

RTS Rundown

Mayor Proclaims April 12 as “Transit Day” During RTS’s 50th Anniversary Celebration



RTS celebrated its 50th anniversary providing transit service to the City of Gainesville.

The Mayor, City Manager, Commissioners and other City officials attended the event, along with present and past RTS employees and members of the Gainesville community.

Mayor Harvey Ward made and presented to Jesus Gomez, Director of Transportation, a proclamation that states April 12 as Transit Day. The focus is to help commemorate the efforts and contribution RTS has made over its years in service.

The event provided an opportunity for the public to connect with community leaders in one-on-one conversations, delve into the rich yet humble history of RTS, tracing its evolution from its inception in 1968 to present day, and learn more about RTS’s exploration into environmentally-focused endeavors with its eBus on site offering a glimpse into the future and RTS’s strong commitment to environmental sustainability.

Children’s activities were also available for families attending the celebration; fostering awareness and familiarity with public transit.



RTS and UF Reach Service Agreement

On May 1, the City and UF Vice President Dave Kratzer and representatives from both negotiation teams met at City Hall. At the meeting, it was agreed that RTS will continue to provide its current level of service—on campus and across the area—until Jan. 1, 2025. This extension of existing bus routes and schedules for six months beyond the June 30, 2024 contract deadline will allow more time to reach a new agreement.

The [data presented to university leaders](#) has been published on the [City of Gainesville website](#).

The Planning Corner by Krys Ochia, Transit Planning Manager

RTS Transit Survey Available Now



The City of Gainesville is conducting a transit study to identify and understand how transit and mobility service options can be improved to make it easier, more convenient, cost-

effective, and reliable for you to get where you need to be when you need to be there.

The pandemic, transit ridership decreased significantly as a direct result of social distancing, remote work, and the resulting shifts in work, commutes, housing, and technology. The focus of this effort is to create a new integrated transit network, as

well as a family of service delivery modes that are more directly responsive to the rider, effective, and provide a more attractive mobility-for-all service for the community.

Take the Survey Now!

**COMING SOON
MAY 2024**

Microtransit Appointment Scheduler



Parking and Planning

by Karla Rodrigues-Silva, Capital Projects Manager & Vision Zero Coord.
Debbie Leistner, Planning Manager for Public Works

Vision Zero Open House A Great Success

The City of Gainesville, Florida, is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all users of its transportation system. As part of this mission, the Vision Zero Open House was organized to raise awareness, foster dialogue, and explore solutions related to transportation safety.

The Vision Zero Open House served as a platform to showcase ongoing collaborative efforts among City, County and State Partners with the aim of improving roadway safety. Participants gained insight into safety issues, trends, and innovative solutions.

The City of Gainesville's Transportation Department and its Partners presented ongoing projects and initiatives focused on reducing accidents, improving infrastructure, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety.

The event helped to show the community that Vision Zero is not just a government initiative; it's a collective effort. Community organizations, advocacy groups, and concerned citizens play a vital role in shaping safer streets.

With this philosophy in mind, attendees also had the opportunity to share their perspectives, voice concerns, and contribute ideas on traffic safety. By involving the community, the City of Gainesville aims to create a collaborative approach to safety measures.

As Gainesville's Vision Zero approach aligns with the global movement to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by prioritizing safety over speed, it aims to create streets where everyone—pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit users—can move freely without fear.

The Vision Zero Open House was more than an event; it was a step toward a safer, more inclusive transportation system. An effort between a community and its government to work together to achieve zero fatalities and make Gainesville's streets safer for generations to come.



New Parking Program headed for downtown



In March 2024, the Gainesville City Commission unanimously approved changes to Downtown Gainesville parking rates. The changes become effective this August.

The new rates are designed to stimulate turnover of high-demand spaces in the heart of downtown and to encourage drivers to find less expensive and long-term parking spaces farther away.

Additional parking changes include

- Parking enforcement hours will change from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, to 10 a.m.-8 p.m., M-F.
- Time limits in Lot 5 (next to City Hall) and Lot 13 (SW 1st St.) will be removed (from 4-hour to no time limit).
- As many as five new pay stations (that accept coins and credit cards) will be installed throughout downtown over the summer.

Employee Spotlight

Helen Harris: 20 Years in the making



RTS staff would also like to congratulate Helen Harris for her 20 years of service with the City of Gainesville, with three of those years within RTS as its Assistant Transit Operations Manager.

Helen Harris, Assistant Transit Operations Manager with Jesus Gomez, Department of Transportation Director.

Thanks for all of your hard work, Helen. We love having you on our team!

Francis Donahue: RTS's New Transit Grants Program Specialist

On October 31, 2005, Francis began his journey at RTS. His first route was Route 7, and despite initial challenges as a commercial vehicle driver, he persevered. Over the years, he transitioned from driving to dispatching and became active in the union; eventually serving as Union President during a financially difficult period. In 2020, he fulfilled a dream of working in the Transit Planning department, focusing on bus stop amenities and ADA access. Now, as a Transit Grant Program Specialist, he continues to learn and grow, following in the footsteps of his knowledgeable predecessor, Margie Allen.

NOTICES

RTS CAB Meeting

Wednesday, May 22 @ 5:30 PM
RTS Administration Building
34 SE 13th Road
Gainesville, Florida 32601

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