



## Why Quinte Access Transportation Chose Paratransit Software to Transform their Operations



### QUINTE ACCESS TRANSIT:

A non-profit transportation provider serving rural Southern Ontario



### CHALLENGE:

Increased customer demand impacting on-time and dependable service



### SOLUTION:

TripSpark's paratransit software with automated scheduling, in-vehicle technology, & passenger apps



### RESULT:

Increased scheduling / administrative efficiency + empowered riders

## Keeping Riders Safe and Healthy

***"We can grow the system, get more people in our vehicles and generate more revenue, without additional cost"***

Quinte Access Transportation is a non-profit transportation provider, serving a large rural population in Southern Ontario. Quinte operates a fixed route system and a paratransit system. Shelly Ackers, Quinte's administrator, helps lead a small but dedicated team of operators who service their appreciative community. To keep their riders safe and healthy, particularly during the harsh winter months, it's been important to connect them with their vehicles as quickly as possible. To do this, Quinte needed an affordable and efficient solution to provide passenger information and transit service.

***"It's been a great solution for us to be able to provide that service and keep it cost effective"***

## Challenges

With more seniors surrendering their drivers' licenses, Quinte has experienced higher demand for public transportation. "Year after year, ridership has increased by probably 16-18%," says Shelly. This has challenged the non-profit organization's ability to provide on-time and dependable service for its growing ridership, while still being able to control operating costs.

Keeping in contact with drivers (and knowing where their vehicles are located) has been an important issue for Shelly and her team. This has also become a safety concern with the introduction of governmentally mandated "hands free" rules about in-vehicle communication. Before the new rules were enforced, Shelly connected with drivers over cell phones. As this was no longer possible, maintaining essential contact with drivers to ensure that their schedules remained on-time, became another challenge for Quinte.

Because Quinte is divided by two bridges, traffic congestion becomes a major issue during rush hour. If a vehicle is caught on the wrong side of the city at the wrong time of day, the vehicle's schedule and its

## Fixed Route and Paratransit Case Study Quinte Access Transportation

riders' trips run the risk of being late. Another area of concern for Shelly has been ensuring that seniors have fast access to transit. Being forced to wait outside in the cold can lead to health-related concerns as well as slip-and-fall issues. Therefore, it's important to provide these riders with dependable, real time trip information so that they can have more control over their transit experience.

### Fixed Route and Paratransit Solutions

By implementing **TripSpark's paratransit software** suite, Shelly was quickly able to transform her operations. New automated scheduling and reporting functionality enabled Shelly to design more efficient routes and draw solid conclusions from reliable data. After introducing a fixed route solution, Shelly was able to take advantage of the real time data and Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) services provided by in-vehicle mobile data terminals (**Rangers**). In fact, Shelly has completely replaced her communication system with Ranger units, and she can now send and receive text messages and coordinate trip data with drivers without using cellphones. The Rangers also help drivers to speed up their service. Because driver sheets are entered quickly, riders don't have to wait as long to get going.

***"Now our drivers receive their manifests electronically, they complete their trips, record payment and no-shows"***

Upon implementing the **MyRide mobile application**, riders were able to access real-time passenger information on their devices. Within the app, Riders are informed when their bus is scheduled to arrive, and they can plan their trips from end-to-end and store

favorite routes and destinations. Riders are also alerted to traffic problems, construction issues, and if major delays are anticipated.

***"It makes for a much smoother system"***

On the paratransit side, Shelly has implemented an **automated notification system** to be able to provide outbound telephone calls, text messages and emails to riders. This added value service provides them with reminders and updates about their planned trips. Riders are happier having advanced notice about approaching vehicles. Shelly points out, "it gives them that flexibility to control more of their ride." The AVL capabilities have given Shelly immediate insight into her schedule, which in turn is used to pass information on to her riders. Being able to track vehicles in real time on a map, means that Shelly doesn't need to talk with drivers directly to acquire their location. Importantly, this enables her operation to be fully compliant with the government's hands-free communication regulations.

***"People have that comfort level when they're riding the buses"***

### Operational Savings & Funding Opportunities

Because Quinte Access Transportation is a non-profit organization, they cut costs wherever they can. The TripSpark software solutions they implemented have allowed them to cut back on their administration costs. The new reporting capabilities gives Shelly the opportunity to provide robust reports to potential funders and other important stakeholders, allowing access to funds that may have previously gone untapped. "For a small agency, that's huge," exclaims Shelly.



### MOVING >> << TOGETHER

TripSpark Technologies is a community transportation technology company focused on helping mid-sized transit agencies and private operators increase rider satisfaction, drive revenue, and address specific operational needs. TripSpark makes this possible by nurturing strong partnerships with our customers, offering the latest technologies and providing exceptional support.

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