



City of Harrisonburg
Public Information Office
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
540-432-8931 (office)

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Contact: Mary-Hope Vass, Public Information Officer
540.432.8931
MaryHope.Vass@HarrisonburgVA.gov

City Celebrates 40 Years of Transportation Services

Harrisonburg, Va. – The city’s Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT) is celebrating 40 years of service to the community! Throughout its 40 years of service, the department has grown from two taxis into operating transit buses, paratransit buses, school buses, and the city’s central garage.

In November 1976, the city purchased two existing taxi cab businesses and operated from a rented facility on Noll Drive. This was the city’s first version of the Harrisonburg Department of Transportation.

Reggie Smith, director of HDPT, was hired in December of 1976 and just two years later began operating school buses that required residents to pay a bus fare in order for their children to get to school.

By 1984, the department grew to include eight school buses and the riders no longer had to pay an individual bus fare. On the transit site, service expanded to include four transit routes, which primarily served James Madison University

After 20 years of service, the taxi fleet was sold to a private company and the central garage became part of HDPT’s operation.

In 2014, the department completed a project to demolish its undersized facilities and moved into its newly constructed facilities on the same site.

HDPT has experienced its peak operation during 2016 with the operation of 32 transit buses hauling 18,000 passengers per day; six paratransit buses hauling 130 passengers per day; and 41 school buses hauling 4,300 students per day.

“We have reached many milestones throughout the years and are excited to celebrate 40 years of service to the community,” added Reggie Smith.

The community is invited to celebrate with the city in recognizing HDPT’s 40 years of service. A flag-raising ceremony will be held on **Friday, November 11 at 6:00 a.m.** at the administrative facility, which is located at 475 E. Washington Street.

An open house will be held for members of the public to tour the facilities from 7:00 a.m. until noon.

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Transit Development Plan

Part of the open house includes information on HDPT's transit development plan. Every six years, HDPT is required to update its plan and the process for the next update has just begun.

Members of the public are encouraged to review and comment on the transit development plan during the open house on Friday, November 11.

This is an opportunity for the public to inform HDPT of practices they are doing well and what improvements they recommend to the department.

Additional information on HDPT and the services it provides is available at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/HDPT.

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