



CASE STUDY



# HRT Paratransit

An ADA-compliant service connecting 3,200+ riders to jobs, health care, and their community.

PARTNER

Hampton Roads Transit

LOCATION

Hampton Roads, VA

LAUNCH

February 2020

CHALLENGE

Provide accessible, reliable, and convenient transportation to riders across a large service zone.

USE CASE

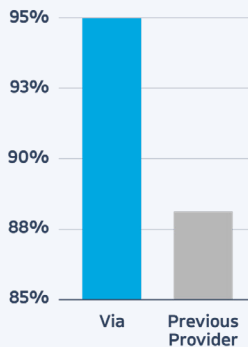
Improve quality and efficiency of existing paratransit service while reducing operational costs.



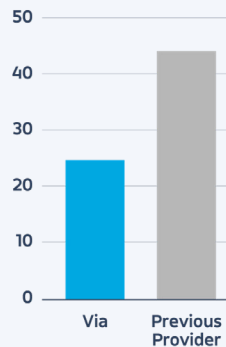
## Overview

Transportation in Hampton Roads, Virginia, is no small feat. The agency tasked with connecting this sprawling metropolitan area, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), operates bus, light rail, and ferry routes, in addition to an extensive paratransit service that completes more than 360,000 trips per year. In late 2019, driven by mounting costs and frustrations from riders experiencing unreliable vehicle arrival times, circuitous routes, and inflexible scheduling transit leaders knew this service needed an operations and technology overhaul. They issued an RFP, which Via won.

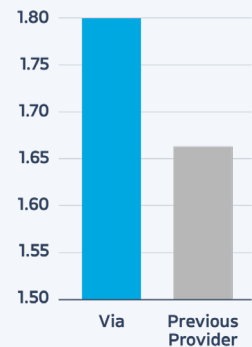
On-time performance



Avg. trip duration



Avg. productivity



“This app makes my life so much better. I don’t have to keep calling in. I can see where my driver is.”

– Rachel H., Rider

“The driver app is perfect and simple to use!”

– Christopher A., Driver

“Everything has been going well with [the service] for our members. The drivers could not be nicer....The individuals taking the reservations have been easy to work with.”





– Joann A. Mancuso, Brain Injury Services Manager for Eggleston Services

## Solution

In February 2020, Via took over operations and maintenance (O&M), and the technology for HRT’s entire paratransit service from two legacy providers. HRT made the decision to combine their paratransit technology provider and operations into one streamlined contract with Via.

On the tech side, Via introduced proprietary software, including intelligent routing algorithms and sophisticated rider and driver apps. Operationally, Via leverages experience managing large driver populations to establish a culture of professionalism, and HRT benefits from real-time visibility into the service at all times.

A call center, web portal, and rider app give customers flexibility when booking rides, while in-app notifications, SMS reminders, and automated voice calls ensure passengers stay informed. After assuming operations in February, the world changed due to COVID-19. Thankfully, technology makes new safety protocols possible, from limiting vehicle capacity to facilitating contact tracing.

 SERVICE ZONE	<b>230 SQ. MILES</b>
 FLEET SIZE	<b>85 VEHICLES</b>
 HOURS OF SERVICE	Hampton and Newport News: Weekdays & Saturdays 5AM–1:20AM Sundays 5:30AM–9:20PM
 RIDER COHORTS	Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach: Weekdays & Weekends 4:45AM–2:15AM
	<b>ADA-APPROVED RIDERS</b>

## Results

Within the first month of service, on-time performance (OTP) exceeded that of the previous contractor and, within two months, both call-in wait times and late pick-ups decreased. Average trip duration decreased by more than 44%, and app adoption increased with 20% of riders using the app for bookings, cancellations, vehicle tracking, and more. The rider app plus Via’s Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology has reduced call volumes by 30%. Riders quickly noticed these improvements — the service’s average rider rating is 4.93/5, with 94% of riders rating 5 out of 5 stars.

In June, even with reduced vehicle capacity and suppressed demand due to the pandemic, the new service exceeded the previous utilization — a key efficiency metric measuring passengers per revenue hour, resulting in lower costs for the agency and fewer vehicle miles driven.