



## 2024 ANNUAL RIDERSHIP REPORT



# 2024 ANNUAL RIDERSHIP REPORT

## LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Long Island Rail Road finished 2024 with increased ridership, continuing the upward trends of recent years. Total ridership was 75.5 million customers, increasing +15.7% above 2023's 65.2 million ridership (the increase is +15.5% when 2023 is adjusted to match calendar differences). When compared to 2019, total ridership represented 82.9% of 2019's ridership. 2024 Non-Commutation ridership increased +19.7% with 47.3 million customers exceeding pre-pandemic 2019 levels by 16.7% and outperforming Commutation ridership that increased +9.7% with 28.2 million customers. This was a remarkable year marked with significant improvements in LIRR ridership, service performance and customer satisfaction.

## 2024 Ridership Summary

- In 2024, the Long Island Rail Road accommodated a total of 75.5 million customers, that's 10.3 million more customers than 2023, while it reached 82.9% of 2019's pre-Covid ridership.
- 2024 Commutation ridership reached 28.2 million customers increasing +9.7% from last year (+9.1% when 2023 is adjusted for calendar/workday differences). Monthly ticket ridership increased by 23.5% over 2023. The gradual return to work in the office (part/full-time) and improved on-time performance contributed to the Commutation growth.
  - 2024 Reverse Commute ridership increased +16.2% in the AM period and +28% in the PM Peak Period compared to 2023
- 2024 Non-Commutation ridership reached 47.3 million customers. Non-Commutation ridership increased +19.7% contributing to the strong ridership come-back, indicating higher demand for LIRR off-peak travel. Non-Commutation ridership surpassed pre-pandemic 2019 levels by 16.7%.
  - Saturday ridership increased 20.7% and Sunday ridership increased 15.5%, while Off-peak weekday travel increased 17.8% in 2024
  - Off-peak and weekends have returned stronger primarily driven by discretionary trips to concerts, sporting events (to local venues, especially to UBS Arena) and other leisure trips.

Annual Ridership (in millions)\*  
2024 vs 2023

	2024	2023	% Change vs 2023
Total Ridership	75.510	65.370	15.5% ▲

\* Annual ridership is based on a calendar adjustment to reflect same workdays in 2024 and 2023.

▲ Increase

▼ Decrease

● No Change

## Major Factors and Initiatives Affecting Ridership

### 1. ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE RELIABILITY

- **On-Time Performance (OTP):** One of the most reliable predictors of customer satisfaction is the ability of the LIRR to deliver passengers to their intended destinations on time. For 2024, the LIRR's OTP was 95.65%, which was above the goal of 94% and an increase of 1.7% percentage points from 2023. The opening of Grand Central Madison in 2023 altered the operation in an unprecedented way that led to a dip in 2023 which was improved as the operation was finetuned through 2024.
- Key service improvements included the number of scheduled trains increasing from 303,519 in 2023 to 316,954 in 2024. The increase was mainly due to having 12 full months of Grand Central Madison service in 2024 as compared to only 10 months in 2023.
- **Equipment Performance:** The 2024 annual fleet MDBF Mean Distance Between Failures (MDBF) for the entire fleet was 163,564 miles, exceeding the 2024 goal of 150,000 miles by 9%.
- The M9 fleet, with an MDBF of 434,481 miles, was the strongest contributor in the LIRR's fleet reliability achievements. In addition, LIRR's RCM program and rigorous maintenance strategies contributed to sustain outstanding reliability performance.
- The Maintenance of Equipment Department's strategic efforts helped to sustain more than 25 years old diesel fleet reliability, with C3 fleet achieving MDBF of 79,594 – trailing the goal by 20%. The combined diesel fleet achieved an MDBF of 46,211 miles, which exceeded the goal by 3%.

### 2. RIDERSHIP TRENDS AND OTHER BUSINESS SEGMENTS

- Based on LIRR's 2024 Ridership Book, some key highlights of ridership trends include:
  - 2024 was a noteworthy year for the MTA Long Island Rail Road, as it celebrated its 190th Anniversary on April 24th, 2024, and remained the busiest commuter railroad in North America, with ridership continuing to rebound in the post-COVID era. In 2024, the LIRR carried more than 245,000 customers each weekday, an approximately 13% increase versus 2023, when about 217,000 customers were tallied each weekday (ridership numbers are based on a combination of train counts and load weigh data).
  - The weekday ridership, while continuing to trend upward, does remain somewhat below the pre-COVID base in 2019, when 284,110 customers were carried each weekday. The 2024 figure is 86% of the pre-COVID base, mostly the result of Peak ridership, which has been somewhat slower to return to earlier levels.
  - Off-peak weekday ridership, on the other hand, at 107,910, is higher than the 2019 base of 98,340, an increase of 10%.
  - Weekend ridership has also seen substantial increases over the pre-COVID base. On Saturdays, 2024's average ridership was 122,810, versus 112,540 in 2019, a 9% increase. On Sundays, ridership is up 10% versus 2019, from 91,550 to 100,770
  - On weekdays, midday off-peak ridership increased on every branch except Oyster Bay. Substantial increases were seen on the West Hempstead Branch, which saw significant service increases after the opening of Grand Central Madison, going from shuttles every two hours that required a change of trains at Valley Stream, to hourly direct service to western terminals in Manhattan and/or Brooklyn. This led to a 343% increase in average midday weekday off-peak ridership – from 230 in 2019 to 1,020 in 2024.
  - Similarly, Ronkonkoma and Huntington service went from hourly to half-hourly, leading to ridership increases of 33% and 12%, respectively.

- On the Montauk Branch, the South Fork Commuter Connection continued to realize significant ridership increases, up about 20% from 2023 (which was over 50% higher than pre-COVID ridership).
- Throughout the year, with ridership increasing, the LIRR continued to analyze new and emerging ridership patterns and made a number of schedule changes to better accommodate customer demand. Among the key changes were:
  - The Oyster Bay Branch gained a second AM Peak dual-mode trip directly into Penn Station with the diversion of Train 513 from Hunterspoint Avenue.
  - In order to better accommodate post-event ridership and resultant customer demand at Penn Station, several late evening eastbound trains on major branches were moved from Grand Central to Penn Station. Included were trains on the Ronkonkoma and Babylon Branches.
  - After LIRR service to Grand Central Madison began in 2023, new ridership trends and demand patterns began to emerge. While AM Peak ridership stabilized at a 60/40 split between Penn and GCM, Off Peak ridership continues to skew toward Penn Station. Using ridership data and customer comments and feedback, a number of terminal changes were made throughout the year. More Off Peak and weekend service moved to Penn Station from Grand Central. On weekends, additional trains from the Ronkonkoma, Huntington and Long Beach Branches were moved to Penn Station, while trains from the Far Rockaway and West Hempstead Branches were moved to Grand Central.
  - With Summer Service demand on the Montauk Branch expanding beyond the long-standing Friday/Sunday peaks, Train 20 began operating on summer Thursdays in addition to Fridays.
  - Additional Peak through trains were provided to and from Atlantic Terminal, targeting branches where customer demand was strongest for direct service to and from Brooklyn.
- Some other key highlights of ridership trends during 2024:
  - Continuing to offer the City Ticket (27% of 2024's total ticket sales), the Monthly ticket discount, and the Combo ticket between the two railroads contributed to ridership growth.
  - Technology applications continued to offer better service to customers:
    - TrainTime App offers the ability to purchase mobile tickets, along with information on crowding and accessibility.

### **3. CUSTOMERS COUNT SURVEY**

- The 2024 Fall overall LIRR satisfaction increased to 76% (up from 70% in Spring 2024) and the highest it has been since Fall 2022 prior to the opening of GCM.
- Nine branches saw significant increases in overall satisfaction with LIRR
  - City Zone is the highest scoring branch at 82%, followed by Port Washington at 79% (up 3 pts)
  - All branches now have satisfaction scores above 70%, except Oyster Bay, which is not far behind with 68% score but saw an 8 pt increase from the last survey wave.
  - Other increases include Long Beach 72% (up 11 pts), West Hempstead 72% (up 9pt), Far Rockaway 76% (up 7 pts), Ronkonkoma 75% (up 6 pts), Hempstead 74% (up 5 pts) and Babylon (up 4 pts), Port Jefferson 73% (up 4 pts).
- The key drivers of satisfaction remain primarily service-related:
  - Transfer experience, Service Reliability, Peak service frequency, and On-time Performance

- Focusing on improving the Jamaica OTP and the transfer experience in Jamaica is likely a factor in these increased customer scores, as satisfaction with transfer experience, a top attribute, is 63%, up 6 pts.
  - The share of customers always/sometimes transferring has not changed, but those who transfer more often indicated an increase in satisfaction with their transfer experience as well.
  - Of those who 'Always' transfer, 50% (up 10 pts) are satisfied with their transfer experience
  - Transfer experience satisfaction increased among those transferring in Jamaica (where most transfers occur), up 8 pts to 63%.
- In addition to Transfer Experience, most key attributes also saw increases, particularly satisfaction with peak service frequency (71%, up 4 pts) and frequency of delays (72% up 3 pts.)
  - The added focus on restroom cleanliness through the QR code initiative is also showing results. Satisfaction with restroom cleanliness is up, both for restrooms at stations (73%, up 4 pts) and for restrooms on board (45%, up 4 pts)
- Customer satisfaction scores increased reflecting improvements implemented throughout the year:
  - Overall On-board satisfaction increased to 86% (from 84%)
  - Overall satisfaction with LIRR stations increased to 84% (from 82%)
  - On-time Performance increased to 78% (from 76%)
  - Service Reliability increased to 82% (from 80%)
  - Seat Availability increased to 72% (from 70%)
  - Peak service frequency increased to 71% (from 67%)
  - Safety from accidents on-board increased to 91% (from 90%)
  - Safety from crime or harassment on-board increased to 86% (from 85%)
  - The satisfaction of customers with the LIRR increased for Penn Station and Atlantic Terminal along with GCM. Those whose destination is GCM or Jamaica are the most satisfied with LIRR.
  - When asking those dissatisfied what would increase their satisfaction, the top 3 areas mentioned were: "More frequent service on weekdays", "More reliable service", and "More convenient transfer options"
- Several LIRR initiatives contributed to the satisfaction increases above, such as (to name a few):
  - Schedule optimization through data analysis and consist adjustment adding trains to meet new demand trends, seat availability enhancements
  - OTP task force targeting problem patterns, focus on Jamaica performance, management presence on the platforms in Jamaica, routing strategies and track utilization constant monitoring
  - The station "Spruce-Up" program resulted in increased cleaning and enhanced customer experience
- Looking ahead, these initiatives are expected to lead to customer satisfaction increases, as well.

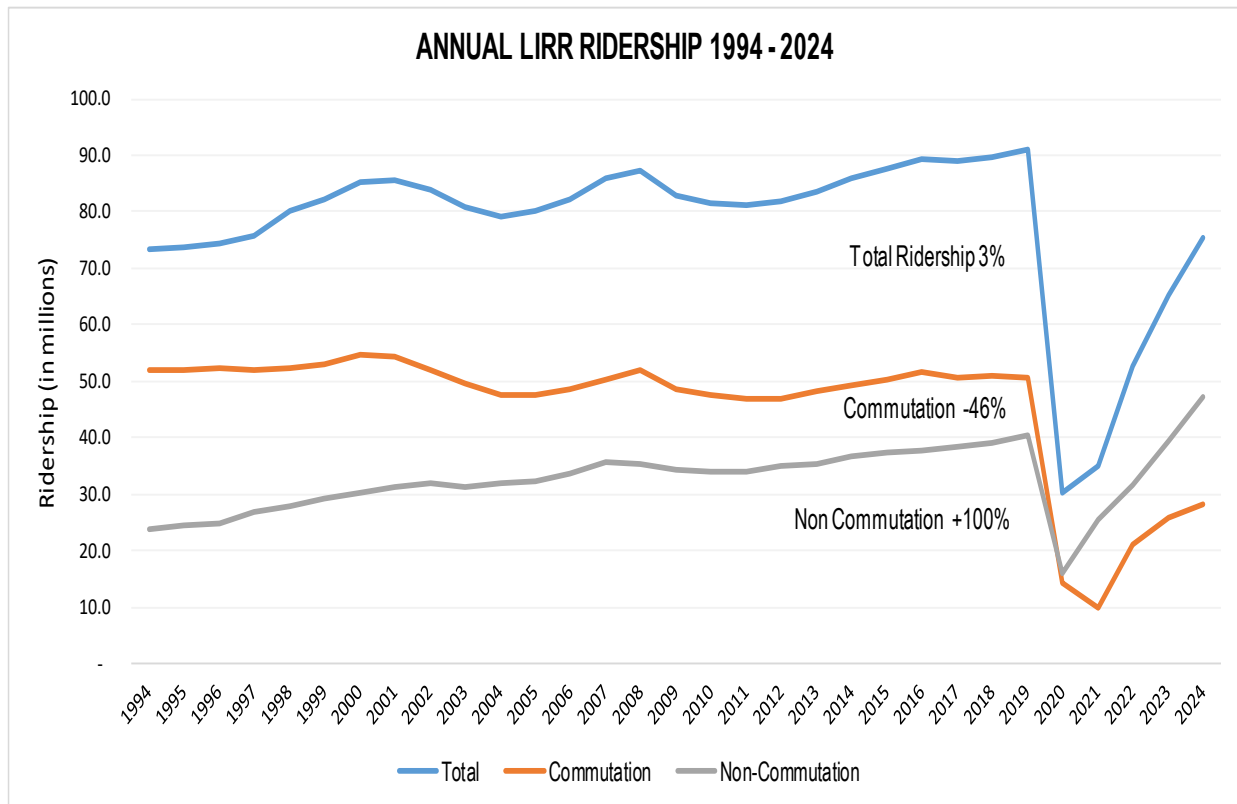
#### 4. REGIONAL ECONOMY

- Employment figures showed that NYC jobs continued to experience growth, showing gains (January 2025 increased +2.7% or +125,000 more jobs vs. 2024). Of those employment sectors where most of LIRR customers work, the Financial Services sector increased +1.8% and the Professional/Business Services sector increased +1.9%.

## Long-Term Ridership Trends

### Ridership Trends

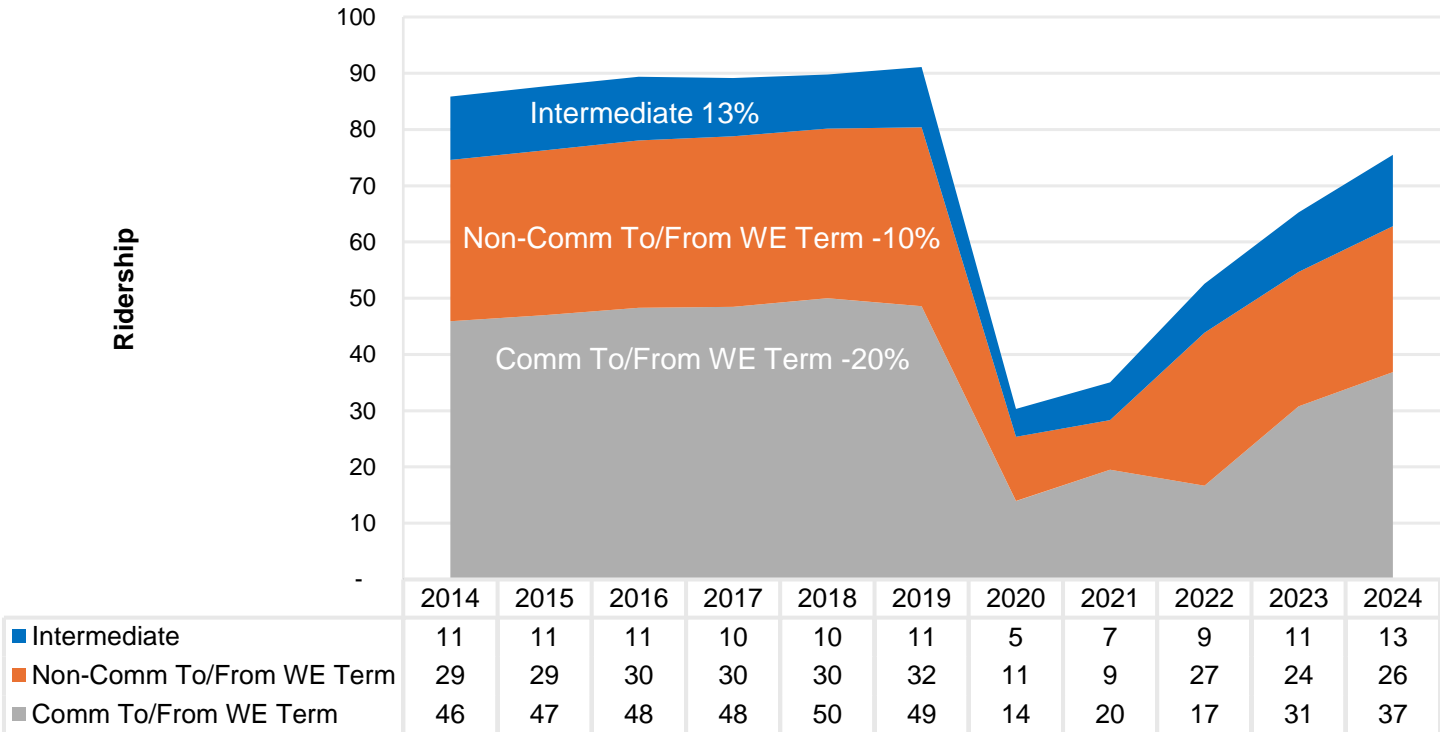
- The Long Island Rail Road rebounded from the pandemic-driven declines and experienced overall ridership growth of 3% over the past 30 years system-wide in total ridership
- Non-Commutation ridership has been a strong driver, showing an impressive increase of 100%, while Commutation ridership showed a decrease of 46% over the 30-year span



Ridership Trends by Market

- Over the past 10 years (2014-2024) ridership changed as follows (considering the unusual decline due to the pandemic):
- Commutation ridership to western terminals decreased by 20%
- Non-Commutation ridership to western terminals decreased by 10%
- Intermediate ridership outside of western terminals increased by 13%

ANNUAL RIDERSHIP BY MARKET: 2014-2024 (in Millions)



Notes

- Intermediate:** customers traveling outside of the Western Terminals (Penn Station, Atlantic Terminal, and Hunters Point/LIC)
- Non-Comm. to/from the Western Terminals:** customers traveling to/from Western Terminals with ticket types other than Weekly & Monthly tickets
- Comm. to/from Western Terminals:** customers traveling to/from Western Terminals with Weekly & Monthly tickets

## 2024 vs. 2023 Branch Comparisons

- All LIRR Branches experienced significant ridership gains in 2024, except the Greenport branch that declined 3.1% (mainly due to long-term trackwork programs that impacted service throughout the year). The Port Jefferson branch (which includes the Huntington customers) leads with 13.9 million customers, followed by the Babylon branch with 12.9 million customers and the City Zone branch with 12.0 million customers, which experienced the largest percent increase (+24.5%) from last year among all LIRR branches.

### RIDERSHIP BY BRANCH

Branch	ANNUAL RIDERSHIP		
	2024	2023	% Change
Babylon	12,856,764	11,606,943	10.8% ▲
City Zone	11,898,368	9,554,530	24.5% ▲
Far Rockaway	5,541,238	4,904,415	13.0% ▲
Greenport	84,975	87,690	3.1% ▼
Hempstead	3,786,420	3,271,387	15.7% ▲
Long Beach	3,436,864	3,117,606	10.2% ▲
Montauk	1,904,464	1,762,578	8.0% ▲
Oyster Bay	1,177,122	1,023,159	15.0% ▲
Port Jefferson	13,882,798	11,934,009	16.3% ▲
Port Washington	11,535,377	9,928,915	16.2% ▲
Ronkonkoma	8,323,600	7,151,722	16.4% ▲
West Hempstead	1,082,320	895,877	20.8% ▲
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,510,309</b>	<b>65,238,830</b>	<b>15.7%</b>



Increase



Decrease



No Change

\* Ridership data is based on ticket sales.

\*\* Port Jefferson branch includes ridership from Huntington Branch.



## 2025 Outlook

- The Long Island Rail Road's post-pandemic recovery is expected to continue as ridership has currently reached 86% of 2019's ridership in the first quarter of 2025.
- The overall outlook in 2025 will excel as the company's focus on Safety, Reliability and the Customer Experience has already led to positive performance trends, which will be strong drivers for future ridership growth.
- Recent achievements in the first quarter included:
  - The 1,000,000<sup>th</sup> customer transported to Elmont-UBS Arena Station
  - The best total February OTP in the LIRR recorded history with 96.41%
  - Construction of the new Yaphank station and rehabilitation work at Mastic-Shirley station
  - New evening service on the Oyster Bay Branch
- Upcoming improvements in the second quarter will include:
  - Completing several construction projects, including the west end platform replacement at Babylon, restoration of the historic station building at Roslyn, grade crossing rehabilitations, tie replacement work along the Long Beach and Far Rockaway branches, platform reconstruction at Hollis and Forest Hills and completion of station Spruce-ups at Inwood, Locust Valley and Glen Street
- As a result of the record on-time performance and increased customer satisfaction, ridership is expected to continue to increase.
- The historic opening of the Grand Central Madison (GCM) service will continue offering enhanced travel options to LIRR customers benefiting from the 41% overall service increase to New York City.
- Customers will continue taking advantage of the new service options, increasing the share of trips to GCM vs. Penn Station, which is currently stabilized at 40% share for trips to GCM vs. 60% share to Penn Station during the AM Peak.
- Weekday and Weekend ridership will continue to increase, with weekdays carrying on average more than 251,000 customers, and Saturdays carrying 111,000 customers and Sundays carrying 92,000 customers.
- Fare offerings such as the City Ticket availability during peak hours will continue providing incentives for ridership growth, coupled with cross-travel opportunities between Metro-North and Long Island stations via Grand Central.
- New business opportunities are expected to bring incremental ridership as local events, such as PGA's 2025 Ryder Cup and the FIFA Club World Cup soccer games hosted at MetLife stadium in June 2025. Also, the UBS Arena will continue hosting not only NY Islanders games, but multiple shows & entertainment.
- Non-Commutation ridership has been consistently surpassing 2019's pre-pandemic levels and is expected to follow increasing trends outpacing the Commutation market. Ridership is expected to grow as local sports teams (Mets, NY Islanders, Rangers, Knicks, Nets, Yankees, etc.) and local venues (MSG, Barclays, UBS Arena, Forest Hills Stadium, Citi Field, MetLife, etc.) continue to offer a great selection of sports games, events, concerts, and entertainment. Also, air travel will continue to increase bringing incremental ridership to reach local metro-area airports via the LIRR, including the expansion plans at Long Island's MacArthur airport.