



**Roundtrip reduces ride  
wait times drastically  
for 11,000 paratransit  
trips in Richmond, VA  
with GRTC.**

**roundtrip**



## Featured Customer:



### Overview

GRTC is the primary public transportation provider for the Richmond, Virginia region. The company is a not-for-profit public service corporation jointly owned by the City of Richmond and Chesterfield County in Virginia. Currently, GRTC operates 37 local routes and 10 express routes that provide transit service within the City of Richmond, Henrico County, and a small portion of Chesterfield County—a service area that accounts for more than 8 million passenger rides yearly. In addition to traditional fixed-route service, GRTC Transit System's CARE services provide origin-to-destination services under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for the citizens of the Richmond Region. CARE Programs provide curb-to-curb paratransit services to individuals with disabilities who may not be reasonably able to use GRTC fixed route bus services.

Each year, \$5.75 billion or roughly 9.8% of the total expenditure on public transportation goes to funding paratransit (APTA). In 2013, Approximately 223 million paratransit trips took place throughout the year (APTA). In 2017, Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) partnered with Roundtrip to launch CARE On-Demand. The first of its kind, CARE On-Demand offers the paratransit community in Richmond same-day, non-stop, on-demand rides while subsidizing costs for the passenger. To date, Roundtrip has delivered 11,000 rides while providing cost savings of over \$100,000 to the system.



## Challenge

Over the past decade, overall public transportation ridership has gone down, but with many baby boomers joining the senior population, paratransit demand has gone up. As such, GRTC began to face challenges keeping up with the demand for over 1000 daily paratransit trips. Customer complaints were on the rise and media coverage spoke of dissatisfaction towards the CARE program's inefficiencies.

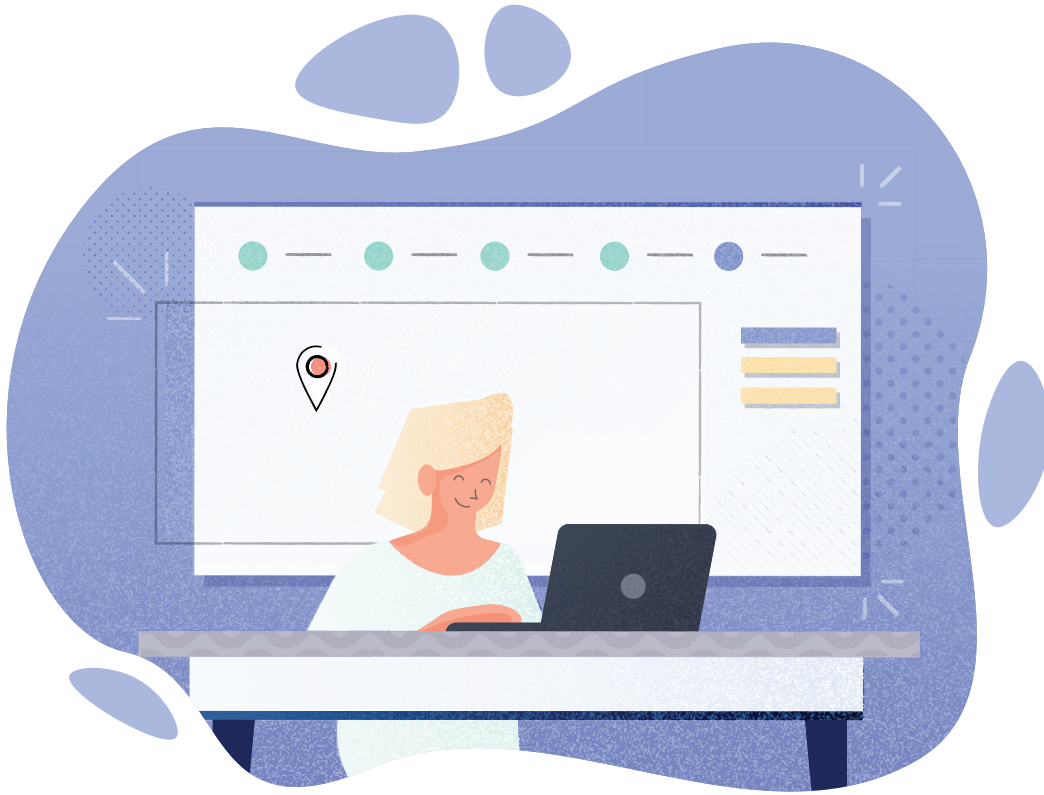
For the paratransit community in Richmond, getting a ride needs to be quick and easy, but customers were reporting late CARE vans that sometimes didn't even show up at all. Tim Barham, Chief of Transit Operations at GRTC, remarked, "it pretty much hit us in the face. We couldn't keep up with demand with the existing resources. We began looking for more creative ways to address what was going on."

In 2015, Tim led the team by putting together the RFP on behalf of GRTC's CARE program in October of 2016. Key criteria for this RFP included:

- Staying within the spirit of FTA regulations
- Availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles
- Support from a Call Center for members
- Same-day service and vehicles provided within 2 hours of request

Initially, GRTC didn't get many responses, and of the early applicants, they found vendors who were either too expensive or simply couldn't support every transport need GRTC would require. Finally, in 2017, GRTC and Roundtrip met for the first time. Mark Switaj, CEO of Roundtrip, spoke about the program Roundtrip could offer. The senior staff at GRTC felt it was a good fit — especially with Roundtrip's medical transportation background.

In addition to meeting its RFP criteria, GRTC chose to partner with Roundtrip because of aligned values, a focus on technology, and responsiveness. Carrie Rose Pace, Director of Communications at GRTC, expressed, "Both companies are committed to safe and reliable transportation. We all care about providing the same level of access to everyone regardless of their ability." Roundtrip was one of two partners who were awarded this innovative contract to manage the CARE On-Demand program for residents and the program launched in August 2017 with Roundtrip joining in December 2017. In the first 90 days of using Roundtrip, CARE members traveled almost 10,000 miles (over 1,500 rides) and seamlessly transitioned scheduling services from a phone-based system to Roundtrip's online booking portal.



## Impact

In providing the paratransit with more flexible, reliable, and cost-effective transportation options, partnering with Roundtrip has added value for GRTC to offer a quality level of service at a much lower cost. With the traditional model, the cost per paratransit trip is \$29.00. But with CARE OnDemand powered by Roundtrip, the cost to GRTC is \$15.00. That means that GRTC is able to offer more premium, on-demand services at almost 50% the cost. In 2018 alone, GRTC saw \$90,000 in cost savings. The average monthly savings using Roundtrip for CARE services is \$10,000 which puts overall cost savings well over \$100,000 since launch and about \$40,000 YTD in 2019. Since inception, Roundtrip has increased average monthly ride volume 7x for CARE members seeking more flexible options. Overall, Roundtrip has completed over 11,000 rides for GRTC CARE members. Some CARE members use Roundtrip services every day to get to work and to run their regular errands like heading to the grocery store or the pharmacy. Other CARE Commented members use Roundtrip for social and recreational purposes like going to the movies or the mall. Both Roundtrip and GRTC are extremely excited to be addressing social determinants of health and overall well-being for the paratransit community in Richmond. Now, CARE members can get exactly where they need to go with an affordable, reliable, flexible option that reports over 98% on-time arrivals. Carrie Rose-Pace explains, “Roundtrip makes it easier and more convenient to make trips that are more spontaneous instead of having to plan it so far ahead of time. I also like that Roundtrip offers a phone and online booking service for a variety of users.” Roundtrip has continued to receive positive feedback from the program and plans to expand in 2018.



## Future

Looking towards the years to come, both Carrie and Tim see a growing demand for microtransit, ondemand and automated services. Upon partnering with Roundtrip, Tim recalls, “What struck me was what Roundtrip was doing with technology and the app. I saw value in giving customers the option and even offering discounts to customers using the app. As we move forward, microtransit and selfdriver vehicles are becoming more prevalent from the tech side of transportation. Finding partners who are committed to innovation is essential as the transportation industry continues to evolve. Roundtrip’s technology is on the cutting-edge.”