



PT spotlight on Valley Regional Transit



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Valley Regional Transit (VRT) provides service in Ada and Canyon counties in the way of public bus transit, specialized van services, paratransit, Park & Ride, and more. They work with other organizations and government agencies to create options that are accessible, affordable, and consistent. VRT has 700 bus stops, 45 buses (12 electric +5 more coming in 2024), 39 cutaway buses, 25 vans/minivans, and 16 other support vehicles.

In 2023, VRT provided 1,096,198 rides, (106,982 door-to-door rides, and 989,216 fixed route rides). Their demographics are all ages, the majority of riders are employed full or part time, and over all household incomes.

In 2023, VRT introduced a new service, Beyond Access. They brought together a small group of service providers to offer transportation across different service zones, days, and times into a single, regional service. This will be phased in over the new few years, but it will ultimately provide qualified-based service for older adults and persons with disabilities. These will be **no- cost** trips in and between Canyon and Ada counties.

VRT is working to move more of the fleet to low- or no-emissions options with electric vehicles and are currently in the process of establishing formal energy efficiency and carbon neutral goals. They installed charging infrastructure, which is the first step toward electrifying their fleet. They have 12 electric buses currently, 5 additional in 2024 and 8 more in 2026.

In 2023, VRT leaned into their Better Bus initiative to improve bus routes, bus stops, bus rides and an exploration of regional rail. They have conducted three phases of

public outreach to guide the redesign process. The changes will be made starting this summer.

Access Paratransit is a curb-to-curb service for serves ADA, Boise, Caldwell, Garden City, Meridian and Nampa. This service is for people who are unable to utilize the bus system due to disability. It operates Monday through Saturday, with the same hours as the fixed route system. The cost, once a rider has met certification requirements, is \$3 per trip.

Other services VRT provides include City Go, Lyft Transit Connection, Meridian Medical Transportation, Meridian Veterans Shuttle, Rides2Wellness, Safe Routes to School, Village Van, VRT Late Night and Volunteer Driver Program. To Find out more information on any of these programs, please visit their website at www.valleyregionaltransit.org/services/

How can I get involved? Ride the bus. The website has a trip planner, which helps with planning when and where to be to get to your destination. Share the news, tell someone who needs one of their services that it is available. You can get more information by calling their help desk at 208 345-7433 workdays until 6 p.m. VRT offers many types of advertising options, share the info about VRT to business owners and anyone who might need to get their information out.

Contact Rich Marks at rmarks@ridevrt.org. Let your voice be heard. VRT wants to know how they can make their service, bus stops etc. meet the needs of our community. You can address all suggestions, compliments and concerns at www.valleyregionaltransit.org/feedback/



