



March 12, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting

## Title

Consider Rezoning 532 Hawkins Street — Nyrma Soffel, Community Development

## Summary

Project name	N/A
Address/Location	532 Hawkins Street
Tax Map Parcels	27-L-22
Total Land Area	+/- 9,178 square feet
Property Owner	James (Jim) A. Herr
Owner's Representative	James (Jim) A. Herr
Present Zoning	R-3, Medium Density Residential District
Proposed Zoning	R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional
Planning Commission	March 12, 2025 (Public Hearing)
City Council	Anticipated April 8, 2025 (First Reading/Public Hearing)
	Anticipated April 22, 2025 (Second Reading)

## Recommendation

Option 1. Recommend approval of the rezoning request.

## Fiscal Impact

N/A

## Context & Analysis

The applicant is proposing to rezone a +/- 9,178 square foot parcel from R-3, Medium Density Residential District to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional. The property is addressed as 532 Hawkins Street and is identified as tax map parcel 27-L-22. If approved, the applicant plans to construct four townhouse-style, two-level multi-family dwelling units with two to three bedrooms each.

## Background

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

Site: Vacant property, zoned R-3

North: Single family detached dwelling, zoned R-2  
East: Residential units, zoned R-3  
South: Across Hawkins Street, residential uses, zoned R-3  
West: Single family detached dwelling and a vacant property, zoned R-3

### *Proffers*

The applicant has offered the following proffers (written verbatim):

1. Dwelling units may be occupied by a single family or no more than three (3) unrelated persons.
2. A minimum of one and one half (1.5) parking spaces per unit shall be provided.

The conceptual site layout is not proffered.

The R-5 district allows dwellings to be occupied by a family or not more than four persons. Proffer #1 reduces the allowable occupancy of dwelling units to either a family or not more than three persons. The minimum off-street parking requirements of Section 10-3-25 (7) allows for reduced parking when occupancy is restricted in specific districts. If the applicant had not proffered a reduced occupancy, they would have been required to provide up to 3.5 parking spaces per unit. Since they limited the occupancy, only one parking space per unit would be required by the ZO; however, as indicated in proffer #2, the applicant has proffered a minimum of 1.5 parking spaces per unit.

### *Land Use*

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Medium Density Residential and states:

These areas have been developed or are planned for development of a variety of housing types such as single-family detached, single-family attached (duplexes and townhomes), and in special circumstances, multi-family dwellings (apartments). Depending on the specific site characteristics, densities in these areas should be around 15 dwelling units per acre. Non-residential uses may also be appropriate.

Given the mix of housing types within this area of the City, staff believes that the four proposed townhouse-style apartment units would be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Guide.

### *Transportation and Traffic*

The Determination of Need for a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) form ("TIA determination form") for the proposed rezoning is attached. The TIA determination form indicated that the project would not generate 100 or more new peak hour trips, which is the threshold for staff to require a TIA. Therefore, a TIA was not required for the rezoning request.

Immediately to the west of the subject property is an undeveloped public alley. The applicant is planning to reconstruct and widen the entrance to the alley and improve it to provide access to a

proposed parking lot to the rear of the building. The applicant is also conceptually demonstrating the construction of a private sidewalk extending along the side of the alley between the public sidewalk along Hawkins Street and the private parking lot. While the applicant is proposing to improve the alley, they are not requesting to close it and thus it would remain open for the public to use.

#### *Public Water and Sanitary Sewer*

While staff does not anticipate issues regarding water or sanitary sewer service availability for the proposed development, the applicant has been advised that they will be responsible for completing a study of the water and sanitary sewer capacity prior to submittal of an engineered comprehensive site plan. Any public system improvements required to meet the increased demands resulting from the project will be the responsibility of the developer.

#### *Housing Study*

The City's Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study (Housing Study) places the subject property within Market Type C. Along with other details of this market type, it is the smallest but fastest growing market type in the City. Among other characterizations, Market Type C has a large number of university students. The Housing Study states "[l]ike Market Type A, Market Type C has above median overall access to amenities such as public transit within walking distance, full-service grocery stores, and multiple parks and recreation facilities." It goes on to say that "Market Type C has above median access to amenities yet is the most affordable market type in the City. The creation and preservation of affordable housing and construction of middle-income housing would be appropriate here as there are already amenities in place that would make these areas attractive locations for housing..." The Housing Study also notes that "[h]aving an adequate supply of smaller apartments in Market Types A and C is important because these block groups have higher scores for access to amenities such as jobs, parks, full-service grocery stores, and public transit."

When considering the need for providing more housing in the City, providing multi-family units at this location can be a positive result for this area of the City and for those individuals who want to reside in the City.

#### *Public Schools*

Staff from Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS) noted that based on their student generation calculations, the proposed four residential units is estimated to result in four additional students. Based on the School Board's currently adopted attendance boundaries, Spotswood Elementary School, Skyline Middle School, and Rocktown High School would serve the students residing in this development. HCPS staff also noted that currently four of the six elementary schools exceed effective capacity.

For total student population projections, the City of Harrisonburg and HCPS both use the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service's projections. These projections are updated annually and are available at: <https://www.coopercenter.org/virginia-school-data>.

#### *Recommendation*

Staff recommends approval of the rezoning request, as presented.

#### **Options**

1. Recommend approval of the rezoning request.
2. Recommend denial of the rezoning request.

#### **Attachments**

- Site maps
- Application and supporting documents