



For Immediate Release  
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## City Continues to Get Social

Harrisonburg, Va. – The city of Harrisonburg continues to promote its online efforts through the website and social media sites.

As of Sunday, February 14, the city received 10,000 “likes” on its [primary Facebook page](#), which is a milestone worth celebrating.

“So many people want information timely and social media allows us to connect with that audience and push our messages and information directly to them,” explained Mary-Hope Vass, public information officer. “In turn, we quickly have a more informed citizenry and direct connection to our followers should they need additional information.”

In reviewing statistics from 2015, traffic for the city’s social networks was up. In particular, activity on the city’s Facebook page was up 30% and last year gained 2,000 “likes,” which shows growth that the city hasn’t previously seen. For comparison purposes, only about 500 “likes” were gained in 2014.

Social media allows the city to:

- Address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet.
- Increase transparency of government.
- Monitor and respond to hot topics and emerging issues quickly.
- Open up government to encourage citizen participation, strengthen our democracy, and support a civic culture.
- Identify trends before they take off.
- Listen to residents, visitors, and customers.
- Expand communication tools with a vast distribution system for content, while broadening and engaging new audiences.
- Provide timely emergency information including street closures, road conditions, help in solving crimes, etc.

The city’s website page views also saw a slight increase in 1.14% from last year overall.

Although social media continues to grow in popularity, the city uses a multi-prong approach when communicating with the public. Traditional ways of getting information out still exist such as news releases, forging partnerships with the local media, informational meetings, and mailers.

-MORE-

**PRESS RELEASE: CITY CONTINUES TO GET SOCIAL**  
**PAGE 2**

“We recognize the community utilizes different sources for their information and it is our goal to reach those outlets and become a direct resource of information for the residents in Harrisonburg and beyond,” said Vass.



*Pictured above: Harrisonburg City Council pauses to thank members of the community for their 10,000 “likes” on the city’s Facebook page.*

To connect with the city on social media, visit [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/stay-connected](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/stay-connected) or check out the city’s website at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).

Who will notify you if an emergency-related event is happening in Harrisonburg or Rockingham County? Sign up to receive free alerts through the **Harrisonburg and Rockingham County Emergency Alert System** by visiting [www.HREmergencyAlert.com](http://www.HREmergencyAlert.com).



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