

## Case Study

# City of Richmond

## City of Richmond improves parking enforcement efficiency with AutoVu™ Managed Services



Parking enforcement productivity surges at the City of Richmond with AutoVu managed services which delivers uncompromised reliability

### Business challenge

The city of Richmond is considered the fourth most populous city in the state of Virginia, United States. Located at the center of the greater Richmond Metropolitan Area, and just 98 miles south of Washington, DC, Richmond is known for its historic and architectural charm, and flourishing cultural scene. For residents and an influx of daily commuters and visitors, Richmond offers just under 1,500 on-street metered parking spaces, 5,000 residential and time-limited on-street spaces, and over 5,000 off-street spaces in approximately 20 lots and garages.

A few years ago, Richmond invested in a vehicle booting program for its on-street parking to encourage better parking compliance. While the booting program was effective, parking enforcement officers spent their shifts walking up and down parking zones and city streets checking vehicles at random to identify those with outstanding infractions.

Enforcing the permitted residential and time-limited zones in the city of Richmond was also a very time-consuming process for parking enforcement officers. Officers would validate printed permit decals one by one which was susceptible to errors, especially when decals were not properly displayed or hidden behind dark tinted windows. In areas where parking rules designated 15 minutes up to 4 hours of free parking without a permit, chalking tires was routine. However, cunning visitors would monitor officers and wipe chalk off their vehicles' tires to avoid ticketing on the next walk-by.

With objectives to maximize resources and boost the parking enforcement team's efficiency, the city of Richmond relied on the expertise of SP+ Parking, whose team is contracted to oversee the parking enforcement on behalf of the City of Richmond. SP+ Parking proposed Genetec AutoVu, the automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) system as the proven solution to enhance city parking enforcement.

### AutoVu ALPR simplifies City of Richmond parking enforcement

In a phased parking solution upgrade, the City of Richmond first equipped one vehicle with the AutoVu ALPR system for scofflaw identification. Then later on, residential parking permits were

### Summary

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**Client name:** City of Richmond

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**Products:** AutoVu Managed Services

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**Industry:** Parking Enforcement

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**Location:** Richmond, Virginia, United States

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**Partners:** SP+ Parking, ComSonics

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associated to vehicle license plates, and the City equipped another vehicle with the ALPR system for overtime and permitted enforcement.

“While the city started with one AutoVu system for scofflaw identification, there were always expansion plans in mind. Once we were able to show how efficient the team could be with the ALPR technology, we were confident that we would be able to help them gradually add more mobile systems to really ramp up the parking enforcement throughout the city. AutoVu is a great tool that helps the parking enforcement team excel at their jobs,” said Johnnie Hogue, Regional Manager, CAPP, at SP+ Parking.

Today, the two AutoVu mobile ALPR systems help to simplify the enforcement task for parking operators who no longer have to search for printed decals and chalk tires. Operators select the zone to enforce on the touch-enabled, in-vehicle laptop and drive up and down streets, while the AutoVu cameras scan license plates and alert operators to unpermitted, overtime or scofflaw vehicles.

Uniquely for overtime parking, the digital tire chalking feature of AutoVu captures wheel images of parked cars to compare them to images from subsequent passes. Operators are presented with wheel images; if the tire valves have not shifted, the operator can then confirm the violation.

“People don't even know that we are digitally chalking their tires now. If someone calls to say they were not parked in the area or did not surpass the time limit, we can pull up the images and disprove their claims. We have pictures of the vehicle license



plate, comparable wheel images and date and time stamps. There is no disputing the evidence,” explained Javon Barner, On-Street Parking Enforcement Manager for the SP+ Parking.

### Moving to AutoVu Managed Services delivers 99% reliability

While the AutoVu systems were delivering as promised by helping the parking enforcement team cover more ground in less time, IT-related issues began surfacing. Since the system was being hosted on internal servers, compatibility issues with IT policies would randomly cause the system to go offline. After some initial troubleshooting, the city of Richmond and SP+ Parking reached out to the AutoVu experts at Genetec for assistance. The recommendation was to transition to AutoVu Managed Services (AMS), the cloud-hosted parking enforcement service offered by Genetec, from the server-based AutoVu system.

“When the ALPR system was hosted on our own servers, we used to experience some performance lag and internal IT conflicts. We spent a lot of time troubleshooting for issues, so our system was only up around 55% of the time. Now, with the hosted service from Genetec, we have upwards of 99% uptime, and no issues,” said Barner.

AutoVu Managed Services allows Richmond to experience all the benefits of efficient scofflaw identification and parking enforcement in a cost-effective, highly-reliable turnkey solution. AMS requires no on-site servers, freeing up IT resources for other business tasks and minimizing costs associated with procuring, powering and maintaining infrastructure.

For a manageable monthly subscription fee, Genetec handles all the back-end system updates and maintenance, and ensures the system is optimized to run at peak efficiency on behalf of the City. If parking permits or scofflaw lists need to be updated or if the city of Richmond has any questions, Genetec experts quickly handle all requests via email or phone.

“In case we need assistance, Genetec is always quick to respond. We regularly email our permit and scofflaw lists to Genetec, and within minutes, everything is up to date. The best part about AutoVu Managed Services is that we focus on the parking and let the experts handle the technology,” continued Barner.

### Compliance and customer service gets a boost with AutoVu

Since implementing AutoVu, the City of Richmond has seen tremendous gains in parking enforcement. Not only has system reliability increased significantly, but improved accuracy has minimized the number of errors in citations. With AMS working at peak efficiency, parking officers have been able to maximize their productivity, making the most of each shift. The City has experienced a 6.5% increase in citations, and 13% increase in scofflaw identification.

With these results, Richmond is looking to further expand their AutoVu mobile fleet, and cover even more parking zones. The next phase is likely going to include integrating over 160 metered pay stations into the system for real-time enforcement of more time-limited zones. The parking team is also looking to tap into the advanced reporting features of the ALPR solution to better understand how residents and visitors are using its parking services at various times of the day or year.

“During the day, we cannot afford gaps in our parking enforcement. We need to be as efficient and effective at enforcing permitted and time-limited zones as well as detecting those scofflaw vehicles. Since moving to AutoVu Managed Services, our system is constantly up, and complaints about enforcement gaps from neighborhood committees are down. And there’s nothing to do on our end, except to use the system and encourage better parking compliance,” concludes Steve Bergin, Parking Manager, CAPP, at the City of Richmond.

**“The best part about AutoVu Managed Services is that we focus on the parking and let the experts handle the technology.”**

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