CITY OF HARRISONBURG

AUGUST 2025

NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD SMALL AREA PLAN









Source: City of Harrisonburg

Northeast Neighborhood Association NENA A Non-Profit Dedicated to Community, Culture and History Harrisonburg, VA

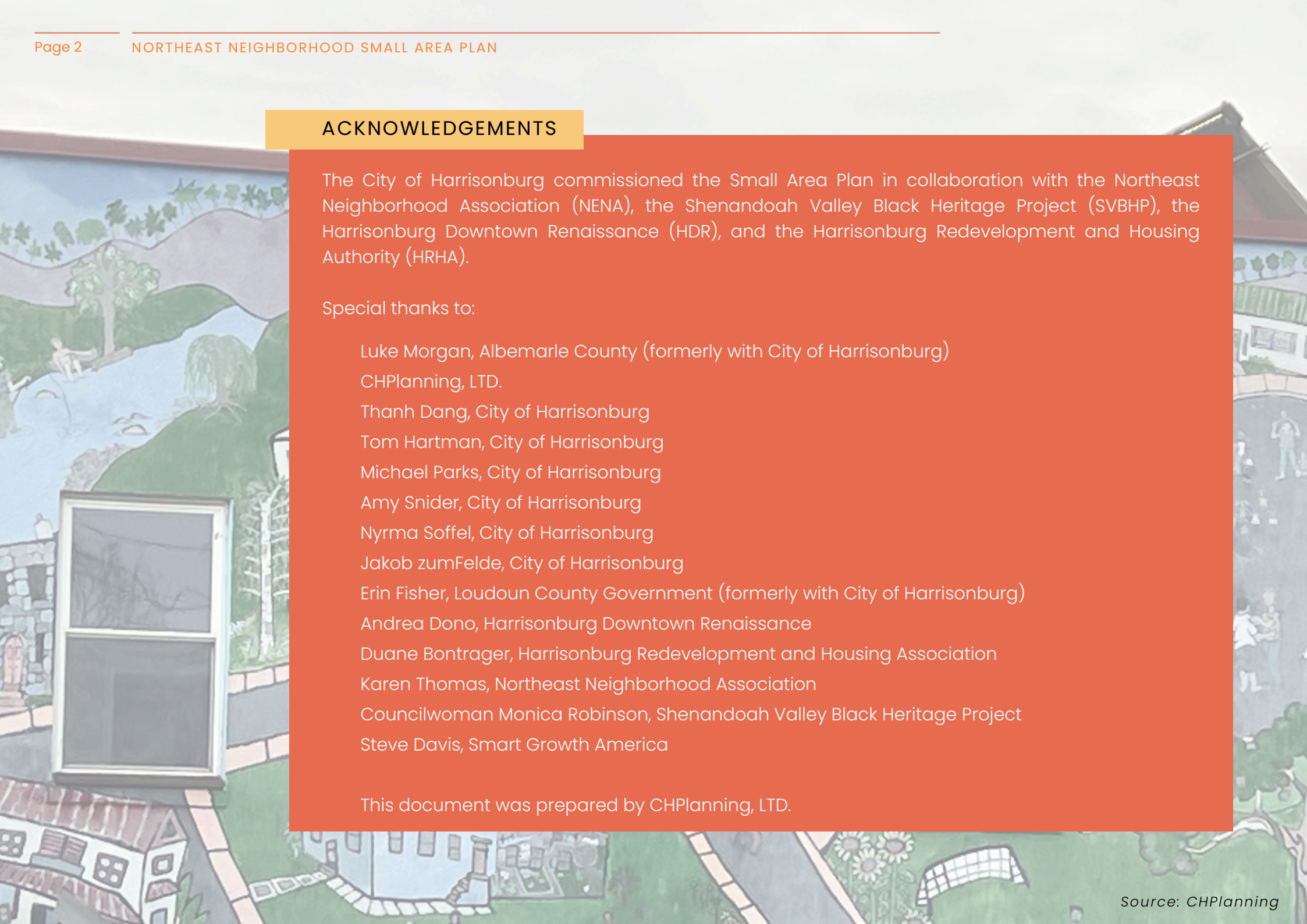
HARRISONBURG VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE

SVBHP

HDR HARRISONBURG DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE

Smart Growth America Making Neighborhoods Great Together

Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Harrisonburg commissioned the Small Area Plan in collaboration with the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA), the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project (SVBHP), the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR), and the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA).

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This document was prepared by CHPlanning, LTD.

Source: CHPlanning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northeast Neighborhood is a 186-acre area situated in the northeast corner of the City of Harrisonburg. It is characterized by its rich history shaped by a strong African American community. In the 1950s, the Northeast Neighborhood was impacted by Urban Renewal, displacing many African American residents and destroying community spaces.

The Northeast Neighborhood's existing conditions reflect the lasting impacts of Urban Renewal and other policies that transformed community assets into regional amenities. These changes have contributed to a **loss of historical identity and sense of place, along with increased vacancy and disinvestment**.

In September 2023, the national nonprofit Smart Growth America and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded a Community Connectors Program grant to the City of Harrisonburg to provide an opportunity to acknowledge past harm and improve collaboration between the City government and its residents. The project team is led by the City government, the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA), the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project (SVBHP), the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR), and the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA). After the grant was awarded, the project team identified that a **Small Area Plan (SAP) for the Northeast Neighborhood would help identify desires related to both historical preservation and opportunities for physical changes to shape the community's future**.

Community engagement was critical throughout the development of the SAP. From community events to workshops, community surveys to neighborhood tours, the project team employed **diverse methods to meet residents where they were throughout each project stage**. With support from NENA and SVBHP, the team was able to successfully obtain input from residents, project partners, business owners, and community leaders. HDR served as a connector to the business community.

These discussions, combined with a review of the existing conditions and other City plans, have resulted in this community-driven document: **a framework to shape the future of the Northeast Neighborhood and heal from the impacts of Urban Renewal.**

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Source: CHPlanning

LIST OF ACRONYMS

This document uses the following common terms and acronyms.

CBO - Community-Based Organizations
HDR - Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance
HRHA - Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority
LIHTC - Low-Income Housing Tax Credit
NENA - Northeast Neighborhood Association
SAP – Small Area Plan
SVBHP - Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project
S.W.O.C. - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges



Source: CHPlanning

Section 1:

Introduction

This Small Area Plan (SAP) is a **community-informed vision and implementation framework** for the City of Harrisonburg's ("City") Northeast Neighborhood ("Neighborhood"). The goal of this document is to outline the steps necessary to bring the Neighborhood's desired vision to reality. It provides recommendations for future projects, programs, and policies that address land use and transportation planning, urban design, investment decisions in capital projects and programs, and adjustments to zoning laws.

Although the Northeast Neighborhood comprises just 1.7% of the City's total footprint, its historical significance is profound. During Urban Renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, major infrastructure projects fractured the Neighborhood's cultural and physical assets, disrupting a thriving Black community and leaving lasting scars.

This SAP, along with the other work done by Smart Growth America and the Community Connectors Program, as discussed in the "Why Plan Now?" section, lays out a path toward healing those past injustices and building a more equitable future. The development and, more importantly, the implementation of this plan's goals and strategies reflect the City's commitment to prioritizing the Northeast Neighborhood for meaningful investment and improvement, and to holding the City accountable for that promise.

Urban Renewal refers to the federally supported process, initiated by the Housing Act of 1949, in which cities like Harrisonburg cleared "blighted" areas and redeveloped them through public-private partnerships, often replacing older neighborhoods with new housing and infrastructure.

> *I like to call it 'Urban Removal,' because it was where cities declared urban areas as slums, and they received federal dollars to come in there and to literally displace and replace area residents … to rebuild new housing.*
>
> - Stan Maclin, Former President of the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center

This SAP supplements the City's 2018 Comprehensive Plan. While the Comprehensive Plan provides a cohesive framework for the City's future, the SAP offers a more detailed understanding of the Northeast Neighborhood's specific needs. It ensures that future decisions, programs, and policies align with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and other City planning documents, as referenced in Appendix A, and will be developed with input from the residents of the Neighborhood.

Community input was a core value in the development of the SAP. The project team prioritized local voices, creating a more effective and responsive approach to future growth that reflects the Neighborhood's character and fosters community ownership. This approach aimed to start repairing the harm caused by past Urban Renewal efforts and connect the Neighborhood to Downtown, ultimately building trust between Northeast Neighborhood residents and the City of Harrisonburg.

The plan addresses displacement and other impacts of Urban Renewal, presenting possible early action steps and long-term solutions for addressing these impacts. The harms of Urban Renewal are generational. The plan proposes strategies to **return functional control and ownership to community residents and organizations, and to restore a sense of engagement, place-making, and belonging.**

Throughout the planning process, the City of Harrisonburg, the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA), the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project (SVBHP), the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA), and the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR) have engaged with the community and have **established relationships that form the basis for trust**. The plan puts forward communication and collaboration strategies to grow and build relationships that are difficult to undermine or undo in the future.

Historically, residents of the Northeast Neighborhood were subject to racism and prejudice that worked against the accomplishments and achievements of its residents. The plan proposes **policies and protections to prevent gentrification and displacement for new residents from low-income and immigrant backgrounds.**



Lucy Simms Mural, Source: City of Harrisonburg

PROJECT APPROACH

The project approach consisted of the following three phases:

Community involved throughout all project phases

PHASE 1: UNDERSTAND

During this phase, the project team built a strong relationship with the Neighborhood's community, gaining insight into its history. The project team also analyzed current data and reviewed existing plans to gain a better understanding of the Neighborhood's current conditions.

PHASE 2: ENVISION

In this phase, the project team collaborated with the community to develop and refine a shared vision for the Neighborhood's future.

PHASE 3: SHAPE

For the third phase, the project team established the community's priorities and identified goals and strategies, considering all gathered community input and documented existing conditions to date.

WHY PLAN NOW?

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS GRANT

In September 2023, the national nonprofit Smart Growth America and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded a Community Connectors Program grant to the City of Harrisonburg to provide an opportunity to advance locally driven projects that will reconnect communities separated or harmed by transportation infrastructure. The Harrisonburg project team's goals were to **repair past harms and to reconnect today's Northeast Neighborhood by creating a community-led small area plan to guide future investments in the area**, including re-envisioning the North Mason Street corridor. The effort from the beginning was grounded in the need to strengthen trust and collaboration between the City, partner organizations, and the community.

The far-reaching impacts of Urban Renewal contributed to a deep distrust of government within the community. This planning effort represents a step toward rebuilding that relationship. With long-time residents facing displacement pressures, a growing need for affordable housing, and increasing climate disruptions, the SAP is more critical than ever. The Neighborhood is also rich in cultural assets that deserve preservation and celebration. As a priority area for the City of Harrisonburg, this SAP provides a framework to guide future projects and programs.

The Harrisonburg Community Connectors team, led by the Northeast Neighborhood Association, the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project, the City of Harrisonburg, the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, and the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority, is guided by the following vision statement:

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS VISION STATEMENT

Rebuilding trust between Northeast Neighborhood residents and the City, repairing past harms, and reconnecting today's Northeast Neighborhood to the heart of the city are our most important goals. We commit to prioritizing the needs, wants, and desires of Northeast Neighborhood community members as we scope potential future investments in the community.

Subgroup of Harrisonburg's Community Connectors Team, Source: City of Harrisonburg



OTHER CITY INITIATIVES

The development of the SAP aligns with several concurrent City initiatives that share complementary goals:

- **Historical Research** ·under the Community Connectors grant documents the impacts of Urban Renewal on displaced residents and businesses, helping the City acknowledge past harms and support restorative storytelling.

- Smart Growth America's Complete Streets Leadership Academy's **transportation demonstration project** introduces temporary improvements along Mason Street to better connect the Northeast Neighborhood to Downtown, directly supporting the SAP's connectivity and mobility goals.

The City's **Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Rewrite** also presents a timely opportunity to reinforce SAP recommendations through updated policies that support diverse housing, mixed-use areas, and safer streets.

Aligning the outcomes of these efforts with the SAP **strengthens the plan's implementation** and ensures a more **integrated, inclusive approach** to neighborhood development.

GUIDING OBJECTIVES FOR THE PLANNING PROCESS

The following objectives informed the approach to the SAP, grounding it in community history, lived experience, and local priorities:

- **Acknowledge and document past harm** caused by Urban Renewal and foster a foundation for healing between the City and the Neighborhood.

- **Engage residents** in shaping a shared vision for the Neighborhood's future, with clear communication of expectations and next steps. Educate the community about City resources to address their needs.

- **Support community-led efforts** by empowering local groups, faith-based organizations, and Neighborhood advocates.

- **Respond to core needs** around walkability, transportation access, housing, and economic opportunity.

> *I would love to see the Neighborhood continue to grow in those expressed hopes. There is a lot of good history in that space. There is a lot of beauty too in the people and places. But there is also a large economic divide within this Neighborhood. My vision would be to see the Neighborhood continue to be a place for such different people, but a healthy place for those who are struggling to be able to succeed.*
>
> - Resident

STRUCTURE OF THE SAP

The SAP serves as a guide for community leaders, residents, institutions, community-based organizations, City staff, property owners, and developers. It is organized into six sections:

1. **INTRODUCTION**

   Provides an overview of the plan, including its purpose, key goals, and general planning overview.

2. **ACKNOWLEDGING THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S PAST**

   Discusses the Northeast Neighborhood's history, from its time as a prominent settlement for freedmen up to Urban Renewal and its impact.

3. **UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT**

   Reviews the current social, cultural, and geographic landscape of the Northeast Neighborhood, including community characteristics and demographic trends.

4. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

   Provides an overview of the various engagement pathways undertaken by the project team for the plan. It highlights some key takeaways from the engagement process and a narrative of community feedback.

5. **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES**

   Synthesizes gathered information and feedback to produce targeted ideas for a shared vision of the future. The goals and strategies are organized under five key themes: 1) Gathering and Belonging; 2) Reconnecting to Downtown; 3) Safety and Security; 4) Opportunity for All; and 5) Healthy Environments.

6. **IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

   Outlines actions for implementing the goals and strategies. The implementation plan is organized into a matrix that establishes a priority hierarchy based on public feedback. Each strategy includes responsible entities, key partners, and potential funding sources.

Section 2:

Acknowledging the Neighborhood's Past

AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE SHAPED THE NEIGHBORHOOD SINCE EMANCIPATION

In 1832, twin brothers Ambrose and Reuben Dallard were born as enslaved people at Riverbank. The brothers escaped, joined the Union Army, and then settled in a community named Zenda before moving to the City of Harrisonburg. In 1869, the brothers began purchasing land and building homes in the northeast section of Harrisonburg, an area that would later become known as Newtown. After the Civil War and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, Newtown became home to many freedmen. As Newtown grew, community assets were established to reflect the needs of its residents. The Newtown Cemetery was established as a burial site for emancipated people, and the Effinger Street School, also known as the Harrisonburg Colored School, was constructed to provide public education to African American children.

In 1892, the City of Harrisonburg annexed Newtown. The community continued to thrive and grow. Many residents moved into the area, and by 1920, Newtown's population had grown from 997 to 1,200. Property ownership and entrepreneurship were of great importance to the community. The Colonnade building served as a gymnasium for the Effinger Street School, a meeting space for the Black American Legion No. 76, and a safe space for a range of community programming. It also became home to several Newtown-born businesses, including George's Barbershop, 'Skully's' pool hall, and Miss Jennie's Chicken Shack.

In 1939, the Effinger Street School closed to make way for the newly built Lucy F. Simms School, which served as a community hub. It was joined by Harris Pool — a public pool built by local African American businessman, Mr. Kent Frances — and several historic Black churches, including John Wesley Methodist Church, First Baptist Church, the Mennonite Mission, and Bethel AME Church.

- **1869:** Brothers, Reuben and Ambrose Dallard, began building houses in what became known as the historic Newtown African American community.
- **1869:** The Newtown Cemetery is established as a burial site for freedmen.
- **1882:** Harrisonburg City Public Schools established the Effinger Street School or the Harrisonburg Colored School.
- **1892:** Newtown was annexed by the City of Harrisonburg.
- **1893:** The Church of the Brethren, which later became known as the historic Bethel AME Church, was built.
- **1895:** The Dallard-Newman house was built by the Dallard brothers.
- By **1920**, Newtown population grew from 997, in 1880, to 1,200.
- **1939**: The Effinger Street School was closed to make way for the newly built Lucy F. Simms School.

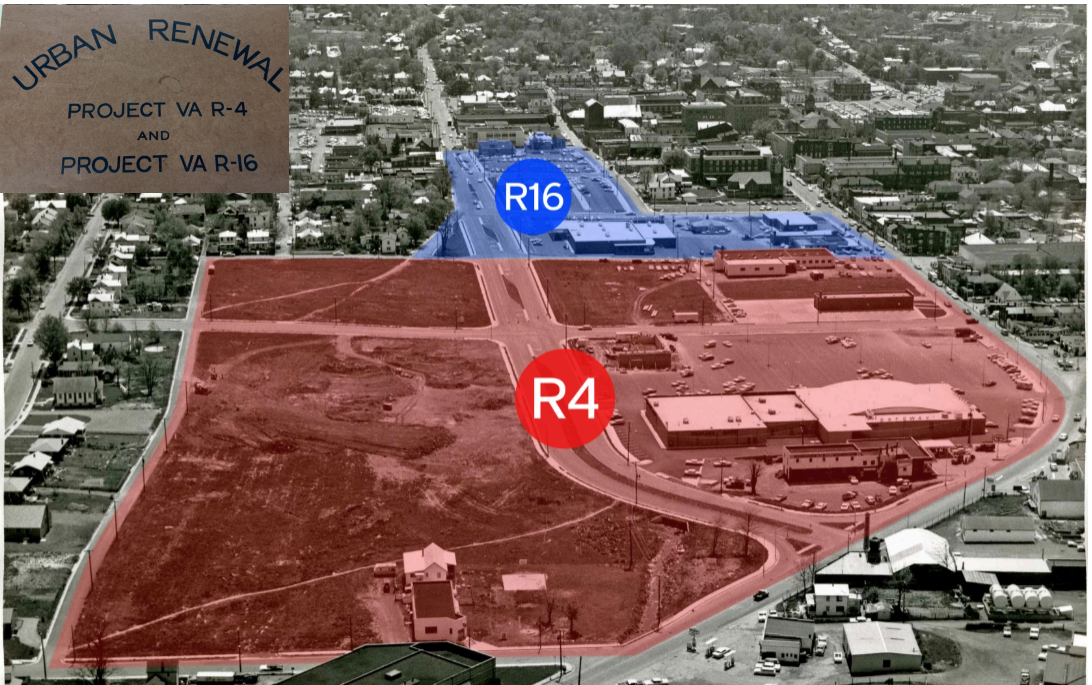
Kelley Street United Brethren in Christ Church, Source: NENA



THE NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD WAS IMPACTED BY URBAN RENEWAL, DISPLACING MANY AFRICAN AMERICAN RESIDENTS AND DESTROYING COMMUNITY SPACES

Around 1955, the City of Harrisonburg initiated Urban Renewal efforts to redevelop "slums" into public housing, with federal assistance. The City established the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) to execute the two main Urban Renewal projects: the "Harrisonburg Northeast Urban Renewal Project R-4" and its smaller tag-on, "Project R-16." These projects targeted Newtown and Mason Street, condemning many Black-owned homes and businesses in the area as **"blight."** Using this designation, HRHA was able to acquire properties through **eminent domain** and clear the land for redevelopment, with the intention of increasing tax revenue, building new commercial developments and low-income housing, and facilitating easier automobile travel.

R-4 was approximately 32.5 acres and R-16 was approximately 7.5 acres, Source: City of Harrisonburg



Eminent domain allows the government to seize privately-owned properties for "just compensation" to be used for "public use," such as roads or public housing.

These actions razed homes and businesses, displacing many Black residents and destroying treasured community spaces. About 225 dwelling units were destroyed and 215 households were forced to relocate (Community Connectors Program - History of Urban Renewal in Harrisonburg 2025), some having to move out of Harrisonburg entirely. Many of the destroyed homes were owned or occupied by descendants of the formerly enslaved people who moved to the area in the late 1800s. The loss of homes, significant capital assets, had profound social and economic effects on residents and their heirs, eliminating generational wealth and hard-fought investments.

> *A lot of the time, we focus on the homes that were demolished, whereas when I think about Urban Renewal, it's about the community and sense of community that was lost.*
>
> – Monica Robinson, Executive Director of SVBHP

The local government sold the seized land to commercial developers, rather than using it for public purposes. The commercial and residential development that occurred reflected a more suburban character with deep setbacks and large parking lots. This suburban character stood in stark contrast to the traditional urban fabric of the historic Downtown, creating a visible divide between the redeveloped north end and the portions of the district that had escaped Urban Renewal.

Additionally, the projects widened and paved streets in the community, including Mason Street, making the area car-centric and reducing safe travel options, such as walking or biking, while also creating a barrier to Downtown.

Urban Renewal remains a scar on the community, traumatizing generations of residents and leading to a lack of trust in government officials.



Maps of Northeast Neighborhood in 1937 (above) and 2022 (right)

Source: JMU Archives



1962 - Residence on the corner of East Elizabeth and Federal Street



Undated photo - Parking lot built on the site of razed homes on the corner of East Elizabeth and Federal Street



2013 - Parking deck built in 1971 on the corner of East Elizabeth and Federal Street

> *These were the homes which could never be described as blighted or slums. They just happened to be in the way of progress. These were the homes with the manicured lawns, well-tended flowers, and in some cases, the wrap around porches.*
>
> - Ruth Toliver, Author and Retired Teacher, spent summers in Harrisonburg staying with her grandmother

Homes labeled as "blight" , Source: JMU Archives







Section 3:

Understanding the Present

UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT

Planning for the future begins with a clear understanding of the Northeast Neighborhood's current conditions. These conditions form the foundation of the plan's recommendations. The project team evaluated a range of factors to gain a deeper understanding of the Neighborhood's existing conditions, which together tell the story of the Neighborhood.

These factors included:

- Existing data
- Existing plans, policies, and studies
- Community feedback

As the name suggests, the Northeast Neighborhood is situated in the northeast area of Harrisonburg. For the purposes of the SAP, the Northeast Neighborhood is bounded by N. Main Street from the west, E. Market Street from the south, Tower Street from the east, and E. Washington Street from the north. The study area spans approximately 186 acres in total.

It should be noted that the City of Harrisonburg does not have official maps of neighborhood boundaries and that the Northeast Neighborhood Association's (NENA) map of the Northeast Neighborhood includes areas outside of the SAP's study area.



Northeast Neighborhood Association's Map of the Neighborhood, Source: NENA

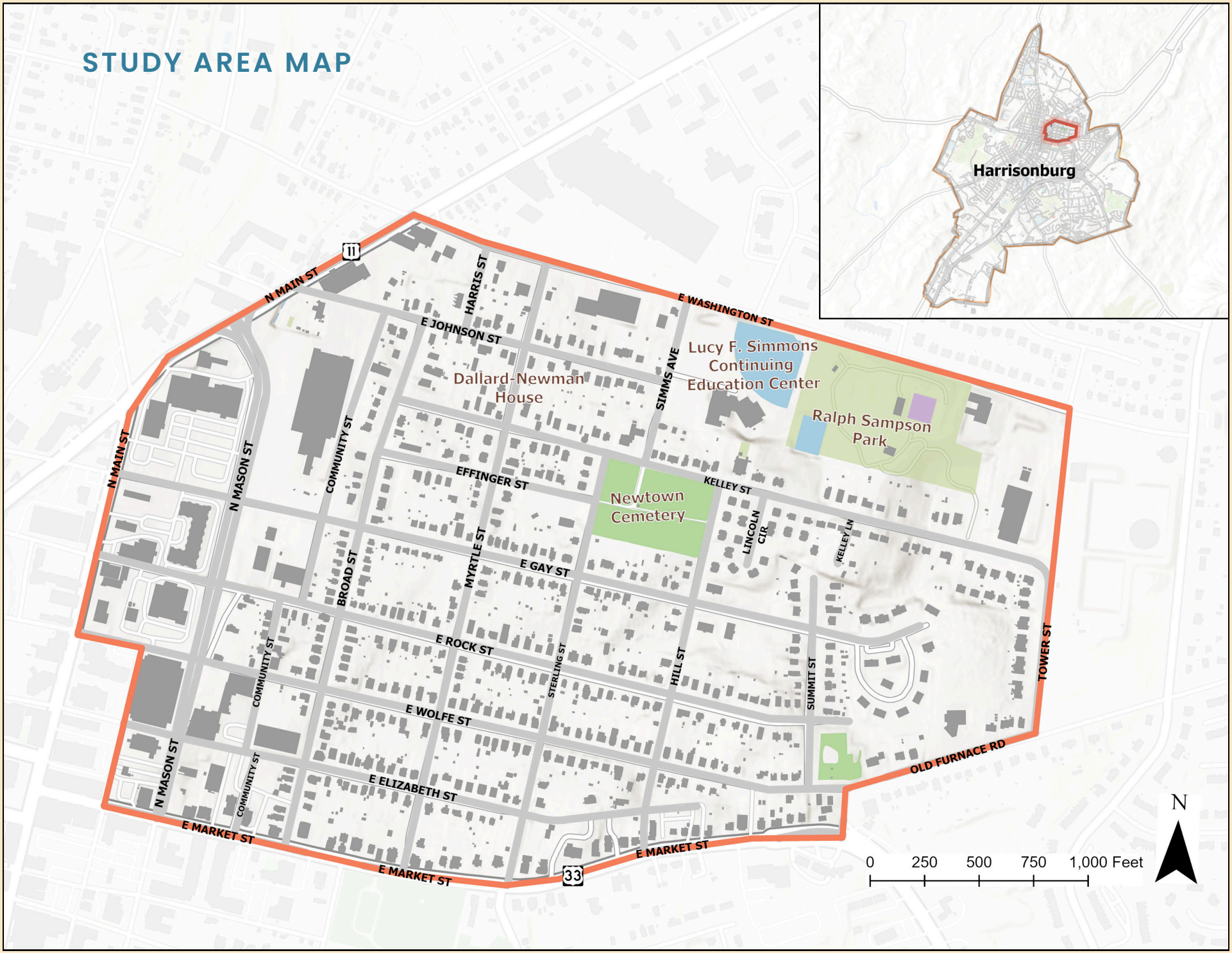
The plan examines existing conditions in the context of historic laws, policies, and practices. It addresses opportunities for Neighborhood residents, CBOs, communities of faith, business and non-profit entities, and the City to preserve and enhance Neighborhood amenities and assets for Neighborhood residents, including people impacted by Urban Renewal and people who might be affected by similar detrimental policies in the future.

The history of Harrisonburg, Newtown, and the Northeast Neighborhood includes slavery, emancipation, and the establishment of Newtown as a self-governing freeman's town with community-sustaining institutions. The existing conditions in the Northeast Neighborhood are shaped by Urban Renewal and other policies that converted Neighborhood assets into regional amenities. As a result, the community has lost some of its history and sense of place and has experienced increased vacancy disinvestment. One considerable loss residents have noted is Harris Pool, the community's swimming pool, which was located at 400 Kelley Street. It hosted various community events before closing in 1979.



Harris Pool, Source: JMU Libraries

STUDY AREA MAP



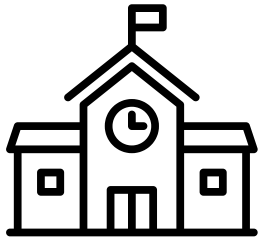
Source: City of Harrisonburg GIS Data Library

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Northeast Neighborhood is home to approximately 1,940 residents (2022 American Community Survey), accounting for about 4% of Harrisonburg's total population. Between 2000 and 2022, the Neighborhood's population grew by 8.1%, while the City of Harrisonburg saw a significantly higher growth rate of 26%.

In the Northeast Neighborhood, the **predominant age group consists of individuals aged 30-34,** with about an equal distribution of male and female residents. Additionally, there is a **significant population of children and youth aged 0-9,** highlighting the Neighborhood's appeal to both young adults and families.

Northeast Neighborhood



45.2%
High school graduate or higher



13.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher



$39,716
Median income



28%
of the population is under 18 years of age



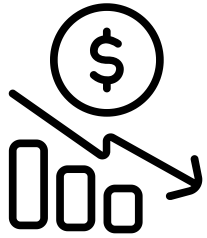
72%
of the population is 18 years of age and over



34.2 years
Median age



6.5%
Unemployment rate

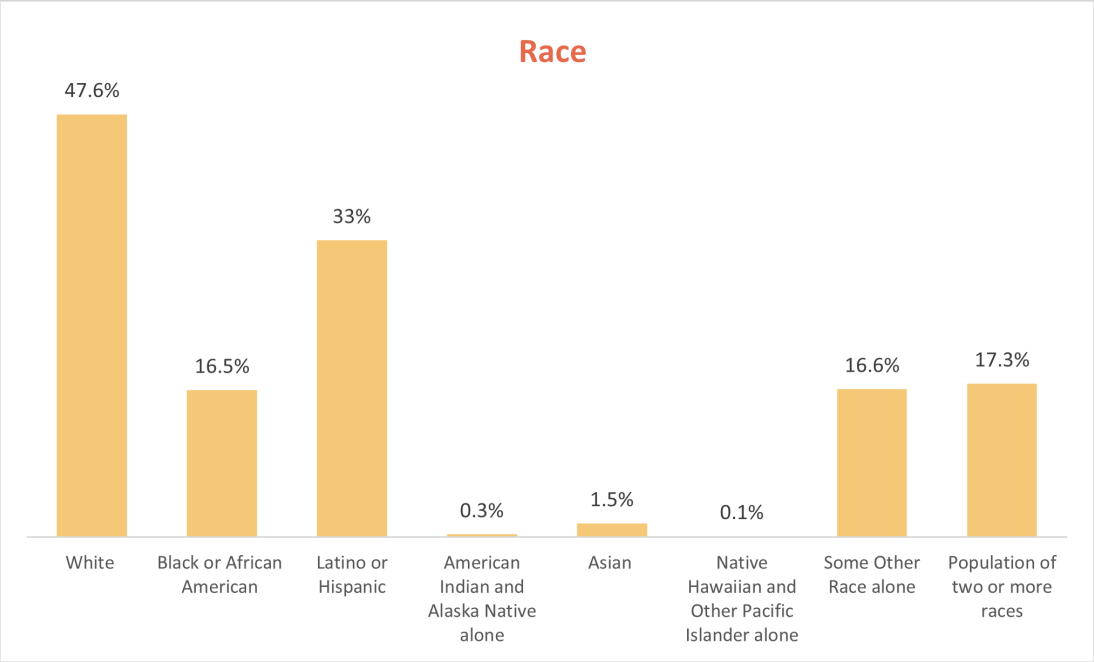


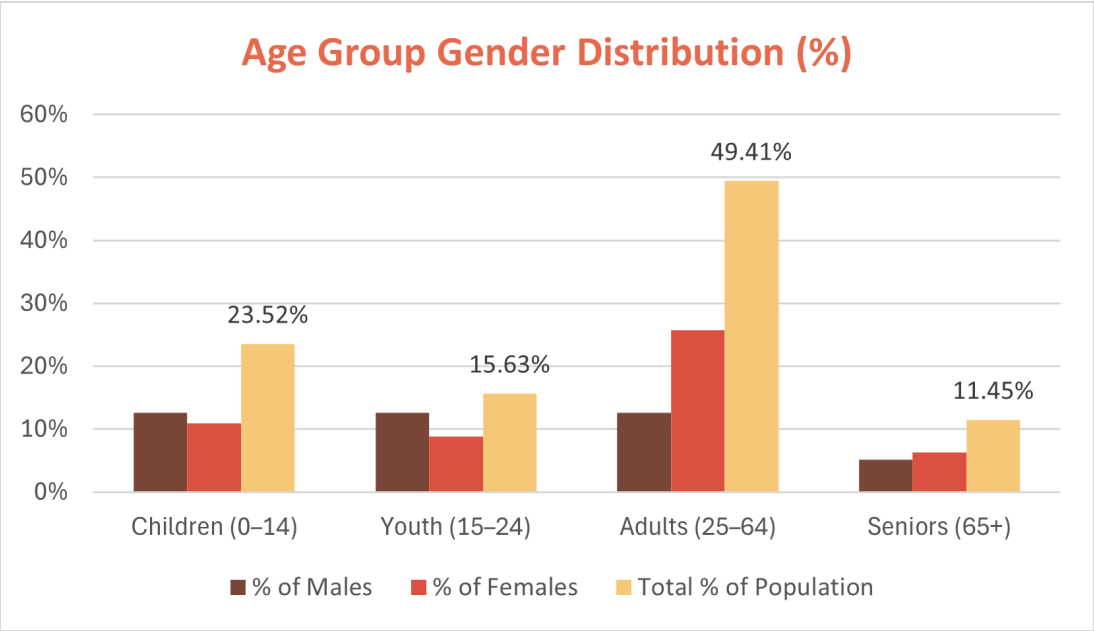
15.7%
Poverty rate

Source: US Census Bureau

DEMOGRAPHICS

Industry by Occupation for Population 16 Years & Over in the Northeast Neighborhood	Percent of Population
Construction & Trades	37%
Education & Health Services	18%
Public Safety & Service	18%
Sales & Office Support	13%
Management, Business, & Finance	8%
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)	4%
Arts, Media, & Entertainment	2%





Source: US Census Bureau

LAND USE AND ZONING

The Northeast Neighborhood is **predominantly residential,** but it also features a mix of other land uses, including commercial, government, and recreational areas. Nearly three-quarters of its area is zoned R-2 (Residential District), permitting single-family and duplex homes. The R-2 zoning allows a variety of housing types and allows group housing projects, which are properties consisting of two or more buildings arranged in a manner that cannot be subdivided into conventional streets and lots and that require designation by the City of Harrisonburg Planning Commission. HRHA's Franklin Heights properties are examples of a group housing project.

Additionally, the Neighborhood also includes nonconforming residential uses, such as apartments, and R-3 zoned (Medium Density Residential) properties on its southern end, which allow single-family and duplex homes by right and apartments with up to 12 dwelling units per building by special use permit, contributing to the area's residential diversity.

The northwestern periphery of the Neighborhood is zoned as M-1 (General Industrial District). This zoning allows uses such as manufacturing, processing, and storage, including the feed mill, distribution centers, and automotive services, which become increasingly apparent at gateways or key transition points into and out of the Neighborhood. The western edge of the Neighborhood is zoned B-1 (Central Business District), which accounts for 63% of the Neighborhood's commercial addresses.

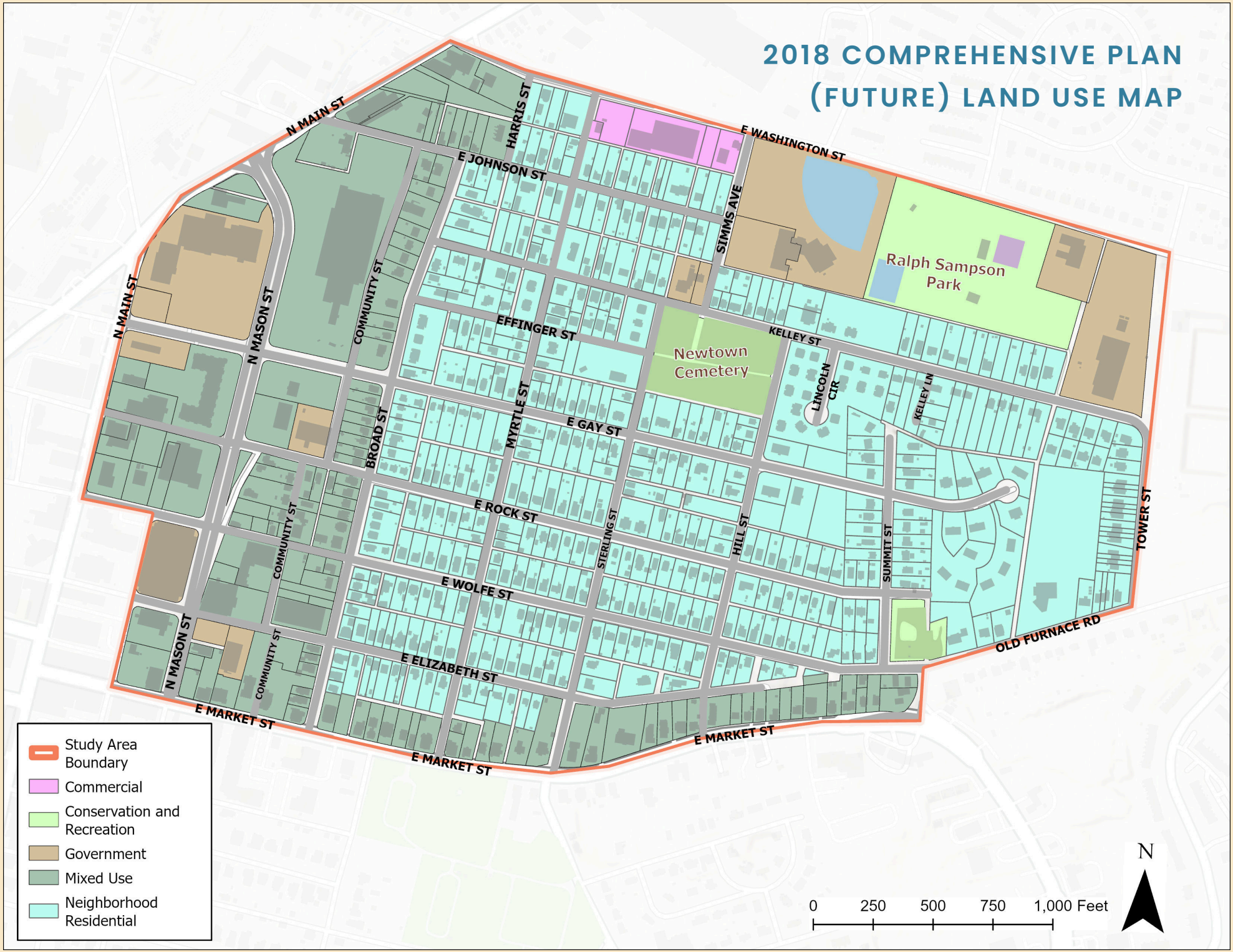
Around 3.5% of the lots in the Neighborhood are vacant. Currently, these vacant lots might harm the area's unity and feel, but they offer future opportunities for affordable housing, green spaces, or small business development.

The study area is also within one of Harrisonburg's two federally designated **Opportunity Zones.**



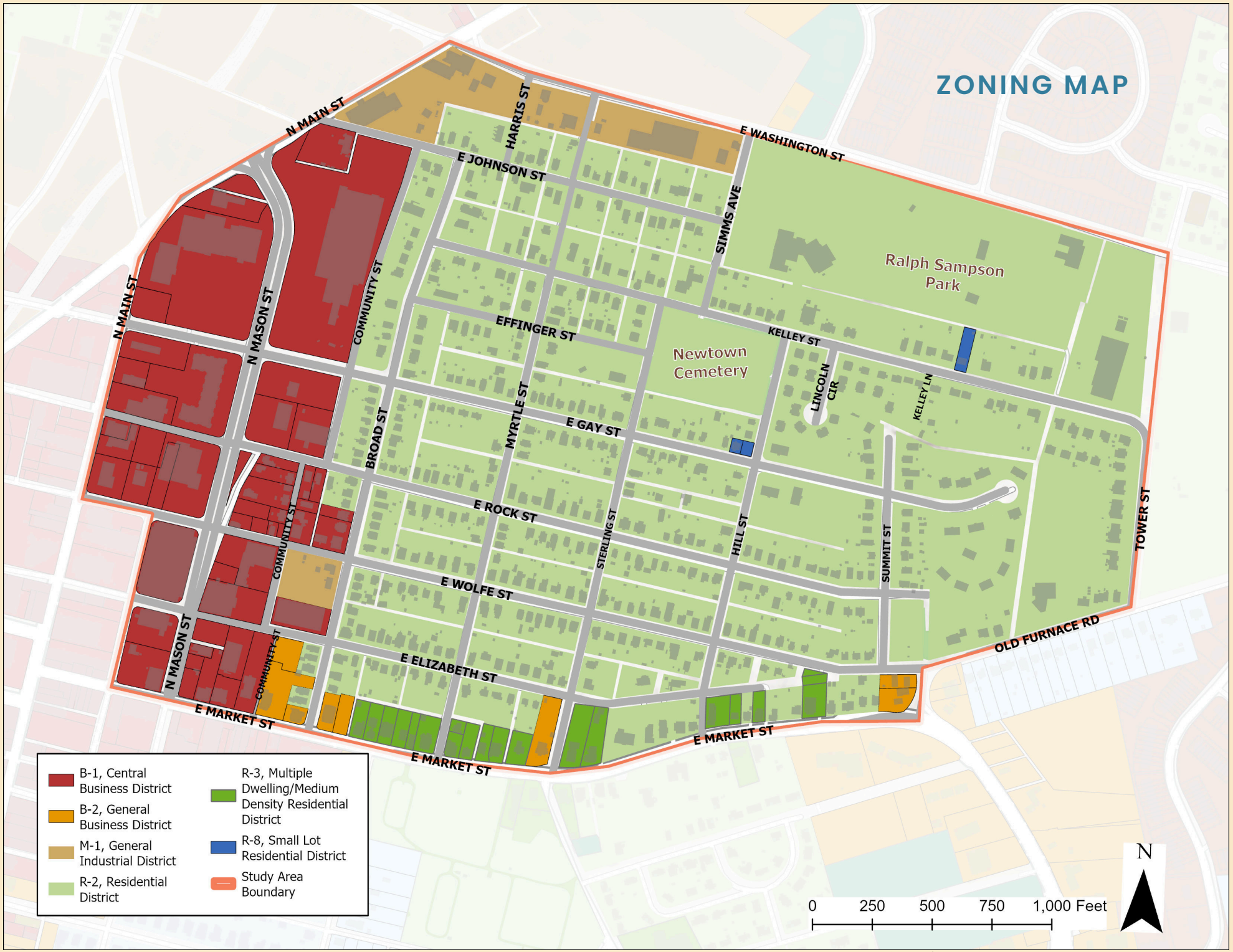
Opportunity Zones are low-income areas that may be eligible to receive tax benefits with new investments. They are intended to encourage economic development for investors.

2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
(FUTURE) LAND USE MAP



Source: City of Harrisonburg GIS Data Library

ZONING MAP



Source: City of Harrisonburg GIS Data Library

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

The Northeast Neighborhood's **transportation infrastructure reflects the lasting impacts of Urban Renewal**, particularly the widening of Mason Street, which created a physical and social divide from the rest of the City. Today, efforts such as traffic calming, Complete Streets planning, and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure aim to reconnect the Neighborhood and make its streets safer and more inclusive for all residents.

The Neighborhood includes both local and high traffic streets, meaning the area handles both residential traffic and through traffic. High traffic streets include N. Mason Street, E. Wolfe Street, and E. Gay Street. Mason Street is a collector road running north to south, serving as a key connector between local roads and major thoroughfares. As part of the Urban Renewal efforts, Mason Street was widened from two lanes to four lanes to accommodate anticipated vehicle traffic. This **change created a visual and physical barrier between the Northeast Neighborhood and the rest of Harrisonburg**, contributing to the emergence of parking lots and car-oriented businesses in the area, as well as the loss of many historic buildings. The fact that the Harrisonburg Downtown Historic District ends at the edge of the Neighborhood further emphasizes the divide.

Residents have requested and pursued traffic calming through the City multiple times since 2008, including collecting signatures from a large percentage of the Neighborhood in 2018 and 2019. As some requirements of the City's traffic calming program posed barriers to implementing traffic calming measures, the City decided in 2021 to address intersection safety concerns in the Neighborhood.

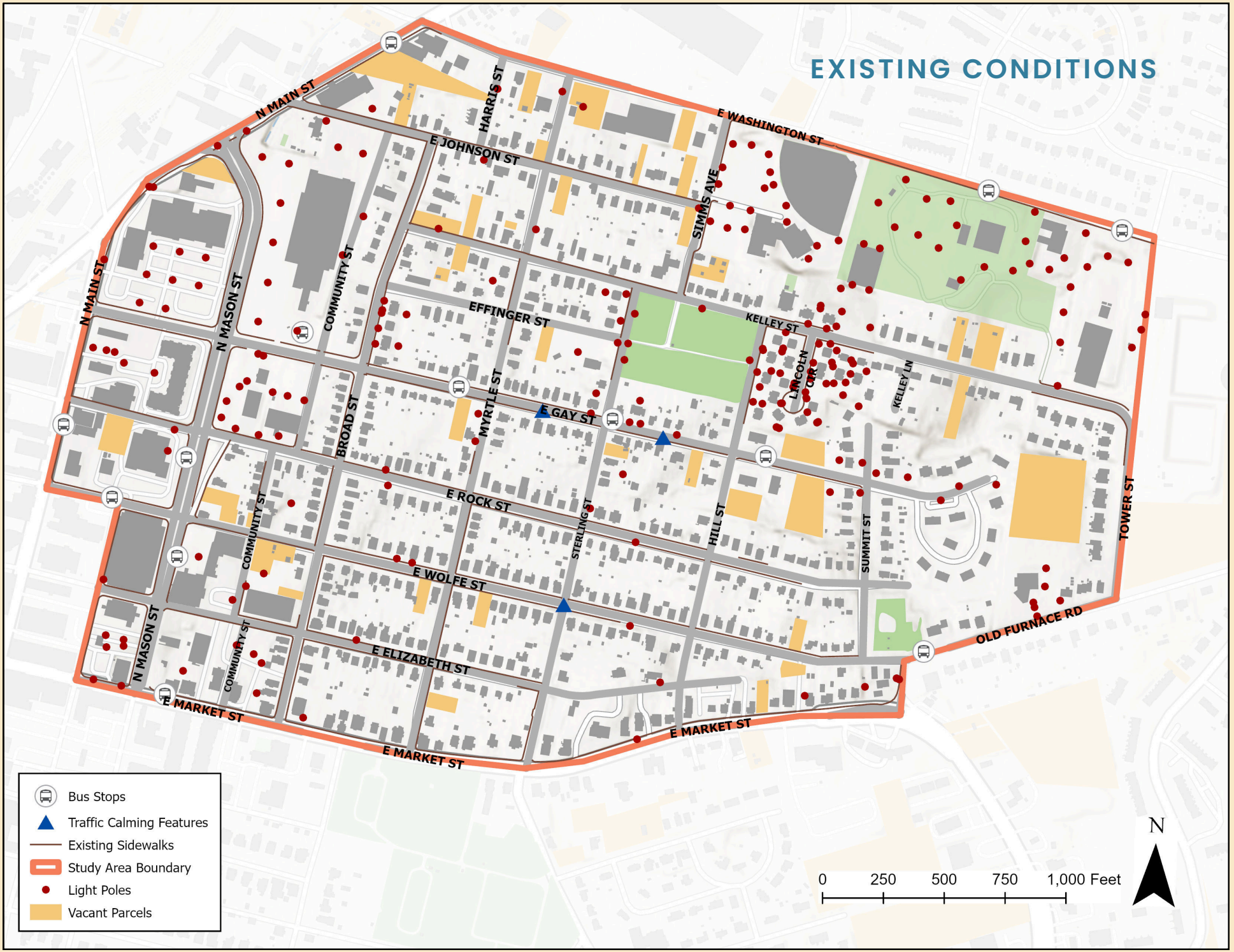
The City prioritized making changes at intersections with higher numbers of crashes, which were all located on E. Wolfe Street or E. Gay Street. These changes involved adding speed humps or relocating stop sign locations. Additionally, stop bars and crosswalks were installed at all intersections in the Neighborhood. There is demand for more safety upgrades across the Neighborhood, including Kelley Street and E. Market Street, as **residents note that speeding and disregard for stop signs remain an issue.**

Public transit runs across E. Gay Street, N. Mason Street, N. Main Street, and E. Market Street. At the corner of E. Gay Street and Community Street is the Transit Hub, one of the city's three bus transfer locations. However, **limited public transportation options and inadequate bus shelters impact connectivity**, and multimodal options are needed to serve residents without personal vehicles better.

Bus stop located at East Gay St. and Sterling St., Source: CHPlanning



EXISTING CONDITIONS



Source: City of Harrisonburg GIS Data Library

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

The Community Connectors grant from Smart Growth America involved a Complete Streets Demonstration Project for N. Mason Street between E. Market Street and N. Main Street. Harrisonburg Public Works made temporary changes to the configuration of N. Mason Street starting on July 7, 2025 until August 5, 2025 that shifted all traffic to the two east lanes of N. Mason between Gay Street and Elizabeth Street.

This temporary change allowed the City to test if roundabouts would be successful at those two intersections, while creating shorter crossing times of N. Mason Street at multiple intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists. It also opened up space currently used for vehicles (the west lanes of North Mason Street between Gay Street and Elizabeth Street) for other community uses, such as space for walking and biking and areas for picnic tables.

Complete Streets is a street design approach that prioritizes safe and convenient access for all users, regardless of their mode of transportation.

The changes were based on community input received through a public forum held in March 2025 and from participants in the Harrisonburg Complete Streets Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy brought community members and business leaders from the Northeast Neighborhood together with City staff and transportation experts to brainstorm ways to improve N. Mason Street. While temporary traffic adjustments are in place, City staff are analyzing changes to how the corridor is used by all users, in addition to seeking public feedback on their thoughts about the changes. That data and community input will be utilized to determine if a permanent project will be pursued.

N. Mason Street Reconfiguration, Source: Kyle Lawrence



TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

There are bike lanes along parts of the Northeast Neighborhood's perimeter, including E. Washington Street and sections of Vine Street and N. Main Street. Within the Neighborhood itself, only two blocks in the southwest corner have a bike lane and a shared-use path. The City's bike stress level criteria classify many streets east of N. Mason Street in the Neighborhood as high-comfort for biking. In contrast, N. Mason Street is considered low-comfort due to factors like multiple travel lanes, higher vehicle speeds, and limited bike infrastructure.

The Neighborhood's streetlights are consistent with City standards. Still, residents noted that **some intersections are dark, which affects nighttime mobility, safety, and visibility**. There is interest among the community in adding and improving lighting along key walking corridors, such as Broad Street. Additional lighting needs to be balanced with potential light pollution, as some residents expressed concern that nighttime lighting could lead to disturbances.

Gay Street, Source: City of Harrisonburg



Stop sign at Hill Street and E. Rock Street, Source: CHPlanning



HOUSING INVENTORY AND AFFORDABILITY

The Northeast Neighborhood's housing landscape reflects the long-term effects of Urban Renewal, with public housing, aging homes, and a mix of renters and long-time residents shaping its character. As concerns about gentrification and rising rents grow, **preserving affordable housing, supporting long-time residents, and honoring the Neighborhood's historic character is key to ensuring equitable development.**

The Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority (HRHA) was initially started in the 1950s to execute Urban Renewal initiatives. Today, HRHA owns 97 residential units in the Neighborhood, including seven single-family homes, and 90 units spread across duplexes and four-unit buildings. These properties are primarily located north of Gay Street, south of Johnson Street, and east of Broad Street. Residents have commented that HRHA should improve its property maintenance and encourage resident participation by offering incentives for upkeep.

The Northeast Neighborhood is **primarily residential**, featuring a mix of single-family homes and multi-family units. The owner-to-renter ratio is similar to that of the City of Harrisonburg, with approximately 40% of its units being owner-occupied. The tenure of the community, much like its housing types, encompasses a diverse range, including long-time residents who have lived there for 25 years or more, as well as new arrivals.

The Neighborhood features a range of architectural styles, including early 20th-century homes with front porches and pitched roofs, mid-century brick homes, and newer infill developments. Many structures reflect vernacular and craftsman influences, contributing to the Neighborhood's historic charm. In terms of building conditions, many homes in the area exhibit signs of aging, with some requiring significant repairs due to deferred maintenance. **The prevalence of older housing stock presents both challenges and opportunities for historic preservation and revitalization**.

Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority, Source: CHPlanning



Colonnade Apartments on N. Mason Street, Source: CHPlanning



HOUSING INVENTORY AND AFFORDABILITY

There are also several historic homes in the area that community members, in partnership with local institutions and CBOs, are working to **preserve both in terms of their physical structure and historical significance**, such as the Ida M. Francis House. This home, located at 252 N. Mason Street, served as a Green Book safe place for Black travelers during the segregation era. The Dallard-Newman House, located at 184 Kelley Street, is another historic home that is undergoing renovation. Ambrose and Reuben Dallard, two freedmen who started the Newtown community, built the house in the mid-1890s. With federal grant funding and support from NENA, the upgraded Dallard-Newman House will turn into the first African American history museum in the area.

In 2021, the City of Harrisonburg completed a housing assessment and market study that identified market types for each U.S. Census-defined block group. The study identified the western side of the Neighborhood as "Market Type A" and the eastern side as "Market Type B." Market Type A is characterized by high demand, rapid population growth, and greater access to amenities, such as transit. Market Type B includes areas with high housing sales, high-income households, and slower population growth, with below-median access to amenities. The study separated the market types by the census block group division at Myrtle Street. Through field experience, however, the Neighborhood character shift occurs at Broad Street, suggesting a potential need to revisit the market study designations.

Gentrification, or the arrival of new residents and developments that displace long-standing community members and businesses, is a concern in the Neighborhood. This issue is especially pressing due to the high demand for off-campus housing from JMU students and the emergence of new developments that may drive up living costs. JMU students already live in the Neighborhood, contributing to the area's evolving housing dynamics.

Many community members are concerned that they will not benefit from the anticipated new development due to pressures of physical, economic, and cultural displacement. Rising housing costs are becoming an increasing burden for many residents, emphasizing the need to preserve existing affordable housing units.

Dallard-Newman House, Source: VA Department of Historic Resources



HOUSING INVENTORY AND AFFORDABILITY

Northeast Neighborhood



732

Households



37%

of the households are owner-occupied



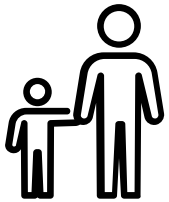
63%

of the households are renter-occupied



2.55

Average household size



55.4%

of housing units are detached single-family houses



$258,750

Median value of owner-occupied housing units

> *I like that it's a true blend of all kinds of people. It's one of the last neighborhoods in town with affordable housing and people living close together in detached homes with yards. It's colorful. It feels very safe to me. I love all the kids and the families. The churches and the cars. I don't want anything coming in here and changing the community feeling or pushing out long time demographics with gentrification.*
>
> - Resident

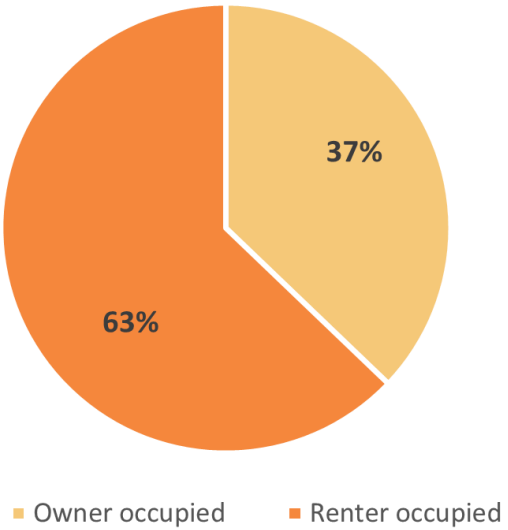
Source: US Census Bureau

HOUSING INVENTORY AND AFFORDABILITY

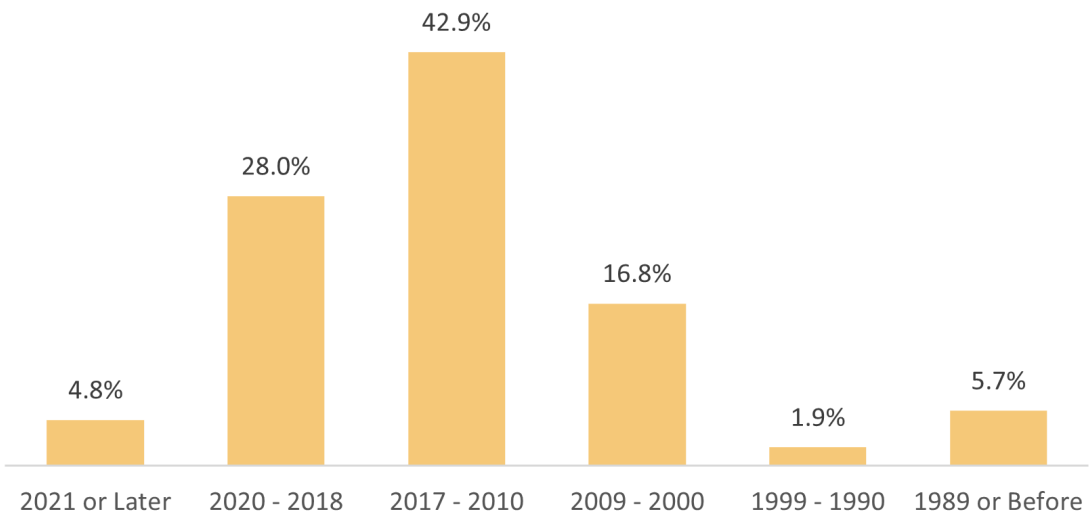
Existing Housing Programs Available:

- HRHA – Assistance for First-time Homebuyers
- VA DHCD – Homeownership Down Payment Assistance Program (DPA); Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
- Central Planning District Commission - Regional First-Time Homebuyers Program
- City of Harrisonburg - SPARC Mortgage Interest Rate Reduction
- VA Dept. of Social Services - Energy Assistance Program (EAP)
- Central Valley Habitat for Humanity - Critical Home Repair Program
- Southeast Regional Community Action Program - HUD-Certified Housing Counseling

Housing Tenure



Year Household Moved Into Neighborhood



Source: US Census Bureau

LOCAL ECONOMY

The Northeast Neighborhood's limited access to essential services and underperforming commercial areas—especially those along N. Mason Street—reflect the **lingering effects of disinvestment following Urban Renewal.** The strategic redevelopment of key sites, such as the Roses property, offers an opportunity to meet community needs.

The Neighborhood lacks essential services, such as grocery stores and healthcare facilities. It has a modest mix of businesses within a limited and underperforming local economic landscape. Community staples such as Kline's Dairy Bar, El Paisano Bakery, and Friendly City Food Co-Op provide valued food, social, and recreational outlets. Still, they are all located west of N. Mason Street, making access difficult. Generally, overall commercial activity remains sparse.

A prominent symbol of this underutilization is the Roses property, a discount department store located near the intersection of N. Mason Street and N. Main Street. Once a key part of the Neighborhood retail corridor, the site represents both a challenge and a significant opportunity for strategic revitalization. Due to its central location, size, and visibility, the Roses property is often envisioned as a future anchor for mixed-use development, affordable housing, or public space.

> *I think the Roses complex is really exciting in terms of possibility. I have a vision of a centralized place with bike/pedestrian access that has mental health services, community gathering places like coffee shops, thrift stores, and bike shops that can provide job opportunities and training to young people, and access to the arts, healthy food, and educational opportunities.*
>
> - Resident

Aerial view of Roses, Source: Lee & Associates



Klines Dairy Bar and El Paisano Bakery, Source: CHPlanning



COMMUNITY ASSETS AND INSTITUTIONAL PRESENCE

The Northeast Neighborhood has many important **historical and cultural assets and organizations that enrich community life and foster a sense of place**. It is also home to municipal services, transportation services, charities serving people experiencing drug addiction and homelessness, and other institutional uses that provide services for the City of Harrisonburg and the surrounding region. The Downtown United States Postal Service location on N. Mason Street is well used, offering P.O. Boxes as well as mailing services.

The Northeast Neighborhood has a strong presence of churches, with nine churches located within the Neighborhood — several of which are integral to the City's historic fabric and cultural identity. **Several churches in the area function not only as places of worship but also as informal community hubs**. Notably, First Baptist Church has a children's playground on a parcel directly across the street, which supports local families and fosters community connection.

Ida Mae Francis Tourist Home, Source: Virginia DHR



Important cultural assets in the area that serve as the foundation of the Neighborhood's rich African American history include Newtown Cemetery, the Dallard-Newman House and Museum, the Ida Mae Francis Tourist Home, and the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center. The Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center is a historic community hub named after a pioneering African American educator. Originally a segregated school, it now serves as a vibrant space for education, cultural events, and local organizations.

Adjacent to the site, Our Community Place's daytime community and meal program provides essential support to unhoused and other financially insecure individuals but has also drawn concern from residents due to visible signs of substance use, discarded needles, and loitering. These conditions have raised safety and public health concerns among residents, reinforcing the need for a coordinated response that balances compassionate care with thoughtful site planning and community-informed redevelopment.

While some public art exists—mainly along the western edge near N. Mason Street—there is an opportunity to strengthen Neighborhood identity and sense of place through the expansion and strategic placement of public art and public realm improvements.

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND INSTITUTIONAL PRESENCE



Source: City of Harrisonburg GIS Data Library

ENVIRONMENTAL AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

The Northeast Neighborhood features gently rolling hills typical of the Shenandoah Valley, with gradual slopes that are mainly oriented towards the northwest and southwest. These hills influence both viewsheds and flooding.

The topography of the Neighborhood provides **scenic views and vistas** that both residents and visitors enjoy. Some of the most picturesque views can be seen from the highest elevations, located near the cemetery and Ralph Sampson Park. The feed mill, located at the corner of N. Main St. and Kratzer Ave., is another prominent landmark that can be seen from higher elevations in the community and serves as a significant visual cue when entering or leaving the Neighborhood.

The community identified **frequent flooding** on Sterling Street, E. Gay Street, and Hill Street as a significant concern. Newtown Cemetery, a cemetery over 150 years old dedicated to the burial of freedmen, faces significant water issues due to erosion from foot traffic, runoff from rainwater, and a berm causing ponding of water on the property. In 2019, an effort was made to plant more trees at the cemetery, spearheaded by NENA and students at Broadway High School, to celebrate the cemetery's 150th anniversary and help prevent future erosion.

The City started a Drainage Improvement Program to evaluate existing infrastructure, identify necessary upgrades and alternative drainage routes, and reduce the frequency and severity of flooding. Residents in the Neighborhood have applied to the program, as there is a history of flooding during heavy storm events, especially along Hill Street, Rock Street, and E. Elizabeth Street.

HRHA Kelley Street Garden, Source: City of Harrisonburg



Ralph Sampson Park, Source: City of Harrisonburg



ENVIRONMENTAL AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Trees not only help prevent erosion, but they also are critical to reducing the urban heat island effect. The urban heat island effect is when a neighborhood experiences significantly higher temperatures than other residential neighborhoods with more green spaces. Impervious surfaces and a lack of tree cover drive this phenomenon. Trees provide shade, cool the air, and reduce heat retention. Currently, tree canopy covers only 20.4% of the Neighborhood, which is lower than the citywide average of 23%, according to the City's 2024 Tree Canopy Study. Community members have expressed a need to plant additional trees and protect existing trees, particularly at the Roses parking lot, which is dominated by impervious surfaces.

The Ralph Sampson Park covers 31 acres in the northeast corner of the Neighborhood. It has steep topography, offering panoramic views of the City and serving as a key elevation point in the Neighborhood. The park features a futsal complex, a natural surface walking trail, basketball courts, a playground, picnic shelters, and a sprayground that opened to the public in July 2025. Many residents note that while the addition of the sprayground is exciting, it does not replace the need for a community swimming pool.

Ralph Sampson Park Basketball Courts, Source: City of Harrisonburg



Ralph Sampson Park Futsal Courts, Source: City of Harrisonburg



Section 4:

Community Engagement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This plan was developed with **community voice as a core value**. From the earliest conversations, the CBOs and the City recognized that this plan could not follow a conventional path. Engagement is not only about collecting feedback, but it is also about listening to lived experiences, validating community pain and pride, and ensuring the strategies in this plan reflect what residents truly want: to be heard, to stay, to thrive, and to belong.

The plan's community engagement was aimed at:

- **Understanding** residents' needs
- **Addressing** past and remaining harms from Urban Renewal
- **Envisioning** the Northeast Neighborhood's future through community input

Recognizing the legacy of displacement and mistrust, the project team used a trauma-informed approach to guide engagement. Principles of safety, trust, empowerment, and cultural awareness shaped all outreach and interactions with the community.

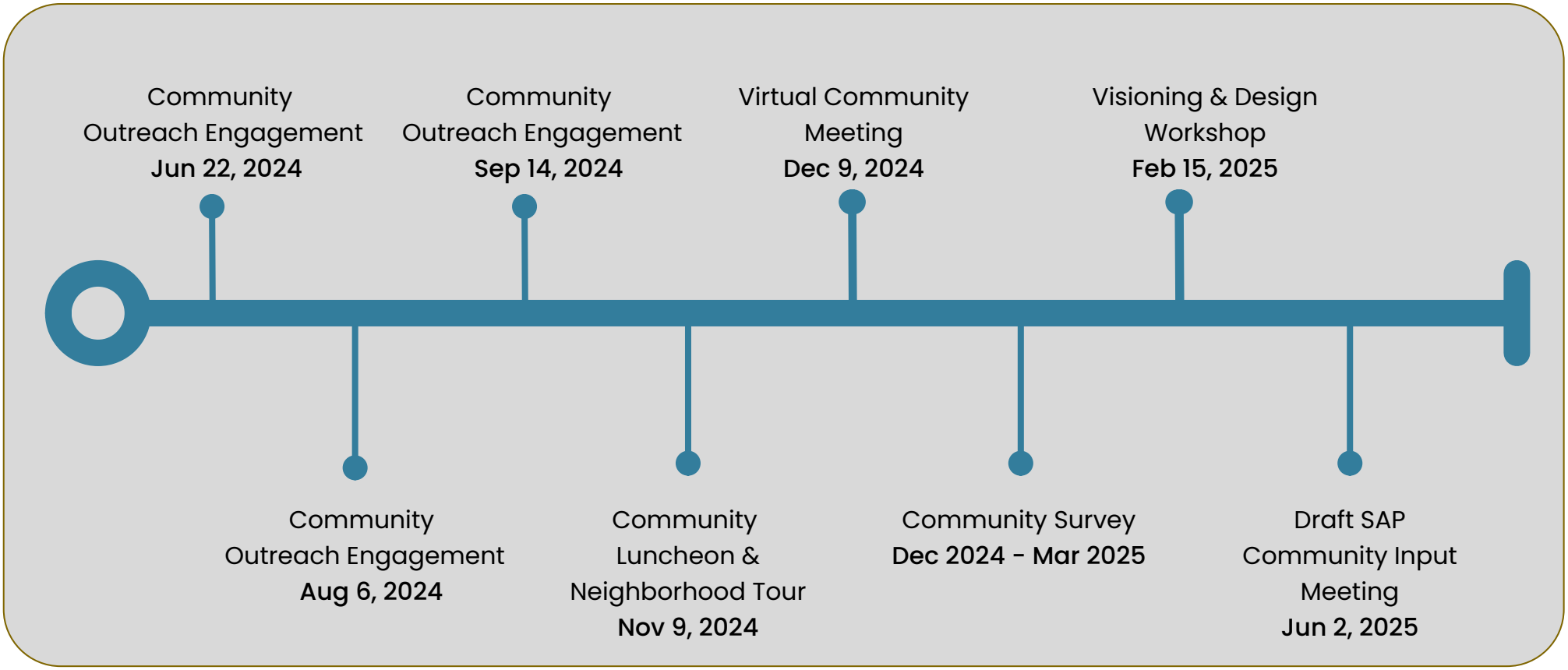
The engagement plan was created by the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA) and the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project (SVBHP), two trusted CBOs with longstanding ties to the Neighborhood. Their leadership helped guarantee the process was rooted in historical context and guided by relationships. The City and project team supported their efforts, encouraging broader participation across different groups within the Neighborhood, including renters, young families, business owners, and long-time residents.

Photo from Engagement Event, Source: City of Harrisonburg



ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

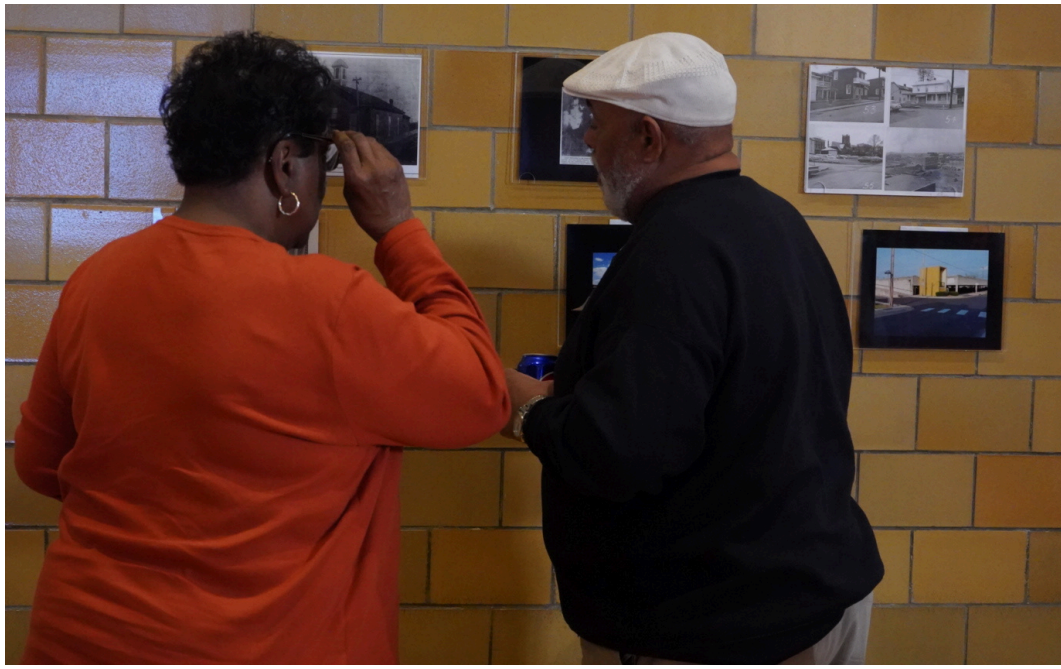
Engagement was woven throughout every phase of the planning process. From community events to workshops, community surveys to neighborhood tours, the team used diverse methods to meet residents where they are. The engagement process targeted a range of stakeholders, including residents of the Northeast Neighborhood, project partners, business owners, and community leaders. Feedback from the engagement process directly shaped the recommendations in the SAP. The engagement efforts are summarized below:



Community Outreach Engagements

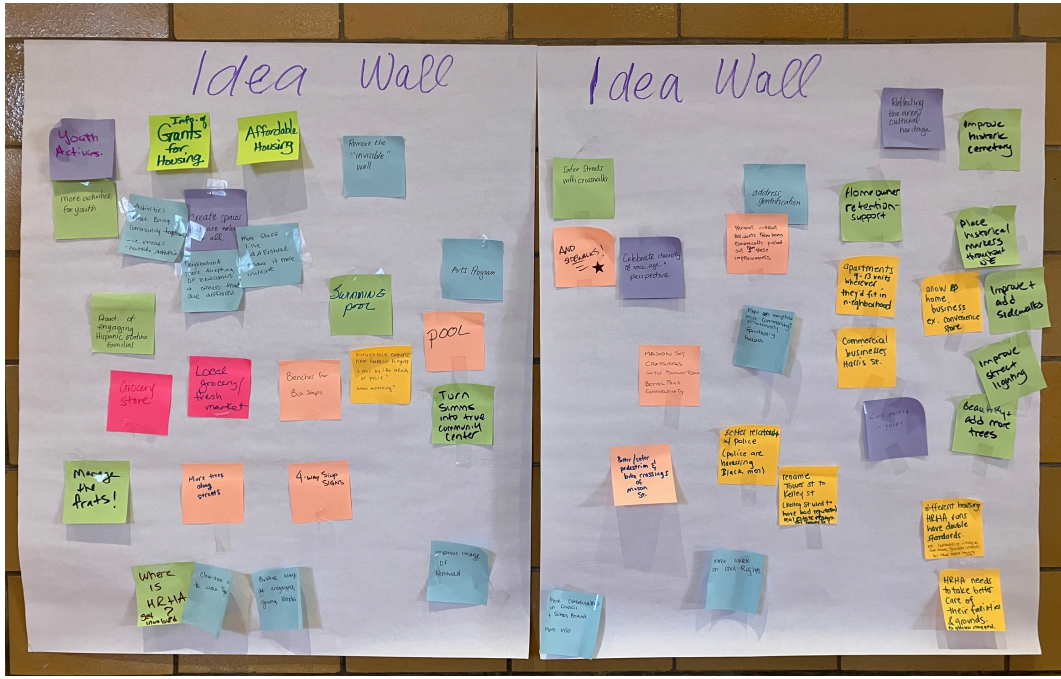
- **Saturday, June 22, 2024**: First Baptist Church Festival
- **Tuesday, August 6, 2024**: National Night Out in the Northeast Neighborhood
- **Saturday, September 14, 2024**: Harrisonburg Rockingham African American Festival

Over several months, the Harrisonburg Community Connectors team participated in three local events to introduce the Community Connectors program, present the project team, and share the vision for a community-centered Small Area Plan. These events helped build a shared understanding and generate interest in the project.



Photos from Engagement Events, Source: City of Harrisonburg and CHPlanning





Community Luncheon & Neighborhood Tour

Saturday, November 9, 2024

The Harrisonburg Community Connectors Luncheon at the Lucy F. Simms Center served as the project's official kickoff event. **Thirty-four community members** gathered to set the stage for the SAP, reviewing the impacts of Urban Renewal, and learning about the planning process and project goals. Residents identified priorities through various engagement activities, including an idea wall to facilitate group brainstorming, a priority dot voting exercise to visualize what the group values most, a map station to gather local knowledge, and a vision board to help envision the future.

After the luncheon, interested attendees joined the project team on a Neighborhood tour. The tour offered participants an opportunity to physically reconnect with spaces impacted by Urban Renewal, while also gaining insight into present-day challenges related to safety, economic development, and Neighborhood character.







Photos from Community Luncheon, Source: CHPlanning

Virtual Community Meeting

Monday, December 9, 2024

Several community members joined a virtual meeting held over Zoom to provide feedback regarding the Northeast Neighborhood's past, present, and future. During this virtual event, attendees answered the following discussion questions through the meeting chat.

1. What do you value most about the Northeast Neighborhood's history and identity?
2. What types of changes or opportunities would you like to see to improve economic and community development?
3. What kind of community do you envision for future generations living in the Northeast Neighborhood?

Participants shared reflections on the Neighborhood's history and identity and discussed how to improve economic and community development. Many emphasized preserving the Neighborhood's character and protecting residents from displacement.

Initial Input and Priorities

After the first two engagement events, the project team reviewed and synthesized the early feedback received from the community. Participants emphasized the need for affordable housing, economic opportunity, public safety, and spaces that foster belonging and pride. Residents also highlighted the importance of reconnecting to Downtown and protecting the character of the Neighborhood.

From this early feedback, the project team identified five guiding priorities that would shape the goals for the SAP:



GATHERING AND BELONGING



RECONNECTING TO DOWNTOWN



SAFETY AND SECURITY



OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL (ECONOMIC MOBILITY)



HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

These draft themes were presented at the next phase of engagement for refinement and confirmation.

Visioning and Design Workshop

Saturday, February 15, 2025

Forty-nine community members met at the Lucy F. Simms Center to refine ideas from earlier engagement sessions and provide feedback on goals and strategies. Attendees participated in a **visioning activity** and a **design workshop activity.**

- The **visioning activity** provided an opportunity for the participants to co-create an aspirational, inclusive, and actionable vision statement for the SAP that is rooted in identity and to review the draft themes.
- During the **design workshop activity**, participants provided feedback on initial strategies and ideas related to the five priority themes. This collaborative effort helped foster community ownership of the planning process, ensuring that future decisions reflect their values and aspirations.

Participant Priority Rankings:

- *Opportunity for All (Economic Mobility)* received the strongest emphasis (40%), reflecting a community-wide focus on access to jobs, housing affordability, and financial stability.

- *Safety and Security* ranked second (17%), underscoring the need for improved lighting, safer streets, and more substantial community presence.

- *Gathering and Belonging*, *Reconnecting to Downtown*, and *Healthy Environments* were equally valued (14%), signaling a desire for stronger social connections, access to green space, and better integration with the broader city.

These priorities became the foundation for developing goals and strategies in the SAP, as discussed in Section 5.

Photos from the Visioning and Design Workshop, Source: CHPlanning





Community Survey

December 2024 to March 2025

The project team launched a survey inviting residents and businesses to express their views on the Northeast Neighborhood. Created on SurveyMonkey, the project team distributed the survey via QR codes, email, the project website, yard signs, and printed copies. It received **101 responses**. Key findings included:

- **Affordable housing** was the highest priority, with 62 respondents identifying it as their top concern.
- **Safer pedestrian and biking infrastructure** was also strongly supported, with 52 respondents ranking it as a top issue.
- Residents cited **community events, better lighting, and local economic growth** as ways to improve Neighborhood safety.
- In terms of transportation and accessibility, respondents emphasized the need for **improved pedestrian safety, sidewalks, and public transit options.**
- Open-ended responses offered further ideas around **youth programming, future uses of key sites** like Roses, and a **10-year vision** for the Neighborhood.



Yard signs advertising the survey, Source: CHPlanning

Draft Small Area Plan Community Input Meeting

Monday, June 2, 2025

The project team hosted a community meeting at the Lucy F. Simms Center to gather community feedback on the proposed SAP goals and strategies. The open-format discussion drew strong engagement from approximately **50 attendees**, who voiced support for youth engagement, expanded childcare access, zoning reforms, and improvements to public spaces. Many participants also emphasized the importance of housing equity and called for formal acknowledgments of historical injustices.

The stories, priorities, and lived experiences shared through each event created a foundation for the next step in the planning process. Through community events, workshops, surveys, and conversations, residents defined what matters most: **preserving identity, creating opportunity, and fostering a sense of belonging.** The project team organized all engagement feedback under five core themes and used it to inform the development of **Goals and Strategy Recommendations** in the Small Area Plan.

Section 5:

Planning For the Future: Community Priorities, Goals, and Strategies

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

This section bridges the existing conditions and the future of the Northeast Neighborhood by:

- **Establishing** a vision statement,
- **Identifying** strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (S.W.O.C.), and
- **Setting** focus areas, goals, and strategies.

To develop this section, the project team synthesized **existing conditions, relevant plans, and community input** to shape a comprehensive and forward-looking framework for Neighborhood growth and improvement.

The Northeast Neighborhood and its partners made exciting progress over the course of the SAP planning process. There is significant momentum and mutually shared commitment to **reversing the negative impacts of Urban Renewal.** The Northeast Neighborhood residents were engaged in developing the Plan's goals and implementation strategies, and residents will continue to be engaged in making the plan become a reality. The goals, strategies, and recommendations are the result of many candid and difficult conversations—discussions geared toward establishing an openness for trust.

The plan focuses on **placemaking** and **place-based solutions** that are built on neighborhood-serving organizations, institutions, and infrastructure. At the same time, the plan promotes greater comfort and confidence for Neighborhood residents who might enjoy amenities offered Downtown. **In summary, the plan and its goals, strategies and recommendations restore a path for increased agency, ownership, authority, and accountability for the people who call the Northeast Neighborhood home.**

VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement describes the desired future for the community, reflecting the hopes and aspirations of residents.

COMMUNITY'S VISION FOR THE NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD

The Northeast Neighborhood is a resilient community, rich in history, particularly in our African American heritage. Today, we are known for our caring and diverse spirit, where residents can connect and access the resources they need. We envision a future that honors our past while building a vibrant and welcoming community.

Here, everyone has the opportunity to thrive through homeownership, wealth-building, and access to essential services like quality education, affordable housing, and childcare. We will be a model of inclusivity, guided by the principles of equity, compassion, and collaboration. We will have well-lit walking and biking routes that reconnect the neighborhood with downtown.

Together, we will ensure that every voice is heard, and every decision is made with the well-being of all residents in mind. We aspire to create a safe, supportive and joyful neighborhood - a place where our children can flourish, our businesses can thrive, and our residents feel a deep sense of pride and belonging.

S.W.O.C. ANALYSIS

The comments received during the community engagement efforts were organized into a S.W.O.C. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) matrix. The matrix is a valuable analysis tool to identify the actions needed to achieve the Northeast Neighborhood's vision and goals.

Strengths are existing features, amenities, and characteristics that contribute to a community's success and well-being. These include intangible attributes as well as physical assets. Thriving communities reinforce, protect, and build on all their strengths.

Weaknesses are existing features, conditions, or problems that hinder a community from realizing its goals. A community should consider ways to address or overcome these obstacles.

Opportunities, unlike strengths and weaknesses, are more forward-looking and deal with larger forces. These are prospects that could help a community realize its goals. A community should consider ways to capitalize on these opportunities strategically.

Challenges, like opportunities, are more forward-looking. These future challenges could hinder the community from realizing its goals. A community should consider ways to avoid or mitigate threats.

STRENGTHS

- Many residents enjoy walking to Downtown.
- Strong desire to activate vacant lots and create pocket parks for children's play areas, particularly using church properties along Broad Street.
- Strong desire to restore/build gathering spaces.
  - Restore lost community spaces such as pools, civic centers, and youth activity centers, to provide safe spaces for children and young adults.
  - Interest in reviving an annual dinner at the Simms Center, which the community used to host.
  - Support for reviving community concerts, food festivals, and arts programming.
  - Suggestions to add pickleball courts and other outdoor activity spaces.
- Caring and diverse neighborhood.
  - Interest in creating more welcoming spaces for immigrant families, particularly Hispanic and Latino communities.
- Rich local history.
  - Desire to highlight and preserve the Neighborhood's civil rights history.
- Presence of strong CBOs.
- Mason Street is owned by the City, offering opportunities for local improvements.

WEAKNESSES

- Concerns about walkability, and a lack of continuous sidewalks and clear crosswalks.
  - Difficulty navigating the Neighborhood safely, especially at Rock Street and Mason Street.
  - Some residents use alleys as alternative walking paths because sidewalks are missing.
- Concerns about crime, drug activity, and squatting in vacant properties.
- Traffic safety concerns, particularly speeding at Rock Street and Mason Street.
- Lack of gathering spaces for youth.
  - Loss of recreational amenities such as a pool and baseball field, which past generations enjoyed.
  - The spraygrounds do not replace the need for a real pool, as many older residents learned to swim because a pool was accessible.
  - The Simms Center and Ralph Sampson Park feel less child-friendly due to the presence of older youth.
- Concerns about rental fees at the Simms Center (e.g., $75 for funerals), with residents feeling that they should not have to pay for a space that was once community owned.
  - Lack of willingness to open the space up to community groups, making booking the space challenging to do.
  - Lack of amenities that often come with rental and community spaces.
- Frequent flooding on Sterling Street, Gay Street, and Hill Street.
- Noise pollution from parks late at night or early in the morning is prompting requests for better enforcement of quiet hours.
- Concerns about noise pollution from traffic, including jack braking and drag racing on Route 33.

OPPORTUNITIES

- City-owned streets, like Mason Street, make it easier to implement improvements.
- Community Connectors and Smart Growth America support the redesign of City-owned Mason Street.
- Interest in reviving past Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) programs (e.g., computer classes, basic graphics, photography) and a hope for a Downtown satellite campus.
- Potential partnership with local schools to use the Simms Center for after-school programs and youth engagement.
- Interest from Spottswood Elementary School in expanding school partnerships to support after-school programs and youth engagement.

CHALLENGES

- Concerns about the loss of trees due to storms, urban improvements (e.g., sidewalk installations), and lack of maintenance.
- Concerns that past community requests for youth spaces have been ignored, leading to skepticism about the potential for meaningful change.
- Concerns that Boys & Girls Club use of the Simms Center may limit space for broader youth programming.
- Concerns about rising housing costs and displacement due to new development.
- Concerns about market-driven development that may not reflect the needs of existing residents.
- Perception that the City's planning process does not fully reflect community input, with some feeling decisions are predetermined.

KEY THEMES, FOCUS AREAS, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Building on the vision statement and S.W.O.C. analysis, the project team expanded the original five key themes (priorities) into nine focus areas and twelve goals, providing a clear framework for specific strategies.

KEY THEMES

- GATHERING AND BELONGING
- RECONNECTING TO DOWNTOWN
- SAFETY AND SECURITY
- OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL (ECONOMIC MOBILITY)
- HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

FOCUS AREAS	GOALS
 HISTORY AND CULTURE	GOAL 1
 GATHERING AND BELONGING	GOAL 2
 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS	GOALS 3 & 4
 CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN	GOALS 5 & 6
 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY	GOAL 7
 HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY	GOAL 8
 ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS	GOAL 9
 NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY	GOAL 10 & 11
 HEALTH	GOAL 12

HOW TO READ THIS SECTION

KEY THEMES
Five guiding principles shaped by community input.

FOCUS AREAS
Defined areas of focus within broader key themes.

GOALS
Broad and long-term guides for achieving the community's vision.

STRATEGIES
Specific policies, infrastructure improvements, partnerships, or other actions necessary to achieve objectives, create essential conditions, or overcome barriers.

ACTIONS
Concrete steps taken to implement strategies.

CASE STUDY OR SPOTLIGHT
Focused example that highlights relevant context or a similar project.

GATHERING AND BELONGING

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Goal 1: Celebrate and educate others about the Northeast Neighborhood's rich African American history and cultural heritage.

Strategy 1.1: Develop programs that celebrate the Northeast Neighborhood's African American heritage.

- *Gather history from those with lived experience and history of the Northeast Neighborhood.*

HISTORY AND CULTURE

The Northeast Neighborhood began as a sanctuary for formerly enslaved people seeking to escape a life of hardship, offering them a place to settle and establish roots. Over the years, the Northeast Neighborhood has evolved into a diverse community, continually embracing new cultures and demographics. Its rich history continues to shape the Neighborhood's identity, fostering a strong sense of belonging among its residents.

Goal 1: Celebrate and educate others about the Northeast Neighborhood's rich African American history and cultural heritage.

Strategy 1.1: Develop programs that celebrate the Northeast Neighborhood's African American heritage.

- Gather history from those with lived experience and history of the Northeast Neighborhood.
- Create exhibits, indoors and/or outdoors, to showcase and capture oral histories from legacy residents and their descendants.
- Organize intergenerational events to connect seniors with younger residents, fostering a shared appreciation of heritage.
- Implement ways for community members to provide feedback and suggest improvements for programs.

Strategy 1.2: Identify reliable financial resources to preserve and enhance Newtown's cultural assets.

- Identify and create a list of cultural assets, including Newtown Cemetery, Ida Mae Francis Tourist Home, Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center, the AME Church, and the Historic Dallard-Newman House.
- Partner with agencies to identify and apply for funding resources.
- Apply for grants specifically designed to preserve cultural heritage assets.
- Complete the renovation of the Dallard-Newman House to serve as a museum to showcase exhibits about the Neighborhood's history and capture oral histories from long-time residents.
- Collaborate with other communities to learn about their funding sources and strategies.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Goal 1: Celebrate and educate others about the Northeast Neighborhood's rich African American history and cultural heritage.

Strategy 1.3: Incorporate public art that raises awareness about what was lost during the Urban Renewal process and celebrates the Neighborhood's diversity of languages and ethnic backgrounds today through a variety of public art media (e.g., sculpture, performances, festivals).

- Issue a call for local artists to contribute to public art projects.
- Partner with property owners and art groups to facilitate the installation of public art.
- Organize art walks to showcase the new installations and educate the public about their significance.
- Host community meetings to identify the best locations for public art installations

OPENING DOORS:
THE ART OF INCLUSION PROJECT IN HARRISONBURG, VA

In 2023, The Arc of Harrisonburg & Rockingham and the Arts Council of the Valley collaborated to showcase twenty artists who transformed household doors into vibrant canvases, celebrating themes of inclusion, acceptance, unity, diversity, and belonging.

Strategy 1.4: Attract tourists and visitors to the Northeast Neighborhood to learn about Newtown's history and cultural assets.

- Install signage and historical markers detailing significant historical events and figures, including those related to Newtown, Urban Renewal, and the Civil Rights era.
- Create a self-guided walking tour map for residents and visitors to explore.
- Develop promotional materials highlighting the Neighborhood's events and attractions.

Strategy 1.5: Continue to use preservation easements, registries, and other tools to enhance the architectural integrity and historical significance of homes and sites in the neighborhood.

- Educate the community about existing preservation tools and their benefits.
- Continue to partner with local organizations and universities to restore and maintain historic homes and sites.
- Preserve Newtown Cemetery through structural interventions that reduce flooding, such as installing protective fences and planting additional trees.
- Explore the feasibility of creating a *historic overlay district* to include parts of the Neighborhood.

A **historic overlay district** adds additional requirements to a zoning ordinance district that protects the historic character of the area.



GATHERING AND BELONGING

Recently, the Neighborhood has experienced significant demographic shifts, notably with a growing Hispanic population. As we look to the future, it is essential to focus on the emerging younger demographic, particularly those in their 30s, while also honoring and supporting the older Black residents who have long been a cornerstone of the community. This balanced approach will ensure that the Northeast Neighborhood remains inclusive and thriving for generations to come.

Goal 2: Build community connections through placemaking, inclusive gathering spaces, and community events for all ethnic groups present in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 2.1: Organize accessible and inclusive community concerts, food festivals, and arts programming for everyone at the Lucy F. Simms Center.

- Collaborate with the Neighborhood and graduates of the Simms School Reunion Committee to create programming and events that are accessible to Neighborhood residents, such as school reunions, May Day celebrations, festivals, and lawn parties.
- Involve children and teens in event planning and programming.
- Identify potential short- and long-term placemaking opportunities and requirements (e.g., permits, use of vacant lots) with the assistance of other stakeholders (e.g., City, James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University).
- Explore grants to fund these events.
- Create a bulletin board kiosk and a community list-serve to inform community members about Neighborhood events and activities.
- Invite food kitchens and food trucks to participate in events, offering affordable options and social gathering spots.
- Identify funders to eliminate rental fees for CBOs located in the Northeast Neighborhood.
- Offer childcare services at events to ensure accessibility for families.
- Evaluate the long-term use of space in the Lucy F. Simms Center to prioritize the Northeast Neighborhood residents' needs.

> *I believe my vision for this underserved community would be the creation of space where all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic background, have equitable access to quality healthcare, education, employment opportunities, and essential services, enabling them to thrive and fully participate in society, free from systemic barriers and disparities.*
> - Resident



GATHERING AND BELONGING

Goal 2: Build community connections through placemaking, inclusive gathering spaces, and community events for all ethnic groups present in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 2.2: Partner with local schools to host after-school programs at the Lucy F. Simms Center to deepen youth engagement.

- Facilitate multi-generational meet-and-greets to foster connections between youth and seniors.
- Develop educational workshops at the Lucy F. Simms Center on various topics that cater to youth, like tutoring, first aid training, entrepreneur courses, art classes, and cooking classes.
- Collaborate with local schools, places of worship, universities, and organizations to offer community service opportunities around the Neighborhood.

Strategy 2.3: Create inclusive spaces that welcome newcomers from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the Northeast Neighborhood.

- Distribute event schedules via internal and external bulletin boards and social media to keep residents informed.
- Ensure signage and information are available in multiple languages to accommodate diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- Leverage local church presence to serve as informal community hubs and strengthen community cohesion.
- Make spaces accessible to individuals with disabilities by ensuring ADA compliance.
- Install benches and picnic areas to encourage social connections.

Strategy 2.4: Create friendly environments for senior citizens that support independence, well-being, and social inclusion.

- Engage senior citizens in the planning process.
- Create a walkable Neighborhood by providing well-maintained sidewalks, shade, safe crossings, accessible gathering spaces, services and amenities (e.g., grocery stores, markets, bus stops), and removing any tripping hazards.
- Provide open spaces that include seating, shade, and restrooms.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

At the core of this plan is a commitment to continue to work hand-in-hand with the community to shape a shared vision for the future of the Northeast Neighborhood. This means ensuring that growth and investment reflect the priorities and aspirations of residents, not outside interests. Achieving this requires building local capacity, empowering residents to take active roles in decision-making, and supporting Neighborhood leaders with the skills and tools they need to guide change. Transparent, ongoing dialogue is essential, creating spaces where everyone feels welcome and heard. Recognizing and honoring the community's history is also vital to moving forward, which includes expanding existing programs to be more inclusive, through multilingual outreach, accessible meeting locations, and culturally relevant engagement. By centering community voices and fostering inclusive participation, this plan aims to create a future that is rooted in equity, pride, and shared ownership.

Goal 3: Empower the Northeast Neighborhood's community or residents to shape the future of the area.

Strategy 3.1: Maintain engagement between the City and the CBOs through meetings in familiar settings (e.g., neighborhoods, places of worship) and public forums to foster dialogue.

- Work with trusted community leaders, such as church leaders, to encourage participation and dialogue.
- Distribute information to the Neighborhood (e.g., on a website or social media) and communicate with partner entities about the languages spoken in the Neighborhood to facilitate the creation of translated materials.
- Hold meetings in pedestrian- and bike-accessible locations, such as the Simms Center and places of worship.
- Create a Northeast Neighborhood community bulletin board kiosk, as well as a community list-serve, to inform community members about community events and activities in the Neighborhood and Downtown.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Goal 3: Empower the Northeast Neighborhood's community or residents to shape the future of the area.

Strategy 3.2: Educate both the public and City staff about the impacts of past Urban Renewal and current opportunities for improvement.

- Develop materials in different languages to educate the public about the impacts of Urban Renewal and current opportunities, and make these materials publicly available in various locations.
- Collect and preserve the cultural history of the Northeast Neighborhood through oral history and documentary material.
- Continue to offer free walking history tours to educate the community about the history of the Northeast Neighborhood and to enhance the tours by adding more stops and information.
- Create a public location (e.g., a website) for community members to access the research completed on Urban Renewal and the inventory of all available historical documents.
- Continue to collaborate with Harrisonburg City Public Schools and Rockingham County Public Schools to incorporate the Neighborhood's history into the curriculum.

Strategy 3.3: Build CBOs' capacity for grant writing and project management.

- Connect with training opportunities for small nonprofits and grant writing.

Goal 4: Addressing past harm caused by Urban Renewal.

Strategy 4.1: Prioritize infrastructure projects in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 4.2: Implement infrastructure projects, especially stormwater and transportation projects, as identified in this SAP.

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN

During the Reconstruction era, formerly enslaved people moved to the Newtown area, now known as the Northeast Neighborhood. In the early 1900s, the area thrived with Black-owned shops and businesses, creating a vibrant atmosphere. However, it thrived out of necessity, as Black residents were confined to this area and had to ensure they had all the resources they needed because leaving the area was unsafe. Urban Renewal projects further isolated the Neighborhood by widening Mason Street into a four-lane road, creating a physical and psychological barrier that made accessing Downtown Harrisonburg more challenging. The community and the City aim to improve access to and from the Northeast Neighborhood and Downtown. Despite its proximity, Downtown feels distant due to heavy traffic, unsafe pedestrian paths, and unwelcoming infrastructure. Reconnecting the Northeast Neighborhood to Downtown is a priority, aiming to create safer and more accessible routes that foster a sense of unity and inclusion.

Goal 5: Strengthen the link between the Northeast Neighborhood and Downtown.

Strategy 5.1: Expand public art and Downstreet streetscape to the Downtown area in the Northeast Neighborhood.

- Identify locations, public and private, for expansion of public art (e.g., murals, traffic cabinets, sculptures).
- Incorporate the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) implementation of the Downtown Streetscape Plan in the Downtown area of the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 5.2: Enhance Northeast Neighborhood gateways, or entry points, to reinforce placemaking and strengthen community identity.

- Gather feedback from the Neighborhood on what gateways should look like and what should be placed at those points to reflect the Neighborhood's values.
- Identify potential private funding sources to support the enhancement of the gateways.

GATEWAY SIGNAGE FOR SEVEN CORNERS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA

Fairfax County community designed gateway signs and banners to reflect its identity and values and distributed a survey to ensure the signage enhances the community's sense of place.

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN

Goal 6: Revitalize N. Mason Street to make it an inviting street.

Strategy 6.1: Improve N. Mason Street to make it more bike- and pedestrian-friendly based on Smart Growth America's Complete Streets Leadership Academy's demonstration project results.

- Ensure sidewalks and pedestrian curb ramps are ADA compliant.
- Enhance street crossings with markings and traffic signals for safer pedestrian movement.
- Add midblock crossings at key locations to improve safety, such as between the Rockingham County Administrative Building and Elizabeth Street Parking Deck, Triangle Park (along N. Mason St., between E. Rock St., and E. Elizabeth St.) and the Friendly City Food Co-Op, and the Rockingham County Administrative Building and Roses discount department store.

Strategy 6.2: Convert N. Mason Street to a major neighborhood destination by attracting businesses and promoting community activation.

- Develop a wayfinding and placemaking strategy to encourage foot traffic.
- Enhance street-level activations by incorporating seating and other amenities into public spaces on N. Mason Street.
- Explore public/private partnerships to acquire property along N. Mason Street, advancing community-driven development.
- Repurpose underutilized parking areas for community use or small businesses.
- Provide existing tools and resources for local businesses to open on N. Mason Street.
- Find opportunities to leverage available space in the Comcast Building for the benefit of the Northeast Neighborhood, its residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.
- Explore the opportunity to reinstate Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) satellite campus on Mason Street to attract students and educational activities.
- Extend the city's annual Best.Weekend.Ever festival and monthly First Friday events to include Mason Street.
- Reexamine setback, massing, and other building form regulations to enhance the pedestrian experience along Mason Street.

Existing tools and resources include Black & Brown Owned Business Growth Program (B³) and the Harrisonburg Entrepreneurship Development Initiative (HEDI). B³ seeks to grow and attract Black and Brown owned businesses by providing business support, while the HEDI program supports early-stage business owners by providing business consulting services.

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN

Goal 6: Revitalize N. Mason Street to make it an inviting street.

Strategy 6.3: Implement urban design projects to connect the Northeast Neighborhood to Downtown and other destinations in the City.

- Develop streetscape design standards and/or guidelines that align with the historic character of the Neighborhood and Downtown.
- Identify and prioritize high-need areas for urban design improvements.

Strategy 6.4: Implement Complete Streets interventions on N. Mason Street to mitigate the legacy of segregation that excluded African Americans from participating in Downtown civic life.

- Collaborate with a range of stakeholders, including business owners, bus riders, residents, delivery services, county offices, and the fire department, to achieve Complete Streets goals.
- Explore rebuilding the corridor to allow two-way traffic on the west side of the median (E. Elizabeth Street to N. Main Street), thereby repurposing for a combination of uses, including open space, paths, seating, and other amenities.
- Enhance the streetscape with greenery and planters to beautify the area, provide shade, and improve aesthetics.



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

One of the most pressing issues in the Neighborhood is the lack of reliable and continuous sidewalks, which are essential for mobility. Additionally, the bus stops in the area are poorly equipped, lacking amenities such as seating, shelter, and lighting, making waiting for and riding the bus uncomfortable. Lighting is another significant concern; residents would feel more secure walking around in the evening if there were better lighting, as the current inadequate lighting makes the Neighborhood feel unsafe after dark. Despite previous efforts to implement traffic calming measures, residents remain concerned about speeding and disregard for stop signs, which continue to pose risks to pedestrian safety and the well-being of the Neighborhood. Addressing these concerns is crucial for enhancing mobility, safety, and the quality of life in the Neighborhood.

Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 7.1: Provide improvements in walking routes to connect people to places with a focus on sidewalks.

- Engage residents in prioritizing improvements during the next Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan update.
- Make sidewalk improvements in areas with public institutions, housing developments, transportation hubs, and frequently visited places.
- Implement pedestrian-friendly pathways to enhance accessibility and connectivity between N. Mason Street and surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategy 7.2: Improve safety on local streets in the Northeast Neighborhood by installing additional traffic calming measures where appropriate.

- Identify priority areas for traffic calming measures using data and public engagement.
- Install speed bumps, speed tables, or other traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds.
- Install new or enhanced crosswalks in high-traffic areas, especially near churches and community gathering spaces.
- Evaluate and address sightline obstructions (e.g., fences, foliage, parked cars, etc.) at intersections.



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 7.3: Add and improve lighting throughout the Northeast Neighborhood, especially around key walking corridors.

- Partner with Harrisonburg Electric Commission to develop a lighting plan for the Northeast Neighborhood.
- Explore opportunities for installing mid-height warm lighting on privately owned properties throughout the community, funded by private sources.
- Encourage residents to turn on door and porch lights during appropriate evening hours.
- Encourage new developments to have outdoor lights.
- Ensure lights are low-glare, warm-toned to reduce potential light pollution.

Strategy 7.4: Increase public transportation use by improving the comfort, safety, and accessibility of bus stops.

- Upgrade bus shelters to be more comfortable, with adequate lighting, emergency call buttons, benches, and shelters.
- Advertise trip planning apps that provide riders with real-time information.
- Collaborate with local artists to enhance bus shelter visibility and foster a sense of community identity.

ConnectingVA is a website and mobile app developed by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) that provides a range of transportation options for traveling throughout Virginia, including ride-sharing, transit, biking, and rail.



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 7.5: Increase Neighborhood access to electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

- Continue to include public property (e.g., Ralph Sampson Park) in City solicitations for public-private partnerships to install EV chargers for public use.
- Engage with congregations, private property owners, and HRHA to share the Neighborhood's interest in EV charging stations and explore whether any non-public properties may be interested in installing EV chargers.
- Encourage private property owners to add EV chargers when properties are redeveloped (e.g., Roses, 7-Eleven).

Strategy 7.6: Enhance safety at designated school bus stops.

- Inventory and map all Neighborhood school bus stops.
- Evaluate school bus stops for safety.
- Relocate school bus stops as necessary.
- Educate parents and children directly about bus stop locations, safe roadway crossings, and pedestrian safety.
- Educate drivers about school bus stop awareness, especially during pick-up and drop-off times.

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Harrisonburg is a thriving city, renowned for being a bustling university town where college students significantly contribute to population growth and shape the housing market. Currently, there are some students living in the Northeast Neighborhood, and residents are keen to keep the student population to a minimum. Housing affordability is a significant topic of discussion in the area, with concerns about rising housing costs and the potential displacement that new developments may cause. There have been discussions on affordable housing solutions, with some participants suggesting that housing should be prioritized for existing residents. Many residents are pleased that individuals rather than large development companies own numerous houses. There is a strong interest in zoning policies that support mixed-income development while preventing displacement.

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy 8.1: Update land use regulations and zoning to align with the Neighborhood's preferences.

- Engage residents in updates to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

Strategy 8.2: Explore the use of tax incentives or inclusionary zoning to support and encourage the creation of affordable and mixed-income housing.

- Explore legal authority to mandate a percentage of affordable units for all future developments in the Neighborhood.
- Continue to use the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and the Virginia Housing Opportunity Tax Credit for new affordable housing.

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy 8.3: Preserve existing housing stock.

- Obtain feedback from the community on current challenges in housing preservation.
- Provide homeowner education on maintenance and improvement programs.
- Support residents applying for programs and grants, like the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) or the Energy Assistance Program (EAP).
- Explore providing tax exemptions on the increased value for rehabilitated properties to encourage rehabilitation without displacement.
- Advertise existing tools and programs for established residents who improve housing with their funds or with City funds as a strategy for anti-displacement.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) helps reduce household energy use by installing cost-effective energy-saving measures. The Energy Assistance Program (EAP), run by the Virginia Department of Social Services, supports low-income households with their energy needs through four components: Fuel, Crisis, Cooling, and Weatherization Assistance.

Strategy 8.4: Work with Our Community Place (OCP) and the Navigation Center to identify a new state-of-the-art facility for OCP located outside of the Northeast Neighborhood.

- Hold a discussion with Neighborhood residents to address safety concerns.
- Increase communication between OCP and Neighborhood residents regarding actions taken to improve the safety and security of the facility, particularly after hours.
- Encourage the OCP Board to meet with Neighborhood residents about the long-term goals for OCP based on its recent strategic planning efforts.

REAL ESTATE TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM IN DANVILLE, VA

In 2019, the City of Danville passed a law that gives homeowners a tax break if they significantly renovate their homes for residential use. They only pay property taxes based on the home's value before the renovation, encouraging people to improve their homes without worrying about higher taxes.

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy 8.5: Enhance quality of life and public safety for homeowners, landlords, tenants, and transient populations through code enforcement and proactive efforts to prevent underutilized properties from falling into disrepair.

- Work with the community to develop revitalization plans for vacant parcels, including green spaces, pocket parks, and housing.
- Provide community education and outreach on zoning, property maintenance, junk/trash, and other City Codes.
- Engage HRHA, CBOs, OCP, regional resources (e.g., Habitat for Humanity), and communities of faith in supporting seniors and others who might benefit from support (e.g., disposing of non-compliant porch furniture, yard maintenance, or minor repairs).

Strategy 8.6: Develop a community-centered anti-displacement strategy.

- Host engagement sessions with residents for active participation.
- Explore community-tied housing models, rental-to-ownership pathways, community land banks, and other practices.
- Review policies for public housing applications to identify ways to improve their efficiency.
- Ensure regular evaluation and monitoring through specific metrics, review processes, and community input.
- Identify financial incentives, such as tax abatements, performance grants, and rental assistance, to help homeowners and renters achieve affordable housing goals.
- Analyze how existing policies can be revised to incorporate anti-displacement priorities.
- Explore the creation of a Community Preference Policy, which provides priority placement for affordable units in a neighborhood or group of neighborhoods to low-income applicants who have been displaced from their neighborhood, are current residents at risk of displacement, or are descendants of displaced residents.

EXTREME HOME REPAIR BLITZ IN HAMPTON, VA

The City of Hampton partnered with Habitat for Humanity and the City of Newport News to help elderly, veterans, disabled, or low-income homeowners in the Wythe neighborhood with repairs to the exterior of their homes, like power washing and window repairs.

Strategy 8.7: Facilitate pro-bono estate planning to resolve issues around "tangled" titles, wills, and insurance.

- Develop a list of area residents/organizations willing to volunteer pro bono estate planning.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

The Northeast Neighborhood faces a significant lack of essential services, such as grocery stores and healthcare facilities, which are mostly concentrated in the central business district across Mason Street, making them largely inaccessible to residents. This gap has sparked a strong interest in fostering small business development within the Neighborhood to better serve the community's needs. A key opportunity lies in the redevelopment of the underutilized Roses property, which residents envision as a vibrant mixed-use hub that could include economic, educational, and mixed-income housing opportunities. The area also holds deep African American cultural and historical significance, having endured past injustices like Urban Renewal. Today, there is a renewed commitment to honoring and celebrating this heritage while ensuring the Neighborhood remains inclusive and welcoming to all—legacy residents and newcomers alike. The vision is to create a thriving, diverse community that bridges generations and cultures, rooted in equity and shared opportunity.

Goal 9: Make the Northeast Neighborhood a great place to open, own, and operate a business with a workforce that has opportunities to professionally grow.

Strategy 9.1: Encourage and incentivize future owners to transform the Roses site into a mixed-used hub with economic and educational opportunities, and mixed-income housing.

- Build relationships between future owners and the community to increase transparency and create trust.
- Review case studies of the redevelopment of similar buildings.
- Gather community input on the future of the Roses site.

> *Thriving, inclusive, and welcoming sounds good! Encouraging cooperative/collective ownership of land, housing, and businesses can be an important way to keep it that way. We can foster safety through connections - develop third spaces where people can gather and hold community events. Make sure the Neighborhood improves walkability to make it a pleasant place to be outdoors interacting with neighbors.*
>
> - Resident

ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Goal 9: Make the Northeast Neighborhood a great place to open, own, and operate a business with a workforce that has opportunities to professionally grow.

Strategy 9.2: Create a centralized and accessible community hub for educational and workforce development.

- Promote networking among community businesses and residents.
- Create an online hub that houses information on educational and workforce development opportunities.

Strategy 9.3: Continue to host educational programs and workshops that support all families in areas such as language learning, job training, and civic engagement.

- Provide workshops on financial literacy in various languages, catering to the diverse population of the Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy 9.4: Educate developers, investors, and businesses on how to take advantage of the Opportunity Zone tax incentive, allowing investors to defer taxes on the invested gain amounts until the Congress-mandated deadline.

- Monitor federal policy regarding the Opportunity Zone tax incentive to ensure the City is working within the correct timeline.
- Create and promote workshops to educate developers, investors, and businesses about the Opportunity Zone incentive.

Strategy 9.5: Support small businesses and foster business opportunities in the Northeast Neighborhood.

- Promote available programs through multiple channels, including social media pages, community boards, CBO websites, and other online platforms (e.g., NextDoor, MeetUp).
- Develop a list of all resources available to residents and small businesses.
- Consider a rezoning study to determine zoning allowances for small businesses and home-based enterprises.

Strategy 9.6: Encourage the establishment of new preschools, child care centers, and in-home care providers in the Neighborhood to expand access to high-quality and easily accessible child care.

- Evaluate in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan the possible use of the Lucy F. Simms Center for the provision of child care.
- Conduct a conversation with the faith community and other community-based organizations to explore the potential use of existing facilities for child care.
- Educate residents on the regulations related to in-home child care and local resources to support the establishment of an in-home child care business.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Northeast Neighborhood faces growing environmental and sustainability challenges that demand urgent and thoughtful action. Climate change is already impacting the area, with low-lying zones, such as the historic Newtown Cemetery, experiencing frequent flooding. The abundance of impervious surfaces and inadequate stormwater infrastructure exacerbate these issues by contributing to stormwater runoff and rising temperatures. To build resilience, the community needs more trees and green infrastructure to help mitigate flooding and manage stormwater. Protecting and promoting the Neighborhood's scenic vistas is also a priority, ensuring these natural assets are both preserved and enjoyed.

Goal 10: Build a sustainable Northeast Neighborhood that is resilient to the effects of climate change.

Strategy 10.1: Plant native plants and trees in public areas, like parks, recreational spaces, streets, and private properties, to provide shade, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and reduce stormwater concerns.

- Prioritize areas with high levels of impervious surfaces that increase the risk of flooding, as well as areas that promote walking towards amenities and services.
- Partner with Harrisonburg's Urban Forestry Program as they work to expand the Neighborhood's tree canopy.
- Conduct outreach on the benefits of preserving and planting trees on private properties, as well as financial support programs, such as the Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP) and the Harrisonburg Electric Commission.
- Collaborate with local schools, organizations, and businesses to plant trees and enhance public spaces and private properties.

Strategy 10.2: Partner with established organizations and agencies to provide community gardens and pollinator gardens to encourage biodiversity and local food production.

- Consider partnerships with nonprofit organizations to support community-based beautification programs.
- Host public education workshops on pollinator gardens, native plants, and sustainable gardening.
- Work with the city's Pollinator Program to explore extending the city's pollinator corridor into the Northeast Neighborhood.

THE WORKFORCE - THE GREAT RALEIGH CLEANUP AND CITY OF RALEIGH BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM, RALEIGH, NC

The City of Raleigh, North Carolina, partners with local nonprofit, The Great Raleigh Cleanup, to employ people experiencing homelessness to beautify City locations, like parks, waterways, and roadsides.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 10: Build a sustainable Northeast Neighborhood that is resilient to the effects of climate change.

Strategy 10.3: Explore the opportunity for installation of recycling bins, trash cans, and dog waste stations at appropriate locations.

- Identify priority areas.

Strategy 10.4: Use multi-level resources (individual, organizational, and municipal) to implement green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and bioretention systems, for stormwater management and flood mitigation where feasible.

- Educate residents on best management practices they can implement to reduce flooding and reduce their Stormwater Utility Fee.
- Conduct a flooding analysis to identify areas that experience frequent flooding and should be prioritized for stormwater management interventions.
- Identify projects that could be eligible for the Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP) to develop, design, and construct stormwater practices.

Strategy 10.5: Expand renewable energy, energy conservation, weatherization, and water-efficient technologies in the Northeast Neighborhood as part of broader sustainability efforts.

- Educate the community on solar installation, energy conservation, weatherization, and water-efficient technology opportunities.
- Determine a list of City-owned and HRHA facilities that are suitable for using renewable energy and water-efficient technologies.
- Identify available funding sources for infrastructure investments and apply for grants.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 11: Preserve the Northeast Neighborhood's scenic vistas.

Strategy 11.1: Improve awareness, access, and amenities to enhance community and visitor enjoyment of Northeast scenic vistas.

- Educate the public about this Neighborhood amenity through signs and educational campaigns.
- Explore working with Scenic Virginia to assess and inventory vistas or consider partnering with Scenic America to protect this neighborhood amenity.
- Add more seating in Ralph Sampson Park to enjoy the views.

Strategy 11.2: Establish land use strategies (e.g., zoning, easement, etc.) to preserve and protect scenic vistas throughout the Neighborhood.

- Limit the placement and height of any amenity that may block the current vistas.

HEALTH

The Neighborhood lacks essential services like grocery stores and healthcare facilities, which limit access to fresh, affordable food and medical care. Addressing these gaps—while educating residents about available resources and opportunities—will be key to creating a healthier, more sustainable environment for all.

Goal 12: Enhance Neighborhood health by ensuring access to affordable, healthy foods, welfare services, ADA-compliant facilities, and recreational spaces.

Strategy 12.1: Improve access to fresh, affordable food through farmers' markets, local grocery stores, cooperative food options, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.

- Examine zoning regulations to support more access to grocery stores and other food sources.
- Support aspiring entrepreneurs who will provide affordable, local, and culturally appropriate food through mobile units, events, food stands, brick and mortar shops, or innovative enterprises.
- Explore tax incentives, loans, and funds (e.g., Virginia Food Access Investment Fund loans and grants) to fund grocery stores in low-income areas.
- Create a handout for WIC/SNAP recipients that includes a map showing locations where SNAP is accepted, such as the Farmers Market and Friendly City Food Co-Op.
- Explore establishing a Healthy Corner Store Initiative.

Strategy 12.2: Investigate sustainable urban agriculture and food production practices.

- Encourage the maintenance and growth of community gardens, incorporating planter boxes.
- Offer educational programs to residents on how to grow their food.
- Explore the use of vacant lots for urban agricultural use.
- Explore partnerships with residents, places of worship, and other organizations to establish additional community gardens, similar to the existing Kelley Street Garden.

HEALTHY CORNER STORE INITIATIVE IN RICHMOND, VA

The Healthy Corner Store Initiative, led by the Virginia Department of Health, seeks to increase access to nutritious foods in underserved communities. In Richmond, the program equipped local corner stores with refrigerators stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables sourced from nearby farms. These healthy options are offered at prices lower than those typically found in grocery stores, making them more accessible to residents.

HEALTH

Goal 12: Enhance Neighborhood health by ensuring access to affordable, healthy foods, welfare services, ADA-compliant facilities, and recreational spaces.

Strategy 12.3: Continue to provide behavioral health services outside the Northeast Neighborhood and promote affordable health services and mental wellness support for unhoused individuals, especially during daytime hours.

- Develop a map that shows where services and resources are located and how they can be accessed, using the Strength in Peers' Community Resource Center's Resource Guide as a reference.
- Continue offering mobile primary care services, such as the Mobile Sentara bus, and expand services to include counseling and therapy.

Strategy 12.4: Encourage physical activity and water safety education by maintaining existing recreational spaces and creating a new swimming pool for all Neighborhood residents.

- Explore opportunities to add more recreational spaces based on community engagement and available funding.
- Invest in amenities at the Simms Center's fitness center and gymnasium.

The Sentara Mobile Care bus makes weekly visits to the Simms Center, offering full-service primary care.

Section 6:

Implementation Matrix

HOW TO READ THIS SECTION

PRIORITY

Priority levels—high, medium, and low—are assigned based on feedback from community engagement efforts.

LEAD ENTITY

Party mainly responsible for the implementation of the recommendation.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Parties that could support the lead entity in execution and implementation.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Potential funding sources that may be explored to support implementation.

Acronyms are used in the matrix to represent commonly referenced entities that are often abbreviated.

BRCC: Blue Ridge Community College
CDBG: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
DHR: Virginia Department of Historic Resources
DPW: Harrisonburg Department of Public Works
EMU: Eastern Mennonite University
HDR: Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance
HDPT: Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation
HRHA: Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority
JMU: James Madison University
NENA: Northeast Neighborhood Association
OCP: Our Community Place
SVBHP: Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project
VDOT: Virginia Department of Transportation
VPAS: Valley Program for Aging Services
VSBDC: Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Goal 1: Celebrate and educate others about the Northeast Neighborhood's rich African American history and cultural heritage.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Potential Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 1.1: Develop programs that celebrate the Northeast Neighborhood's African American heritage.	**High**	NENA, SVBHP	JMU, EMU, Harrisonburg City Public Schools	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funding

ACTIONS

a. Gather history from those with lived experience and history of the Northeast Neighborhood.
b. Create exhibits, indoors and/or outdoors, to showcase and capture oral histories from Legacy residents and their descendants.
c. Organize intergenerational events to connect seniors with younger residents, fostering a shared appreciation of heritage.
d. Implement ways for community members to provide feedback and suggest improvements for programs.

Strategy 1.2: Identify reliable financial resources to preserve and enhance Newtown's cultural assets.	**High**	NENA, SVBHP	Newtown Cemetery Board of Trustees, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, VDHR, JMU, EMU	Grants

ACTIONS

a. Identify and create a list of cultural assets, including Newtown Cemetery, Ida Mae Francis Tourist Home, Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center, the AME Church, and the Historic Dallard-Newman House.
b. Partner with agencies to identify and apply for funding resources.
c. Apply for grants specifically designed to preserve cultural heritage assets.
d. Complete the renovation of the Dallard-Newman House to serve as a museum to showcase exhibits about the Neighborhood's history and capture oral histories from long-time residents.

Strategy 1.3: Incorporate public art that raises awareness about what was lost during the Urban Renewal process and celebrates the Neighborhood's diversity of languages and ethnic backgrounds today through a variety of public art media (i.e., sculpture, performances, festivals).	**Medium**	Arts Council of the Valley	NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, HDR, DPW	Grants

ACTIONS

a. Issue a call for local artists to contribute to public art projects.
b. Partner with property owners and art groups to facilitate the installation of public art.
c. Organize art walks to showcase the new installations and educate the public about their significance.
d. Host community meetings to identify the best locations for public art installations.

HISTORY AND CULTURE				
Goal 1: Celebrate and educate others about the Northeast Neighborhood's rich African American history and cultural heritage.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Potential Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 1.4: Attract tourists and visitors to the Northeast Neighborhood to learn about Newtown's history and cultural assets.	**Medium**	NENA	Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, HDR, SVBHP	Grants
ACTIONS a. Install signage and historical markers detailing significant historical events and figures, including those related to Newtown, Urban Renewal, and the Civil Rights era. b. Create a self-guided walking tour map for residents and visitors to explore. c. Develop promotional materials highlighting the Neighborhood's events and attractions.				
Strategy 1.5: Continue to use preservation easements, registries, and other tools to enhance the architectural integrity and historical significance of homes and sites in the Neighborhood.	**Medium**	NENA, SVBHP	DHR, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, Newtown Cemetery Board of Trustees, JMU, EMU	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funding
ACTIONS a. Educate the community about existing preservation tools and their benefits. b. Continue to partner with local organizations and universities to restore and maintain historic homes and sites. c. Preserve Newtown Cemetery through structural interventions that reduce flooding, such as installing protective fences and planting additional trees. d. Explore the feasibility of creating a historic overlay district to include parts of the Neighborhood.				

GATHERING AND BELONGING

Goal 2: Build community connections through placemaking, inclusive gathering spaces, and community events for all ethnic groups present in Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 2.1: Organize accessible and inclusive community concerts, food festivals, and arts programming for everyone at the Lucy F. Simms Center.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation	HDHA, NENA, SVBHP, Places of Worship, JMU, EMU, Any Given Child	Grants, Annual City Budget

ACTIONS

a. Collaborate with the Neighborhood and graduates of the Simms School Reunion Committee to create programming and events that are accessible to Neighborhood residents, such as school reunions, May Day celebrations, festivals, and lawn parties.
b. Involve children and teens in event planning and programming.
c. Identify potential short- and long-term placemaking opportunities and requirements (e.g., permits, use of vacant lots) with the assistance of other stakeholders (e.g., City, James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University).
d. Explore grants to fund these events.
e. Create a bulletin board kiosk and a community list-serve to inform community members about Neighborhood events and activities.
f. Invite food kitchens and food trucks to participate in events, offering affordable options and social gathering spots.
g. Identify funders to eliminate rental fees for CBOs located in the Northeast Neighborhood
h. Offer childcare services at events to ensure accessibility for families.
i. Evaluate the long-term use of space in the Lucy F. Simms Center to prioritize the Northeast Neighborhood residents' needs.

Strategy 2.2: Partner with local schools to host after-school programs at the Lucy F. Simms Center to deepen youth engagement.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation	Harrisonburg City Public Schools, Places of Worship, JMU, EMU, VPAS, HRHA	Annual City Budget

ACTIONS

a. Facilitate multi-generational meet-and-greets to foster connections between youth and seniors.
b. Develop educational workshops at the Lucy F. Simms Center on various topics that cater to youth, like tutoring, first aid training, entrepreneur courses, art classes, and cooking classes.

GATHERING AND BELONGING

Goal 2: Build community connections through placemaking, inclusive gathering spaces, and community events for all ethnic groups present in Northeast Neighborhood.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 2.3: Create inclusive spaces that welcome newcomers from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the Northeast Neighborhood.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office	Places of Worship, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, NENA, SVBHP, HRHA, Church World Services	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Distribute event schedules via internal and external bulletin boards and social media to keep residents informed. b. Ensure signage and information are available in multiple languages to accommodate diverse ethnic backgrounds. c. Leverage local church presence to serve as informal community hubs and strengthen community cohesion. d. Make spaces accessible to individuals with disabilities by ensuring ADA compliance. e. Install benches and picnic areas to encourage social connections.				
Strategy 2.4: Create friendly environments for senior citizens that support independence, well-being, and social inclusion.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office	Places of Worship, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, NENA, SVBHP, HRHA	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Engage senior citizens in the planning process. b. Create a walkable Neighborhood by providing well-maintained sidewalks, shade, safe crossings, accessible gathering spaces, services, and amenities (e.g., grocery stores, markets, bus stops), and removing any tripping hazards. c. Provide open spaces that include seating, shade, and restrooms.				

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Goal 3: Empower the Northeast Neighborhood's community or residents to shape the future of the area.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 3.1: Maintain engagement between the City and the CBOs through meetings in familiar settings (e.g., Neighborhoods, places of worship) and public forums to foster dialogue.	**High**	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office	NENA, SVBHP, HRHA, Neighborhood Business Owners, Places of Worship	
ACTIONS a. Work with trusted community leaders, such as church leaders, to encourage participation and dialogue. b. Distribute information to the Neighborhood (e.g., on a website or social media) and communicate with partner entities about the languages spoken in the Neighborhood to facilitate the creation of translated materials. c. Hold meetings in pedestrian- and bike-accessible locations, such as the Simms Center and places of worship.				
Strategy 3.2: Educate both the public and city staff about the impacts of past Urban Renewal and current opportunities for improvement.	**High**	NENA, SVBHP	JMU, Harrisonburg City Manager's Office, HDR, Harrisonburg City Public Schools, Rockingham County Public Schools, Harrisonburg Department of Economic	Grants
ACTIONS a. Develop materials in different languages to educate the public about the impacts of Urban Renewal and current opportunities and make these materials publicly available in various locations. b. Collect and preserve the cultural history of the Northeast Neighborhood through oral history and documentary material. c. Continue to offer free walking history tours to educate the community about the history of the Northeast Neighborhood and to enhance the tours by adding more stops and information. d. Create a public location (e.g., a website) for community members to access the research completed on Urban Renewal and the inventory of all available historical documents. e. Continue to collaborate with Harrisonburg City Public Schools and Rockingham County Public Schools to incorporate the Neighborhood's history into the curriculum.				
Strategy 3.3: Build CBO's capacity for grant writing and project management	**High**	NENA, SVBHP	JMU, The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County	Grants
ACTION a. Connect with training opportunities for small nonprofits and grant writing.				

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS				
Goal 4: Addressing harm caused by Urban Renewal.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 4.1: Prioritize infrastructure projects in the Northeast Neighborhood.	**High**	DPW	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, NENA, SVBHP, HDR	Annual City Budget
Strategy 4.2: Implement infrastructure projects, especially stormwater and transportation projects, as identified in this SAP.	**High**	DPW	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, NENA, SVBHP, HDR	Annual City Budget

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN				
Goal 5: Strengthen the link between the Northeast Neighborhood and Downtown.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 5.1: Expand public art and Downstreet streetscape to the Downtown area in the Northeast Neighborhood.	**High**	DPW	HDR, Arts Council of the Valley	City Funds
ACTIONS a. Identify locations, public and private, for expansion of public art (e.g., murals, traffic cabinets, sculptures). b. Incorporate the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) implementation of the Downtown Streetscape Plan in the Downtown area of the Northeast Neighborhood.				
Strategy 5.2: Enhance Northeast Neighborhood gateways, or entry points, to reinforce placemaking and strengthen community identity.	**Medium**	DPW	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, NENA, SVBHP, HDR	Grants
ACTIONS a. Gather feedback from the Neighborhood on what gateways should look like and what should be placed at those points to reflect the Neighborhood's values. b. Identify potential private funding sources to support the enhancement of the gateways.				

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN

Goal 6: Revitalize N. Mason Street to make it an inviting street.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 6.1: Improve N. Mason Street to make it more bike- and pedestrian-friendly based on Smart Growth America's Complete Streets Leadership Academy's demonstration project results.	**Medium**	DPW	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	VDOT, Maintenance Funds, Grants

ACTIONS

a. Ensure sidewalks and pedestrian curb ramps are ADA compliant.
b. Enhance street crossings with markings and traffic signals for safer pedestrian movement.
c. Add midblock crossings at key locations to improve safety, such as between the Rockingham County Administrative Building and Elizabeth Street Parking Deck, Triangle Park (along N. Mason St., between E. Rock St., and E. Elizabeth St.) and the Friendly City Food Co-Op, and the Rockingham County Administrative Building and Roses discount department store.

Strategy 6.2: Convert N. Mason Street to a major Neighborhood destination by attracting businesses and promoting community activation.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	NENA, SVBHP, DPW, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, HDR, Private Property Owners, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce, BRCC	Annual City Budget

ACTIONS

a. Develop a wayfinding and placemaking strategy to encourage foot traffic.
b. Enhance street-level activations by incorporating seating and other amenities into public spaces on N. Mason Street.
c. Explore public/private partnerships to acquire property along N. Mason Street, advancing community-driven development.
d. Repurpose underutilized parking areas for community use or small businesses.
e. Provide existing tools and resources for local businesses to open on N. Mason Street.
f. Find opportunities to leverage available space in the Comcast Building for the benefit of the Northeast Neighborhood, its residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.
g. Explore the opportunity to reinstate Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) satellite campus on Mason Street to attract students and educational activities.
h. Extend the city's annual Best.Weekend.Ever festival and monthly First Friday events to include Mason Street.
i. Reexamine setback, massing, and other building form regulations to enhance the pedestrian experience along Mason Street.

CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN				
Goal 6: Revitalize N. Mason Street to make it an inviting street.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 6.3: Implement urban design projects to connect the Northeast Neighborhood to Downtown and other destinations in the City.	**Medium**	DPW	NENA, SVBHP, DPW, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, HDR	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Develop streetscape design standards and/or guidelines that align with the historic character of the Neighborhood and Downtown. b. Identify and prioritize high-need areas for urban design improvements.				
Strategy 6.4: Implement Complete Streets interventions on N. Mason Street to mitigate the legacy of segregation that excluded African Americans from participating in Downtown civic life.	**Medium**	DPW	NENA, SVBHP, DPW, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, HDR, Harrisonburg Fire Department	City Funds, Grants
ACTIONS a. Collaborate with a range of stakeholders, including business owners, bus riders, residents, delivery services, county offices, and the fire department, to achieve Complete Streets goals. b. Explore rebuilding the corridor to allow two-way traffic on the west side of the median (E. Elizabeth Street to N. Main Street), thereby repurposing for a combination of uses, including open space, paths, seating, and other amenities. c. Enhance the streetscape with greenery and planters to beautify the area, provide shade, and improve aesthetics.				

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY				
Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 7.1: Provide improvements in walking routes to connect people to places with a focus on sidewalks.	**High**	DPW	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, Harrisonburg Rockingham MPO, HDPT, JMU	City Funds, CDBG Funds
ACTIONS a. Engage residents in prioritizing improvements during the next Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan update. b. Make sidewalk improvements in areas with public institutions, housing developments, transportation hubs, and frequently visited places. c. Implement pedestrian-friendly pathways to enhance accessibility and connectivity between N. Mason Street and surrounding Neighborhoods.				
Strategy 7.2: Improve safety on local streets in the Northeast Neighborhood by installing additional traffic calming measures where appropriate.	**High**	DPW	NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, Harrisonburg Police Department	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Identify priority areas for traffic calming measures using data and public engagement. b. Install speed bumps, speed tables, or other traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds. c. Install new or enhanced crosswalks in high-traffic areas, especially near churches and community gathering spaces. d. Evaluate and address sightline obstructions (i.e., fences, foliage, parked cars, etc.) at intersections.				

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY				
Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 7.3: Add and improve lighting throughout the Northeast Neighborhood, especially around key walking corridors.	**High**	DPW	Harrisonburg Electric Commission, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Partner with Harrisonburg Electric Commission to develop a lighting plan for the Northeast Neighborhood. b. Explore opportunities for installing mid-height warm lighting on privately owned properties throughout the community, funded by private sources. c. Encourage residents to turn on door and porch lights during appropriate evening hours. d. Encourage new developments to have outdoor lights. e. Ensure lights are low-glare, warm-toned to reduce potential light pollution.				
Strategy 7.4: Increase public transportation use by improving the comfort, safety, and accessibility of bus stops.	**Low**	HDPT	DPW, Arts Council of the Valley	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Upgrade bus shelters to be more comfortable, with adequate lighting, emergency call buttons, benches, and shelters. b. Advertise trip planning apps that provide riders with real-time information. c. Collaborate with local artists to enhance bus shelter visibility and foster a sense of community identity.				

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY				
Goal 7: Provide transportation, pedestrian, bike, and public transit infrastructure to promote connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all residents in the Northeast Neighborhood.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 7.5: Increase Neighborhood access to electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.	**Low**	DPW	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, HDPT, Places of Worship, Neighborhood Businesses, HRHA	City Funds, Grants, Private Funding
ACTIONS a. Continue to include public property (e.g., Ralph Sampson Park) in City solicitations for public-private partnerships to install EV chargers for public use. b. Engage with congregations, private property owners, and HRHA to share the Neighborhood's interest in EV charging stations and explore whether any non-public properties may be interested in installing EV chargers.				
Strategy 7.6: Enhance safety at designated school bus stops.	**High**	HDPT	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, Harrisonburg Police Department	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Inventory and map all Neighborhood school bus stops. b. Evaluate school bus stops for safety. c. Relocate school bus stops as necessary. d. Educate parents and children directly about bus stop locations, safe roadway crossings, and pedestrian safety. e. Educate drivers about school bus stop awareness, especially during pick-up and drop-off times.				

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 8.1: Update land use regulations and zoning to align with the Neighborhood's preferences.	**High**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office-Housing Coordinator	Annual City Budget
ACTION a. Engage residents in updates to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.				
Strategy 8.2: Explore the use of tax incentives or inclusionary zoning to support and encourage the creation of affordable and mixed-income housing.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office-Housing Coordinator	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Explore legal authority to mandate a percentage of affordable units for all future developments in the Neighborhood. b. Continue to use the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and the Virginia Housing Opportunity Tax Credit for new affordable housing.				
Strategy 8.3: Preserve existing housing stock.	**High**	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office-Housing Coordinator	HRHA, NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Electric Commission, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, VPAS, Habitat for Humanity, Places of Worship	Grants, CDBG
ACTIONS a. Obtain feedback from the community on current challenges in housing preservation. b. Provide homeowner education on maintenance and improvement programs. c. Support residents applying for programs and grants, like the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) or the Energy Assistance Program (EAP). d. Explore providing tax exemptions on the increased value for rehabilitated properties to encourage rehabilitation without displacement. e. Advertise existing tools and programs for established residents who improve housing with their funds or with city funds as a strategy for anti-displacement.				

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 8.4: Work with Our Community Place (OCP) and the Navigation Center to identify a new state-of-the-art facility for OCP located outside of the Northeast Neighborhood.	**High**	OCP	Harrisonburg Police Department, City Manager's Office, Harrisonburg Fire Department, NENA, SVBHP	Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTIONS a. Hold a discussion with Neighborhood residents to address safety concerns. b. Increase communication between OCP and Neighborhood residents regarding actions taken to improve the safety and security of the facility, particularly after hours. c. Encourage the OCP Board to meet with Neighborhood residents about the long-term goals for OCP based on its recent strategic planning efforts.				
Strategy 8.5: Enhance quality of life and public safety for homeowners, landlords, tenants, and transient populations through code enforcement and proactive efforts to prevent underutilized properties from falling into disrepair.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	NENA, SVBHP, DPW, Harrisonburg Police Department, Harrisonburg Fire Department	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Work with the community to develop revitalization plans for vacant parcels, including green spaces, pocket parks, and housing. b. Provide community education and outreach on zoning, property maintenance, junk/trash, and other City Codes. c. Engage HRHA, CBOs, OCP, regional resources (e.g., Habitat for Humanity), and communities of faith in supporting seniors and others who might benefit from support (e.g., disposing of non-compliant porch furniture, yard maintenance, or minor repairs).				

HOUSING AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal 8: Build a safe and strong Northeast Neighborhood by ensuring healthy and sustainable housing options that meet the diverse needs of all residents, including legacy residents and those seeking affordable housing opportunities.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 8.6: Develop a community-centered anti-displacement strategy.	**High**	Harrisonburg City Manager's Office- Housing	HRHA, NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	City Funds/ Grants
ACTIONS a. Host engagement sessions with residents for active participation. b. Explore community-tied housing models, rental-to-ownership pathways, community land banks, and other practices. c. Review policies for public housing applications to identify ways to make them more efficient. d. Ensure regular evaluation and monitoring through specific metrics, review processes, and community input. e. Identify financial incentives, such as tax abatements, performance grants, and rental assistance, to help homeowners and renters achieve affordable housing goals. f. Analyze how existing policies can be revised to incorporate anti-displacement priorities. g. Explore the creation of a Community Preference Policy, which provides priority placement for affordable units in a Neighborhood or group of Neighborhoods to low-income applicants who have been displaced from their Neighborhood, are current residents at risk of displacement, or are descendants of displaced residents.				
Strategy 8.7: Facilitate pro-bono estate planning to resolve issues around "tangled" titles, wills, and insurance.	**Medium**	NENA, SVBHP	Local Attorneys, Blue Ridge Legal Services, City Manager's Office- Housing Coordinator, VPAS	City Funds/ Grants/ Non-Profits
ACTION a. Develop a list of area residents/organizations willing to volunteer pro-bono estate planning.				

ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Goal 9: Make the Northeast Neighborhood a great place to open, own, and operate a business with a workforce that has opportunities to professionally grow.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 9.1: Encourage and incentivize future owners to transform the Roses site into a mixed-used hub with economic and educational opportunities, and mixed-income housing.	**High**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, Harrisonburg City Manager's Office- Housing Coordinator, NENA, SVBHP, City Manager's Office	Private Funds
ACTIONS a. Build relationships between future owners and the community to increase transparency and create trust. b. Review case studies of the redevelopment of similar buildings. c. Gather community input on the future of the Roses site.				
Strategy 9.2: Create a centralized and accessible community hub for educational and workforce development.	**Low**	Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development	NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation, BRCC, Shenandoah Valley Partnership, VSBDC, Shenandoah Valley Workforce Board	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTIONS a. Promote networking among community businesses and residents. b. Create an online hub that houses information on educational and workforce development opportunities.				
Strategy 9.3: Continue to host educational programs and workshops that support all families in areas such as language learning, job training, and civic engagement.	**Medium**	NENA, SVBHP	HRHA, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, Harrisonburg City Manager's Office- Housing Coordinator, Places of Worship	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTION a. Provide workshops on financial literacy in various languages, catering to the diverse population of the Northeast Neighborhood.				

ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

Goal 9: Make the Northeast Neighborhood a great place to open, own, and operate a business with a workforce that has opportunities to professionally grow.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 9.4: Educate developers, investors, and businesses on how to take advantage of the Opportunity Zone tax incentive, allowing investors to defer taxes on the invested gain amounts until the Congress-mandated deadline.	**High**	Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, HRHA	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Monitor federal policy regarding the Opportunity Zone tax incentive to ensure the City is working within the correct timeline. b. Create and promote workshops to educate developers, investors, and businesses about the Opportunity Zone incentive.				
Strategy 9.5: Support small businesses and foster business opportunities in the Northeast Neighborhood.	**High**	Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development	NENA, SVBHP, VSBDC, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Annual City Budget, Grants/Loans, Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTIONS a. Promote available programs through multiple channels, including social media pages, community boards, CBO websites, and other online platforms (e.g., NextDoor, MeetUp). b. Develop a list of all resources available to residents and small businesses. c. Consider a rezoning study to determine zoning allowances for small businesses and home-based enterprises.				
Strategy 9.6: Encourage the establishment of new preschools, child care centers, and in-home care providers in the Neighborhood to expand access to high-quality and easily accessible child care.	**High**	City Manager's Office	VSBDC, NENA, SVBHP, Places of Worship	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTIONS a. Evaluate in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan the possible use of the Lucy F. Simms Center for the provision of child care. b. Conduct a conversation with the faith community and other community-based organizations to explore the potential use of existing facilities for child care. c. Educate residents on the regulations related to in-home child care and local resources to support the establishment of an in-home child care business.				

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 10: Build a sustainable Northeast Neighborhood that is resilient to the effects of climate change.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 10.1: Plant native plants and trees in public areas, like parks, recreational spaces, and streets, and private properties to provide shade, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and reduce stormwater concerns.	**Medium**	DPW	NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, Harrisonburg City Public Schools, Civic Organizations	Grants, Annual City Budget

ACTIONS

a. Prioritize areas with high levels of impervious surfaces that increases the risk of flooding.
b. Partner with Harrisonburg's Urban Forestry Program as they work to expand the Neighborhood's tree canopy.
c. Conduct outreach on the benefits of preserving and planting trees in private properties and financial mechanisms like Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP), Harrisonburg Electric Commission.
d. Collaborate with local schools, organizations, and businesses to plant trees and enhance public spaces and private properties.

Strategy 10.2: Partner with established organizations and agencies to provide community gardens and pollinator gardens to encourage biodiversity and local food production.	**Low**	NENA, SVBHP	OCP, HRHA, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, DPW	Private/Nonprofit Funding

ACTIONS

a. Consider partnering with non-profit organizations to become involved in community-based beautification programs.
b. Host public education workshops on pollinator gardens, native plants, and sustainable gardening.
c. Work with the City's Pollinator Program to explore extending the city's pollinator corridor into the Northeast Neighborhood.

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 10: Build a sustainable Northeast Neighborhood that is resilient to the effects of climate change.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 10.3: Explore the opportunity for installation of recycling bins, trash cans, and dog waste stations at appropriate locations.	**Medium**	DPW	NENA, SVBH, Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, HRHA	Annual City Budget, Private/Nonprofit Funds
ACTION a. Identify priority areas.				
Strategy 10.4: Use multi-level (individual, organizational, and municipal) resources to implement green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and bioretention systems, for stormwater management and flood mitigation where viable.	**Medium**	DPW	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Annual City Budget, Grants
ACTION a. Educate residents on Best Management Practices they can implement to reduce flooding and reduce their Stormwater Utility Fee. b. Perform flooding analysis to identify areas that experience frequent flooding and that should be prioritized for stormwater management interventions. c. Identify projects that could be eligible for the Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP) to develop, design, and construct stormwater practices.				
Strategy 10.5: Expand renewable energy, energy conservation, weatherization, and water efficient technologies in the Northeast Neighborhood as part of broader sustainability efforts.	**Low**	DPW	NENA, SVBHP, Harrisonburg Electric Commission, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, HRHA	Annual City Budget, Grants
ACTIONS a. Educate the community on solar installation, energy conservation and weatherization, water efficient technology opportunities. b. Determine a list of City-owned and Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority facilities suitable in using renewable energy and water efficient technologies. c. Identify available funding sources for infrastructure investments and apply for grants.				

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY				
Goal 11: Preserve the Northeast Neighborhood's scenic vistas.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 11.1: Improve awareness, access, and amenities to enhance community and visitor enjoyment of Northeast scenic vistas.	**Medium**	NENA, SVBHP	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development	Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Educate the public about this Neighborhood amenity through signs and educational campaigns. b. Explore working with Scenic Virginia to assess and inventory vistas or consider partnering with Scenic America to protect this Neighborhood amenity. c. Add more seating in Ralph Sampson Park to enjoy the views.				
Strategy 11.2: Establish land use strategies (e.g., zoning, easement, etc.) to preserve and protect scenic vistas throughout the Neighborhood.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, NENA, SVBHP	Annual City Budget
ACTION a. Limit the placement and height of any amenity that may block the current vistas.				

HEALTH

Goal 12: Enhance Neighborhood health by ensuring access to affordable, healthy foods, welfare services, ADA-compliant facilities, and recreational spaces.

Strategy	Priority	Lead Entity	Partners	Potential Funding Sources
Strategy 12.1: Improve access to fresh, affordable food through farmers' markets, local grocery stores, cooperative food options, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.	**Medium**	Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Friendly City Food Co-Op, Harrisonburg Farmer's Market, Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development	Virginia Food Access Investment Fund, Grants

ACTIONS

a. Examine zoning regulations to support more access to grocery stores and other food sources.
b. Support aspiring entrepreneurs who will provide affordable, local, and culturally appropriate food through mobile units, events, food stands, brick and mortar shops, or innovative enterprises.
c. Explore tax incentives, loans, and funds (e.g., Virginia Food Access Investment Fund loans and grants) to fund grocery stores in low-income areas.
d. Create a handout for WIC/SNAP recipients that includes a map showing locations where SNAP is accepted, such as the Farmers Market and Friendly City Food Co-Op.
e. Explore establishing a Healthy Corner Store Initiative.

Strategy 12.2: Investigate sustainable urban agriculture and food production practices.	**Low**	NENA, SVBHP	Virginia Cooperative Extension, Places of Worship, HRHA, Harrisonburg Department of Community Development	Grants, Private/Nonprofit Funding

ACTIONS

a. Encourage the maintenance and growth of community gardens, incorporating planter boxes.
b. Offer educational programs to residents on how to grow their food.
c. Explore the use of vacant lots for urban agricultural use.
d. Explore partnerships with residents, places of worship, and other organizations to establish additional community gardens, similar to the existing Kelley Street Garden.

HEALTH				
Goal 12: Enhance Neighborhood health by ensuring access to affordable, healthy foods, welfare services, ADA-compliant facilities, and recreational spaces.				
Strategy	**Priority**	**Lead Entity**	**Partners**	**Potential Funding Sources**
Strategy 12.3: Continue to provide behavioral health services outside the Northeast Neighborhood and promote affordable health services and mental wellness support for unhoused individuals, especially during daytime hours.	**Low**	Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board	Sentara RMH Medical Center, Healthy Community Health Center	Private/Nonprofit Funding
ACTIONS a. Develop a map that shows where services and resources are located and how they can be accessed, using the Strength in Peers' Community Resource Center's Resource Guide as a reference. b. Continue offering mobile primary care services, such as the Mobile Sentara bus, and expand services to include counseling and therapy.				
Strategy 12.4: Encourage physical activity and water safety education by maintaining existing recreational spaces and creating a new swimming pool for all Neighborhood residents.	**Low**	Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation		Annual City Budget
ACTIONS a. Explore opportunities to add more recreational spaces based on community engagement and available funding. b. Invest in amenities at the Simms Center's fitness center and gymnasium.				

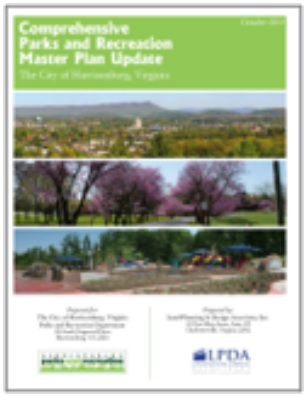
Section 7:

Appendix

APPENDIX A: EXISTING PLANS AND STUDIES & PLAN CONSISTENCY

The project team reviewed thirteen (13) existing plans and studies that may impact the project's study area and found four common themes and key areas of focus: Cultural Identity, History, and Community Spaces; Connectivity to Downtown; Housing Affordability; and Infrastructure & Environment Sustainability.

CULTURAL IDENTITY, HISTORY, AND COMMUNITY SPACES







INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

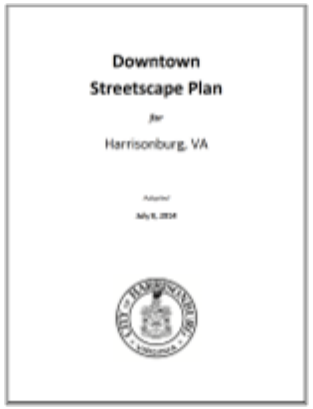






CONNECTIVITY TO DOWNTOWN

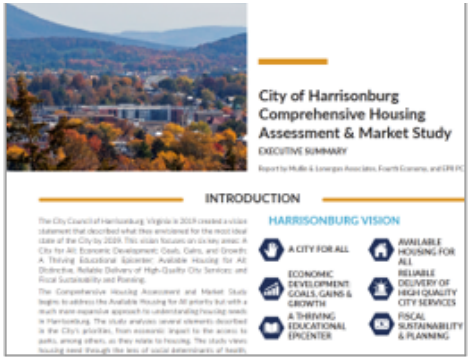








HOUSING AFFORDABILITY





Category	Plan Name	Year	Description
Cultural Identity, History, and Community Spaces *These plans focus on preserving cultural identity, acknowledging the history of disruption due to urban renewal in the Northeast Neighborhood, and enhancing community spaces.*	Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update	2013	Includes the recommendation to create a museum discussing the history of the Northeast Neighborhood and emphasizes community events at the Lucy Simms Center.
	Ralph Sampson Park Master Plan	2008	Focuses on revitalizing a key recreational space for the neighborhood and improving accessibility and community engagement.
	Harrisonburg Downtown 2040 Plan	2021	Acknowledges the displacement caused by Urban Renewal and emphasizes reconnecting the Northeast Neighborhood with Downtown to bridge historical divides.
Connectivity to Downtown *This set of plans emphasizes the importance of connectivity to downtown, upgrades to sidewalks, bike and pedestrian amenities, and the need for better transit and bus ridership from public housing.*	ADA Transition Plan	2024	Focuses on removing barriers to accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and improving sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure in the Northeast Neighborhood.
	Harrisonburg Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	2017	Enhances connectivity through safer and more inclusive walking and biking options.
	Harrisonburg Downtown Streetscape Plan	2014	Addresses transit and pedestrian infrastructure, including better connections for public housing residents.
	Downtown Harrisonburg Operations Study	2020	Proposes traffic pattern adjustments and pedestrian safety enhancements, indirectly benefiting Northeast Neighborhood residents by improving access to the Downtown core.
	Downtown Parking Study	2019–2020	Promotes shared parking and alternative transportation to ease access for residents traveling to and from Downtown.

Category	Plan Name	Year	Description
Housing Affordability *These plans address the need for affordable housing in the Neighborhood and outline strategies for housing and employment growth.*	Comprehensive Housing Assessment & Market Study	2020	Highlights the pressures on affordable housing in the Northeast Neighborhood and the need for preservation and rehabilitation to prevent displacement.
	Harrisonburg Comprehensive Plan	2018	Identifies traffic and roadway improvements, as well as housing affordability, as citywide needs and includes strategies for enhancing rental and homeownership options in the Northeast Neighborhood.
Infrastructure & Environmental Sustainability *This category covers flood mitigation, urban heat island effects, and other environmental sustainability considerations.*	Capital Improvement Program	2024	Includes projects to enhance safety, pedestrian infrastructure, and stormwater management in the Northeast Neighborhood.
	Stormwater Improvement Plan	2024	Addresses water quality, supports regulatory compliance, and identifies locations to implement stormwater management best practices, including at a stormwater management facility at Ralph Sampson Park.
	Urban Forest Management Master Plan	2021	Aims to reduce urban heat islands and improve air quality, creating a healthier living environment for residents.
	Environmental Action Plan	2020	Identifies goals to improve the City's environment and sustainability, including increasing public transit ridership and promoting urban agriculture and community gardens.

These existing plans help establish the groundwork for the Small Area Plan and also create many opportunities to address both immediate and long-term needs.


Northeast Neighborhood Association
NENA
A Non-Profit Dedicated to Community, Culture and History
Harrisonburg, VA


HARRISONBURG VA
FRIENDLY BY NATURE


SVBHP


HDR
HARRISONBURG DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE


Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together
Harrisonburg Redevelopment
& Housing Authority