



PROCLAMATION



VOLUNTARY ACTION CENTER 50TH ANNIVERSARY 1974 - 2024

WHEREAS, the Voluntary Action Center (VAC) was incorporated in 1974 as a volunteer clearing house with a mission of matching volunteers to needs in the community. After becoming aware of a lack of access to services in the community for seniors and persons with disabilities, VAC began providing door-to-door transportation services with one van and several volunteer drivers. VAC provided 7,111 rides in that first year of operation; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, the City of DeKalb awarded a Section 18 grant (later known as Section 5311) for \$117,661, supporting VAC and the Huskie Line Services; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, DeKalb County awarded VAC a grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation to build a transit facility. Meanwhile, the F.O.O.D/Meals on Wheels agency joined VAC in 1987, to help improve coordination among senior providers in the county. The new transit facility was completed in 1988, allowing VAC to consolidate its administrative and operations under one roof for the first time; and

WHEREAS, by 1990, VAC had coordinated and provided one million rides for residents of DeKalb County; and

WHEREAS, in 1991 VAC completed construction of the Central Kitchen Facility at their transit offices, which allowed for rapid growth and expansion of services that continues to this day; and

WHEREAS, by 1992, VAC had documented three million rides; and

WHEREAS, the City of DeKalb was designated as an urbanized area after the 2001 census; and

WHEREAS, by 2003, VAC had expanded its operation of Meals on Wheels into LaSalle County; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, the City of DeKalb received federal funding through Section 5307, and DeKalb County became the 5311 grantee. VAC became the operator for both systems; and

WHEREAS, the City of DeKalb began receiving Downstate Operating Assistance Program funds in 2012, which provides the lion's share of operating funding VAC receives to carry out their mission; and

WHEREAS, the City of DeKalb, VAC and Northern Illinois University began working together to restructure several TransVAC and Huskie Line bus routes in order to provide a better-coordinated and on-time bus route system for the DeKalb metropolitan area. At the completion of the transportation study, the transit development plan was published and a coordinated public transit fare system was developed; these changes became effective in August 2018; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 VAC responded to the pandemic by implementing unprecedented growth in its Meals on Wheels programs and instituting new policies and practices to ensure the safety of clients and the public; and

WHEREAS, VAC continues as the rural transportation provider for DeKalb and Kendall Counties.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cohen Barnes, Mayor of the City of DeKalb, does hereby honor and congratulate VAC on the celebration of their 50th anniversary and applaud their ongoing commitment to providing services that address the basic transportation and nutrition needs of this community and wish them much continued success in the future.



IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of DeKalb to be affixed this 11th day of March 2024.

COHEN BARNES, Mayor