



112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

Phone: (540) 885-5174
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**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
September 13, 2023, 2:30 p.m.**

Electronic Meeting via Zoom

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

[Click Here for Audio Recording of Meeting](#)

	Name	Organization
✓	Amanda Kaufman	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Leslie Tate	City of Waynesboro
✓	Krystal Moyers*	Augusta Health
	Mike Kelley	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
	Greg Beam	Staunton Downtown Development
✓	Terry Rodgers, Chair	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
✓	Anastasia Triplett*	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer*	Transit Service Rider
✓	Paul Terry	Transit Service Rider
✓	Steve Wilson*	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Steven Hennessee*	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
	Ann Cundy	CSPDC
✓	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
✓	Paula Melester	CSPDC
✓	Alisande Tombarge, City of Waynesboro	
✓	Rodney Rhodes, City of Staunton	
✓	Kyle Trissel, DRPT*	
✓	Zach Beard, CSPDC*	
✓	Josiah Hojohn, Shenandoah Valley Social Services	
✓	Mike Norvell, Bay Transit	

Call to Order

The September 13, 2023 meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:30 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, BTAC members may participate in meetings through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually were indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in person.

Public Comment

Chairperson Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.



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Approve Minutes

Chairperson Rodgers stated that there was not an in-person quorum and did not request a vote to approve minutes from the July BTAC meeting.

Business

Introductions: Chairperson Rodgers called for a round of introductions, and committee members introduced themselves.

Bay Transit Microtransit Presentation: Mr. Mike Norvell, Bay Transit, introduced himself and his presentation on Bay Transit's Microtransit Pilot Project. Mr. Norvell's presentation covered the following information (see attached presentation slides for additional detail):

- **About Bay Transit** – Bay Transit, one of three divisions of Bay Aging (one of 25 area agencies on aging in Virginia) operated in a 12-county service area in the Northern Neck region in Virginia. Within the large geographical service area, Bay Transit operated demand responsive service, operated two deviated fixed-route lines, provided mobility management services (New Freedom), operated three (two in 2023) seasonal trolleys, and now provided microtransit.
- **About Bay Transit Express** – Bay Transit Express was launched in June 2021. Along with Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC), Bay Transit solicited competitive bids for a contract to provide microtransit software. Bay Transit started with a small geofenced zone of service around the Gloucester Courthouse area.
- **Microtransit Process Flow** – Riders would request a trip via a mobile app or phone; dynamic routing would get a vehicle to the rider; rider would be picked up; there could be some trip sharing based on the dynamic routing; and rider would be dropped off.
- **Ridership Summary & Analysis** – Through April of 2022, there was a solid start to growth and ridership. Bay Transit Express replaced one of the two deviated fixed-routes. The microtransit service ridership quickly eclipsed the ridership for fixed-route it replaced. Passengers enjoyed short wait times for the microtransit service versus the long wait times of fixed-route which helped to secure high ratings (4.9/5 stars) from passengers. Monthly rides started with 13 for the few days in June 2021 after launch, and grew to 506 in April 2022, and these rides were a healthy mix of new and returning riders.
- **Challenges & Opportunities** – Challenges included a large senior population in the area that were not comfortable using app-based services, lack of no Rappahannock Community College campuses in the microtransit service zone, and marketing needed to be done through multiple concurrent channels to ensure it reached diverse audiences. Opportunities included the development of a webpage portal, promotion through the school system opened up new opportunities for disadvantaged students with after school activities, and development of a Brand Ambassador program to reward referrals.
- **Marketing** – Bay Transit distributed flyers in the service area that described the basics and logistics, with heavy emphasis on businesses and apartment complexes. Promotions also included print and radio ads, along with paid advertising on social media. A Brand Ambassador program was also launched that rewarded referrals.



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- **Efficiency** – Through comparing Cost/Revenue Mile, Cost/Revenue Hour, and Cost/Rider, one could see the cost benefit of operating microtransit versus fixed-route services.
- **Next Steps & Expansion** – Through such success, Bay Transit Express was expanded with a larger service area and an additional van. Simultaneously, it was decided to discontinue one of the deviated fixed-routes. Expanded service called for expanded promotions of the microtransit services.
- **Ride Analysis & Utilization** – Metrics and analyses to show utilization and success of microtransit services were based on account creation, new and returning riders, average number of rides taken per active rider per month, key performance indicators (total ride requests, met demand, completed rides, active riders, and driver hours), monthly ride requests by status, completed riders per vehicle hour, and comparison of microtransit and fixed-route ridership.
- **Applications for Microtransit** – Microtransit could provide a new service focused on high-need populations (seniors, individuals with a disability); replace fixed-route buses; replace older demand-response service; expand service into areas with limited or no existing public transit; and provide first-and-last mile connections to other transit routes (Virginia Breeze).

Questions received and answered throughout the presentation included:

- **What size vehicles were used to operate the service?** Bay Transit started with body-on-chassis vehicles, but later transitioned to two raised-roof, accessible minivans that could accommodate nine passengers.
- **What was the payment method for microtransit?** Passengers could pay through the app, but if they were un-banked, passengers could pay in cash. Payment was not collected until the passenger boarded the vehicle.
- **What kind of impact was seen from no-shows to the dynamic routing?** A record of no-shows was kept, and no-shows did have an impact on timing. But, microtransit was still averaging a 10-11 minute wait time – still successful compared to fixed-route wait times.
- **Did microtransit services provide door-to-door service?** Yes, service was door-to-door, but could also be bus stop to convenient drop-off point.
- **Would additional stops be accommodated on the way to a final destination (e.g., a stop to a daycare center on the way to work)?** This level of information was not collected for passenger trips on microtransit, but it was assumed that this kind of stop could be accommodated. Passengers under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- **What was the layout of the vans – was there a center aisle?** There was no center aisle on the Ford transit vans. At any one time there was only one to two passengers in the van at a time, so there would be no need to climb over other passengers. The only challenge with the van was that drivers had to get out of the vehicle and open the door for passengers to board and alight (this was only a problem in inclement weather).

Ms. Thompson reminded the BTAC that microtransit was one of the out-year projects identified in the Transit Development Plan (TDP). The feasibility study for a microtransit pilot project was scheduled to be completed in Fiscal Year 2025.

Triennial Review Update: Ms. Devon Thompson announced that the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's (CSPDC) Triennial Review was nearly complete. The virtual site visit was conducted July 31 –



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August 3, 2023. Ms. Thompson indicated that Triennial Reviews were conducted every three years and examined how recipients of Urbanized Area Formula Program funds met statutory and administrative requirements through 23 areas of compliance. There were only three findings, for which corrective actions would be implemented by the end of the year. The three areas of findings were in Technical Capacity – Award Management; Procurement; and Title VI. The final report would be emailed to the CSPDC Board of Commissioners Chairperson in mid-October and would be available to committee members as well.

BRCC Shuttles Hours Update: Ms. Thompson reminded the committee about the new changes to the BRCC Shuttles. The additional hour discussed at the July BTAC meeting was added back into the schedule beginning August 1, 2023. The newly revised hours were 7:00 AM-7:00 PM, and 7:30 AM-5:30 PM. One bus began at Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) at 7:00 AM and another began at 7:30AM at the Staunton Lewis Street Hub; one bus terminated at the Staunton Lewis Street Hub at 5:30 PM and another terminated at 7:00 PM at BRCC. Implementation was smooth and well received by passengers.

Paratransit Operations Update: Ms. Thompson reminded committee members that Saturday paratransit service had been planned for Fiscal Year 2024 (one bus). Due to increased paratransit service demand, CSPDC/Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) agreed and opted to add two hours daily, Monday-Friday, to cover peak trip request time, 11:00 AM-1:00 PM. The additional weekday hours had greatly helped with scheduling. Ms. Thompson indicated that Saturday service would be assessed later in the Fiscal Year or next Fiscal Year based on the budget.

Staunton Lewis Street Hub Rehabilitation Update: Ms. Paula Melester indicated that the engineering and design phase was progressing. The certificate of appropriateness was granted from the City of Staunton Historic Preservation Commission, which allowed work to proceed on 90 percent design plans. Ms. Melester indicated that the next steps would include submitting the designs to the City of Staunton for site plan review and approval along with starting the procurement process for the construction project. Staff would expect to break ground around Spring 2024.

Mr. Steven Hennessee inquired about an agreement that would need to be in place with Dominion Power and CSPDC regarding power to the lot, for EV conduit and lighting. Ms. Melester indicated that the consultant assisting with the project had electrical experts on staff to assist with the process.

ITS – Mobile Data Collection System Update: Ms. Thompson indicated that the contract with Passio Technologies had been executed. CSPDC staff was working with Passio to schedule a kickoff meeting in the coming weeks, with implementation to follow later in the Fall. Ms. Thompson reiterated that the mobile data collection system (MDCS) would serve as the backend software for future forward-facing technologies for passengers. The system would also include tablets for bus drivers to input performance data, such as mileage and passenger trips, and the system would provide real-time location (GPS) for all buses.

Afton Express Update: Ms. Melester announced that Afton Express celebrated its second year of operations on September 1, 2023. Ridership continued to increase with average daily passenger trips around 75-95. It was projected that daily passenger trips could reach up to 100 by the end of 2023.



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Ms. Melester indicated that CSPDC and VRT were participating in the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) Discover Transit Month. The two initiatives, Afton Express anniversary and Discover Transit Month, were observed and celebrated simultaneously with pop-up events held throughout the month in Staunton and Charlottesville. These events would thank current riders for their patronage as well as entice new riders to try out the service. Additionally, there would be a fare-free day across the entire service, BRITE and Afton Express, on Wednesday, September 20, 2023.

Contractor Update: Mr. Steve Wilson reported on the following:

- **Ridership:** Mr. Wilson indicated that ridership on both BRITE and Afton Express continued to rise.
- **Staffing:** Mr. Wilson announced that VRT was actively seeking and hiring bus drivers.
- **Operations:** Mr. Wilson indicated the following operational changes:
 - 250 Connector – Valley View Senior Apartments was a CALL stop all day, but recently was changed to a fixed stop in the morning to proactively serve the many calls that were received at the beginning part of the day.
 - Stuarts Draft Link – The Amazon facility stop in Fishersville was adjusted to become the first and last stop of the day and was now served between 6:45 AM to 6:45 PM.

Other Business: Chairperson Rodgers asked if there was any other business to come before the committee.

- Ms. Thompson announced that she and Mr. Kyle Trissel were selected as statewide fellows for the inaugural class of Virginia Transit Association's (VTA) Virginia Transit Leadership Institute (VTLI). VTLI aimed to foster the next generation of public transportation leaders in Virginia. The comprehensive program would span nine months with sessions held around the state.

Adjournment

Chairperson Rodgers indicated that the next BTAC meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at the BRITE Transit Facility – lunch would be served at 1:00 PM, and the meeting would start at 1:30 PM.

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:43 PM.

Rural Microtransit in Gloucester, VA

September 13, 2023





BAY AGING

DIGNITY AT EVERY AGE



BAY HEALTH

A DIVISION OF BAY AGING



BAY HOUSING

A DIVISION OF BAY AGING



BAY TRANSIT

A DIVISION OF BAY AGING

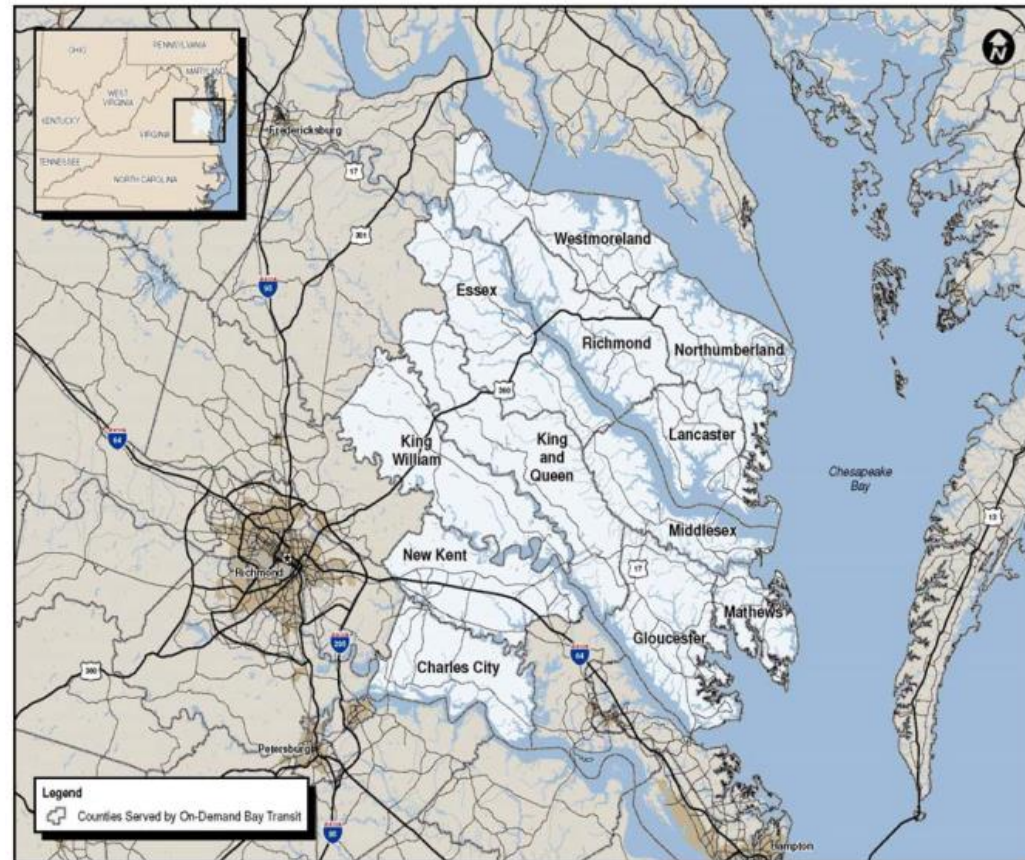
Bay Transit: Transportation for people of all ages

Art Dubey is a 78-year-old veteran who has visual impairments that prevent him from driving. Bay Transit has been providing Art with transportation services for over twelve years. “Without Bay Transit, I would not be able to continue living at my home and be active in my community.”



Bay Transit

- Public transportation provider for the Middle Peninsula, Northern Neck, and Charles City & New Kent Counties (12 counties)
- Demand Responsive Service (systemwide)
- Two Deviated Fixed Route Lines
- Mobility Management
- Three Seasonal Trolleys
- Microtransit
- Averaging 10.1 miles per trip



Demand Responsive Service

- 82.6 % of Bay Transit's services.
- Requires 24-hour reservations
- Standing orders for regular commuters
- \$2 per ride



Bay Transit

In FY 2022, 123,903 rides were taken on Bay Transit including on Bay Transit Express, our microtransit service launched in 2021, deviated fixed-route lines, and our seasonal trolleys. Just considering demand responsive trips:

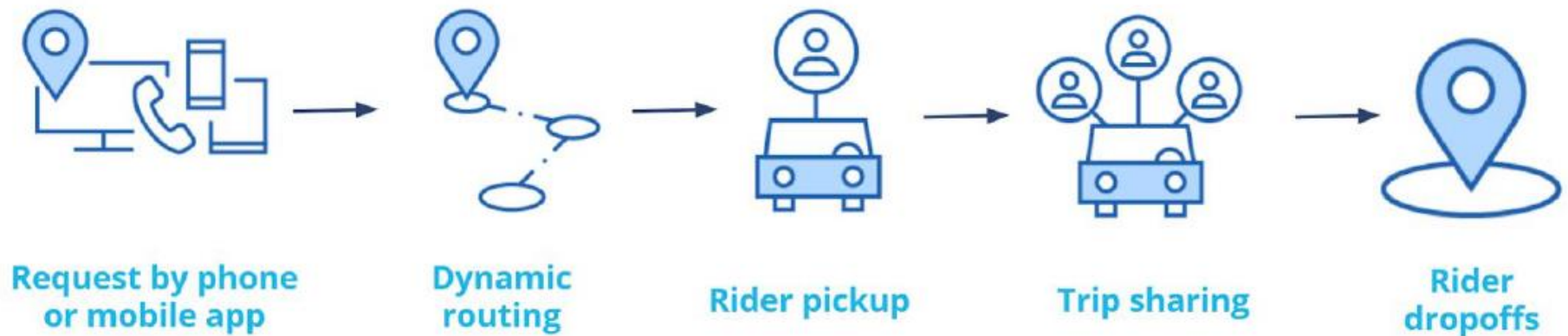
- 56.3% of these trips were for people commuting to work
- 18.2% for health care service access
- 18.4% for other consumer services, businesses, county and town government offices
- 2% of trips were for educational purposes taking students to and from RCC.



Bay Transit Express Launched on June 28th, 2021



Microtransit Process Flow



What is Bay Transit Express?

A promotional graphic for Bay Transit Express. It features a dark blue background with white and teal text and graphics. On the right, there's a white van with 'BAY TRANSIT EXPRESS' and a logo on its side. A person wearing a face mask and carrying boxes and a bag stands next to the van. Inside the van, several passengers are visible, also wearing masks. A teal circular callout contains the text 'Your first 10 trips are FREE!' with a smaller note '*Expires October 31, 2021.' below it. The top right corner has the 'BAY TRANSIT EXPRESS' logo. The bottom right corner says 'Powered by VIA'. The bottom left corner has the website 'baytransit.org/express'. In the center-left, there's a QR code and text about downloading the app or calling 804-693-6977, with 'Download on the App Store' and 'GET IT ON Google Play' buttons below.

BAY TRANSIT EXPRESS

Introducing Bay Transit Express:
\$2 rides around the Gloucester Courthouse area.

Your first 10 trips are **FREE!**
*Expires October 31, 2021.

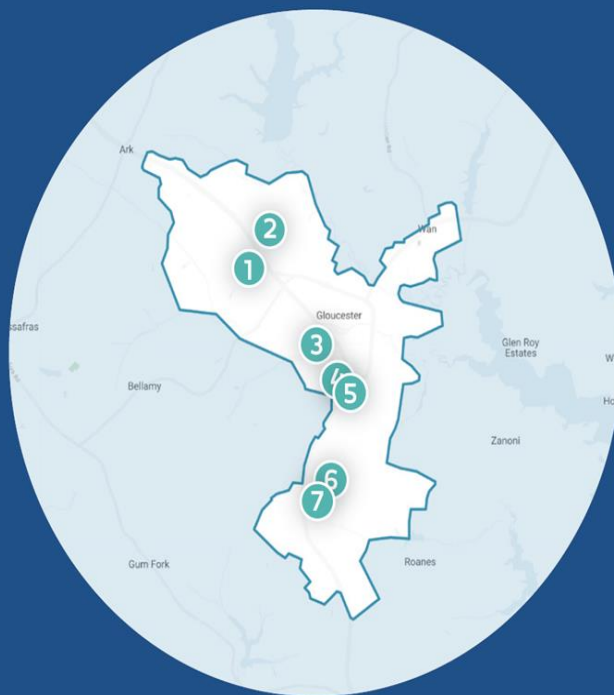
Download the Bay Transit Express app or call 804-693-6977 to get started.

baytransit.org/express

Powered by **VIA**

How it works



- ① Food Lion
- ② Riverside Walter Reed Hospital
- ③ Walmart
- ④ Aldi
- ⑤ Shoppes at Gloucester
- ⑥ Lowe's
- ⑦ MD Express Urgent Case

The basics.

Bay Transit Express is a fast, easy, affordable way to get around — book rides straight from your phone, get picked up in minutes, and get to work or run your errands without needing a car.

Service hours:

Weekdays 8am-5pm

Price: \$2 per ride

Two easy ways to pay.



Add your credit or debit card information to your account in the app.



Pay in cash on board.
Exact change required.

Overall Ridership Summary Through April of 2022

3,800+

Rides completed since launch

7.4 min

Avg. ride duration

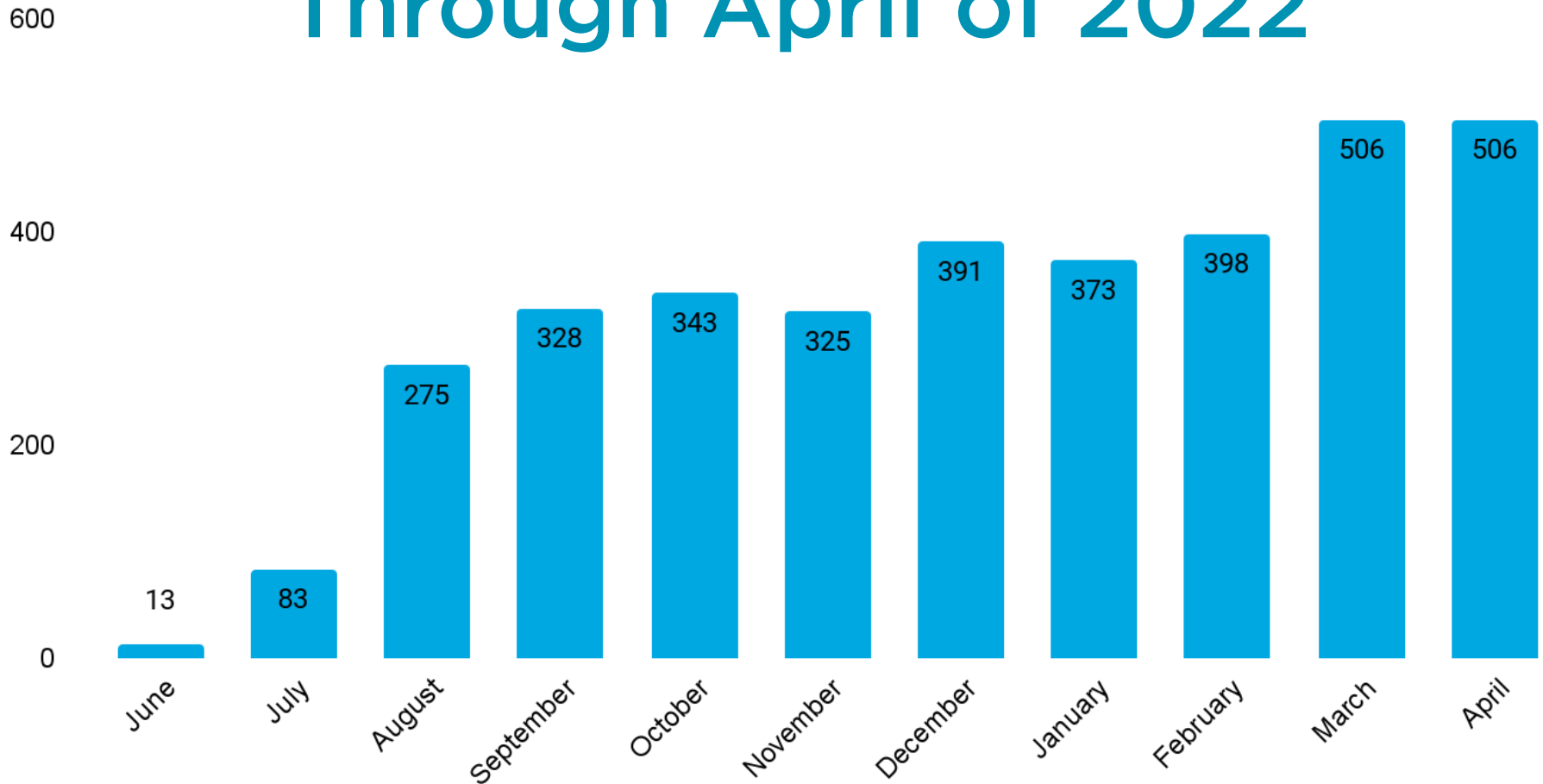
4.9/5 stars

Average ride rating

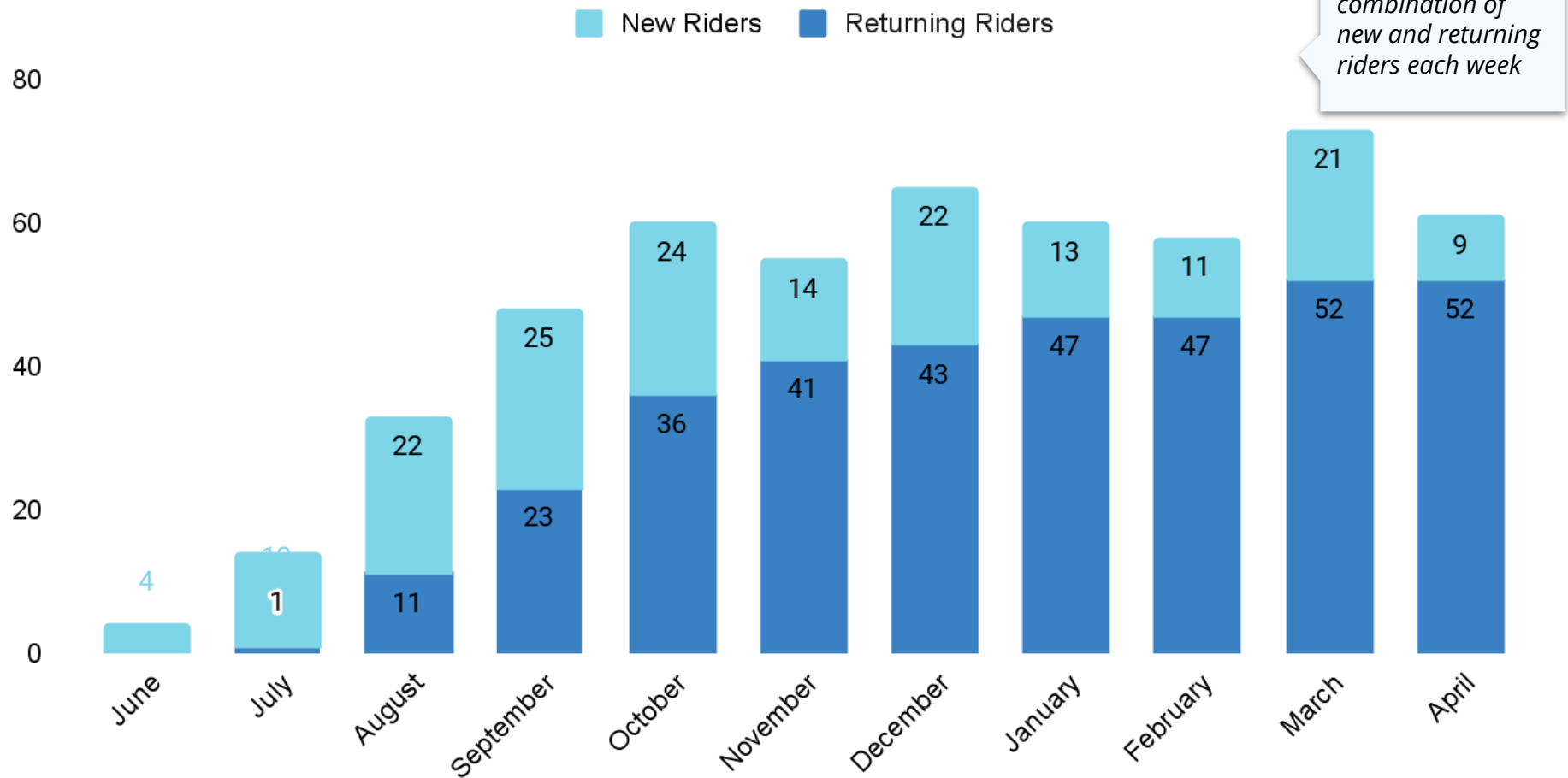
180

Unique riders

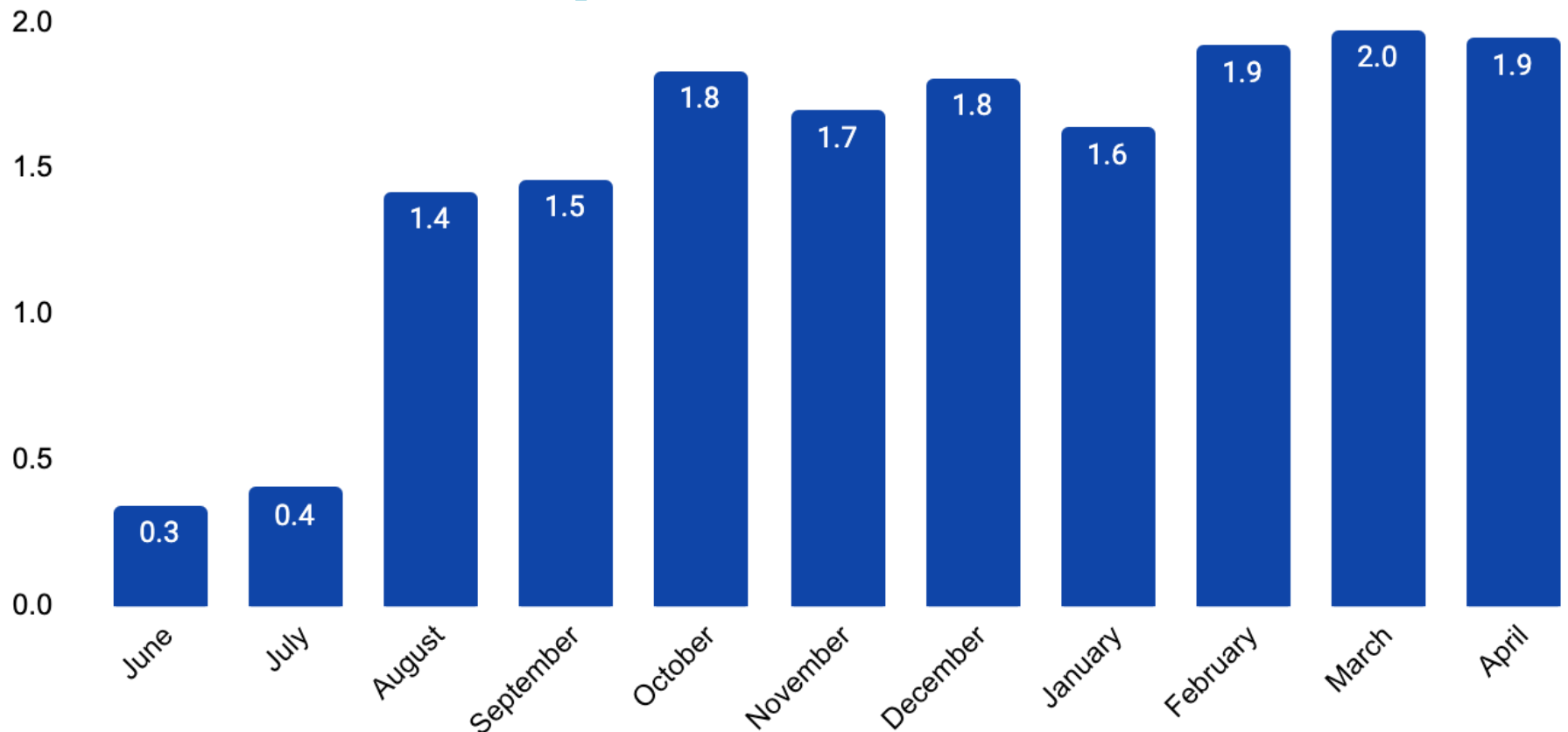
Growth in Monthly Rides Through April of 2022



Growth and Acquisition Through April of 2022



Growth in Utilization Through April of 2022



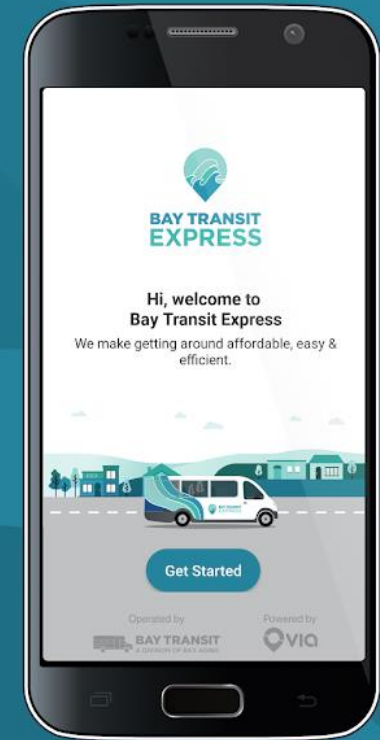
Bay Transit Express Started Using More Fuel-Efficient Vehicles in May of 2022



Challenges

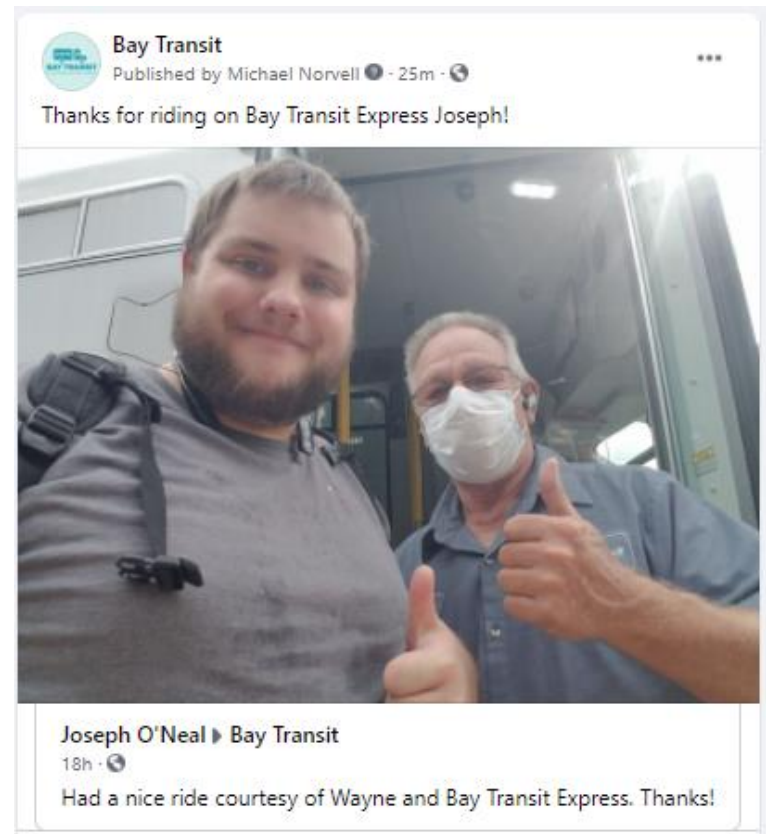
- Significant percentage of Gloucester County residents are seniors who may not be comfortable using app-based services.
- There are no Rappahannock Community College campuses in the current Bay Transit Express service zone.
- Marketing must be done through multiple concurrent channels to ensure that it reaches diverse audiences.

Book rides straight
from your phone.



Opportunities

- Developed a Bay Transit Express webpage portal as well as promoted the local phone number in newspapers, local radio stations, etc.
- Promoted Bay Transit Express to the Gloucester County Public Schools leadership team and expanded service hours until 5 PM to appeal to transportation disadvantaged students that have after school activities.
- Developed “Brand Ambassador” program that rewards referrals and posting about Bay Transit Express on social media.



Ongoing Marketing

- Distributed Bay Transit Express posters and brochures to Gloucester Courthouse area businesses and apartment complexes.
- Promoted service in local newspaper and radio station.
- Paid advertising on Bay Transit's Facebook page.
- Developed "Brand Ambassador" program that rewards referrals and postings about Bay Transit Express on social media.



Measuring Program Efficiency: FY22 Deviated Fixed-Route versus Bay Transit Express

	Cost/Revenue Mile	Cost/Revenue Hour	Cost/Rider
Oct.	\$ 2.96	\$ 70.96	\$ 34.64
Nov.	\$ 3.16	\$ 75.41	\$ 35.99
Dec.	\$ 3.44	\$ 81.24	\$ 41.33
Jan.	\$ 3.58	\$ 80.94	\$ 48.93
Feb.	\$ 3.03	\$ 71.70	\$ 39.31
Mar.	\$ 3.16	\$ 74.98	\$ 34.96
April	\$ 2.94	\$ 70.03	\$ 38.21
May	\$ 3.16	\$ 75.12	\$ 31.05
June	\$ 3.46	\$ 82.63	\$ 26.38
July	\$ 3.72	\$ 86.88	\$ 22.73
Aug.	\$ 2.91	\$ 66.82	\$ 30.59
Sept.	\$ 3.31	\$ 75.56	\$ 35.46
Monthly Avg	\$ 3.24	\$ 76.02	\$ 34.96

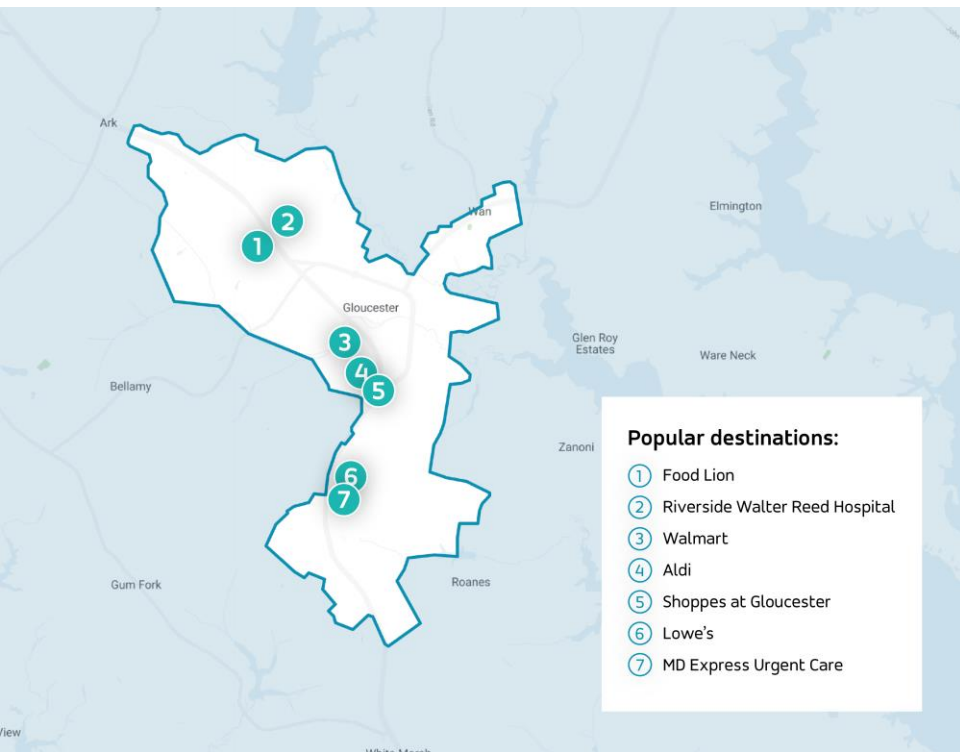
	Cost/Revenue Mile	Cost/Revenue Hour	Cost/Rider
Oct.	\$ 3.51	\$ 32.87	\$ 18.11
Nov.	\$ 3.87	\$ 34.88	\$ 19.32
Dec.	\$ 3.60	\$ 37.31	\$ 18.03
Jan.	\$ 3.30	\$ 33.96	\$ 16.39
Feb.	\$ 4.06	\$ 48.40	\$ 20.91
Mar.	\$ 2.43	\$ 29.71	\$ 12.15
April	\$ 2.86	\$ 34.67	\$ 12.95
May	\$ 2.94	\$ 33.38	\$ 15.24
June	\$ 3.67	\$ 44.60	\$ 16.32
July	\$ 3.80	\$ 46.65	\$ 17.92
Aug.	\$ 1.79	\$ 22.99	\$ 8.01
Sept.	\$ 4.05	\$ 49.34	\$ 21.05
Monthly Avg	\$ 3.32	\$ 37.39	\$ 16.37

Next Steps: Expansion

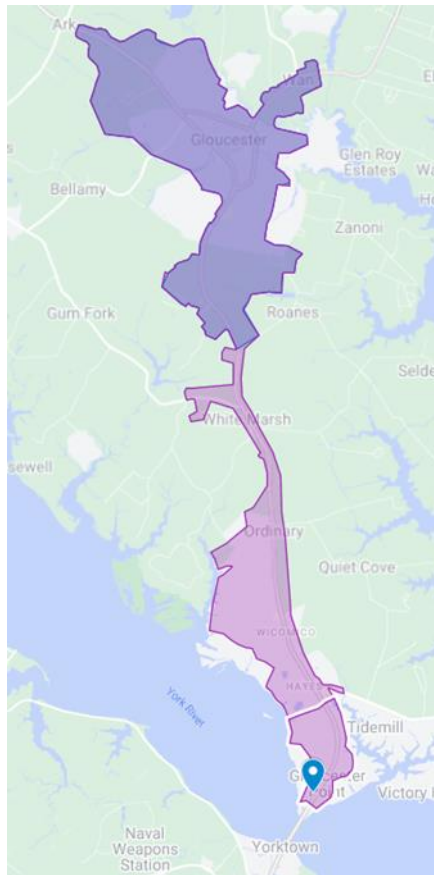


- Expand Bay Transit Express service zone to Gloucester Point.
- Simultaneously, discontinue our hiveXpress deviated fixed-route service in Gloucester County .
- Add a second, new Bay Transit Express van into service.
- Look for opportunities to take advantage of the more cost-efficient, microtransit service to replace other deviated fixed-route lines in Tappahannock and West Point.

Initial Service Zone and Expanded Service Zone



Next Steps: Market Expanded Service



- Targeted marketing to businesses, apartment complexes, and mobile home parks in the expanded service zone.
- Distributed hundreds of updated promotional postcards to the residents of mobile home parks in Hayes, VA.
- Promoted the expanded service zone and reduced fare through local newspapers and radio stations.

Postcards Promoting Expanded Service



Introducing **\$1 rides**
in the newly expanded
Bay Transit Express
service zone.



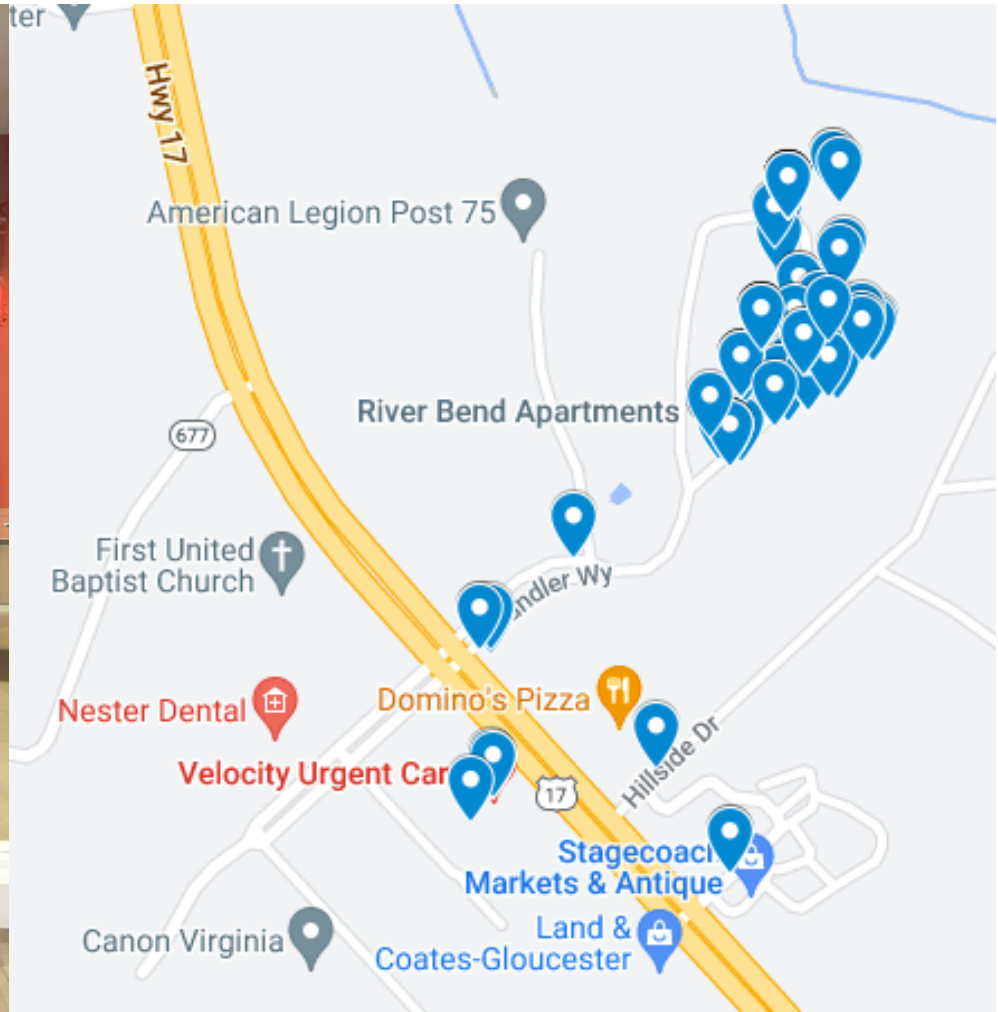
Download the Bay
Transit Express app
or call 804-693-6977
to start riding.

Start riding
anywhere from
Gloucester Point
to the Gloucester
Courthouse area on
October 11th.

Powered by VIA

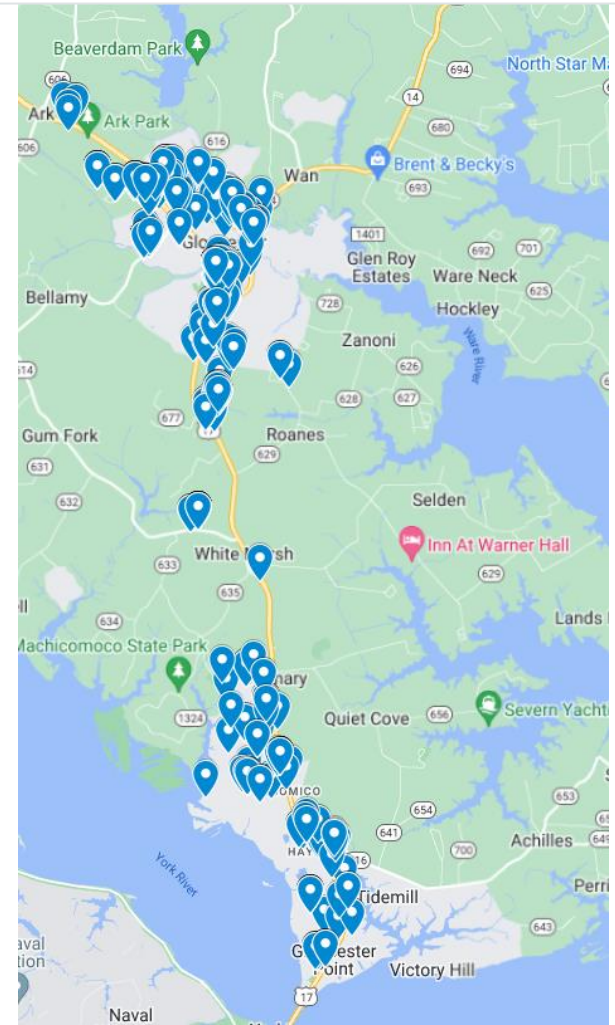


Measuring Utilization at Locations Where Promotional Postcards Were Disseminated



Measuring Utilization at Locations Where Promotional Postcards Were Disseminated

- Daffodil Gardens I & II, Bay Aging's Income Restricted Senior Apartments
- Wicomico I and Wicomico II
- Woodsville Mobile Home Park
- Beacon's Bay Mobile Park



Account Creation Drives Ridership Growth

Accounts created since launch

1,075

of Riders made at least one...

633 58.9%

of Riders completed 1+...

536 49.9%

of Riders completed 2+...

410 38.1%

of Riders completed 5+...

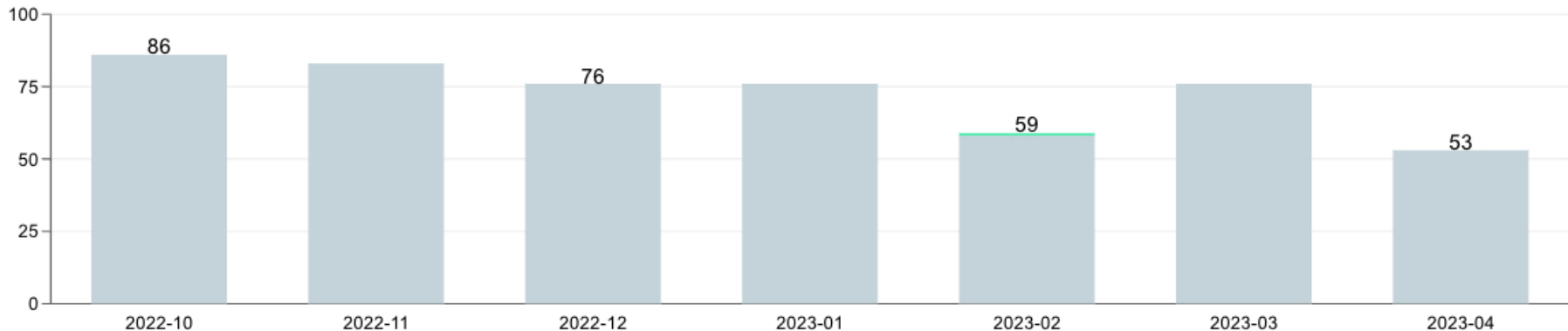
285 26.5%

■ Riders since launch ■ Riders Portion (percentage)

Accounts Created Trend

Number of accounts created segmented by acquisition source.

Rider accounts created

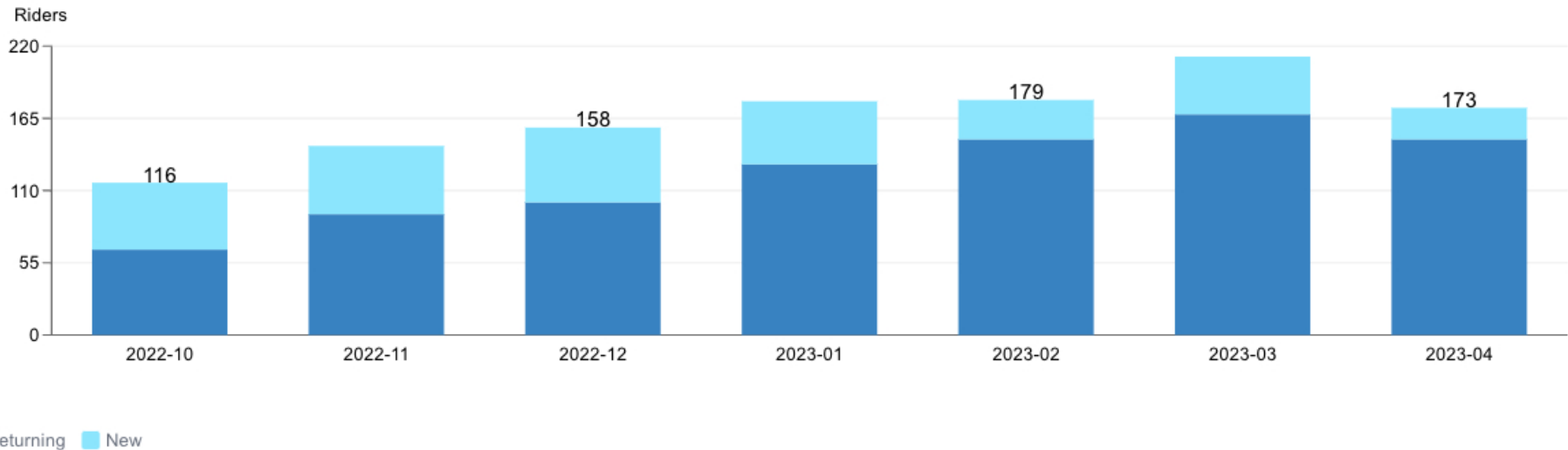


■ non-referral ■ referral

New and Returning Riders

Active Riders

Riders who took a ride in the period selected (broken down by those who took their first ride ever and returning riders).

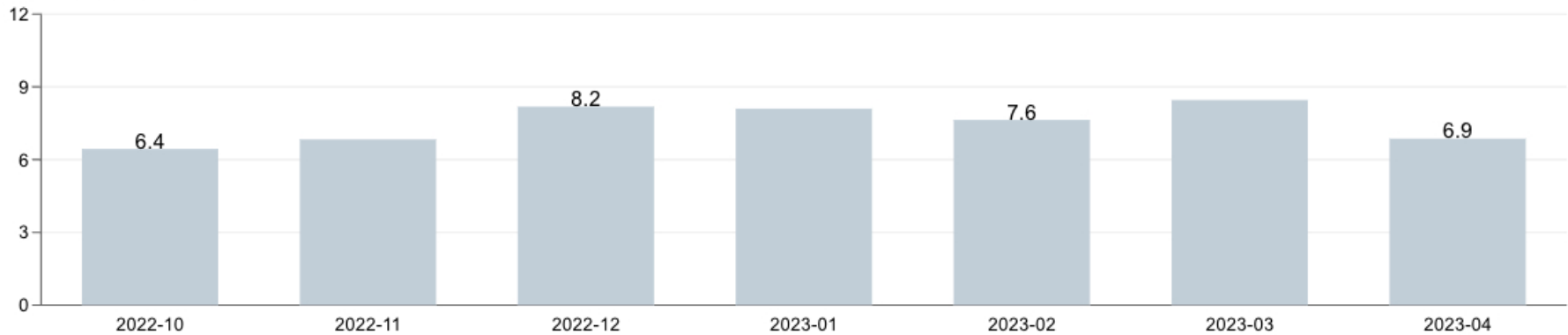


Average Number of Rides Taken Per Active Rider Per Month

Completed Rides

Average number of rides taken per active rider.

Rides completed per rider



Completed Rides

FY 2023 Operational KPIs from 10/1/2022 to 4/23/2023

Total ride requests

9,977

Met Demand

9,726

Met Demand Rate

97.5%

Completed rides

8,813

Completed Rides Rate

88.3%

Completed Prebooking Rides...

0.3%

Completed On Demand Rides...

99.7%

Active Riders

399

Driver Hours

4,366.9

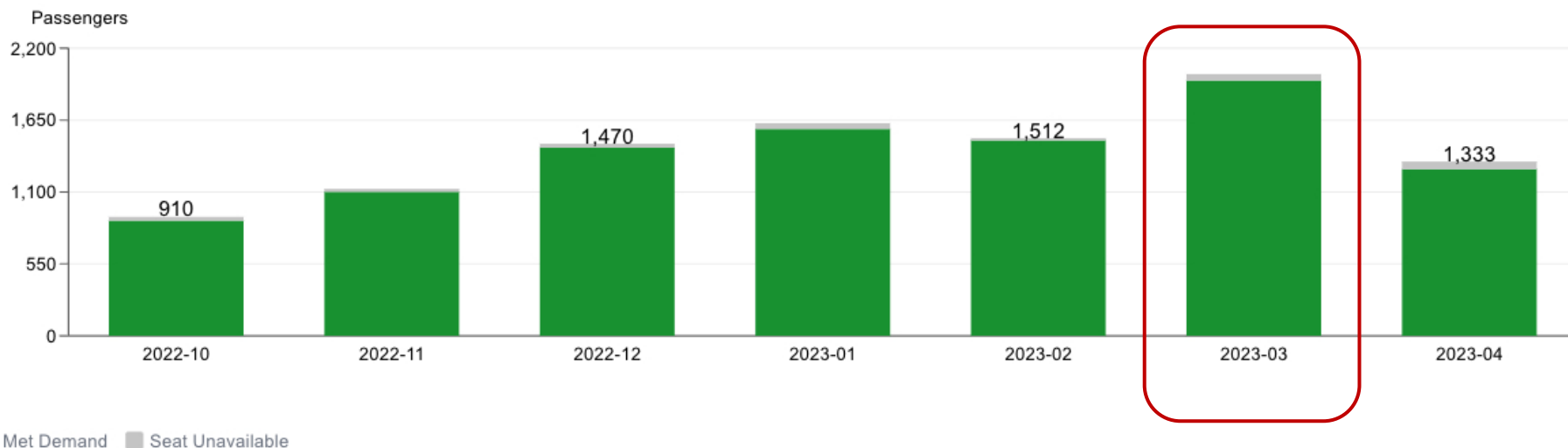
Utilization

2

■ Filtered period

Met Demand

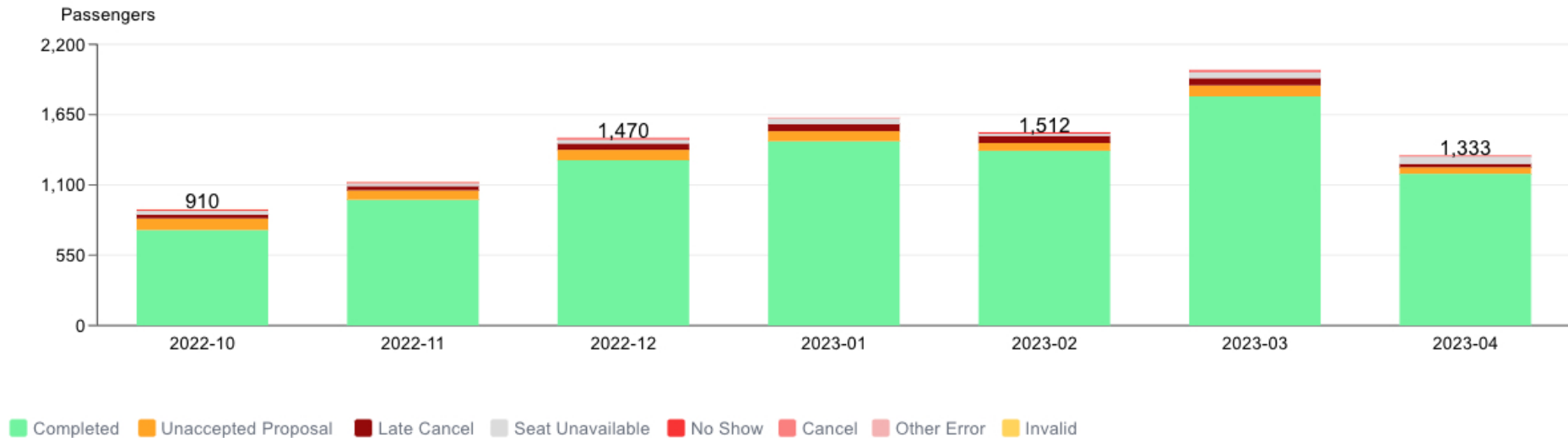
Number of ride requests (passengers) met with a ride proposal.



Monthly Ride Requests by Status

Detailed Ride Requests Status

Breakdown of all ride requests (passengers) by status.

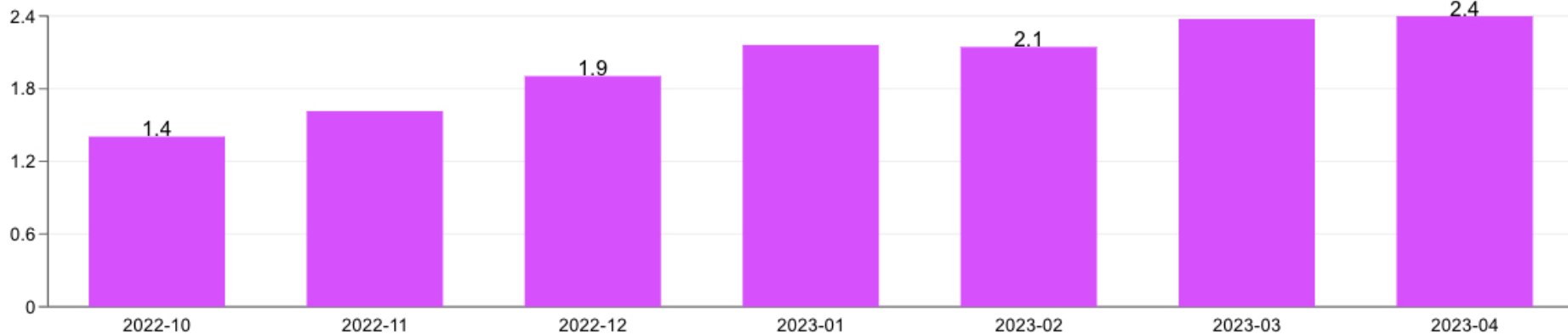


Utilization, completed rides per vehicle-hour, surges 71%

Utilization

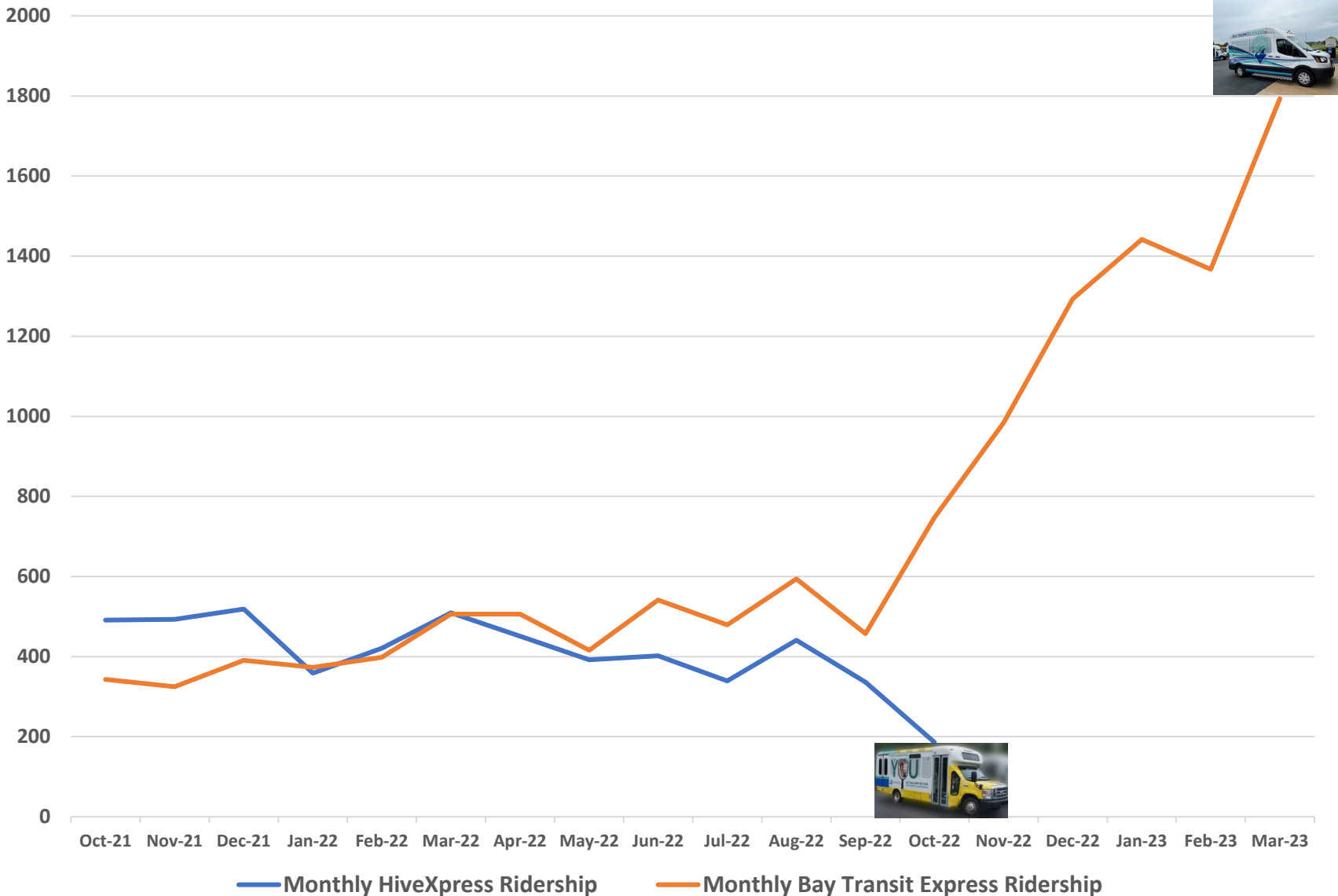
Completed rides / net driver hours.

Utilization Rate

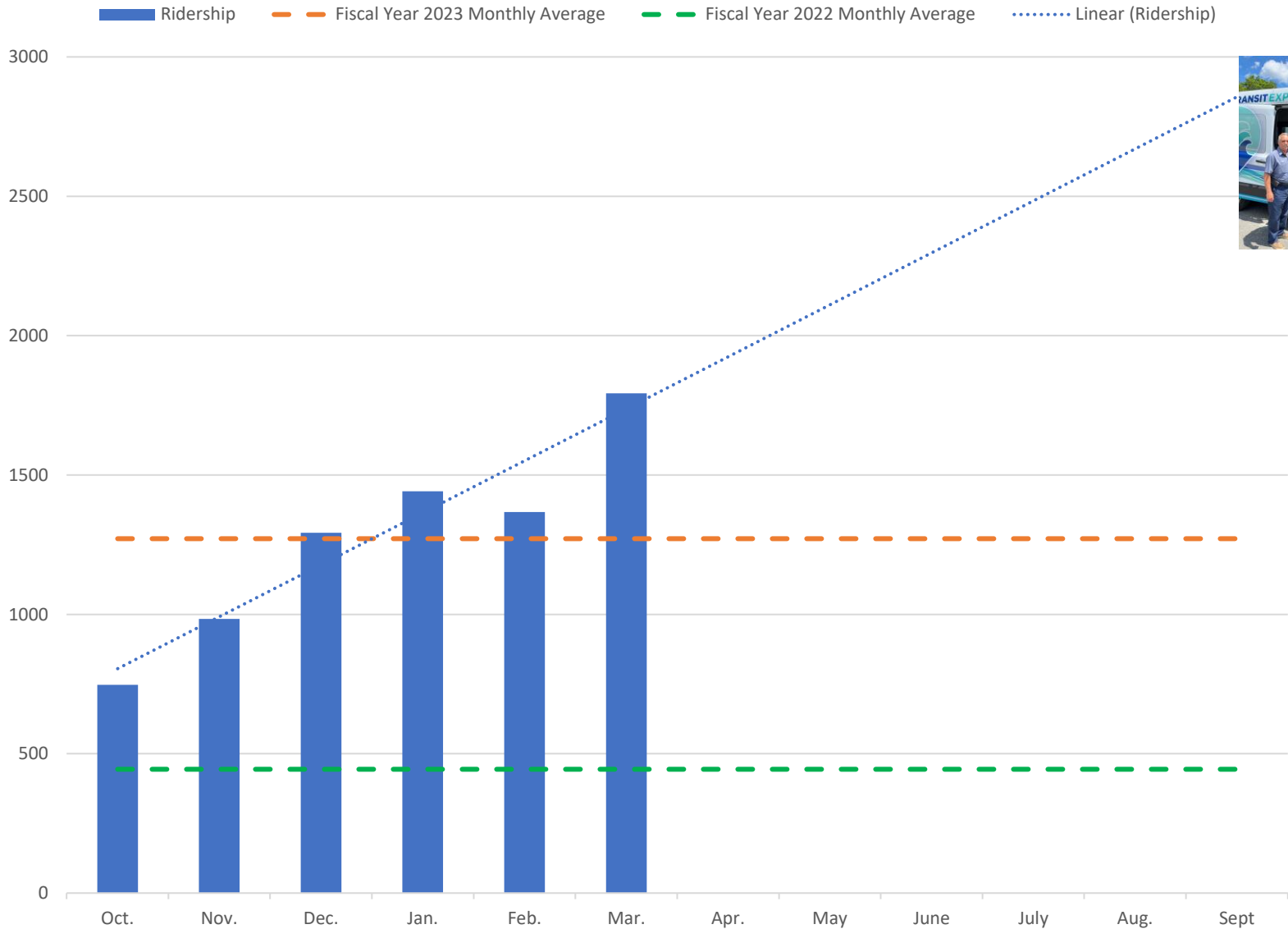


Utilization

HiveXpress vs. Bay Transit Express Monthly Ridership



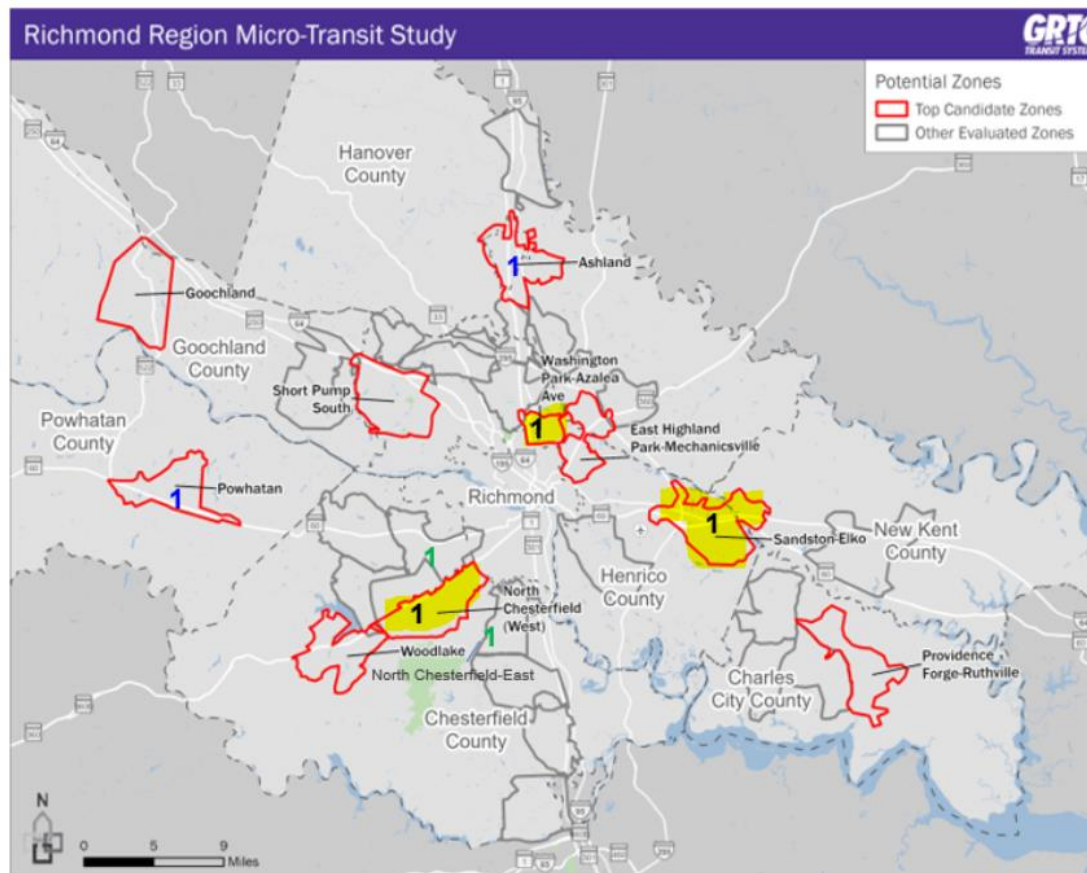
FY 2023 Bay Transit Express Ridership



Applications For Microtransit

1. Provide a new service focused on high-need populations (e.g., seniors, individuals with a disability)
2. Replace fixed-route buses with microtransit
3. Replace older demand-response (e.g. dial-a-ride) service with microtransit
4. Expand service into areas with limited or no existing public transit
5. Provide first-and-last mile connections to other transit routes (e.g., Virginia Railway Express, Virginia Breeze)

GRTC: Microtransit to bolster ridership on underperforming fixed-routes



A map of planned and potential microtransit zones should the pilot expand. Image provided by GRTC.