

Annual Report

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T R A N S F O R M A T I O N

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01. Our Leadership

A Message from the CEO

William Harrell Chief Executive Officer



Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) celebrated its 25th anniversary in Fiscal Year 2025. On October 1, 1999, Tidewater Regional Transit (TRT) and Peninsula Transit (PENTRAN) merged to form HRT. The merger transformed public transportation in the region.

While transformation can at times feel slow, we must pause and reflect on our many outstanding accomplishments over the last quarter-century, including building the Commonwealth's first light rail, securing dedicated funding for regional transit, and bridging the gaps in public transit with OnDemand ridesharing, among other notable achievements.

HRT continues to transform public transportation through advancements in technology, enhancing services and amenities, and exploring innovative ways to expand our reach. By embracing change and inspiring growth, HRT remains a vital resource to Hampton Roads. Together, with our community partners, we are transforming lives by providing more people access to jobs and educational opportunities.

HRT's success would not be possible without the dedication of its employees, the six cities we serve, and public transit advocates across Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Our commitment to the communities we serve remains steadfast. With every new initiative, we are building transformative public transit—together.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to William Harrell, the CEO of Hampton Roads Transit. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

President and CEO, Hampton Roads Transit

The Senior **Executive** Team



Conner Burns
Chief Financial Officer



Benjamin Simms IV
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

2025 Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads

Commissioner Stephens Johnson (Chair)

Chesapeake

Hon. Shannon E. Glover (Vice Chair)

Portsmouth

**Commissioner Patricia P. Woodbury
(Past-Chair)**

Newport News

Hon. Hope Harper

Hampton

Hon. Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond

Virginia Beach

Hon. Les Smith

Chesapeake

Hon. Marcellus Harris III

Newport News

Hon. Mamie Johnson

Norfolk

Commissioner Ryan A. King

Norfolk

Commissioner Anthony “Tony” Goodwin

Portsmouth

Commissioner Roland White

Hampton

Commissioner Tiffany Robinson

VDRPT

Commissioner J. D. “Danny” Diggs

Virginia State Senator

Commissioner Alex Askew

Virginia House Delegate



Mission

To connect Hampton Roads with transportation solutions that are reliable, safe, efficient, and sustainable.

Vision

A progressive mobility agency that promotes prosperity across Hampton Roads through collaboration and teamwork.

Values

Safety

We strive for safety excellence across all areas of our business.

Workforce Success

We're committed to effective hiring, training, and ongoing success of every team member.

Customer Service

We're committed to professional, courteous and dependable service.

Fiscal Responsibility

We're dedicated to diligent stewardship that is accountable, transparent, and delivers the most value for our customers and funding partners.

25

Years of
services

9,461,337

Total
boardings

1,050,436

Service
hours

13,218,334

Miles
Traveled

435

Bus Operators

70%

Bus on time
performance

99%

Ferry on-time
performance

99.2%

Light rail on time
performance

50

New Bus
shelters
installed

3

New Ferry
dock shelters
installed

40,876

OnDemand
riders

59,454

Base Express
riders

67

Bus safety
barriers installed

51

New buses to
refresh fleet

1,834

Student Freedom
Passes issued

7

Transit Security
Officers hired

2

New VB Wave
Trolleys added
to fleet

34,991

Average monthly
Paratransit
ridership

5

Consecutive
years of perfect
stormwater
compliance

32

Employees
promoted

108,374

Customer
service calls
answered

1,000

Safety
Department
training hours

6

PRSA Awards
Won

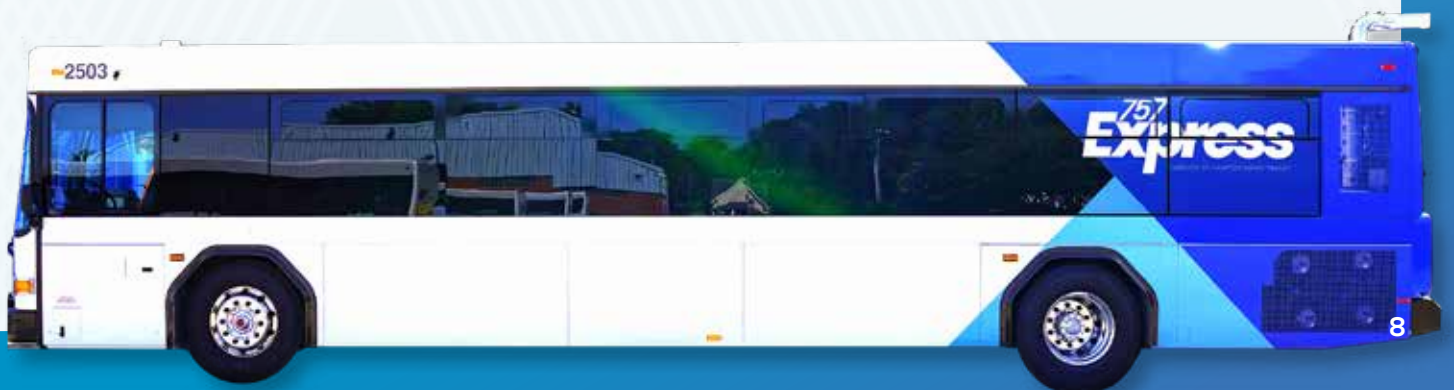
1,051

Employees

32

New Paratransit
vehicles added

FY25 At a Glance





02. Customer Focused Operations



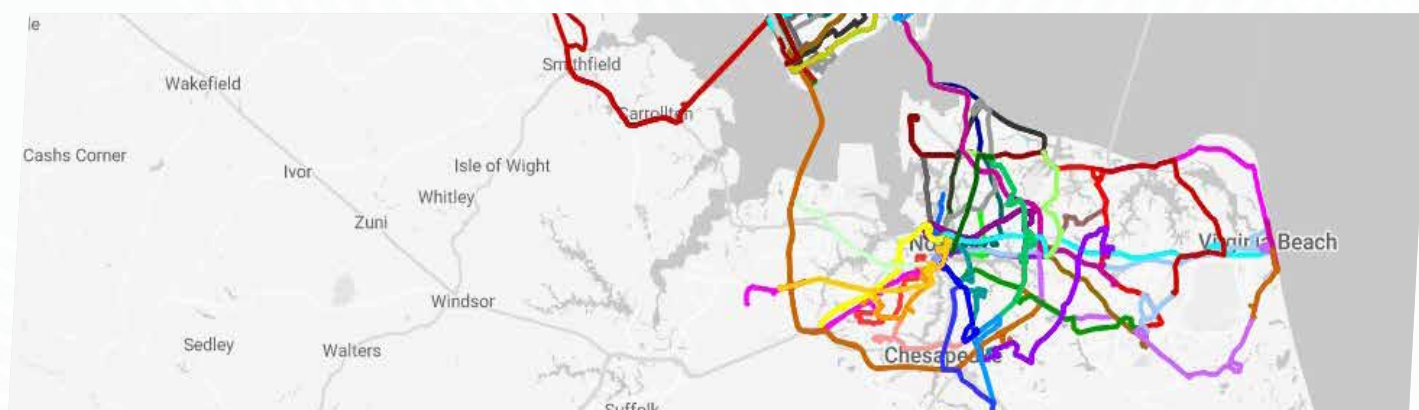
Paratransit Service Improves On-Time Performance

HRT's Paratransit improved on-time performance since Easton Coach was awarded a \$151 million contract to operate the service beginning July 1, 2024. Easton has made significant improvements to its operating facility located at 420 E. 20th Street in Norfolk, just a few blocks from HRT's Southside facility. Easton also established a call center and training facility, located directly behind HRT's Norfolk office, and doubled the size of its dispatch and training staff, maintenance and safety teams and road supervisors. The improvements were further enhanced by the addition of 32 Ford Transits to the Paratransit fleet.

- **On-time performance: 92.6% of all trips were provided within 30-minute pick-up window**
- **April 2, 2025: Record-setting day, with 1,523 rides**
- **Average monthly trips completed: 31,078**
- **Average number of passengers transported monthly: 34,991**
- **Customer service calls answered: 242,570**
- **Average call wait time from August through June: 39 seconds**
- **Total passengers transported: 419,894**
- **Total miles covered: 4,271,508**

Technology Develops New Interactive System Map

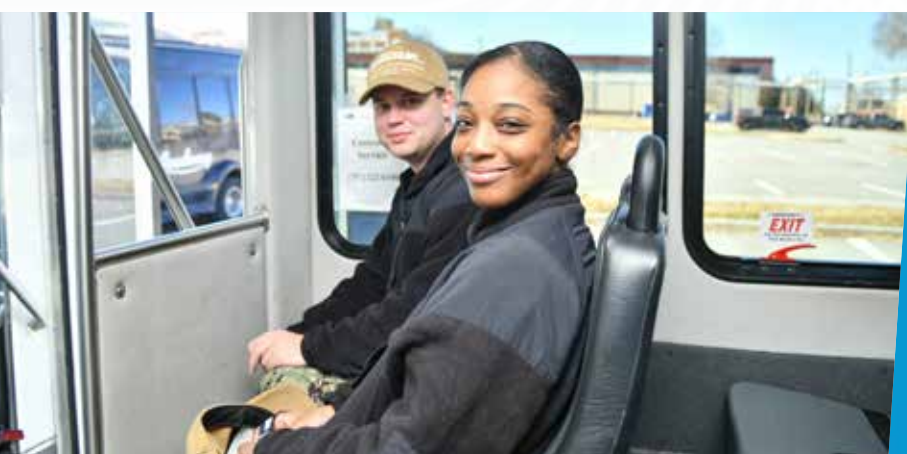
The Technology Department developed and launched a new system map – an innovative tool making it easier for customers to navigate our sprawling transit system. The digital system map features every route and over 2,600 bus stops. Designed with customers in mind, it's user friendly and intended to boost customer confidence while using our system.



Base Express Celebrates Major Milestones

In December, the Base Express celebrated two years at Naval Station Norfolk. Base Express operates two routes and carried more than 90,000 passengers in the first two years, averaging about 5,000 per month. The Blue and Gold Routes provide free public transit to service members, government contractors, and veterans with easy and convenient access to major points of interest seven days a week.

In January, the Base Express marked another milestone, reaching 100,000 riders. When the service began in December 2022, it was anticipated to reach 25,000 riders within the first three years. The Base Express has surpassed its ridership goal, exceeding all expectations.



Total Ridership: 59,454

Gold Route: 31,674

Blue Route: 27,780

The Student Freedom Pass

Student Freedom Pass helps young riders, ages 13 to 17, get to school, extracurricular activities, jobs, or just spend time with friends. Each year, HRT's Public Outreach connects more students with their communities by handing out these free public transit passes.

- **1,834 passes distributed**
- **25% increase from FY24**
- **13 high schools visited in 5 cities**

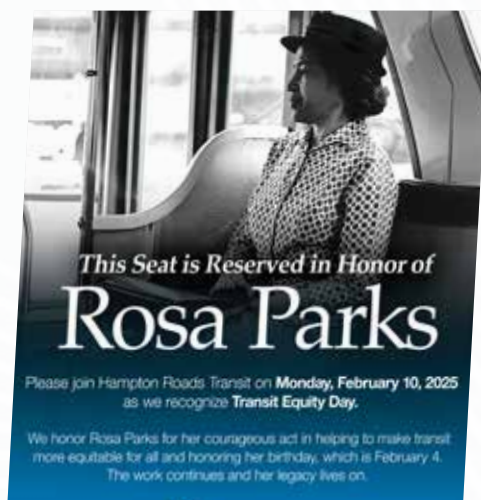


The Student Transit Riders Commission Formed

Another way HRT is investing in its young riders is through its newly created Student Transit Riders Commission (STRC). Announced in the spring, the STRC consists of Student Freedom Pass riders from each of the six cities served by HRT and will mirror HRT's governing body, the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads. The goal is to engage the next generation of public transit riders and create lifelong users.

Free Fare Days Increase Awareness of Transit

The community was able to try transit for free on four days throughout the year. With the support of the Commission, HRT offered free fare on all bus, light rail, ferry, Paratransit, and OnDemand ridesharing services on Election Day, Transit Equity Day, Earth Day, and Juneteenth.



A graphic for "Celebrating Juneteenth" with the text "Free Fare Thursday, June 19th". Below it, it says "To commemorate Juneteenth all bus, light rail, ferry, trolley, paratransit, and OnDemand Rideshare services will be fare free." The background features colorful hands reaching up.

Election Day 2024: 34,944 riders

Transit Equity Day 2025: 29,702

Earth Day 2025: 34,366

Juneteenth 2025: 31,011

Community Resource Fairs Connect Commuters

Public Outreach hosted its third annual Community Resource Fairs at the Hampton Transit Center and Newtown Road Station. More than a hundred people took advantage of this one-stop shop to learn about valuable resources available in their community. HRT partnered with over a dozen organizations, including YWCA of South Hampton Roads, VB Talent Acquisition, Sentara Behavioral Health Services, Norfolk Homeless Unit, Virginia Beach Housing and Prevention Services, Virginia Beach Public Utilities, Virginia Beach Animal Control and Services, the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, Newport News Department of Human Services, Eggleston Services, Hampton Youth Opportunities, and goCommute.



Transit Advertising Summary

- 8 new advertising clients
- 94% client retention rate
- 48 buses and light rail vehicles wrapped
- \$557,613 advertising revenue



Digital Media Highlights

Total Reach



2,045,087

(Combined FB, IG, X/Twitter, YouTube)
(Number of unique individuals who saw a piece of content on an HRT social media platform).

New Followers



2,312

(Combined FB, IG, X/Twitter, YouTube)
(Number of unique individuals who follow an HRT social media platform).

Content Interactions



52,934

(Combined FB, IG, X/Twitter, YouTube)
(Measures engagement with content shared by HRT).

Post Engagements



923,763

(Combined FB, IG, X/Twitter, YouTube)
(Total number of actions people took involving HRT posts).

Creator Collaboration Highlights

OnDemand Rideshare

- Discovering Your City @discoveringyourcity
- K. Janea @_sunkizzed
- Madelyn Filio @msprevail.social
- Marquita Bianca @marquita.bianca

VB Wave

- Odester Hepburn @odestereats

Top Performing Instagram Post of FY 25:

- Norfolk Tides Ferry post

Top Performing LinkedIn Post of FY 25:

- CoVA Biz photo of William E. Harrell, President & CEO

Top Performing Facebook Post of FY 25:

- Renee Browder Employee Spotlight



Free Rides to the Tides Partnership

Hampton Roads Transit, the City of Norfolk, and the Norfolk Tides teamed up to offer free rides on the Tide light rail and Elizabeth River Ferry to Harbor Park for every home game during the 2025 season. Parking in and around the ballpark is limited due to casino construction adjacent to the stadium. On opening weekend in March, more than 4,500 riders passed through Harbor Park Station.

”

“From opening night to the last out of the season, fans recognize HRT’s transportation solutions for baseball games and other big events this spring and summer.” – William E. Harrell

HRT staff volunteered to help with crowd control at light rail stations during the first home game and during special game nights throughout the season.





Operation Lifesaver Promotes Light Rail Safety

HRT won a grant from Operation Lifesaver, Inc. for the *second time* in three years to promote light rail safety.

The grant, totaling nearly \$20,000, is for rail safety education and public awareness. HRT was also awarded a \$10,000 grant by the Federal Transit Administration to develop a campaign encouraging users to complete an online transit safety pledge.

HRT partnered with the Mid-Eastern Atlantic Conference (MEAC) to launch the Operation Lifesaver campaign during the annual MEAC tournament in March. The tournament was held at Scope Arena and brought thousands of people to Downtown Norfolk. The Public Outreach team handed out custom koozies and other Operation Lifesaver-branded giveaways. They talked to visitors about using light rail to get to the games, and more than 100 people signed the transit safety pledge.

Public outreach held additional events to raise awareness, securing about 400 safety pledges by the end of June.



Tide Light Rail Performance

- **99.2% on-time performance**
- **Zero reportable work injuries**
- **Zero reportable incidents or accidents**
- **Zero days with vehicles out of service due to unavailable parts**



03. Regional Impact



VB Wave Trolley Marks 40 Years of Service

Hampton Roads Transit kicked off FY25 by celebrating the 40th anniversary of the VB Wave Trolley. Virginia Beach Mayor Bobby Dyer and Councilwoman Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond spoke at the event on July 23 at the Oceanfront. The trolley is a summer staple for residents and tourists alike and has carried more than 5.5 million passengers over the last 40 years.

”

“The VB Wave Trolley is a welcoming summertime sight and an experience that visitors cherish forever.” -William E. Harrell

New Trolleys Added to Fleet

Two new Hometown trolleys were added to the fleet as part of ongoing fleet renewal. They look like the beloved blue and tan trolleys that passengers have come to enjoy over the years. However, there are some changes in the driver’s seat, including a digital dashboard.

OnDemand Rideshare Returns

October also saw the return of OnDemand Ridesharing in Newport News and Virginia Beach. Following a successful trial in FY23, this second pilot runs through September 2025, after which the service will be evaluated. Passengers enjoyed free rides during the first two weeks of service.

At \$2 per person per ride, OnDemand Ridesharing offers an affordable transportation option for those without vehicles and in areas with limited fixed-route bus service. Providing first and last mile service, OnDemand helps bridge an important transportation gap, connecting passengers with key points of interest on the Southside and Peninsula.



- **Total Ridership: 40,876**
- **Newport News Zone: 25,046**
- **Virginia Beach Zone: 15,830**

GoMobile Rollout Begins

Summer 2025 brought the trial of GoMobile – **a new and convenient way for customers to pay for public transit.** This highly anticipated platform has been years in the making. The new technology will be rolled out gradually. It began with the mobile ticketing feature, made available to VB Wave Trolley passengers over the summer. The full launch, expected in FY26, will bring additional features, including a reloadable card for cash-paying customers and the ability to pay with credit and debit cards, or mobile wallets.

Fare validators have been installed on every vehicle in HRT's fleet to prepare for the full GoMobile launch.



Commute Smarter with goCommute

November brought a big change to the Transportation Demand Management program (TDM) previously known as TRAFFIX. After nearly 30 years, the program was rebranded as goCommute. With a new name and fresh logo, goCommute offers time and money-saving solutions to help Hampton Roads drivers stress less, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

goCommute – or goCo – provides commuters resources for finding and joining a vanpool or carpool, taking public transit, walking, or biking, all while enjoying access to perks like commuter rewards, guaranteed ride, and free public parking. The program is funded through the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) with a mission to advocate for sustainable transportation by connecting employers and commuters with free resources and innovative solutions.



- *Trips recorded: 72,115*
- *Number of vanpools: 33*
- *Number of vanpool passengers: 244*
- *Vehicle miles reduced: 1,901,396*
- *Tons of emissions reduced: 816*

HRT 25th Anniversary

On Oct. 1, 2024, HRT celebrated another major milestone: 25 years since Peninsula Transit (PENTRAN) and Tidewater Regional Transit (TRT) merged to form Hampton Roads Transit.

It was the first voluntary merger of two transit companies in the United States. Prior to the merger, TRT provided transit service in the cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach as well as Suffolk. PENTRAN served Hampton and Newport News.

Together, a merged agency offered more clout, better connectivity, cost savings – and a shining example of regional cooperation that would make possible the advent of light rail and cross-tunnel express bus service. The many benefits envisioned 25 years ago still live on today.

More than 50 employees who served at the time of the merger are still with HRT today. We spent the last year talking to as many of them as possible to learn about their lives before and after the merger.



1999
TRT/PENTRAN Merger

2007
Tide Light Rail Groundbreaking

2011
Tide Light Rail Opening



2016
Downtown Norfolk Transit Center
(DNTC) opens

2019
Awarded \$3.9M to purchase six electric
buses

2020
General Assembly awards HRT
dedicated regional transit funding



2022
757 Express program launches
on the Peninsula

2023
Elizabeth River Ferry celebrates
40th Anniversary

2024
VB Wave Trolley celebrates
40th Anniversary



Scan the
QR Code
to view
HRT's 25th
Anniversary
Video



Earth Day Celebrations

Community Cleanup

The 2025 Earth Day celebrations were a big success. Throughout the month of April, several organizations and dozens of HRT staff members committed their time and energy to tidying up area bus shelters, proving once again that many hands make light work!



Commissioners Host Ride-alongs

On Earth Day, Commissioners from all six cities participated in ride-alongs with staff and constituents. These annual rides provide an opportunity for Commissioners to interact with frontline employees and customers. The initiative has received positive feedback from the Commission, customers, and staff.



Celebrating Bike Month with Community-Wide Events

HRT and goCommute celebrated the benefits of biking throughout Bike Month with a slew of family-friendly activities. The May calendar was packed, beginning with bike expos in Norfolk and Hampton, and culminating in Bike to Work Week, which took place from May 12 to 16. Riders participating in a special Bike to Work Day event on Friday, May 16 were able to take advantage of a dozen pit stops, including four hosted by the goCo crew.



New Passenger Shelters Installed at Ferry Docks

In June, HRT staff, Commissioners, and community partners gathered at the High Street ferry dock in Portsmouth to celebrate the installation of three new passenger shelters. The brightly colored shelters, located at High Street and North Landing in Portsmouth and Waterside in Norfolk, arrived just in time for the start of the busy summer season. The shelters were designed and constructed to resemble cargo ship containers, reflecting the working waterfront along the Elizabeth River. Each shelter is a different color reflecting HRT's blue and green brand colors.

”

“Whether you’re commuting, sightseeing, or just enjoying the ride, these new ferry shelters are a fresh and modern addition to your journey across the water.”

-William E. Harrell

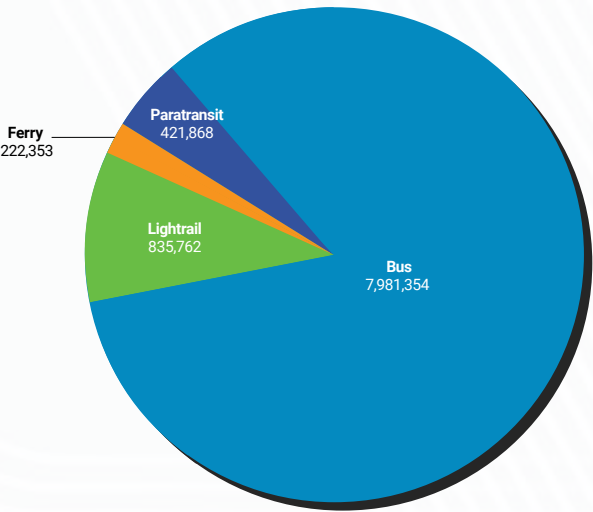
The shelters feature solar-powered lighting to enhance safety and security, digital display panels to provide real-time service information, and integrated speakers that enable HRT to make announcements directly to passengers. These features will ensure that riders stay informed and connected every step of the way. The project cost \$825,000 with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) providing 68 percent of the funding.





04. Organizational Performance

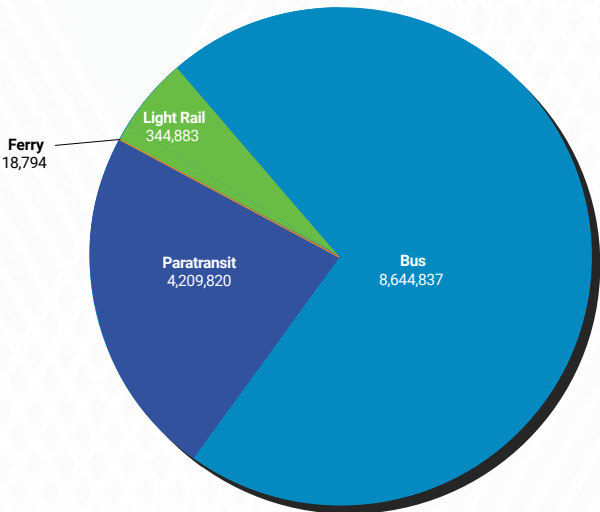
FY25 By the Numbers



Total Boardings

By Mode

Bus	7,981,354	+12% vs. FY24
Light Rail	835,762	-3.4% vs. FY24
Ferry	222,353	+6.4% vs. FY24
Paratransit	421,868	+9.8% vs. FY24
Total Boardings	9,461,337	

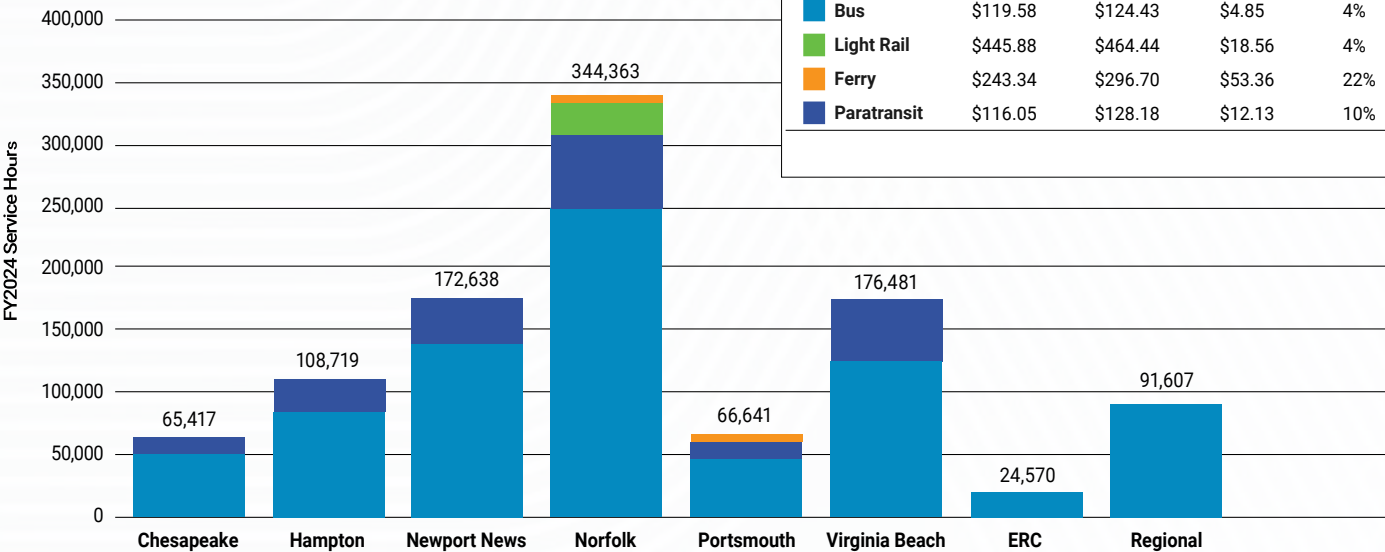


Vehicle Revenue Miles

By Mode

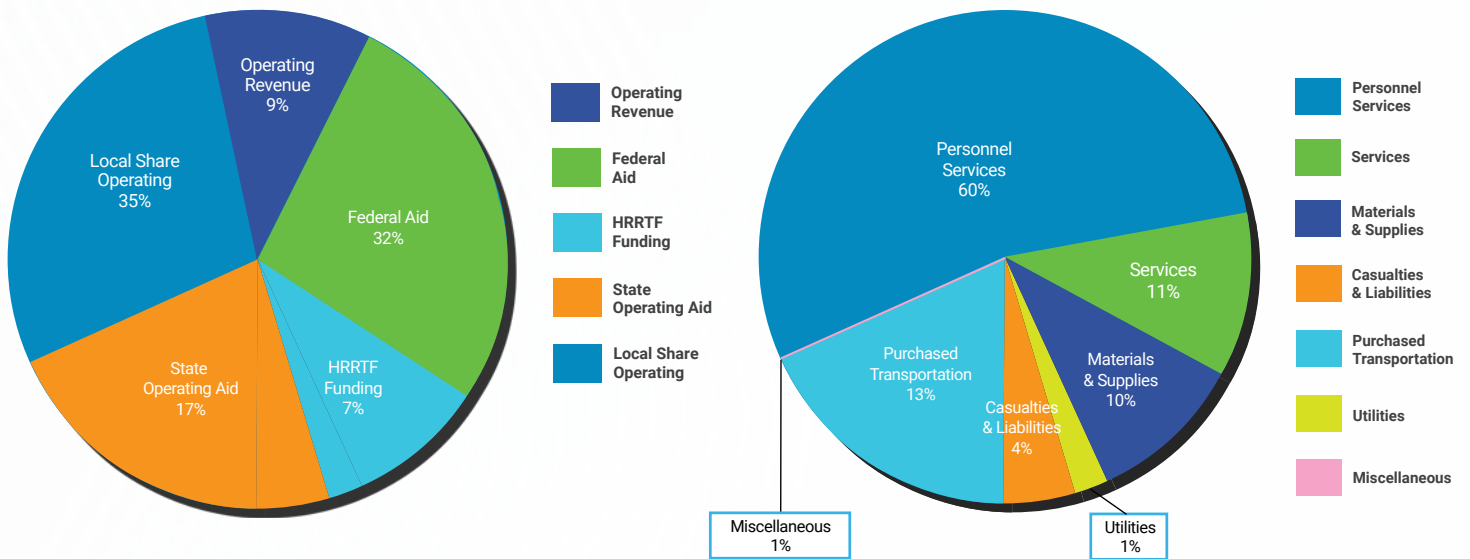
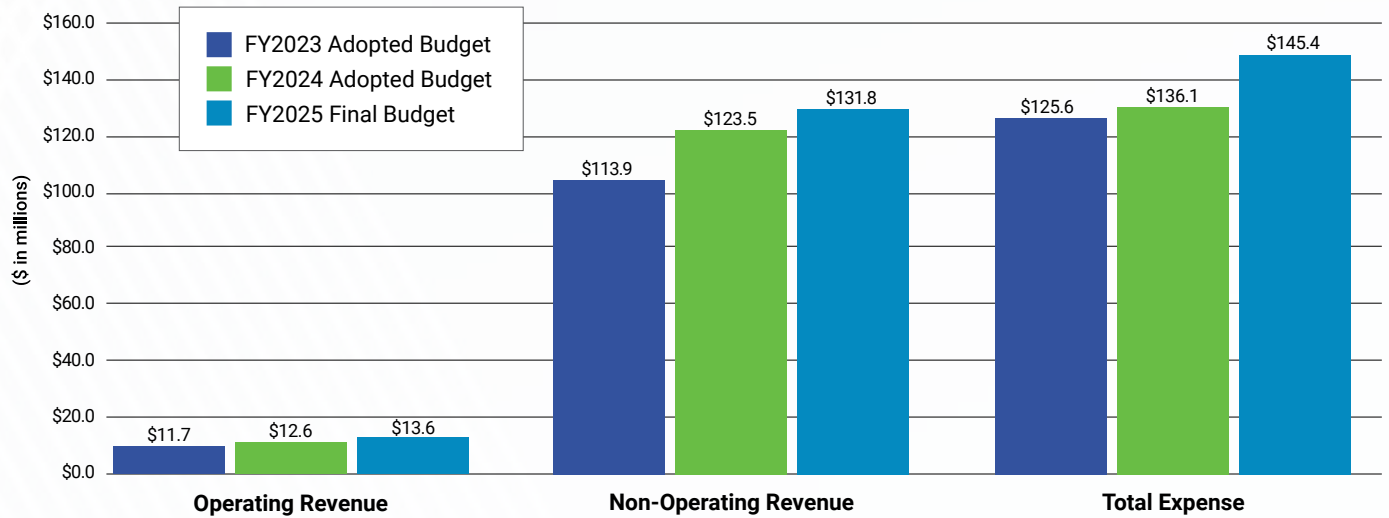
Bus	8,644,837
Light Rail	344,883
Ferry	18,794
Paratransit	4,209,820
Total Vehicle Revenue Miles	13,218,334

Budgeted Service Hours



Mode	FY24 Cost/Hour	FY25 Cost/Hour	Variance \$+/-	Variance %+/-
Bus	\$119.58	\$124.43	\$4.85	4%
Light Rail	\$445.88	\$464.44	\$18.56	4%
Ferry	\$243.34	\$296.70	\$53.36	22%
Paratransit	\$116.05	\$128.18	\$12.13	10%

Financials



Revenue (in thousands)	FY2023 Adopted Budget	FY2024 Adopted Budget	FY2025 Final Budget	Prior Year \$/+/-	Prior Year %+/-	FY2025 Budget %
Operational Revenue	\$11,713.7	\$12,640.1	\$13,539.8	\$899.7	7%	9%
Federal Aid	\$26,694.0	\$38,859.0	\$46,120.7	\$ 7,261.7	19%	32%
HRRTF Funding	\$10,319.0	\$10,044.1	\$10,517.6	\$473.5	5%	7%
State Operating Aid	\$31,464.9	\$26,837.1	\$24,937.7	\$(1,899.4)	(7%)	17%
Local Share-Operating	\$45,396.5	\$47,766.3	\$50,258.9	\$ 2,492.6	5%	35%
Total Revenue	\$125,588.1	\$136,146.6	\$145,374.7	\$9,228.1	7%	100%

New Union Contract Delivers Historic Pay Increase

In July, a new 3-year contract took effect, providing higher base pay and better benefits for bus operators and mechanics. The agreement was negotiated between HRT and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1177.

Hourly base-pay for top operators and maintenance staff increased by 19.4 percent – the largest pay increase ever negotiated. In addition, the starting base hourly rate was increased by over 27 percent.

”

“Our operators and mechanics are at the heart of what we do. With their steadfast focus on safety and professionalism, they ensure we serve our communities reliably and efficiently.” - William E. Harrell

Under the new contract, bus operators now earn \$29 per hour, and rail operators earn \$30.60 per hour. Top mechanics earn between \$28.42 and \$33.35 per hour.

Installation of Free Wi-Fi Complete

In July 2024, the installation of free Wi-Fi on all HRT buses, trolleys, light rail, and ferries was completed. This technology, developed over 18 months, keeps customers connected during their commute and enhances the customer experience. Before free Wi-Fi could be installed, HRT’s router required an upgrade to faster, smarter, more reliable equipment. The router upgrade also enabled other projects to move forward, including the upgrade of video surveillance on all buses and the launch of GoMobile.



Going Places Podcast Expands Reach

The Marketing and Strategic Communications team added a podcast to its expanding toolbox. “Going Places” launched in August, bringing a fresh perspective to public transit. The podcast covers topics and trends with Hampton Roads Transit’s experts, industry thought leaders, community trailblazers, and everyday transit users.

In its inaugural year, “Going Places” took on the free fare debate, the economics of transit, and how young professionals are relying more on public transit than previous generations. With new episodes released monthly, the podcast continues to cultivate its audience. Whether you’re a commuter, employer, or a transit advocate you’ll want to tune in to “Going Places” – available on Spotify, Apple, Amazon, iHeart or wherever you get your podcasts.



Weathering Winter Storm Kingston

On February 19, 2025, Hampton Roads was hit with a severe winter storm, forcing HRT to suspend service for two days. Parts of the service area saw more than 10 inches of snowfall. It's the first time since 2018 all service had to be suspended due to inclement weather.

Emergency Manager Lawrence Mason worked with senior executive team members, operations, facilities, communications, and other key departments to guide HRT through the storm, until all services were back up and running on February 23.

”***Your commitment to serving our community, even in the toughest conditions, does not go unnoticed. Thank you for going above and beyond to keep our customers safe.”*** – **William E. Harrell**

HRT is the only public transit agency in the Commonwealth with a dedicated Office of Emergency Management.



Multi-Million Dollar Roof Renovation Completed at Hampton Headquarters

The end of the fiscal year brought the long-awaited celebration of a construction project at Hampton Headquarters. Work replacing the building's aging roof took about a year. The project also included replacement of 64 skylights and the atrium windows and installation of new exterior lighting. The **\$2.5 million project** was funded with grants from the Federal Transit Administration and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

Connecting Chesapeake Study Moves Forward

Hampton Roads Transit, in partnership with the City of Chesapeake, conducted an 18-month study (Summer 2023 – Winter 2025) to explore high-capacity transit options within the city, aimed at improving regional connectivity and supporting future growth. The study looked at express bus, bus rapid transit (BRT) and light rail options that align with the city's long-term vision for land use, development, and multimodal accessibility.

Community engagement was a central component throughout the study process including three public meetings, briefings with Chesapeake City leadership and City Council, dozens of pop-up events, at least 15 presentations to community groups, civic leagues, businesses, and business groups.

After carefully evaluating 16 alignment alternatives, two BRT alignments emerged as the most feasible and cost-effective solutions. Work on the project is ongoing.

Ridership Increases on 757 Express Routes

HRT's three 757 Express bus routes continue to see exponential growth since introducing 15-minute peak-period service.

- **Route 112**, which runs from Lee Hall to Newport News Shipbuilding via Jefferson Avenue in Newport News, saw ridership grow by an average of **74 percent** since it was launched in October 2022.
- **Route 114**, serving Mercury Boulevard and Downtown Hampton, was up **56 percent** since May 2023.
- **Route 20**, connecting downtown Norfolk with the Virginia Beach Oceanfront via Virginia Beach Boulevard, saw a **35 percent** increase since November 2023.

Bus routes connecting with 757 Express routes are also experiencing ridership increases.





05.
**Workforce
Success**

Awards & Accolades

Most Influential People

CoVa Biz Magazine named **HRT President and CEO, William E. Harrell** among the 150 Most Influential People in Coastal Virginia. The annual list recognizes community leaders who have made significant contributions to the Hampton Roads business and economic landscape. He was honored for his decades of public service.



VTA

The Virginia Transit Association (VTA) recognized HRT for excellence in transit marketing for the **VB Wave Trolley's record-setting 2024 season**. The VTA also honored the **U.S. Navy and former Commissioner August Bullock** for their longstanding support of public transportation. The awards were presented in Richmond during the VTA's annual conference in May.



PRSA

The Marketing and Strategic Communications team earned **six Pinnacle Awards** from the Hampton Roads chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). HRT was presented with **four Excellence Awards and two Merit Awards** during a ceremony in November.



Distinguished Young Professionals

Chief Communications Officer Alexis Majied was honored by Mass Transit magazine on its annual 40 Under 40 list of young professionals in the transit industry. She was selected from more than 120 nominations for her job commitment, industry involvement and contribution, achievement and innovation.



05. Workforce Success

HRSD

HRT was recognized by the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) for its commitment to environmental excellence. The Southside operations complex in Norfolk earned a **Platinum Award** for its perfect stormwater compliance record for five consecutive years. The Northside facility in Hampton earned a **Gold Award** for perfect compliance and best practices to keep storm drains free of hazards and spills.



VTLI

Marketing Communications Strategist Katie Fenimore was selected to participate in the Virginia Transit Association's Virginia Transit Leadership Institute. VTLI is a nine-month program designed to engage, elevate, and cultivate the next generation of public transportation leadership. Throughout the program, Fenimore represented HRT at various facility tours, Transit Advocacy Day, and the annual VTA Conference where the group held its graduation ceremony.



LEAD Peninsula

Military Outreach Liaison Caleb Smith was selected to participate in the LEAD Peninsula Class of 2025. LEAD Peninsula is a community and civic immersion program that offers a comprehensive, behind-the-scenes look at the components that make the Peninsula run efficiently and effectively and prosper economically. The program fosters opportunities for increased communication and cooperation among the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.



Building Back the Workforce :

Human Resources continued a robust campaign to build back the agency's workforce. The department hosted 13 career fairs and attended an additional 67 career fairs to recruit bus operators, mechanics and fill other vacancies.

- ***The number of bus operator trainees recruited increased 75%.***
- ***The number of mechanics recruited and hired increased 38%.***
- ***Employee referrals increased 50%.***
- ***Candidates hired from employee referrals increased 63%.***
- ***32 employees received promotions.***
- ***68 new full-time administrative staff were hired.***
- ***Bus operator trainee turnover fell 21%.***
- ***Bus operator resignations fell 16%.***



Inaugural Internal Career Expo

The Recruitment and Retention Committee hosted the agency's first Internal Career Expo. It was open to HRT employees only, with a focus on networking and career development. Employees were given the opportunity to receive assistance with their resumes, learn more about the L.E.A.D. program and other training initiatives, and meet with representatives from all departments.

- **27 staff attended**
- **13 received resume assistance**
- **10 attended mock interviews**



L.E.A.D. Program

- **LEAD sessions: 3**
- **LEAD graduates: 138**
- **LEAD training courses completed: 1,434**
- **LEAD training hours completed: 951**



HRT Makes it to International Bus Roadeo

The annual bus "Roadeo" was held in December at Todd Stadium in Newport News. Bus operators **Reginald Charity Jr.**, **Shawn Washington** and **Gary Tate** moved on to the state competition hosted by Fairfax County in April. Operator Charity placed third and qualified to compete in the International "Roadeo" held in Austin, TX, where he placed 21st out of 75 operators.

HRT is gearing up to host the 2026 Virginia State Bus and Maintenance "Roadeo" in March at the Hampton Roads Convention Center for operators and the Hampton garage for mechanics.



Operation Hurricane Relief

In October, HRT collected **2,500 pounds of supplies** for Virginia Beach-based Operation Blessing during Operation Hurricane Relief. With the help of the Hampton Roads community, dozens of employees volunteered and filled two VB Wave Trolleys—one on the Peninsula and another on the Southside—with diapers, baby wipes, and formula. After two back-to-back hurricanes, Operation Blessing distributed supplies to residents across seven Southern states. This was an initiative of HRT Cares, an employee group that supports fellow employees and community organizations.



Glitz, Glam, and Good Time at HERO Gala

Nearly 250 people attended the HERO Gala at the Sheraton Waterside Hotel's International Ballroom. Attendees enjoyed heavy hors d'oeuvres, music, and multiple raffles with over a dozen prizes. The event aimed to provide a relaxed atmosphere for employees to socialize outside of work.

CEO Luncheons

HRT President and CEO William Harrell hosted **two luncheons** in FY25. Dozens of employees across all departments were invited to join him for lunch and casual conversation in Hampton and Norfolk. These luncheons continue to provide excellent opportunities to engage with team members, address concerns, and discuss ongoing initiatives.



Transit Employee Appreciation Day

In March, HRT celebrated National Transit Employee Appreciation Day, a by fueling the fleet with food. Volunteers with the Recognition and Reward Committee delivered sandwiches to staff in Norfolk, Hampton, and the Norfolk Tide Facility. HRT could not function without the hard work and dedication of its employees. Everyone plays a vital role in keeping this organization moving forward.

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“Whether operating or maintaining a bus, assisting our passengers, or working behind the scenes, your efforts are essential to the communities we serve, connecting people to jobs, education, healthcare, and essential services. The work you do has a direct impact on the lives of countless individuals.” – William E. Harrell



HRT Cares

The Reward and Recognition, HERO, and IDEA Committees hosted more than a dozen events throughout the year. From serving up cool summertime treats to providing health and wellness information, committee volunteers are dedicated to the task of showing that “HRT Cares.”

- *Mister Softee Ice Cream Truck Days*
- *Jingle Jam: HRT Holiday Harmony Singers, “Jingle Bells” Recruiting Reel*
- *School Supplies Drive benefiting THRIVE and ForKids*
- *HERO Cookouts*
- *Pool Tournament*
- *Breast Cancer Awareness and Mobile Mammogram*
- *Holiday Festive Photo Raffle*
- *HERO Gala*
- *HRT Drives Out Hunger Food Drive*
- *Transit Employees Appreciation Week*
- *3-Point Contest*
- *Heritage Day Potluck*
- *Mother’s Day HERO Raffle*







06. What's Next for HRT?

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on the many changes at Hampton Roads Transit over the last 25 years, we're excited about the transformation still to come.

In 2026, commuters can look forward to full implementation of GoMobile. Riders should not view this transformation as a move away from cash fare, but rather as an opportunity to embrace new technology and take control of their commute.

HRT is also looking forward to transforming its footprint in the region with the groundbreaking on the Evelyn T. Butts Transfer Center in Norfolk. Currently, customers wait on the street to catch a bus at that location. We'll finally be able to provide them with an off-street transfer center that includes a park-and-ride lot.

HRT's bus routes have remained essentially unchanged since its inception. That's why the System Optimization Study (SOP) will be an integral part of our transformation moving forward. Implementing the SOP will put the agency in a better position to launch the remaining 757 Express Routes, bringing more frequent service to more customers.

We're also excited to host the Virginia Bus Operator and Maintenance Roadeo in March. This three-day event is always well attended by representatives from agencies across the Commonwealth. It will be an excellent opportunity for HRT and the region to provide our out-of-town guests with a transformative experience.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to enhancing the customer experience. The upcoming initiatives reflect our dedication to innovation. Thank you for being part of the journey as we grow and transform public transit, *together*.

Connecting Hampton Roads: Building Public Transit Better, Together



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