

Update on the Council Vision and Action Plan



Council Vision

20-year Aspirations

Informs Priorities

HARRISONBURG 2045:
A CITY FOR ALL



Action Plan



2045 CITY COUNCIL VISION 2025 - 2028 PRIORITIES ACTION PLAN

Area

VISION AREA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Priority

PRIORITY E

With partners, evaluate and enhance strategies and processes that enable individuals to start businesses with greater ease

Rationale

RATIONALE AND CONSIDERATIONS

By working with partners to evaluate and improve the systems that help individuals start businesses, the city can reduce common barriers like regulatory complexity and limited access to resources. Streamlining these pathways empowers aspiring entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds and encourages local investment. This focus strengthens the local economy, promotes self-sufficiency, and ensures business opportunities are within reach for all residents.

Champions

STAFF CHAMPION

Brian Shull, Peirce Macgill

Tasks

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

TASKS

TARGET DATES

1. Update the Starting a Business in Harrisonburg guide

September 2025

2. Meet with the Small Business Development Center and former business owners to identify specific roadblocks to starting a business

January 2026

3. Enhance outreach to better promote City programs and resources to minority-owned businesses based on National League of Cities feedback and best practices

December 2026

4. Identify and train Spanish language Launch Harrisonburg facilitators

January 2027

5. Offer a Spanish language Launch Harrisonburg cohort

March 2027

Target Dates

Progress over past fiscal year

Community Connectors



Economic Development



Progress over past fiscal year

Navigation Center

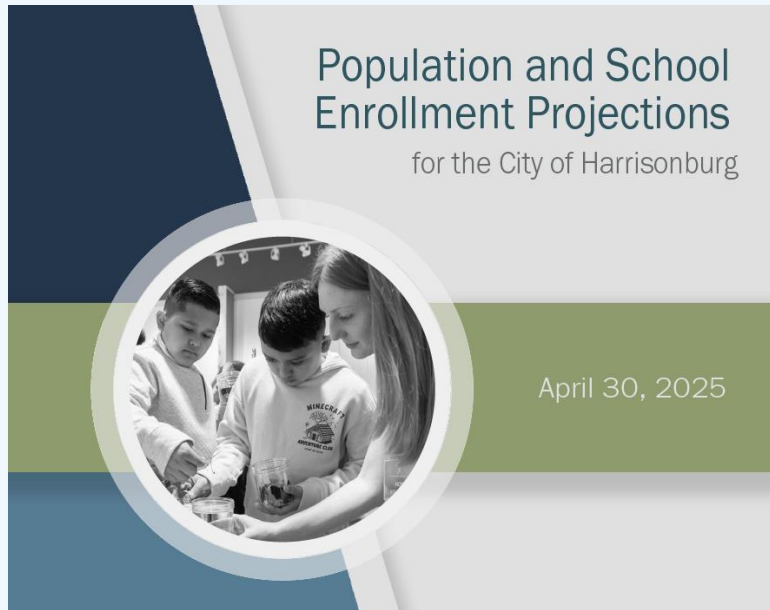


Fire Station 5



Progress over past fiscal year

Population Study



Childcare Support



Progress over past fiscal year

Transit Strategic Plan



Stormwater Improvement Plan



HARRISONBURG 2045: A CITY FOR ALL



We provide a quality urban living option for everyone who wants to reside here.

Our diverse population thrives in a welcoming city where all are valued as friends and neighbors.

Our inclusiveness is our strength and reflects the true spirit of our city.

The pillars of our multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-generational city consist of a robust economy and a vibrant education epicenter, along with a broad range of amenities and a beautiful natural environment that enrich life.

This is made possible by the fiscally sound planning of our staff and elected leaders.

Bold thinking, community input, and best practices lead the city to consider new paths and structures that have led to our recognition as a model locality.

New Focus Areas and Priorities

A Harmonious Community

- A. Develop a central resource/hub for newcomers that makes them welcome in City Hall and other City locations, provides information, and ensures access to City services
- B. Employ strategies to ensure all residents, visitors, and businesses have effective access to City services and reduce barriers to access
- C. Coordinate and promote awareness of Public Safety services and programs that enhance community safety
- D. Implement a discussion of measures and actions the Council can take to remedy past actions, current harms and lasting impacts
- E. Identify and employ tools to give citizens greater access to City decision-making, including addressing barriers to participation in governmental processes
- F. Explore/conduct research on the advisability of establishing an office of human rights or a human rights commission

A Thriving Educational Epicenter

- A. Assess and determine how to provide additional support to expand early childhood education and after-school programs supported by the City
- B. Work with the School Board to identify a successful strategy to meet our school needs
- C. Enhance City-University relationships as economic and community partners for the benefit of residents and students
- D. Continue to foster a relationship with partners to identify and deliver continuing education and workforce development that meets the needs of our community

Available Housing For All

- A. Complete the zoning ordinance re-write
- B. Research and implement viable housing strategies that will achieve recommendations of the Housing Study with a focus on increasing home ownership and spurring the supply of needed housing across all incomes
- C. Continue the relationship with City/County Homeless Coalition to ensure collaboration and communication among service providers
- D. Establish a sustainable Housing Trust Fund that addresses specific needs and goals, along with clear administration, policies, and funding

New Focus Areas and Priorities

Community Resiliency & the Natural Environment

- A. Provide community engagement and education activities to implement community goals for the widespread adoption of renewable energy and efficiency measures
- B. Continue implementation of the Urban Forestry Management Plan
- C. Continue implementation of the Urban Wood Program
- D. Develop and implement a landscape management plan
- E. Explore and enable sustainable practices that support financial stability and education regarding environmental impacts for lower income families
- F. Collaborate with HEC to develop a plan for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with community goals

Economic Development & Financial Empowerment

- A. Collaborate with private regional workforce transportation partners to establish a well-connected public transportation system, focused on enhancing workforce and resident transportation within the area
- B. Enhance small business and entrepreneurship training, support, and access to grants and funds
- C. Develop an economic development strategic plan, including the identification of target business sectors for the City and appropriate recruitment strategies
- D. Research, identify and implement programs to enhance the financial wellbeing and prosperity for residents
- E. Evaluate and enhance strategies and processes that enable individuals to start businesses with greater ease

Available Housing For All

- A. Implement the Transit Strategic Plan
- B. Continue strengthening city staff's ability to meet and serve our city into the future
- C. Develop methods to effectively acquire customer service feedback
- D. Complete the Update to the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and prioritize recommendations for implementation
- E. Design and construct Station 5 in the Northwest Section of the City and begin implementation of the planned replacement of Station 4 in the Northeast Neighborhood
- F. Update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Recommendation

Option 1. Adopt the 2045 Council Vision and the
2025-2028 Action Plan