



CITY OF HARRISONBURG
**PARKS &
RECREATION**

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TO: Ande Banks, City Manager
FROM: Matt Little, Recreation and Events Manager, Parks & Recreation
DATE: 4/24/23
RE: Downtown Race Routes

Summary: Consider the updated running/walking race routes to be used in downtown Harrisonburg.

Background: The Special Events committee, along with event organizers, have created two updated race routes to be used in downtown Harrisonburg. These updated race routes bring safety to the forefront. Previously, Liberty Street was only partially closed, and vehicular traffic could drive on the West lane heading South while runners were running/walking North in the East lane. At this time, no accidents have occurred but the Committee wanted to be proactive and remove this potential hazard. After many discussions, we have been able to create these new race routes and close both lanes of Liberty Street for increased safety. Both lanes of Main Street, in addition to the side streets, will still be closed for these races. The Police Department and Public Works will be able to create safe road closures to ensure participant safety and not impact participant enjoyment.

The “EMU” race route road closure, which includes the neighborhood surrounding the campus, for races will still be in effect and can be accomplished without modifications. Similarly, the road closure utilized for Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation’s Youth TryAthlon and Race to Beat Breast Cancer in the neighborhood surrounding Westover Park will not be altered. These routes are still able to maintain participant safety with limited adjustments to vehicular traffic.

The other two race routes that have been used in the past – East Washington Street and Linda Lane – have been removed from consideration as many groups are utilizing Harrisonburg’s many trails, specifically the Friendly City Trail, Trails at Hillandale, and the Trails around Purcell Park. The Parks & Recreation department has consulted with many event organizers and have recommended these alternative trails when events are less than 200 runners. Currently, the road closure race route options are cost prohibitive for many event organizers and the Trails are a safe, cost-efficient alternative.