

Annual Report

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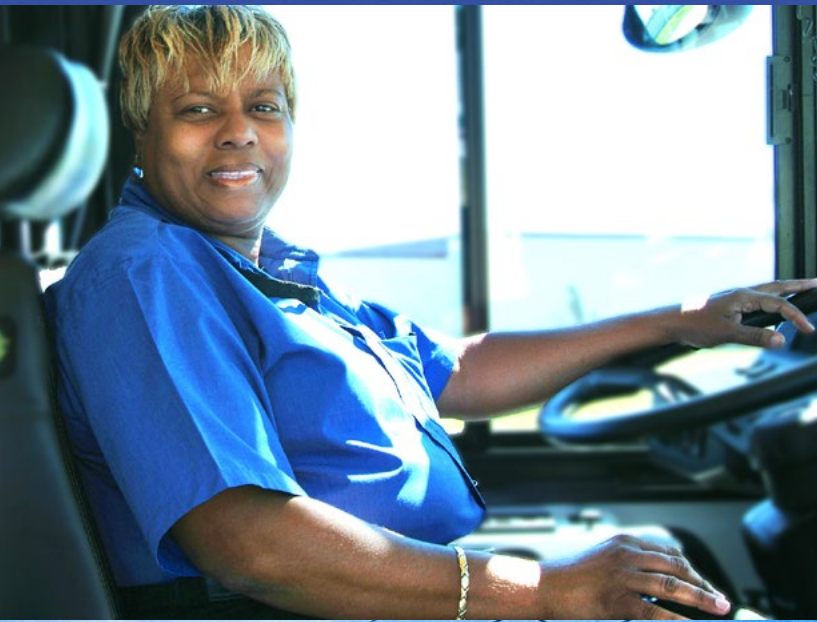


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01.

**Our
Leadership
Team**



01. Our Leadership Team



A Message from the CEO

Hampton Roads Transit was on the move in 2023. Moving forward with our mission, vision, and values. You will see throughout this annual report how the agency expanded on all these key elements, making it a successful year.

HRT is continuing its mission to connect Hampton Roads, and this couldn't be more evident than in the launch of our 757 Express service. Various components were implemented throughout the year, including the addition of new technologies, more frequent service, and customer amenities.

Our vision as a progressive mobility agency moved forward with the rollout of our OnDemand pilot program. This unique transportation option showed strong ridership growth throughout. HRT's OnDemand service received overwhelmingly positive reviews from customers and was by all accounts a success.

Our commitment to customer service and workforce success remains strong. In 2023, we added 156 full-time bus operators and hiring continues to be a priority. As we build back our workforce, improvements continue to operations, including the addition of 15-minute service frequency during peak travel times on 757 Express routes and the return of 30-minute frequency on others.

I want to extend my thanks to the Commission for their continued support and to each of the hard-working staff at HRT. The pages ahead highlight just some of our shared successes across every level of the organization. Without your unwavering commitment and dedication, we would not have been able carry out these accomplishments in 2023. I'm excited about what's to come in 2024 and look forward to making public transit better, together.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to be 'W. H. E.', written over a dark blue background.

President and CEO, Hampton Roads Transit

Senior Executive Team



Brian Smith
Deputy CEO



Conner Burns
Chief Financial Officer



Benjamin Simms
Chief Operating Officer



Dawn Sciortino
Chief Safety Officer



Ray Amoruso
Chief Planning &
Development Officer



Sibyl Pappas
Chief Engineering
& Facilities Officer



Michael Price
Chief Information
& Technology Officer



Kim Wolcott
Chief Human Resources
Officer



Alexis Majied
Chief Communications
Officer



Robert Travers
Corporate Counsel



Malika Blume
Director of Internal Audit

01. Our Leadership Team

2023 Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads

**Honorable Amelia Ross-Hammond
(Chair)**

Virginia Beach

**Honorable Patricia P. Woodbury
(Vice-Chair)**

Newport News

**Honorable Andria McClellan
(Past Chair)**

Norfolk

Honorable Jimmy Gray

Hampton

Honorable Shannon E. Glover

Portsmouth

Honorable Don Carey

Chesapeake

Honorable Lionell Spruill, Sr.

Virginia Senate

Commissioner August Bullock

Newport News

Commissioner Brad Hunter

Portsmouth

Commissioner Roland White

Hampton

Commissioner Kirk Houston

Norfolk

Commissioner Stephens Johnson

Chesapeake

Commissioner Mike Mucha

VDRPT

Commissioner Jennifer DeBruhl

VDRPT

Commissioner Neil Sherman

VDRPT, Alternate

History Making Commission

The Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads marked a significant milestone in 2023. For the first time in its history, the Commission leadership were all women; Amelia Ross-Hammond, Patricia Woodbury, and Andria McClellan.

Chairwoman, Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond (Virginia Beach) is also the first Black woman to serve as Chair of the Commission. An early advocate of light rail expansion, she was first appointed in 2016. Dr. Ross-Hammond was reappointed in 2020 and 2022. Dr. Ross-Hammond says one of her greatest achievements is helping to secure the dedicated funding that made the 757 Express possible.

Vice-Chair, Dr. Patricia Woodbury (Newport News) is the longest serving member of the Commission. She joined in 2008 and has served as Chair twice and will serve a third term in 2024. During her tenure she's had a hand in every aspect of the Commission but says her work on the Budget Committee and helping to bring back the Management / Financial Advisory Committee (MFAC) has been the most fulfilling.

Current Past Chair, Ms. Andria McClellan (Norfolk) was first appointed to the Commission in 2017. She is credited with spearheading the Smart Cities & Innovation Committee. As chair of SCIC Ms. McClellan has been a motivating force behind our mobile ticketing initiative, which we plan to roll out in the near future. Ms. McClellan Chaired the Commission from July 2019 – June 2020.



02.

**Customer
Focused
Operations**

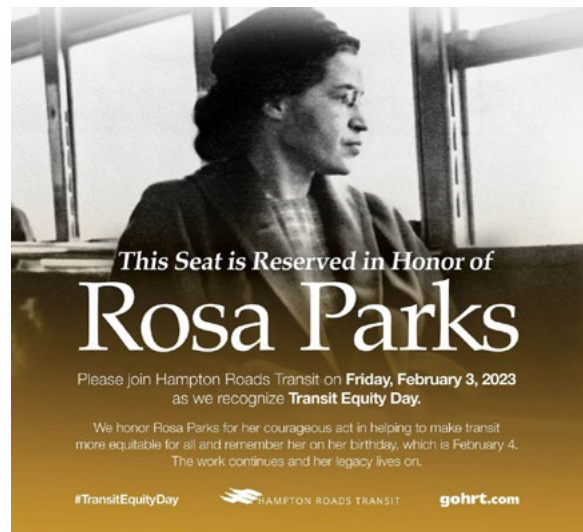


02. Customer Focused Operations

Provide a high-quality service that is easy to use and enhances people’s lives.

Free Fare Days

The Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads approved four fare-free days in fiscal year 2023: Election Day, Transit Equity Day, Earth Day, and Juneteenth. Riders were able to ride fare free on all bus, light rail, ferry, paratransit, and microtransit on those days. It was also an opportunity to engage new riders to try transit.



Ridership totals:

Election Day– Nov 8, 2022
Total– 23,408

Transit Equity Day– Feb. 3, 2023
Total– 21,750

Earth Day– April 21, 2023
Total– 23,741

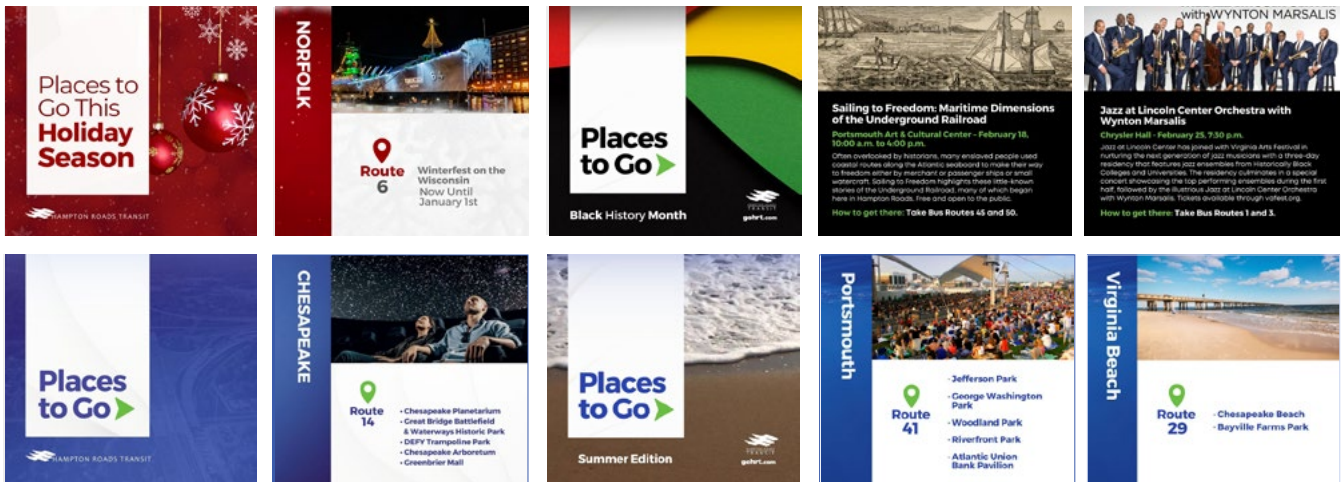
Juneteenth– June 19, 2023
Total– 25,652

Social Media Experiences Exponential Growth

The growth of the Marketing and Strategic Communications department allowed for HRT’s presence on social media to increase exponentially in 2023. Thoughtful planning, coupled with consistency and vibrant artwork helped to expand our reach in the community. We posted original content on average 50 times per month on Facebook and Instagram. Additional content was posted on Twitter and LinkedIn. We increased our reach across all platforms.

“Places To Go” Campaign

Our “Places To Go” campaign was one of many social media initiatives we used to reach riders. PTG began in December to let the community know about holiday events happening in their communities and how to get there by bus. The campaign continued throughout the year by highlighting attractions along specific routes in each of the cities we serve. In February, during Black History Month, we let the people know about events going on to celebrate Black History and how to utilize public transportation to get there. Finally, in June we launched a special “Places To Go: Summer Edition” showing family-friendly activities along bus routes in all six cities served by HRT. We plan to continue this campaign in other forms to improve the overall customer experience and attract choice riders.



Community Resource Fairs

The Marketing and Strategic Communications Public Outreach team hosted two community resource fairs in the spring. There was one at the Newport News Transit Center in March and a second at the Downtown Norfolk Transit Center in April. Hundreds of people turned out across both events where they had access to resources and information from various organizations. Riders had the opportunity to apply for free home internet, medical benefits and even careers with HRT. The fairs also provided operators with a chance to learn more about some of the resources available to them and their families.



02. Customer Focused Operations

Operation Lifesaver

In the fall of 2022, HRT was awarded a \$20,000 grant by Operation Lifesaver, Inc. and used it to launch a light rail safety campaign in June of 2023. We were one of only six agencies in the nation to receive this award and it was the highest award amongst all agencies. This is the third time HRT has received this grant. The safety campaign kicked off with a train wrap reveal at the Norfolk Tide Facility. The train features the campaign message of “See Tracks? Think Train!” The goal of the campaign is to encourage residents and visitors to use caution around the light rail tracks in and around Downtown Norfolk. The campaign will continue through fall of 2023.

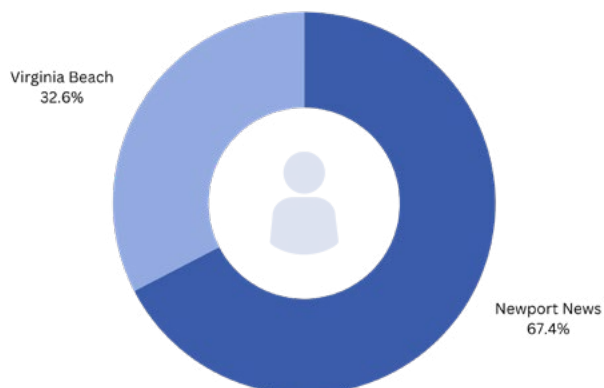
OnDemand Pilot Program

In July 2022, HRT launched a six-month OnDemand microtransit pilot program. It offered service in zones within the cities of Newport News and Virginia Beach. Ridership growth continued month over month throughout the duration of the pilot program. Riders mostly used the service to commute, but also used it to connect to other modes of transportation, to run errands, get to appointments and for leisure activities.

Total Ridership: 23,330

Newport News: 15,700

Virginia Beach: 7,600



Paratransit

HRT welcomed 20 new Chrysler Voyager vans to the paratransit fleet this year. The vans are ADA-accessible and have been modified to comfortably fit up to one wheelchair and three ambulatory riders at a time. Six of the vans were paid for with money from the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund for fleet expansion. The remaining 14 were paid for using a grant from the Federal Transportation Administration.





401B
SERVICE

401B

 **OPERATION LIFESAVER**
Rail Safety Education

DO NOT CROSS IN FRONT OF THE TRAIN
DO NOT GET TOO CLOSE TO THE TRAIN



03.

Regional Impact

757
Express

A SERVICE OF HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT



03. Regional Impact

Foster regional quality of life and economic vitality.

757 Express

In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly recognized the vital role of transit by passing legislation establishing dedicated funding of at least \$20 million annually to pay for the 757 Express. Fiscal year 2023 saw the launch of the 757 Express; envisioned as a regional transit system including a mix of high-frequency, express and limited-stop bus services, connecting commuters to major employment destinations. Thirteen bus routes will eventually connect the highest densities of people and jobs in the region, as hiring permits expansion.



Service Improvements

In October 2022, the 112 (Jefferson Avenue) was the first of 13 high-frequency 757 Express routes to launch, followed by the 114 (Mercury Boulevard) in May 2023. Both serve commuters on the Peninsula, who can now catch a bus every 15 minutes during the peak hours of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. every weekday.

In its first eight months since the launch of the 757 Express with increased frequency, Route 112 experienced more than 22% growth in ridership, while Route 114 experienced 4% growth within its first month.

The new Route 980 was also launched in October 2022 under the 757 Express umbrella of services. The limited-stop service was designed to connect the Downtown Norfolk Transit Center with Amazon warehouses in Suffolk and Chesapeake. It began with two runs, with a third being added in January 2023.



Cities	Shelter Count	Park Bench / Trash Can
Chesapeake	12	7
Hampton	17	0
Newport News	68	18
Norfolk	5	5
Portsmouth	2	0
Virginia Beach	1	0
Total	105	30

Passenger Amenities

The 757 Express also provides for upgrades to various amenities throughout the system, including the installation of more than 600 new bus shelters, benches, or a combination of the two at bus stops across the region. Trash cans and solar lighting are also being added to enhance safety and the overall customer experience.



New Buses On Parade

HRT welcomed 24 new buses to its fleet in September 2022. There was an official ribbon cutting ceremony in front of our Hampton Headquarters with a parade of buses. The new vehicles were added to enhance the 757 Express service.



Base Express Launches at Naval Station Norfolk

Navy sailors are singing praises to HRT after the launch of the Base Express in December 2022. The Base Express offers two routes, Blue and Gold, throughout Naval Station Norfolk and operates seven days a week. It's available to all service members, their families, veterans, and government employees. The Base Express has enjoyed a steady increase in ridership nearly every month since it was launched. During the first seven months it was up and running, more than 16,000 riders took advantage of this free service.



The Base Express is paid for through a \$2.3 million grant from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation for three years. After that, the service will be paid for using 757 Express funding.

TRAFFIX: Commute Differently

Reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled	4.2M
New Users	854
Trips Recorded	248k
Tons of Emissions Reduced	1.8k
Vanpools	30
Vanpool Passengers	218
GoPass365 Rides	426k



03. Regional Impact

Inaugural Transit Advocacy Day

In May 2022, HRT hosted its first Transit Advocacy Day, inviting local, state, and federal lawmakers, along with business and community leaders to experience a day in the life of a transit rider. More than 100 people participated in the event, which began at our Norfolk Tide Facility and included a ride on the Tide light rail, a trip to the Downtown Norfolk Transit Center, and a bus ride to our Norfolk Headquarters on 18th Street. Once at HQ, participants heard from our President and CEO, Commission Chair, and other advocates on the importance of continuing to support public transportation. This inaugural event was well received, and everyone walked away with a better understanding of the important role public transportation plays in our region.



Celebrating 10-Year Partnership with Elizabeth River Crossings

Hampton Roads Transit is celebrating the 10th year of its partnership with Elizabeth River Crossings. ERC maintains and operates the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels between Norfolk and Portsmouth with the Virginia Department of Transportation. HRT benefits greatly from its partnership with ERC in that our buses are not required to pay tolls for use of the tunnels. Additionally, since 2013, ERC has invested more than \$20 million to fund a fleet of seven HRT buses for Norfolk and Portsmouth routes, extend nightly and Sunday service on specific routes, and add 90 more minutes of ferry service in the mornings.



Earth Day & Community Cleanup

In addition to offering free fares on Earth Day, HRT hosted a Community Clean-up Event. In the weeks leading up to Earth Day, volunteers were able to sign-up online to clean a bus stop in their neighborhood. HRT provided all the supplies, like trash bags and grabbers for easy handling. All volunteers had to do was provide the manpower. More than 100 people, including HRT staff, volunteered to clean a total of 19 stops and the surrounding areas.



VB Wave Trolley

I Heart Trolley Campaign

Also new this year, our Marketing and Strategic Communications team came up with a campaign to show the trolley some love and build excitement among riders. The “I ‘heart’ our trolley” campaign launched soon after the trollies rolled out in May. The team handed out branded swag including t-shirts, tote bags, bumper stickers, coffee sleeves, coasters, hats, and buttons. The campaign was well received by trolley operators, riders, and businesses along the Oceanfront.



Restoration Project

In May, the VB Wave service hit the streets of Virginia Beach, marking its 39th year serving residents and tourists at the Oceanfront. Ahead of the busy summer season, our fleet of 14 trollies underwent an extensive restoration to the wooden finishes that make them so unique. New security cameras were also installed to each trolley to ensure a safe riding experience.



Mobile Ticketing

HRT partnered with Journey by Bytemark to bring back mobile ticketing for the VB Wave. Signage at stops along the Oceanfront were updated with QR codes directing riders to gohrt.com/mobile for instructions on downloading the mobile ticketing app, fare pricing, and route information. Working in coordination with the City of Virginia Beach, we also installed sidewalk stamps at trolley stops along Atlantic Avenue for the first time.



04.

Organizational Performance



04. Organizational Performance

Ensure financial stewardship of cost-effective operations.

2023 By The Numbers | Operations

Total Boardings	7,176,495
Miles Traveled	14,165,124
Student Freedom Passes Issued	1,277
Customer Service Calls Answered	125,911

Number of Operators who Achieved 20+ years of service

20 Years	25 Years	30 Years	35 Years	40+ Years
3	10	3	1	1

Maintenance Going the Extra Mile

Director of Bus Maintenance, John Nason started the year with a goal of decreasing the amount of time buses spent in his shop. At the beginning of the year, buses were returning for maintenance every 5,000 to 6,000 miles on average. Through a number of process improvements, his team has been able to boost that to around 10,000 miles, reporting 50% fewer breakdowns. Nason has set a new goal of 15,000 miles by the end of next year.

State-of-the-Art Equipment

In March, a year-long bus lift replacement project was completed in Hampton. A \$2.3 million grant paid for the state-of-the-art equipment which will have a positive impact for decades to come. The scissor style lifts give mechanics a better view of spaces often hidden from view by tires, fenders, and the vehicle frame. They are operated by a console that performs automatic safety checks for capacity and leveling. They can hold up to 60,000 pounds and are equipped to handle electric buses. These lifts are in use every day by some of the most important people we have, doing some of our most essential work.



Newport News Transit Center Renovation

The Newport News Transit Center celebrated its grand reopening in September 2022 following an extensive reconstruction project. The project included the addition of two bus bays, bus shelters, a bike repair station, and an improved traffic pattern. The center, located just outside the Huntington Ingalls shipyard is our second busiest location, serving more than 2,000 riders daily.



Hampton Transit Center Rejuvenation

There was a ribbon cutting ceremony held to officially mark the reopening of the Hampton Transit Center in May 2023. A year-long reconstruction project expanded the Center's park and ride access to support additional commuters, increase the number of bus bays and shelters, and improve bike amenities and pedestrian crossings. The project was paid for using a \$3.3 million Smart Scale grant.



Advertising Achievements

The Marketing and Strategic Communications Advertising team has pulled off back-to-back record-breaking years when it comes to advertising revenue. By providing continuity of service over the years the team has maintained HRT's excellent reputation when it comes to fulfillment, leading to retention and increased revenue. The team is looking to expand revenue opportunities by advertising on the ferry. This year the agency sold its first ferry advertisement to High Noon Hard Seltzer. The company signed a four-month contract to advertise on the side of the ferry. High Noon Hard Seltzer was looking for a way to target customers around Harbor Park and Waterside. Utilizing the ferry presented a great opportunity to do that.



Virginia Transit Association Annual Conference & Expo

Hampton Roads Transit was honored to host the 2023 Virginia Transit Association's Annual Conference and Expo. It was held May 23-24 at the Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel. Several HRT staff members participated in the conference, either presenting in one of the many panel discussions or as an attendee. Former TDCHR Chair, Sen. Aaron Rouse was the keynote speaker at a special awards ceremony held on the final afternoon of the conference.



05.

Workforce Success



05. Workforce Success

Build a culture of innovation and workforce success to ensure HRT remains relevant to the dynamic needs of the region.

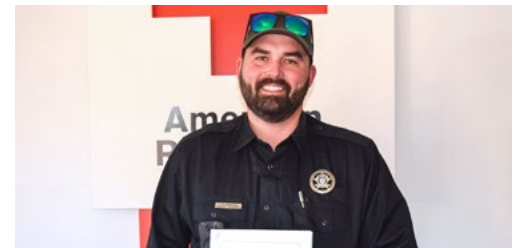
Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA)

Hampton Roads Transit was recognized by Women in Transportation Seminar (WTS) International twice in 2023. Our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Committee was selected to receive the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award for promoting diversity, inclusion, and multi-cultural awareness within the transportation industry. HRT President and CEO, Mr. William Harrell, was selected to receive the group's Honorable Ray LaHood Award for being an advocate of women in the workplace.



And The Award Goes To...

Transit Security Officer Donovan Shallis received the American Red Cross National Lifesaving Award in December 2022. He was nominated for this prestigious award following his heroic efforts to save a man who fell unconscious in the lobby. Officer Shallis performed CPR for at least six minutes until first responders arrived and could take over.



Our Light Rail Operators were given the Champions of Hospitality Award for Best Front-Line Employees by Visit Norfolk. The crew was presented with the award during National Travel and Tourism week in April 2023. Members of Visit Norfolk made a surprise trip to the Norfolk Tide Facility to hand-deliver the award.



In May 2023, Hampton Roads Transit hosted the Virginia Transit Association's Annual Conference and Expo in Virginia Beach. Several staff members were recognized during the awards ceremony. Public Outreach Coordinator, Marie Arnt, received The Helen Poore Transit Professional Distinguished Service Award and Vanpool Program Coordinator, Latwana McClure, received the Transit Employee Unsung Hero Award.



Recruitment: Building Back Our Workforce

As we continue to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, ridership numbers are on the rebound, up more than 11% overall since last year. Operationally, improvements continue as we build back our workforce of bus operators, including the addition of 15-minute frequency during peak travel times on 757 Express routes and the return of 30-minute frequency on other routes.

- Participated in 69 career fairs
- Held 17 internal career fairs
- 294 people attended
- 164 Bus and Light Rail Operator Applicants selected from internal job fairs



NOW HIRING!

We are looking for (FT) Bus Operator Trainees
You do not need a CDL to apply!

Offering

- Paid Training
- Room for Advancement
- New hire service bonus up to \$5,000
- Opportunities for overtime
- CDL License Preparation Course
- Excellent benefits to include medical, dental, vision, and a pension
- Salary of \$42,640 with an increase every 10 months up to 5 years

For more information visit gohrt.com
Hampton Roads Transit is an equal opportunity employer.
Call Hampton Roads Transit for more information (757) 222-6000.

HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT
career fair

Thursday, July 6, 2023
10am-2pm

509 East 18th St. Building 4
Norfolk, VA 23504 (Boardroom 234)

Offering Medical, Vision, Dental & Pension

- Paid Training
- Veteran Friendly Employer
- Room for Advancement

On the Spot Screening & Interviews!
Positions available in Norfolk.

Electrical & Electronic Maintenance Technician *\$5,000 Service Bonus \$30.60/hr.	Facilities Maintenance Mechanic Starting Salary \$38,000/yr.	Operations Facility Equipment Technician Starting Salary \$46,000/yr.
Electro-Mechanical Technician *\$5,000 Service Bonus \$30.60/hr.	Facilities Maintenance Technician Starting Salary \$44,000/yr.	Track Inspector \$23.54/hr.

05. Workforce Success

CEO Roundtables

HRT's Senior Executive Team endeavors to improve communication between leadership and employees. To that end, a series of CEO Roundtables were held in the Spring. Mr. Harrell and members of SET met with staff in Hampton, Norfolk, and at the Norfolk Tide Facility. Dozens of operators, mechanics and administrative staff participated with the goal of establishing a forum for open communication.



Leading, Educating, and Developing (L.E.A.D.)

It's our goal at HRT to grow and develop any employee who is interested in becoming a leader or improving their leadership skills. Throughout the year, the Human Resources Department offers courses in its L.E.A.D. Program.

L.E.A.D. Program Participation

- o Sessions held: 3
- o 92 employees have graduated
- o 26% of graduates were promoted
- o 1,852 training courses completed
- o 1,559 minutes of training completed



Reward and Recognition Committee

The Reward & Recognition Committee hosted monthly events for employees. From celebrating Heritage Month to the holiday party and the kickball tournament, there was something for everyone to enjoy.



06.

**What's Next
for HRT?**



HAMPTON ROADS
TRANSIT

MAXIMUM CAPACITY 90
PASSENGERS

ELIZABETH RIVER FERRY V

HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

06. What's Next for HRT?

As we look ahead to 2024, we are excited about continuing to move Hampton Roads Transit forward. The agency endeavors to further expand regional connectivity, bring new technologies onboard, and increase passenger amenities. We look forward to offering additional 757 Express routes, adding free wi-fi on more buses, launching mobile ticketing, improving the customer experience by installing digital signage at transfer stations and adding shelters and solar lighting at more bus stops.

Through 2024 we look forward to providing transit services that effectively connect communities and businesses across the region, improving access to jobs, healthcare, education, workforce training, shopping, and entertainment.

HRT will maintain and cultivate new partnerships throughout the community to ensure we are meeting the dynamic needs of the region. New connections, creating a better commute for current and potential customers alike. Public transit that is not just transportation but is transformative.

Connecting Hampton Roads: Building Public Transit Better, **Together.**



Scan the this QR code to access a video of this report.





gohrt.com