



October 8, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting

Title

Consider Rezoning at 2410 Reservoir Street — Nyrma Soffel, Community Development

Summary

Project name	N/A
Address/Location	2410 Reservoir Street
Tax Map Parcels	81-B-1-B
Total Land Area	+/- 20,479 sq. ft.
Property Owner	City of Harrisonburg
Owner's Representative	Valley Housing Trust
Present Zoning	R-3, Medium Density Residential District
Proposed Zoning	R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional
Planning Commission	October 8, 2025 (Public Hearing)
City Council	Anticipated November 12, 2025 (First Reading/Public Hearing) Anticipated November 25, 2025 (Second Reading)

Recommendation

Option 1. Recommend approval of the rezoning request.

Fiscal Impact

N/A

Context & Analysis

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

Site: Vacant land; zoned R-3

North: Townhomes; zoned R-3

East: Across Reservoir Street, vacant land and many different housing types along Stonewall Drive; zoned R-3

South: Single-family dwelling; zoned R-3

West: Multi-family dwellings; zoned R-3

The applicant is proposing to rezone a +/- 20,479 square foot parcel from R-3, Medium Density Residential District, to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional. The property is addressed as 2410 Reservoir Street and is identified as tax map parcel 81-B-1-B. The subject

parcel is owned by the City of Harrisonburg and was made available for residential development through the City's Surplus City Property Disposition for Residential Development program in February 2025.

If approved, the applicant plans to buy the property to construct a single-story building with five (5) efficiency units.

City Owned Land and Housing

The 2021 Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study recommended identifying suitable City-owned parcels for affordable and mixed income residential development. The City assessed several vacant city-owned parcels and after determining there was no further public use for these properties established a process to sell the surplus parcels for residential development. Under the program guidelines, offers below the assessed value could be considered if the discount was tied to housing affordability.

Five parcels were listed for sale in February 2025. Applicants were considered based on established evaluation criteria, including readiness/feasibility, experience/qualifications, and community value. Information about the program is available on the City website at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-land-housing>.

Frank Gordon, Trustee of the Valley Housing Trust, proposed to purchase 2410 Reservoir Street for \$74,600, below the assessed value of \$108,700, in exchange for creating five housing units with a 30-year affordability commitment below 80-percent of Area Median Income. The sale is contingent on securing land use approvals and the necessary funding to support development. City Council approved the disposition of the property to Valley Housing Trust following a public hearing held on August 26, 2025 (Public hearing information is available at <https://harrisonburg-va.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7523686&GUID=20C99547-581A-4954-83F6-6881A735FD49&Options=&Search=>).

Proffers

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

1. Dwelling units on the referenced property shall be one bedroom or efficiency units only.
2. Dwelling units on the referenced property may be occupied by a family or no more than two (2) individuals per unit.
3. A maximum of five dwelling units are permitted.

The conceptual site layout is not proffered.

Regarding proffer number 2, parking regulations require one and a half off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit for one-bedroom multifamily units within the R-3 and R-5 districts, unless the occupancy has been restricted through a proffer with a conditional rezoning. Proffer number 2 reduces the occupancy, allowing for a reduction in the off-street parking spaces to one space for each dwelling unit.

Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Mixed Use and states:

The Mixed Use category includes both existing and proposed areas for mixed use. Mixed Use areas shown on the Land Use Guide map are intended to combine residential and non-residential uses in neighborhoods, where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Mixed Use can take the form of a single building, a single parcel, a city block, or entire neighborhoods. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces for large scale developments will ensure development compatibility of a mixed use neighborhood with the surrounding area. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments (TND). Live-work developments combine residential and commercial uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. The scale and massing of buildings is an important consideration when developing in Mixed Use areas. Commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way. Downtown is an existing area that exhibits and is planned to continue to contain a mix of land uses.

The downtown Mixed Use area often has no maximum residential density, however, development should take into consideration the services and resources that are available (such as off-street parking) and plan accordingly. Residential density in Mixed Use areas outside of downtown should be around 24 dwelling units per acre, and all types of residential units are permitted: single-family detached, single-family attached (duplexes and townhomes), and multi-family buildings. Large scale developments, which include multi-family buildings are encouraged to include single-family detached and/or attached dwellings.

The proposed development conforms to the Comprehensive Plan adding to the variety of housing types and mixed-income housing in the area. The site of the proposed development has existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along its frontage and is located along Transit Route 02, providing multi-modal access to commercial areas and other amenities.

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.

Regarding proffer number 3, the existing entrance is in the functional area of the intersection. Staff has determined that the development cannot have more than five dwelling units unless the entrance is relocated to align with the median as a right in/right out. This determination is based on the *Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Road Design Manual, Appendix F: Access Management Design Standards for Entrances and Intersections*, which defines “low volume commercial entrances” as:

Any entrance, other than a private entrance, serving five or fewer individual residences or lots for individual residences on a privately owned and maintained road or land uses that generate 50 or fewer vehicular trips per day using the methodology in the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation.

Virginia Housing Trust desires to keep the entrance at its present location and has proposed a proffer to limit the number of dwelling units to five (5) so that it does not exceed VDOT's threshold for a "low volume commercial entrance."

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer

Staff has no concerns with the requested rezoning regarding water and sanitary sewer matters.

Housing Study

The City's Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study (Housing Study) places the subject site within Market Type A. Among other things, this Market Type is characterized by high population growth. The study notes that Market Type A has "above median overall access to amenities such as public transit within walking distance, full-service grocery stores, and multiple parks and recreation facilities." The study also notes that "policies that are appropriate to Market type A areas include an emphasis on increasing density through zoning changes, infill development and housing rehabilitation to maintain the quality of housing."

Public Schools

Based on the Weldon Cooper Center report's calculation, this development's proposed five multifamily residential units are estimated to generate four (4) K-12 students at full build-out. According to the School Board's current attendance boundaries, Spotswood Elementary School, Skyline Middle School, and Rocktown High School would serve the students residing in this development.

Conclusion

Staff believes that the rezoning request aligns with the City's objectives for affordable housing and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. With the applicant's submitted proffers, staff does not believe that there would be any adverse effect to the area and recommends approval of the rezoning request.

Options

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

Attachments

- Site maps
- Application and supporting documents