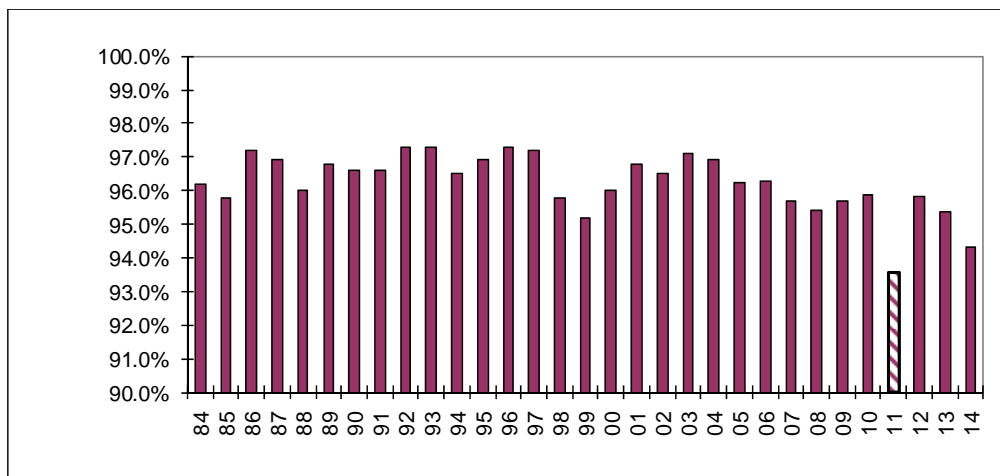
\* Line estimates beginning in August 2010 may be affected by the implementation of a new revenue accounting system, which provides more precise line breakdowns than our previous systems were able to provide.

### **On-Time Performance**

The winter weather's effect on Metra's on-time performance in January and February of 2014 was substantial. On-time performance is the percentage of scheduled trains that arrived on-time each month. Metra considers a train late if it arrives six minutes or more after its scheduled arrival at its last stop. Metra system reliability over the past several years has tracked at a very high level, usually exceeding 95% on-time performance in any given month. The "Polar Vortex" event of January 6-7 significantly delayed trains. System on-time performance was 85.6% in January and 89.3% in February. For January, 57% of all train delays were caused by weather.

On-time performance was significantly better for the second half of 2014, but not good enough to increase the average for the year to be comparable or better than previous years. In 2014, on-time performance averaged 94.3%, which is below the 2009-2013 average on-time performance of 95.3%.

**Annual On-Time Performance\***

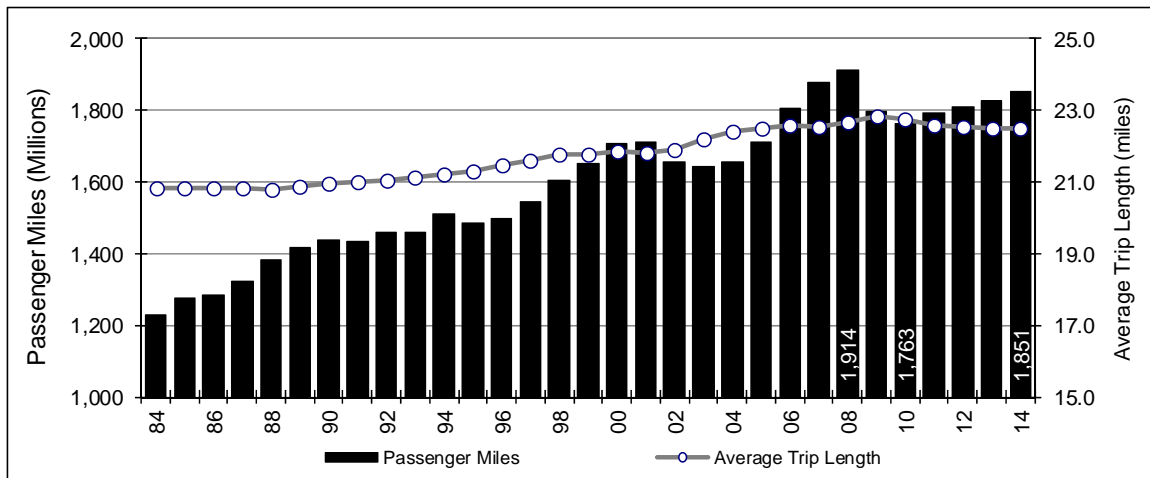


\* A striped bar is used for 2011 to show the Groundhog Day Blizzard's impact on on-time performance.

### Passenger Miles & Trip Length

Each year, Metra calculates the number of passenger miles traveled and the average trip length by line. In 2014, the total number of passenger miles increased by 1.3% when compared to 2013, continuing a positive trend that began in 2010. The average trip length did not change from 2013 to 2014 at 22.5 miles. Passenger miles and trip-length calculations do not include Benefit-Access trips.

**Passenger Miles and Average Trip Length (in millions)**



\* Free RTA Circuit Permit/Benefit Access trips and South Shore are not included.

### Average Fare

Each year, Metra calculates the average fare paid by fare-paying passengers. The average fare calculation does not include Benefit-Access trips. In 2013, the average fare increased 3% compared to 2012 as a result of the 11.1% ten-ride increase approved in December 2012. In 2014, the average fare decreased by \$0.01 or 0.1%

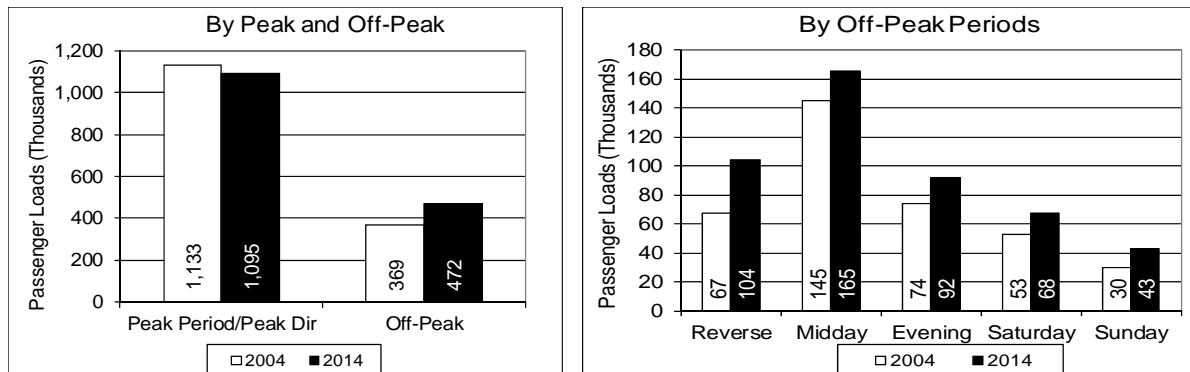
**Average Fare by Line**

Line	2013	2014	% Chng
BNSF	\$3.89	\$3.88	-0.1%
Electric Lines	\$3.49	\$3.50	0.2%
Heritage	\$4.05	\$4.06	0.3%
Milw-N	\$3.95	\$3.93	-0.4%
Milw-W	\$3.97	\$3.97	-0.1%
North Central	\$4.54	\$4.55	0.2%
Rock Island	\$3.66	\$3.66	-0.2%
SouthWest	\$3.56	\$3.55	-0.1%
UP-N	\$3.54	\$3.53	-0.4%
UP-NW	\$4.02	\$4.01	-0.3%
UP-W	\$3.83	\$3.82	-0.4%
<b>System</b>	<b>\$3.81</b>	<b>\$3.80</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>

### Ridership by Service Period

The average daily passenger loads for each service period in 2014 indicate that Metra provided nearly 1.6 million passenger trips per week. The peak-period/peak-direction remained Metra's largest market, accounting for about 70% of all trips taken. The figures below show the shares of the average weekly passenger loads for 2004 and 2014. Off-peak ridership in 2014 is 28% greater than 2004, while peak-period ridership is 3% less over the same time period. The largest percentage growth in off-peak ridership has occurred in the reverse-commute service periods (55%) and on Sundays (44%). Substantial growth has also occurred on Saturdays (27%), Evenings (24%), and during the Midday (14%).

**Passenger Loads by Period**



### Type of Tickets

Metra offers a wide array of ticket types including monthly, ten-ride, one-way, and weekend tickets. One-way tickets can be purchased on-board the train from the conductor or at a station with a ticket agent. The total number of tickets bought in 2014 declined by 0.1% compared to 2013.

In 2014, ten-ride ticket sales declined 4.0%; monthly tickets sales increased 2.7%. The shift between ten-ride ticket and other sales in 2013 was less in 2014. This shift was attributable to the ten-ride ticket price change from nine to ten equivalent one-way fares, effective February 1, 2013. In 2014, station one-way ticket sales increased by 0.5%. Conductor one-way sales declined 0.2% while weekend ticket sales declined by 0.6% in 2014.

**Ticket Sales by Type**

	January-December			Percent Change	
	2012	2013	2014	12 vs. 13	13 vs. 14
Monthly	1,125,139	1,209,844	1,242,471	7.5%	2.7%
Ten-ride	1,853,877	1,504,105	1,444,553	-18.9%	-4.0%
Station One-Way	5,880,230	6,479,673	6,514,736	10.2%	0.5%
Conductor One-Way	4,345,102	4,362,168	4,352,262	0.4%	-0.2%
<i>Total One-Way</i>	<i>10,225,332</i>	<i>10,841,841</i>	<i>10,866,998</i>	<i>6.0%</i>	<i>0.2%</i>
Weekend	1,380,144	1,480,005	1,470,595	7.2%	-0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,584,492</b>	<b>15,035,795</b>	<b>15,024,617</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>

The following table shows the percent share of tickets, passenger trips, and revenue by ticket type.

**Percent Share by Ticket Type**

Ticket Type	2012			2013			2014		
	Tickets	Trips	Revenues	Tickets	Trips	Revenues	Tickets	Trips	Revenues
Monthly	7.7%	60.0%	55.2%	8.0%	63.7%	57.7%	8.3%	64.8%	60.7%
Ten-Ride	12.7%	23.0%	27.9%	10.0%	18.4%	25.7%	9.6%	17.5%	23.0%
One-Way	70.1%	12.7%	14.6%	72.1%	13.3%	14.3%	72.3%	13.2%	14.0%
Weekend	9.5%	4.3%	2.3%	9.8%	4.5%	2.3%	9.8%	4.5%	2.3%