



2021/2022 Initiatives and Milestones

Team HRT continued making progress in achieving our Vision and Mission throughout Fiscal Year 2022.

This has been a year full of significant effort and achievement. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has required ongoing creativity, vigilance, effective leadership, and teamwork within HRT and working closely with federal, state, regional, and local partners.

I'm extremely proud of the work we've done. Some highlights for this year are captioned below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Harrell".

William E. Harrell, President and CEO

Customer-Focused Operations

- Serviced over 146,000 customer calls through the Customer Contact Center.
- Implemented the Service Reliability Plan, solidifying reliable, on-time performance in tandem with bus operator availability, and began strategically restoring service on the Peninsula in May in addition to launching seasonal VB Oceanfront routes.
- Implemented enhanced cleaning contracts and launched "Am I Clean?" campaign to support customer engagement and agency responsiveness to cleanliness issues.
- Completed passenger amenity upgrades (new shelters, benches, solar lighting, trash receptacles) at over 150 locations. Roll-out of the multiyear RTS Bus Shelter Program was celebrated with a successful ribbon-cutting event at Orcutt Ave at 81st (Hampton).
- Enhanced availability of both manual and automated (voice, email, text) Customer Alerts via the Call Center's Interactive Voice Response System (IVR).
- Upgraded Newport News Transit Center and broke ground on Hampton Transit Center renovations.
- Provided system-wide ridership promotions including Free Fare days on Earth Day, Election Day, and the 10th Anniversary celebration of The Tide, and robust Student Freedom Pass outreach.
- Strengthened HRT's ability to gauge and incorporate "Voice of the Customer" through in-person and automated Bus Service Satisfaction surveys through IVR.
- Completed procurement for mobile fare systems targeted for system-wide deployment.
- Minimized customer complaints during two snow events by having the Call Center make outbound calls (a new initiative) to notify employers in all six cities about planned and anticipated service interruptions.
- HRT Facebook reach over 150,000 (122% increase), Instagram reach over 19,000 (515% increase), Twitter impression over 328,000 (85% increase), and 6,284 LinkedIn page views.

Regional Impact

- Actively procured 24 new buses (Group A) for "757 Express" launching on the Peninsula.
- Partnered with the new Regional Transit Advisory Panel and led coalition building and advocacy in 2021 General Assembly Session that protected \$20 million in annual funding for HRT.
- Collaborated closely with city partners on local Transportation Service Plans, including Norfolk's transit network redesign, and updating of HRT's 10-year Transit Strategic Plan in sync with local needs and priorities.
- Continued effective coordination with HRTAC to utilize Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund moneys in accordance with HRT's 10-year Transit Strategic Plan unanimously approved by the Commission.
- Supported special events across the region, including the Patriotic Festival, the Juneteenth Parade in Newport News, and Harborfest.
- Enhanced HRT's regional profile and community relations through the CEO's "757 Express Executive Corner", with this year's featured guests representing the YWCA, ForKids, HRCAP, Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia, and the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.
- Ongoing Electric Bus Pilot Project and completion of a comprehensive study and planning for future transition to Electrification of fleet and facilities infrastructure, beginning with a new Southside Operations and Maintenance Facility (replacing the old Parks Ave facility).

Regional Impact *(continued)*

- Won \$5 million federal earmark (Community Project Funding) with support of Rep. Elaine Luria.
- Held multiple tours and events with Congressional and State officials and key staff.
- HRT's TRAFFIX program helped reduce 3.1 million Vehicle Miles Traveled; reduce CO2 emissions by 1,409 tons; and complete 301 outreach events and meetings with employers to promote and expand use of Transportation Demand Management strategies including transit, ridesharing, walking, biking, and telework.
- Continued work on the Norfolk LRT extension in partnership with the City of Norfolk for a 2-mile extension of light rail to the redevelopment area of Military Circle.
- Completed the Documented Categorical Exclusion in support of a future Peninsula BRT project.
- Worked closely with Williamsburg Area Transit Authority, Suffolk Transit, and the HRTPO to fulfill regional planning responsibilities.

Organizational Performance

- Management's ongoing operating and fiscal discipline has supported 3rd consecutive budget of keeping Total Local Funding level (FY20-22), and 6th consecutive year of positive end-of-year balances (FY17-FY22).
- Among only 35 recipients in 18 states, Team HRT successfully won \$53 million in competitive American Rescue Plan funding; bringing additional federal discretionary dollars into the region is further extending operational and fiscal sustainability.
- Management has maintained prudent fiscal oversight and utilization of federal COVID funding to support a multi-year Response, Recovery, Resilience strategy.
- Collaborated closely with cities through MFAC in securing city council resolutions for HRT to strategically allocate funds and ensure budget predictability for Local partners.
- Agency-generated revenue (through advertising sales) were larger than budgeted, exceeding \$1.7 million, and 15 new outlets for fare card sales were added (216 total).
- Management is advancing strategic improvements in back-office technologies to support business efficiencies and effectiveness; needs assessment to replace outdated HCM (Human Capital Management) system is nearing completion.
- Increased electronic records by 9% and shredded over 3.5 tons of old records in compliance with records disposition schedule.
- Achieved 99% completion on scheduled Bus preventive maintenance, and 100% of all scheduled PM on Signal, Traction Power, and Overhead Catenary System for The Tide.
- Achieved 14% reduction in preventable Bus accidents.
- Actively implementing EAM (Enterprise Asset Management) to support asset condition tracking and ongoing state of good repair.
- Received two (2) HRSD Gold Awards for 18th Street and Hampton facilities.

Workforce Success

- Supported hiring objectives through participation in 45 job fairs.
- Successfully negotiated a new Collective Bargaining Agreement within 5 weeks, including: a 12% increase in base wages over 3 years, an "Active Attendance Incentive" premium of \$2.25 for every hour worked, Juneteenth as a paid holiday, increases to uniform allowances and tools, and increases to instructor and night shift premiums.
- Successfully negotiated health, dental and vision insurance renewals to a zero (0) percent increase for the 2nd consecutive year, while maintaining competitive coverages.
- Implemented robust "L.E.A.D." program providing leadership training to current managers and employees wishing to develop leadership skills and prepare for advancement. A total of 55 employees graduated from the program this year. Another 50 employees participated in other developmental training programs in FY22.
- Deployed two (2) Bus simulators to enhance Operator training and performance.
- Continued robust employee engagement efforts through committees: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Rewards and Recognition; Recruitment and Retention.
- Onboarded 75 administrative positions including key positions such as Chief Communications & External Affairs Officer, Manager of Internal Audit, Director of Finance, Director of Bus Maintenance, Organizational Advancement Officer, RTS Program Manager, and Safety Manager.
- Promoted approximately 30 employees to fill positions such as Chief Transit Operations Officer, Manager of Fleet Maintenance, Manager of Rail Systems, Director of Transportation, Director of Contracted Services & Operations Analytics, Sr. Manager of Bus Transportation, Assistant Director of Finance, Assistant Director of Service Planning & Scheduling, and Manager of Security and Emergency Preparedness.