

The questions and comments below were submitted prior to the Planning Commission review of the CIP by Commissioner Finnegan via email on Monday, January 30, 2024. The referenced page numbers have been changed to reflect the current page numbers.

1. What is the source of the "other revenue" for the fire department projects that list other revenue as a funding source?

**Response:** In the case of Fire Station #5, the "other revenue" is ARPA funding.

2. There is now high pedestrian and car traffic activity between Magpie Diner and the Liberty Street Mercantile, with lots of opportunity for conflict. Is signalized traffic control being considered for the intersection of Gay Street and Noll Drive? If so, should we expect to see it in the next CIP?

**Response:** This intersection does not currently meet warrants for the installation of a traffic signal. However, the City has received a High Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grant for Gay Street that will include a roadway reconfiguration (add center turn lane and bike lanes) as well as some pedestrian improvements. That project will remove one eastbound vehicle lane and add bike lanes at this intersection.

3. It's possible I missed it, but I did not see the sidewalk project from Harrisonburg Crossing to MLK on the east side of Reservoir. What is the status of that project that was in previous CIP documents?

**Response:** The project was removed because it has received VDOT funding. The funding is currently programmed to be released to the City in FY26.

4. **Page 5—Police Firearms Range Noise Reduction:** When Bluestone Trail is extended to RHS (pg. 44) is there any concern about the proximity of the firing range to the trail?

**Response:** At this time, staff has no concerns.

5. **Page 9—Fire Station 4 Replacement:** Is this in the same location, on the same acreage of land as the current station? Is additional land needed to build this?

**Response:** The Fire Station will be built on the exact same site as the current fire station. The current station will be removed and a new modern station built in its place on the existing site.

6. **Page 24—Bridge Preventative Maintenance Program:** Are the bridge replacements on Country Club Rd. going to include space to accommodate future lane reconfigurations, bike and pedestrian improvements?

**Response:** Our current understanding from VDOT is that it will allow for accommodation.

7. **Page 26—Annual Street Paving Program:** Does the city have an estimate for how much of the annual \$2.1 million for street repavings pays for on-street car parking, as opposed to the movement of traffic? Approximately what percent of the paved public streets in Harrisonburg are used primarily for storage of private property?

**Response:** The City does not have this estimate nor do we have data identifying the percentage questioned.

8. **Page 32—Traffic Detection Cameras:** Are the traffic detection cameras the white bell-shaped devices on traffic light arms? Can these detect and trigger green lights for cyclists and pedestrians as well as cars waiting at a red light? Is the video footage from these cameras used/accessible by HPD in the event of a crash or pedestrian hit-and-run?

**Response:** Yes, these are the white bell-shaped devices, however we only have that style detection at 30% of our signals. The remaining signals have a single camera per approach. All our cameras are effective at detecting cyclists and our newest technology, called MioVision, is very effective at detecting and counting cyclists. None of our camera systems detect pedestrians as pedestrians utilize the pedestrian push buttons to activate the crosswalk signals. The cameras do not record and are only a live feed.

9. **Page 40—Chicago Avenue and Waterman Drive Improvements:** I would hope these improvements would have funding allocated in the 2025 - 2029 timeframe, as I would expect cycling traffic to increase along this corridor with the addition of the Northend Greenway extension on Mount Clinton Pike. This portion of Chicago from Greystone to Mount Clinton will be a weak link in an otherwise good bike infrastructure network.

**Response:** Due to the different funding grants available to the City it is difficult to fund projects within this timeframe as most VDOT grants allocate funding the last few years of VDOT's Six Year Plan. However, for this corridor Public Works is kicking off a study to evaluate improvements that can be made for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians, as well as exploring opportunities to connect the Friendly City Trail to the Northend Greenway.

10. **Page 41—Mt. Clinton Pike Widening:** Same comment as above about funding timeline. Many of the residents of Gemeinschaft do not own or have access to cars, and have no option other than to walk where on a very dangerous and pedestrian-hostile stretch of Mount Clinton Pike that has no sidewalk, shoulder, or shared use path.

**Response:** Due to the different funding grants available to the City it is difficult to fund projects within this timeframe as most VDOT grants allocate funding the last few years of VDOT's Six Year Plan.

11. **Page 46—Neff Avenue Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements:** Is an RFPB (pg. 34) or pedestrian island being considered for the pedestrian crossing on Neff?

**Response:** Public Works just started a study funded by VDOT for Neff Avenue between this pedestrian crossing and Reservoir Street with the hopes this study will find a reasonable solution to this safety concern.

12. **Page 52—Port Republic Road – Forest Hill Road:** Is this turn lane not included with the redesign of Forest Hill and University Blvd. that is already (at least partially) funded?

**Response:** No this was not included in the University Blvd project.

13. **Page 75—Water Street Parking Deck:** Lack of movement on the Water Street deck project may be impacting other projects, such as the Build Our Park project due to temporary shifting of car parking. Was the funding for this project moved to "future" compared to where the funding was in previous versions of the CIP?

**Response:** Funding for the Water Street Parking Deck project (also known as the Downtown Parking Deck in previous CIP documents) has been in the "future/beyond" category since the 2020-2024 CIP.

14. **Page 92—Purchase Land for 7<sup>th</sup> Elementary School:** Comments from HCPS included in staff reports received by Planning Commission frequently include the text "Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS) staff noted that schools are over capacity in many of the schools". How will the opening of Rocktown High School and the construction of a 7th elementary school affect this?

**Response:** The opening of Rocktown High School will impact the current capacity challenges at Harrisonburg High School - currently HHS is 664 students over effective capacity. Additionally, a 7th elementary school will impact the continued enrollment growth in our school division. Currently, when focusing only on K-5 enrollment, we have the availability of adding nearly 70 students. However, since we also have more than 100 PreK students in several of our schools, the result then changes to over effective capacity by nearly 30 students. This year's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service projections continue to show enrollment growing during the 2020s, reaching 7,000 K-12 students by around 2030 for HCPS. They project that our enrollment growth could increase by 276 - 389 students from 2023 through 2028.

15. **Page 115—Roof Repair/Replacement at Waterman Elementary School (Gym):** Refers to the roof of Waterman Elementary School. What about the roofs of the outbuildings? How old are those outbuildings along Chicago? What condition are they in? How often are they used for classroom space?

**Response:** The mobile units at Waterman are used on a regular basis for classroom and resource spaces. We are working on a process to evaluate, repair and/or replace the mobile units at Waterman. There are seven mobile units. Three are used as classrooms, one is our thinking and tinkering lab, one is our space for instructional coaches and larger meetings, one is a sensory space, and one is storage.

16. **Page 154—Temporary Credit Purchases:** Can you explain more about the nutrient credit program? What is the funding used to purchase?

**Response:** Because the City owns and operates a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), DEQ issues the City a permit for this system. As a part of this permit, we have a special condition that requires the City to remove Nitrogen and Phosphorous from our waterways. To meet this requirement, the City has three different pathways, 1) construction of stormwater facilities that remove these pollutants, 2) purchase temporary credits from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, however these only satisfy compliance for 1-year before additional credits are needed, and 3) purchase permanent credits that cost more than temporary credits, but do not expire. The City has planned to take a balanced approach to meeting our reduction requirements and have credits from all three as part of our compliance strategy. All three of these items are constructed or purchased with funds collected by the Stormwater Utility fee.

The questions and comments below were submitted prior to the Planning Commission review of the CIP by Vice Mayor Dent via email on Friday, February 2, 2024. The referenced page numbers have been changed to reflect the current page numbers.

#### **General Comments:**

As reported in the State of Climate Action by WRI et al., adoption of renewable energy has occurred much faster than the phasing out of fossil fuels.

[https://systemschangelab.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/SoCA\\_2023\\_rev7.pdf](https://systemschangelab.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/SoCA_2023_rev7.pdf)

Harrisonburg City Council has approved the Resolution Adopting High Performance Standards and Solar Requirements for City Owned Buildings (Oct. 25, 2022) and subsequently amended the Environmental Action Plan to include Community Goals including carbon neutrality by 2050 (Oct. 24, 2023).

In keeping with these standards and goals, any new or significantly renovated city building or facility must consider alternatives to fossil fuel infrastructure, as well as continuing to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy. Any time an existing HVAC or other system is needed, options such as electric heat pumps should be considered, as feasible and appropriate.

#### **Specific Comments and Questions:**

1. **Page 5—Police Firearms Range Noise Reduction:** The alternative is far preferable (to soundproofing the existing facility): find a new property and build an **indoor** firing range. Council has received complaints from neighboring communities about the highly disruptive noise of gunfire, and Chair Finnegan has an excellent point about potential safety issues for the upcoming extension of Bluestone Trail to reach the High School.

**No response provided.**

2. **Page 6—Fire Station # 5 (Park View) and Page 9—Fire Station 4 Replacement:** See general comment on alternatives to fossil fuels. These fire stations should be evaluated for potential of geothermal and electric heat pump systems, as well as solar and energy efficiency measures.

**Response:** The design for both Fire Station #5 and Fire Station #4 includes a solar array that will render the buildings net zero for carbon emissions. The site for Fire Station #5 was assessed for a geothermal system however it was ruled cost prohibitive at over \$2 million. Both buildings will be designed to meet VEES standards.

3. **Page 7—Apparatus Replacement Program:** These at the very least should be fuel-efficient, and consider any alternative low- or zero-emissions vehicles as technology matures.

**Response:** EV Fire apparatus is an emerging market that the Fire Department is monitoring closely. Both Fire Station 5 and 4 will include infrastructure to accommodate EV fire apparatus that demands significant electric charging support. As the cost of these vehicles stabilizes (currently double the cost of current apparatus) and the reliability of vehicles improves, the Department will incorporate this technology into our fleet.

4. **Page 18—HVAC Upgrades District Courts and Old Courthouse:** Consider heat pumps and other alternatives.

**Response:** City staff will work with County staff to evaluate different systems that are applicable to the existing facilities.

5. **Page 19—Renovation of Old Municipal Building:** Consider fossil-free HVAC, and the potential for solar on the Turner Pavilion (p. 59) to serve as a ground-mount.

**Response:** Renovation of the Municipal Building is still in a conceptual phase. If this project proceeds to planning and execution, then all facility systems will be evaluated through a lens of resiliency.

6. **Page 21—Courts Building Project:** Consider the possibility of adding a Public Defender's office, as now being considered in the General Assembly, to needs for space.

**Response:** If a public defender' office comes to fruition, as of right now it is only a legislative effort, that office would be under the authority and discretion of the Virginia Indigent Defense Commission and not the City of Harrisonburg. It would be the responsibility of that entity to accommodate its space needs.

7. **Page 23—Water Street Bridge:** Preferable to close to vehicle traffic and open for foot traffic.

**No response provided.**

8. **Page 44—Bluestone Trail:** Bluestone Trail to new Rocktown High School – moved to Future – could this be done sooner, to address the need for safe travel to RHS?

**Response:** As of now we are only focused on VDOT SmartScale funding for this project. If awarded during the next round of SmartScale, funding would potentially not be available until FY30, which is why this has been placed in the future.

9. **Page 50—Northend Greenway:** Northend Greenway, now in Future – possibly sooner?

**Response:** We are currently beginning a new study for the NEG corridor where we are trying to find a suitable path to downtown. When the study is completed, it will most likely make us lean towards a SmartScale grant, which as noted above, intends the funding time to at least FY30.

10. **Page 51—Port Republic Road Sidewalk – Main Street to Crawford Avenue, Page 54—Old Furnace Road Sidewalk Gaps, Page 55—Central Avenue Sidewalk, and Page 64—Franklin Street Sidewalk:** All listed as Future; possibly sooner? Seeking grants and other funding.

**Response:** While these may or may not be considered for SmartScale funding due to recent changes in the program, Public Works is evaluating any potential funding source. However, because a specific source has not been identified, we felt listing it as future was the most conservative approach for this year.

11. **Page 57—Solar Implementation Plan:** Excellent! Grant funding (EECBG) and other sources to fund various projects over time.

**No response provided.**

12. **Page 58—Building Energy Audits:** Good first step for energy efficiency (EE) low-cost improvements; do EE first, then solar.

**No response provided.**

13. **Page 68—Simms HVAC Replacement:** Consider alternatives to fossil fuels such as heat pumps, as well as solar (p. 57). Potential for community solar to benefit energy-burdened neighborhood residents.

**No response provided.**

14. **Page 74—Elizabeth Street Deck, Page 75—Water Street Parking Deck, Page 76—Public Safety Building Parking Deck (public parking portion):** Consider alternative locations and more space-efficient options to clear out downtown to make room for green

space and higher-value uses. Consider solar panels to shade parking lots and rooftops of parking decks, with EV chargers available.

**No response provided.**

15. **Page 77—Boiler Replacement at Harrisonburg High School, Page 88—Boiler Replacement at Keister Elementary School, Page 90 Replace Air Handler at Keister Elementary School, Page 93—Replace Air Handler at Spotswood Elementary School, Page 104—Upgrade HVAC Controls at Stone Spring Elementary School, Page 105—Boiler Replacement at Stone Spring Elementary School, and Page 111—Replace Air Handler at Waterman Elementary School:** In all cases, consider higher-efficiency and fossil-alternative options.

**No response provided.**

16. **Page 91—MTC Renovations Request:** What renovations?

**Response:** Architecture, Inc. was retained in January 2021 to conduct a Facility Assessment Study of various campus buildings making up the Massanutten Technical Center campus. Over the course of the past month, Architecture, Inc. and our civil, mechanical and electrical engineers, have undertaken a review of nine (9) permanent buildings, (4) mobile classrooms and (1) fenced area.

This technical school has not had a major renovation since [unknown date]. To compound this during the height of Covid this facility had a higher incidence of cases than regular schools that can be attributed to outdated HVAC systems and the lack of fresh air.

According to our estimates, pairing the repair and renovation and the removal of the standalone classroom buildings to consolidate them in to two additions is the best overall economical solution.

**Proposal**

To address the above stated problems in the priority listed in the Overall Campus Condition section as those noted in the Master Plan, below.

A Master Plan has been included to provide a strategy for the development of the whole campus. This master plan will lead to better long-term planning, for future growth and investment, while guarding against costly short-term missteps.

**Vision:**

- Provide a safe cohesive campus for both high school and adult student learners as well as a hub for community/industry training.

**Goals:**

- Consolidate scattered small buildings around campus to clear paved areas for parking and improve fire lane loop access throughout the campus.
- Determine the highest and best use of existing facilities and opportunities for redeveloping existing sites with the underlying goal of reducing maintenance costs and repair work needed to maintain the school’s aging building inventory.

Two campus sites were identified as major opportunities for development:

**Addition 1:** Adult Learning Campus: replaces four (4) existing “temporary” mobile classrooms and the existing Plumbing Building and construct an addition to the Adult Education Center.

**Addition 2:** South Building: replaces existing Job Placement Skills (JPS)/IT and 3D/Virtual FX temporary structures and construct a new Community Training Center.

The Master Plan defines an improvement plan for the Technical Center and the Adult Education Center, establishing a vision for the development of the Adult Campus and Core Campus areas. The Master Plan’s implementation is organized in three phases:

**Phase 1:** Renovate interior and repair exterior of existing buildings based on the Facility Assessment Study (FAS) recommendations.

**Phase 2:** Central Plant and Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing system upgrades

**Phase 3:** New facility construction

For the Facility Assessment Study the consultant team reviewed the campus structures based on four (4) major assessment categories:

- Architectural Exterior & Interior Systems
- Structural Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Mechanical, Plumbing Sprinkler & Electrical Systems

Each of the buildings identified in the Facility Assessment Study includes a brief history listing basic data that is unique to the structure. This information includes; when it was constructed, the square footage of the structure, date(s) of previous addition(s) and renovation projects. We have identified a list of priorities for the campus based on the following criteria and are listed in the Overall Campus Condition.

**Priority 1 - Currently Critical Conditions** in this category require immediate action to:

1. correct a cited safety hazard
2. stop accelerated deterioration
3. return a facility to operation

**Priority 2** - Potentially Critical Conditions in this category, if not corrected expeditiously, will become critical within a year. Situations within this category include:

1. intermittent operations
2. rapid deterioration
3. potential life safety, health or security hazards

**Priority 3** - Necessary, but Not Yet Critical conditions in this category require appropriate attention to preclude predictable deterioration or potential downtime and the associated damage or higher costs if deferred further.

**Priority 4** - Recommended Conditions in this category include items that represent a sensible improvement to existing conditions. These are not required for the most basic function of the facility; however, Priority 4 projects will improve overall usability and/or reduce long-term maintenance or energy costs.

**Priority 5** - Does Not Meet Current Codes/Standards - “Grandfathered” Conditions in this category include items that do not conform to existing codes, but are “grandfathered” in their existing condition. No action is required at this time, but should substantial work be undertaken in contiguous areas, certain existing conditions may require correction.

17. **Roof Repair/Replacement at the Following Schools: Harrisonburg High School Pages 79 and 80; Keister Elementary School Pages 84, 85, 86 and 87; Spotswood Elementary School Pages 94, 95, 96, 97, and 98; Skyline Middle School Page 102; Smithland Elementary School Page 103; Stone Spring Elementary School Page 107; Thomas Harrison Middle School Page 109; and Waterman Elementary School Pages 114, 115, and 116:** Whenever a roof is replaced, consider adding solar panels, so that the life-cycle of the roof and solar match.

**No response provided.**

18. **Parking Lot Resurface at the Following Schools: Harrisonburg High School Page 82; Keister Elementary School Page 83; Spotswood Elementary School Page 99; and Thomas Harrison Middle School Page 110:** Consider adding solar panels to shade portions of parking lots with EV chargers available.

**No response provided.**

19. **Page 92—Purchase Land for 7<sup>th</sup> Elementary School:** Still under discussion for timing, need, and feasibility, especially given that bond proceeds would require raising taxes, and we will already need to raise taxes in 2026 to construct Fire Station #4 (p. 9).

**Response:** A 7<sup>th</sup> elementary school will impact the continued enrollment growth in our school division. Currently, when focusing only on K-5 enrollment, we have the availability of adding nearly 70 students (1-26-2024 data). However, since we also have more than 100 PreK students in several of our schools, the result then changes to over effective capacity by nearly 30 students. This year's Weldon Cooper Center for Public

Service projections continue to show enrollment growing during the 2020s, reaching 7,000 K-12 students by around 2030 for HCPS. They project that our enrollment growth could increase by 276 - 389 students from 2023 through 2028. At this time Waterman, Spotswood, Stone Spring and Keister Elementary schools have classrooms in mobile units.

20. **Pages 117 to 142 All Water and Sewer Projects:** Consider potential impacts of forthcoming regulations of PFAS (aka “forever chemicals”) and needed mitigations at different phases of the water cycle. See especially p. 129, Water Treatment Assets. Excellent inclusion of Sustainability measures throughout.

**Response: Preview of Requirements that might or might not be required of Harrisonburg Public Utilities as pertains to PFAS and PFOS:**

Maximum contaminant levels have yet to be set for drinking water; there is now some speculation as to what that might be.

**Preview of Status at which Harrisonburg Public Utilities stands with respect to perspective PSA and PFOS requirements:**

PFOS and PFAS have not been a regular monitoring requirement for HPU. By EPA selection, HPU has completed UCMR3 (the third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule) sampling and testing in 2013-2015, contaminant levels project minimal impacts. HPU has voluntarily been monitoring its future Shenandoah raw water source quarterly; contaminant levels project minimal impacts. HPU is now undertaking UCMR5 (the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule) sampling November through March; CIP impacts for WTP expansion projects will be re-evaluated upon results.

Water Treatment CIP will in the future provisions to add acetic acid feed for pH adjustment to the Shenandoah River. This project is rather small but will be added as an expansion project.

21. **Page 143—School Bus Parking Lot Expansion:** Good to consider electric charging infrastructure. Investigate two-way charging.

**No response provided.**

22. **Page 145—School Buses:** Expand electric school buses as rapidly as possible.

**No response provided.**

23. **Page 147—Transit Center:** Consider locations to allow for reduction of parking and traffic in key areas such as downtown.

**No response provided.**

24. **Page 148—Transit Buses:** Replace with electric vehicles for smaller paratransit vehicles and potential on-demand transit vehicles (if implemented); later replace full-size transit buses with electric as technology evolves.

**No response provided.**

25. **Page 151—City Landfill Closure & Monitoring:** What is the time frame for final closure? Seeking to build solar farm on the landfill, and move athletic fields to Smithland complex.

**Response:** The landfill stopped receiving solid waste in December 1994, and the official closure was certified by DEQ in November 1998. Per DEQ regulations the closure period is 30 years from the certification date, which is December 2028. At that time, the City can start the process to request termination of select portions of our closure requirements, however, groundwater monitoring will need to continue due to it having a corrective action plan.

26. **Page 153—VMRC Extended Detention Pond, Page 154—Temporary Credit Purchases, Page 155—Permanent Credit Purchases, Page 156—Waterman Drive Drainage and Water Quality Improvement, Page 157—Drainage Improvement Program, Page 158—Suter Street Drainage Improvements, and Page 159—Heritage Oaks Drainage Improvements:** Drainage improvements – Stormwater Improvement Plan process to include public engagement.

**No response provided.**