



For Immediate Release
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Sharing the Vision for Downtown

Harrisonburg, VA – The City of Harrisonburg is partnering with other agencies and the community to discuss the vision for Downtown Harrisonburg.

The Harrisonburg Downtown Streetscape Plan was last updated in 2005. With many changes and exciting opportunities in the downtown area, a need has risen to update this plan. The proposed updates in this plan will build upon the 2005 Downtown Streetscape Plan by expanding the study area, adding new concepts, and covering additional elements that were not mentioned during the last plan revision.

A public forum has been set for **Thursday, June 6 from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.** and will be held in Council Chambers. This is an opportunity for members of the community to view the updated draft of the Downtown Streetscape Plan in its entirety and learn about key features.

The Downtown Streetscape Plan is considered a working document and was prepared by city staff with the support of the Streetscape Plan Committee and the Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance Landscape Committee.

“Various committees have focused on different aspects of this plan for many years and we are now ready to move forward with one cohesive, coordinated plan,” said Brad Reed, Transportation Planner with the Department of Public Works.

“Our goal with this plan is to present an easily communicable, comprehensive vision for public spaces in Downtown Harrisonburg that can be utilized by public and private agencies to build a vibrant downtown. This is a plan for an investment in downtown.”

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Specific goals outlined in the Downtown Streetscape Plan:

1. Develop a comprehensive vision for the public right-of-way in the study area to define public and private expectation for project elements.
2. Provide a plan for safe and efficient multi-modal transportation, emphasizing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.
3. Provide sufficient parking to support current and future downtown business, residential housing, and visitor needs.
4. Enhance public transportation facilities to accommodate citizens and visitors.
5. Develop a plan for public services in the downtown area that addresses the changing needs of businesses.
6. Plan for necessary improvements to public and private utility infrastructure.
7. Partner with property owners and community stakeholders to provide opportunities for development or redevelopment of public and private downtown properties.
8. Expand recreational and green space opportunities in the downtown core.
9. Enhance the visual character of the downtown streetscape.

Residents, business owners, visitors, and anyone with an interest in Downtown Harrisonburg are encouraged to participate in this forum. The forum will be in the format of an open house, with opportunities to discuss this plan one-on-one with city staff, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance representatives, and other community members.

What are the next steps for the Downtown Streetscape Plan?

1. City staff will discuss and address any concerns or suggestions that were made during the forum.
2. A public comment period will be open from June 6 until June 17 for the community to provide additional feedback to city staff on the proposed plan. This feedback can be sent to Brad Reed or Thanh Dang at the Department of Public Works (Brad.Reed@HarrisonburgVA.gov or Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov).
3. The revised plan will be presented to the Harrisonburg Planning Commission. A date for this presentation has not yet been set.
4. The Harrisonburg Planning Commission will determine a date for a public comment period. This public comment period will take place at a Planning Commission meeting.
5. City staff will take into consideration suggested revisions from the Harrisonburg Planning Commission and make those changes before the next phase of this proposal.

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6. If recommended by the Harrisonburg Planning Commission, the plan will then be presented to Harrisonburg City Council, for which a date has not yet been determined.
7. Harrisonburg City Council will then hold a public comment period before final revisions are made and the Downtown Streetscape Plan is officially adopted.

The Downtown Streetscape Plan is a comprehensive plan and vision, not to be confused with the Streetscape Project that will begin next summer. The City will undergo a second beautification project in the downtown corridor, called 'Streetscape Project Phase II.' This project will replace and upgrade sidewalks on the west side of Main Street, from Court Square to Wolfe Street.

For more information and to follow the progress of the Downtown Streetscape Plan, visit www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/downtown-streetscape-plan or call the Department of Public Works at 540-434-5928.

***The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 50,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*

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