



**NextGen Ridership Update
Quarter 4, Calendar Year 2023**

**Operations, Safety, and
Customer Experience Committee
May 16, 2024**

Metro[®]

NextGen Bus Plan Ridership Update

This report provides an assessment of Metro bus system ridership for Q4 (October 1 - December 31) CY 2023. Ridership is analyzed by:

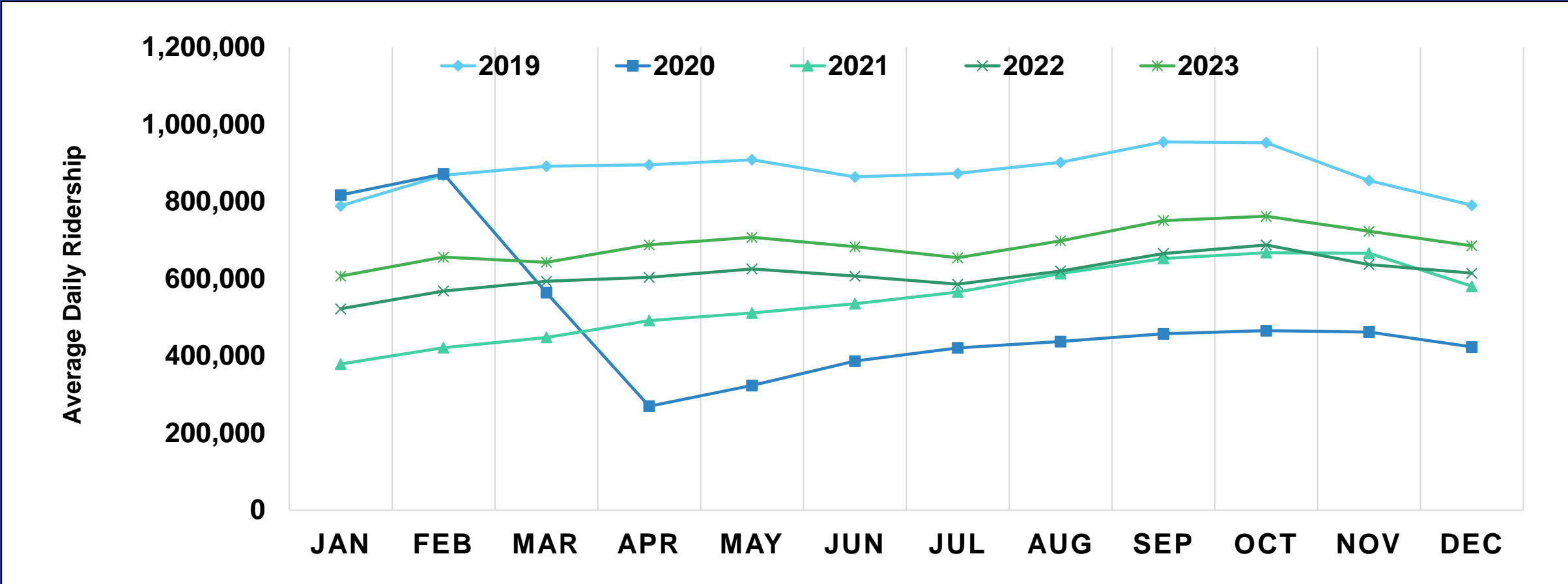
- Day type (Weekday, Saturday, Sunday)
- Service area
- Equity Focus Communities (EFCs)/non-EFCs
- Time period
- Line/line group, and
- Changes in average passenger trip length

The report compares the ridership from Q4 CY2019 (pre-pandemic) with Q4 CY2023 when service was fully restored (7 million revenue service hours annualized) based on the NextGen Bus Plan, with full bus operator staffing.

Another update will be provided in mid 2024 covering bus system ridership for Q1 CY2024.



Average Weekday Ridership 2019-2023

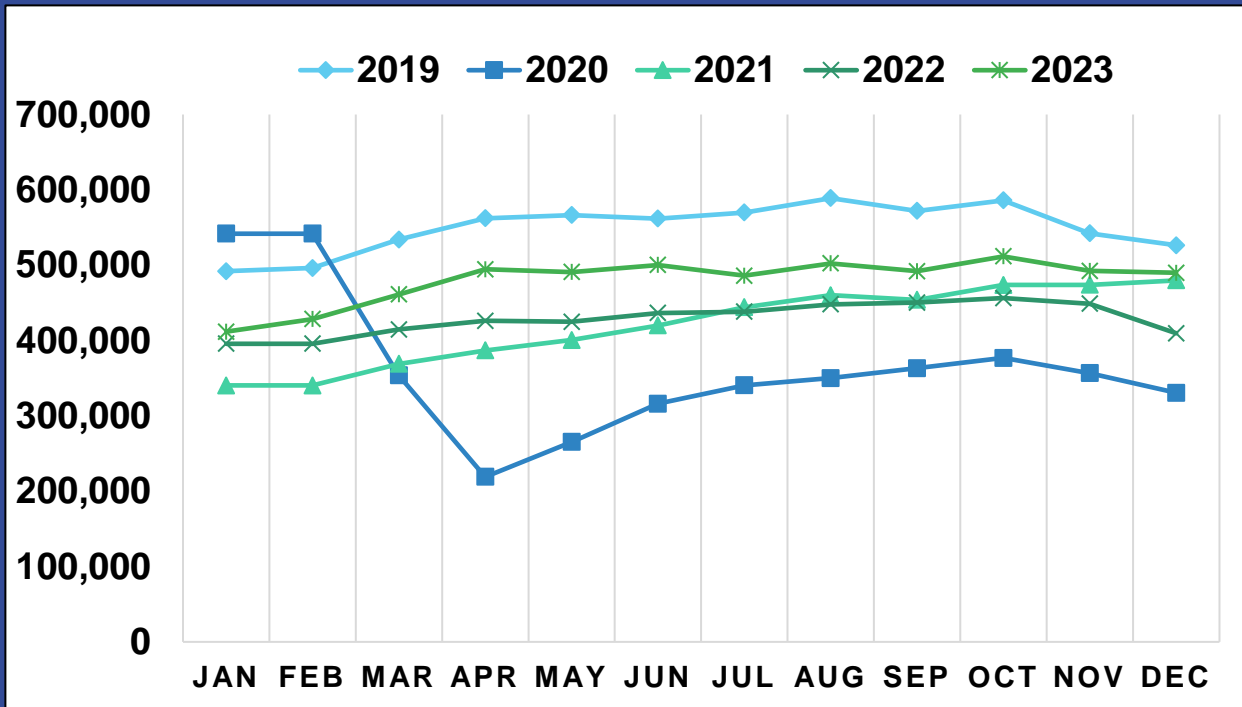


Service has remained at full 7 million revenue service hours (RSH) since December 2022. Average weekday ridership consistently remained above 2022 levels in 2023, including Q4. Ridership recovery improved in Q4 to 83.4% of 2019 pre-COVID ridership (was 78.6% in last update covering September 2023).

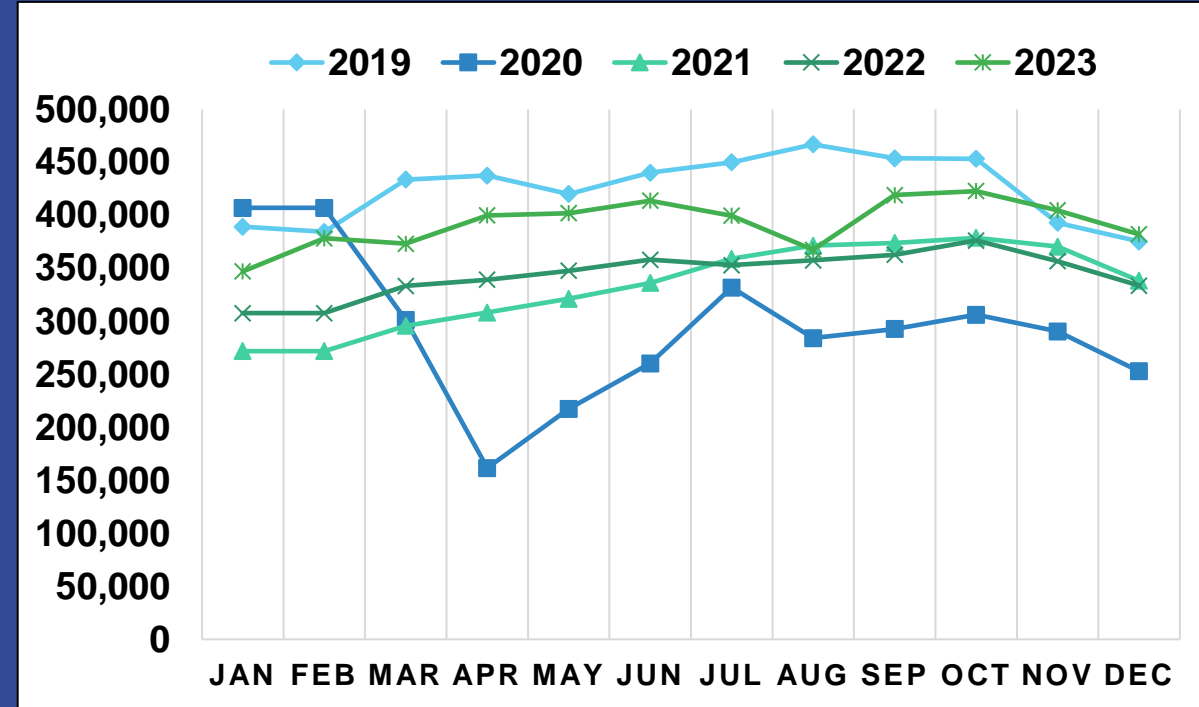


Weekend Ridership

Average Saturday Ridership 2019 – 2023



Average Sunday Ridership 2019 – 2023



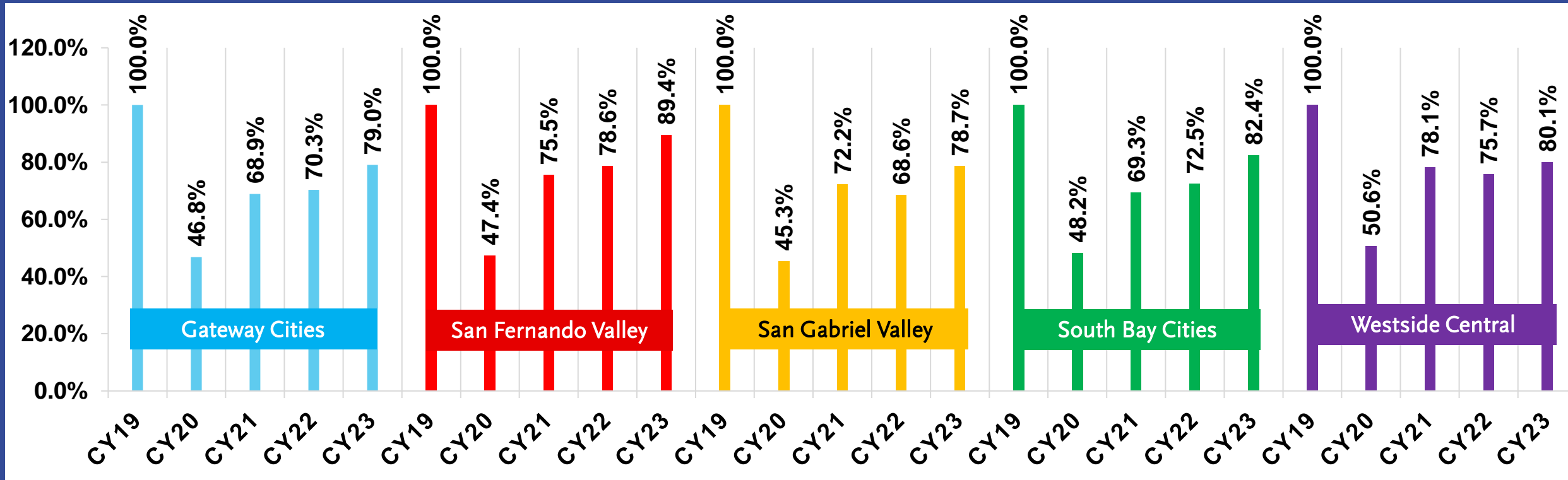
Q4 CY2023 average Saturday ridership recovery improved to 90.3% of 2019 pre-COVID level (was 86% in last report that reviewed September 2023).

Q4 CY2023 average Sunday ridership recovery improved to 99.97% of 2019 pre-COVID level (was 92.4% in September 2023).



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Average Weekday Ridership Recovery by Service Area Q4 CY2019 – Q4 CY2023



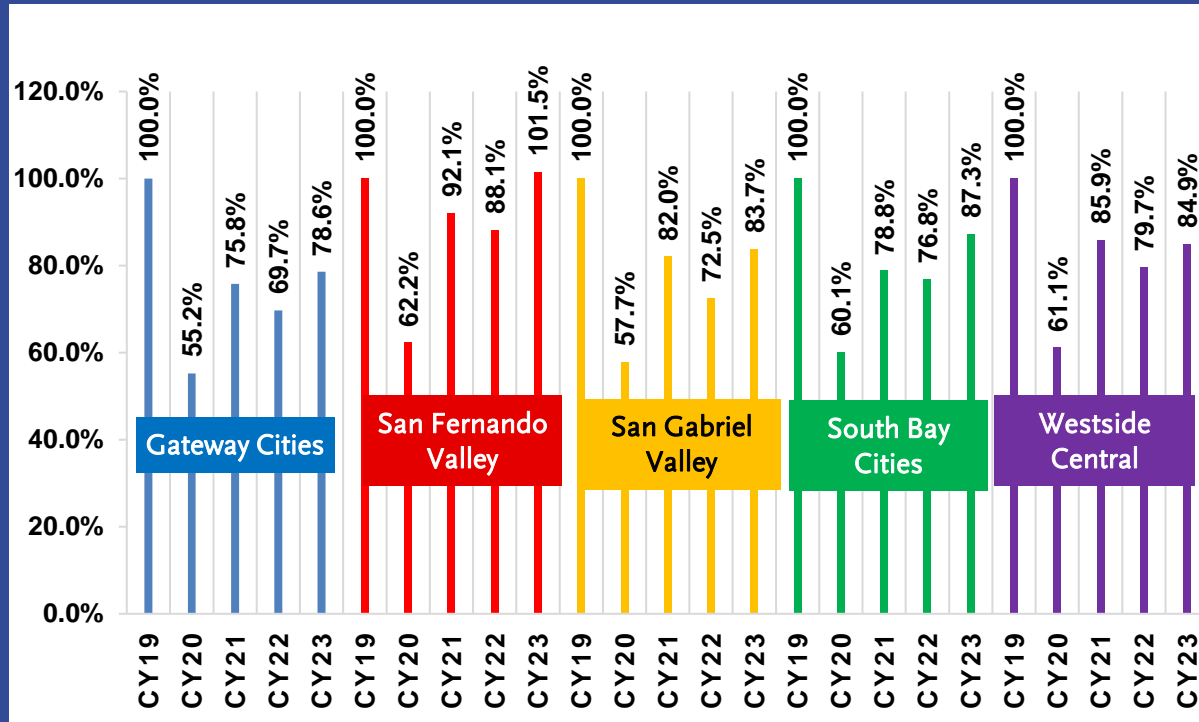
Weekday bus ridership has grown year over year in each of Metro's regions. Recovery improved by around 10% in most areas between CY2022 Q4 and CY2023 Q4. Notably strong recovery in the San Fernando Valley at almost 90%.



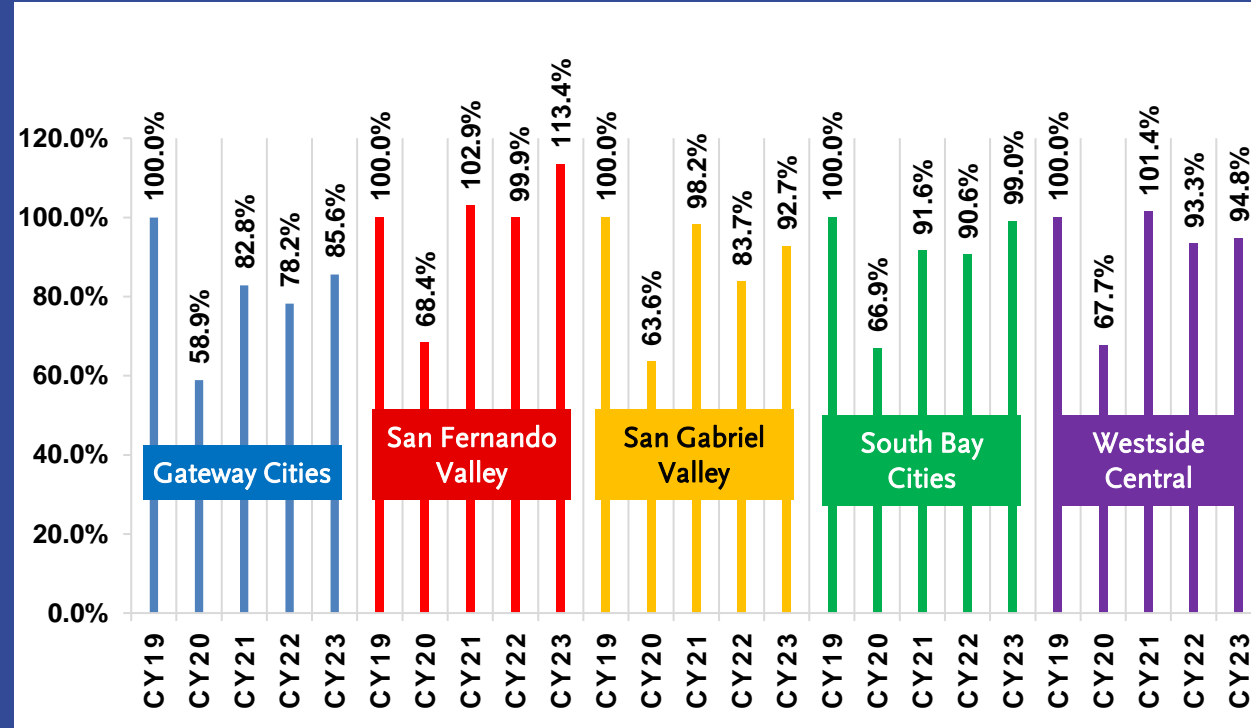
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Saturday and Sunday Ridership

Average Saturday Bus Ridership 2019–2023



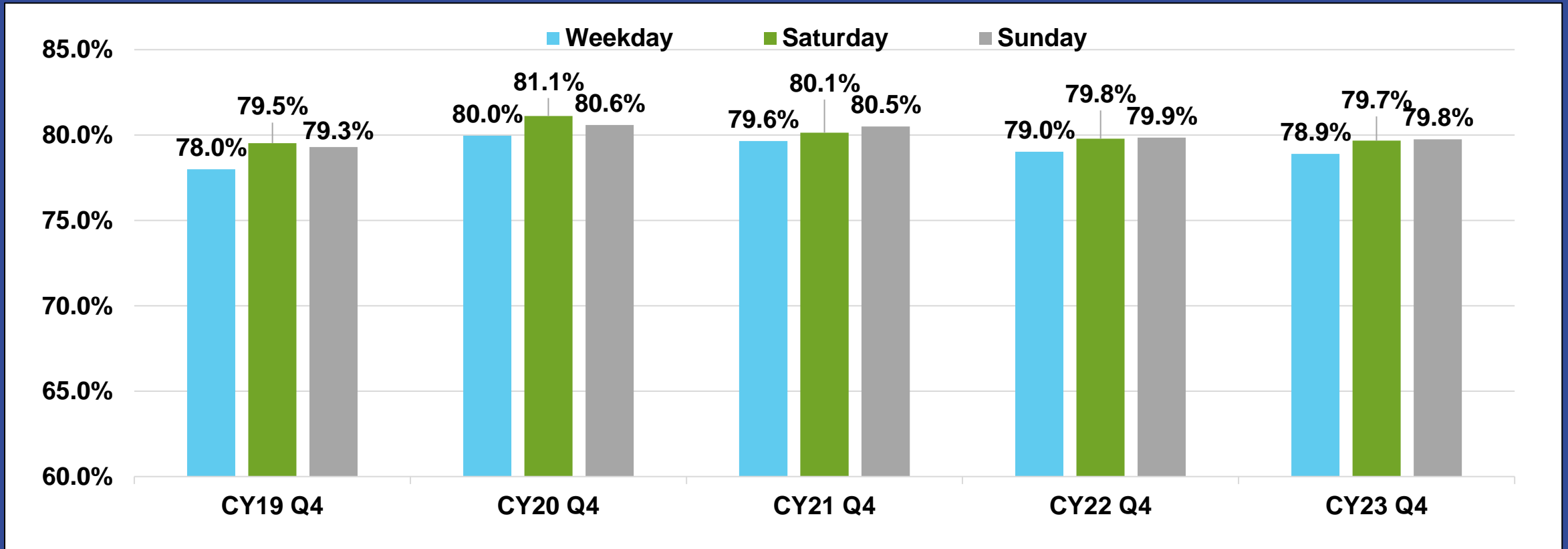
Average Sunday Bus Ridership 2019-2023



Most areas improved by up to 10% or more between CY2022 Q4 and CY2023 Q4 for both average Saturday and Sunday ridership. San Fernando Valley showed the most recovery, exceeding pre-pandemic 2019 ridership levels both Saturday and Sunday, with South Bay Cities almost reaching full recovery on Sunday.



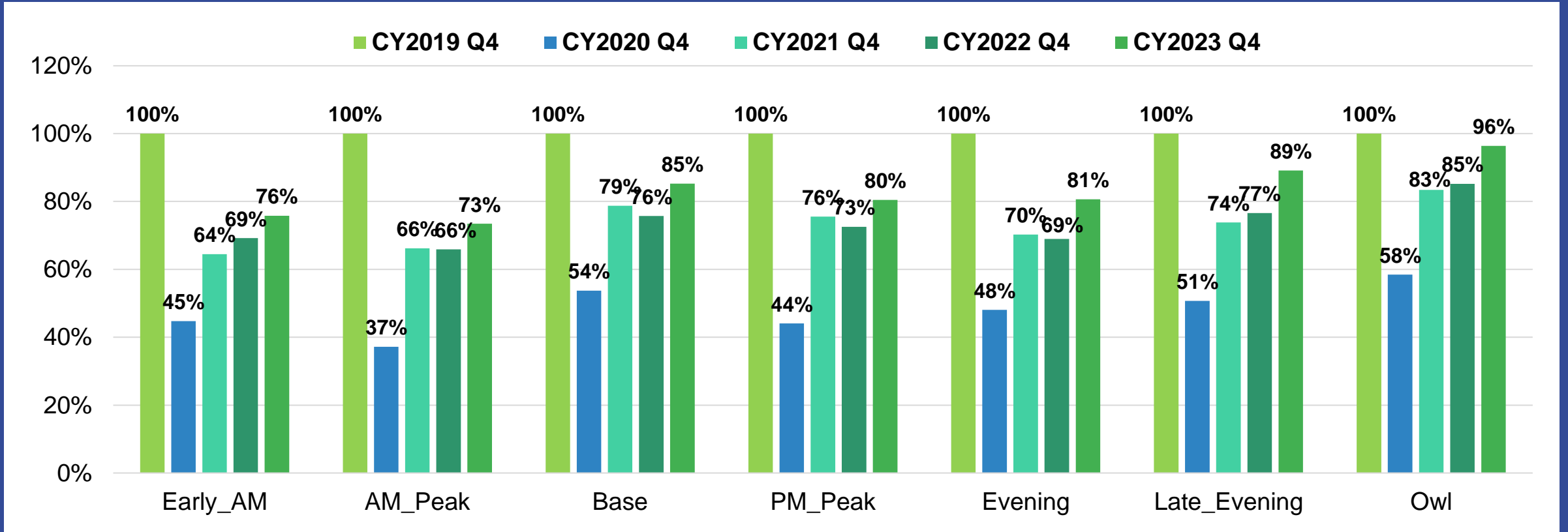
Ridership Percentage in Equity Focus Communities Q4 CY2019 – Q4 CY2023



Equity-Focus Community share of bus ridership (boardings) grew most in 2020. While EFC share remains above pre-pandemic levels suggesting the NextGen Bus Plan has been beneficial to these communities, it peaked early in the Covid period when people travelled for essential jobs and services.



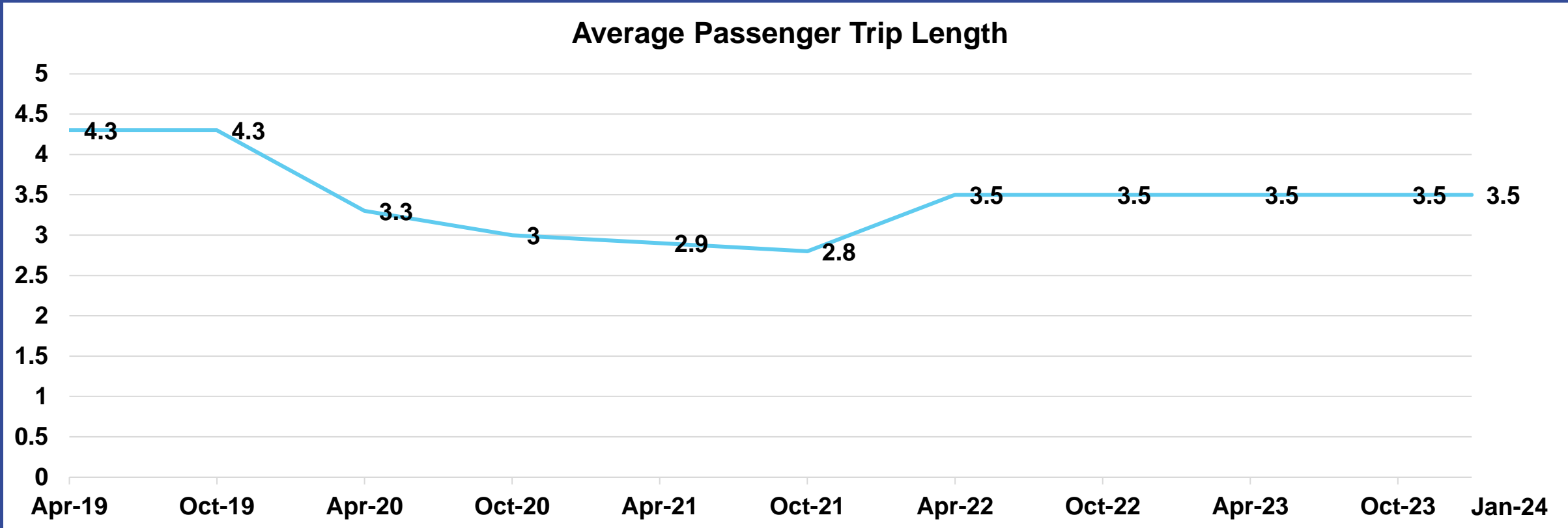
Weekday Ridership by Time Period Q4 CY 2019 to Q4 CY2023



Midday ridership recovery (base) has exceeded both AM peak and PM peak recovery from the pandemic, likely in response to NextGen Bus Plan's increased off-peak service frequencies. AM peak remains most subdued compared to pre-pandemic as transit use has shifted due to telecommuting and more off-peak travel to service jobs. PM Peak has stronger recovery than AM peak. Late evening and owl ridership periods recovered most strongly as these periods typically serve transit-dependent shift workers.



Average Weekday Bus Passenger Trip Length



Average passenger trips lengths (unlinked) declined from just over 4 miles to just under 3 miles with the pandemic. They have remained lower than pre-pandemic lengths at around 3.5 miles. This is consistent with the NextGen Bus Plan which was designed to attract an increased share of shorter-distance travel through improved local bus frequencies.



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Average Line/Group Ridership Recovery

Average % Ridership Recovery Q4 CY2023 versus Q4 CY2019	Number of Weekday Lines/Line Groups Average Recovery	Number of Saturday Lines/Line Groups Average Recovery	Number of Sunday Lines/Line Groups Average Recovery
>= 140.0%	0	2	1
130.0 – 139.9%	0	2	3
120.0 – 129.9%	0	1	8
110.0 – 119.9%	3	6	9
100.0 – 109.9%	8	7	16
90.0 - 99.9%	22	23	15
80.0 - 89.9%	18	12	10
70.0 - 79.9%	12	14	11
60.0 - 69.9%	13	7	0
50.0 - 59.9%	4	0	0
40.0 - 49.0%	1	0	0
30.0 - 39.9%	1	1	1
Total Lines/Line Groups	82	75	74

- In 2023 Q4, ridership recovered to above pre-pandemic levels on 11 weekday lines (up from 6 in September 2023), 18 Saturday lines (up from 14), and 37 Sunday lines (up from 24).
 - Weekday lines with ridership recovery above 83.4% average: 19-Tier 1, 11-Tier 2, 6-Tier 3, and 8-Tier 4
 - Saturday lines with ridership recovery above 90.3% average: 15-Tier 1, 9-Tier 2, 9-Tier 3, and 6-Tier 4
 - Sunday lines with ridership recovery above 99.97% average: 14-Tier 1, 10-Tier 2, 8-Tier 3, and 5-Tier 4
- Ridership recovery has been strongest where NextGen has invested in improved frequencies or in response to line restructuring.
- Lines serving downtown LA and with lower frequency have recovered more slowly. Low frequency lines will be a focus of the June 2024 service change.



Conclusions

- During the pandemic, non-peak ridership was more resilient as those trips were largely composed of essential workers and/or essential trips; this trend has continued.
- Weekday, Saturday, and Sunday ridership recovery has continued in 2023 Q4 above levels seen in the September 2023 review, with Sunday ridership just below 100% recovered in Q4 (has been above 100% in first two months of 2024).
- Off-peak and EFC shares of ridership remain larger than pre-pandemic, and average trip length remained shorter. This is consistent with the NextGen Bus Plan focus on growing off-peak and shorter-distance ridership.
- Metro programs such as fare capping, LIFE, and GoPass as well as new NextGen bus priority lanes and high-frequency network, together with customer experience improvements focused on customer safety, security, and cleanliness, and improved reliability continue to support and accelerate ridership recovery, and achieve the growth intended from NextGen.
- Additional frequency improvements for low frequency lines will be a focus of the June 2024 service change.



**Questions?
Thank You**