

USING EXISTING ROUTEMATCH TECHNOLOGIES AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

"We looked at what we already had," said Kevin Karkoski, Intercity Transit's Dial-A-Lift Manager. "We knew we had a proven demand response system that would work and work well. So we adapted it for the general public, and created a call and ride system that would run 7 days a week. All this would be done door-to-door as a shared ride. By doing so, we not only gained better control of number of riders per vehicle, but we could properly schedule and capture trip purpose and prioritize essential trips."

Covering technology was not the only item to check off the list. Educating the general public on short notice on how to use the new service was also needed.

"We have a great marketing communications team," said Kevin. "Five days before switching our entire service model, we put out notices on the bus to inform riders of the change. The team hustled to get the word out to local media, on the web site, and on Facebook and Twitter that fixed route service would temporarily cease running starting April 13, and that a new call and ride service would take its place."

Initially, it took some time for general public riders to acclimate to call ahead reservations. No shows spiked the first few days, but quickly dropped as schedulers explained how the system worked, and why cancelling after change of mind was important. As riders settled into the new model, hailing and scheduling time quickly cut in half from 4 minutes to two minutes.



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A POPULAR SERVICE THAT MET THE NEED

Since the launch, Intercity Transit has been able to both serve and prioritize essential workers. Over the past two months in which the mandate was enacted, forty-seven paratransit vehicles and twenty 16 passenger vans were on the road at a time, averaging over 700 rides per day on weekdays and 300 on weekends. Booking windows were set at 30 minutes, with 1-3 passengers per vehicle. Based on destination data, the overwhelming majority of trips headed to medical centers, employment centers and grocery stores. Two major hospitals kept essential workers busy. The service additionally connected into neighboring Pierce Transit's fixed route service, linking people to work there. Homeless shelters trips were also quite common.

As the state looks to open up and re-store service, the team at Intercity Transit are reviewing how this model can be applied moving forward.

"The technology has been really fantastic. The tablets were intuitive and simple, and the maps helped drivers get around to new locations," said Kevin. "Everything being fed and verified in real time made things easier for us. It completed everything we needed to do, and most importantly, the community has appreciated the service."

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