



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

## Department of Planning & Community Development

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Building Inspections  
Engineering  
Planning & Zoning

To: Planning Commission  
From: Department of Planning and Community Development  
Date: October 9, 2019 (Regular Meeting)  
Re: Public School Off-Street Parking Approval Request – Additional High School

### **Summary:**

Consider a request from Harrisonburg City Public Schools for approval of the minimum number of off-street parking spaces to be provided for the additional high school located on a +/- 60-acre site adjacent to I-81 and between Boxwood Court and East Kaylor Drive. The site is addressed as 2868 South Main Street, 40 Boxwood Court, and Boxwood Court and can be found on tax maps 2-C-1, 2-D-0, 2-D-6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

### **Background:**

The Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Governmental/Quasi-Governmental. These lands include properties owned or leased by the City of Harrisonburg, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the federal government, and other governmental/quasi-governmental organizations. Examples of entities included in this category are City Hall, City administrative and support facilities, Harrisonburg City Public Schools, James Madison University, Rockingham County Administrative Offices, Rockingham County Public Schools, and the Massanutten Regional Library. Properties within this designation may already include uses supplied by the entities mentioned or are planned to be used by such public entities for any type of uses necessary for their services. Some Governmental/Quasi-Governmental uses, such as James Madison University, other state agencies, and the federal government are not subject to some of the City's land use regulations. City parks are included in the Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Category. Furthermore, it should be understood that properties that are owned or leased by the City, which may not be designated as Governmental/Quasi-Governmental by the Land Use Guide, may be developed with public uses, as defined by the Zoning Ordinance, to operate and provide services supplied by the City in any zoning district, which as of the approval of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, is every zoning district in the City.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

**Site:** Undeveloped parcels, zoned B-2

**North:** Self-storage units, zoned M-1

**East:** Across Interstate 81, Ramblewood Park, zoned R-1; and a manufacturing facility, zoned M-1

**South:** East Kaylor Park Drive and undeveloped parcels, zoned B-2

**West:** Undeveloped parcels, automobile dealership, offices, and commercial uses, zoned B-2

**Key Issues:**

During Summer 2018, City Council and the School Board jointly announced the purchase of +/- 60 acres of land for an additional high school. The land is adjacent to I-81 between Boxwood Court and East Kaylor Park Drive. In June 2019, Planning Commission reviewed the high school site per City Code Section 10-1-6 and determined that the public facility is in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan as provided by the Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2232. In July 2019, City Council rezoned the site from R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional to B-2, General Business District.

In order to continue with site design, review and approval by Planning Commission of the proposed number of minimum off-street parking spaces is required per Section 10-3-25 (12) of the Zoning Ordinance (ZO). Section 10-3-23 (12) requires the following:

Elementary schools, junior or senior high schools, or equivalent facilities: Proposed off-street parking spaces shall be programmed by the applicable school authorities as necessary to meet state standards for use and consideration of site locations, then submitted to the planning commission for comprehensive site plan review.

This process includes for HCPS to determine the amount of parking they believe is adequate for their site based on division and state agency recommendations. Within the attached layout titled “New Harrisonburg High School, Parking Calculations,” HCPS has indicated that they have used the document titled “Guidelines for School Facilities in Virginia’s Public Schools” prepared by the Virginia Department of Education (DOE) to determine Virginia DOE’s suggested number of parking spaces. The Virginia DOE document states that:

Adequate parking for staff and an additional 10 percent to 20 percent parking space for visitors should be provided. Student parking to accommodate one-third of the student enrollment should also be provided.

HCPS states that there will be approximately 200 staff members who will be employed at the school, however, not all would be in the building at the same time. HCPS also estimates that there will be 1,200 students at the high school. Therefore, the total number of parking spaces suggested by the Virginia DOE is 565 parking spaces. The school is proposing to provide 646 parking spaces on the school property, 610 of which are located adjacent to the school in lots described on the layout as student lot, west teacher lot, and east teacher lot. Another 36 parking spaces will be provided further from the school building and closer to the athletic fields.

An additional 50 on-street parking spaces will be constructed as part of the new public street that is proposed to run along the western boundary of the school property to generally connect East Kaylor Park Drive on the southern end of the property to the Boxwood Court public street right-of-way on the northern end of the property. However, the 50 on-street parking spaces are not to be counted as part of meeting the school’s off-street parking requirements.

Staff has no concerns with the proposed number of minimum off-street parking spaces and recommends approval.

HCPS understands parking lot landscaping requirements, among other details, would be reviewed during the engineered comprehensive site plan phase of development to ensure that regulations are met.

**Environmental Impact:**

N/A

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

N/A

**Alternatives:**

- (a) Approve the proposed number of minimum off-street parking spaces as proposed by HCPS; or
- (b) Deny the request.

**Community Engagement:**

N/A

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends alternative (a) to approve the proposed number of minimum off-street parking spaces as proposed by HCPS.

**Attachments:**

- 1. Site maps (2 pages)
- 2. Applicant's Letter (1 page)
- 3. Conceptual Layout of Off-Street Parking Spaces (4 pages)

**Review:**

N/A