Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 16. To maintain economic leadership in the Shenandoah Valley by offering opportunity for all people, businesses, and industries that enhances the City’s ability to expand its economic base and provide good employment for all people.

Objective 16.1 To increase the number of higher-paying jobs available in Harrisonburg by attracting new businesses and assisting existing firms to expand locally.

   Strategy 16.1.1 To improve the quality of life of people in Harrisonburg to attract new businesses and people/employees, while also considering how new businesses may, in turn, can improve the City’s quality of life.

   Strategy 16.1.2 To review land use policies and regulations, and if appropriate to amend them to provide for the availability of sites for businesses to locate and expand.

   Strategy 16.1.3 To protect the City’s limited availability of properly zoned, job producing industrial land.

   Strategy 16.1.4 To continue to improve thriving commercial areas that include downtown, the East Market Street Corridor, and the South Main Street corridor with business expansion efforts, visual improvements, and the reuse and development of underutilized properties.

   Strategy 16.1.5 To improve the City’s transportation system as a way to preserve the City’s competitiveness for attracting new businesses.

   Strategy 16.1.6 To promote and market Harrisonburg as a business friendly, highly competitive and attractive city in the Shenandoah Valley for business recruitment and expansion and a high quality of life.

   Strategy 16.1.7 To regularly update and disseminate market trends and information and apply market data to economic development initiatives and programs.

   Strategy 16.1.8 To quantify the impact of the regional college-aged student population on the local economy and adjust household income and poverty level to improve potential for business recruitment and investment.

Objective 16.2 To create a well-prepared and successful workforce by providing educational programs for workforce development, training, and retraining to meet demands of business and industry.

   Strategy 16.2.1 To promote the awareness of programs offered by and information available from organizations such as the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board (SVWDB), the SVWDB Valley Workforce Center, and the Valley Career Hub online site.

   Strategy 16.2.2 To explore programs and initiatives that offer skilled trades training for people in the City.

   Strategy 16.2.3 To collaborate with service providers to help people in the City overcome barriers to employment such as basic education and training, transportation, childcare, and other obstacles.

   Strategy 16.2.4 To connect employers with education providers so that they can work together to develop training, apprenticeship, and other programs to train and educate people to fill the needs of employers while also helping to improve opportunities for individual people.

   Strategy 16.2.5 To actively promote the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.
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Objective 16.3 To increase technology-related job opportunities in the City.
   Strategy 16.3.1 To promote the benefits of the City’s two technology zones.
   Strategy 16.3.2 To grow technology zone incentives and marketing to attract expansion investments from information technology, telecommunication, and cyber security companies from the Washington, D.C. metro area as well as among local and regional companies.
   Strategy 16.3.3 To collaborate with James Madison Innovations and the James Madison University Center for Entrepreneurship to attract start-up technology companies.
   Strategy 16.3.4 To identify training and education opportunities to retain immigrants and veterans living in our community by providing them with skills that can be transferred to technology job opportunities.

Objective 16.4 To attract capital-intensive operations to the City to increase the machinery and tools tax base.
   Strategy 16.4.1 To market available industrial land in the city.
   Strategy 16.4.2 To work with property owners to develop shovel-ready sites and shell buildings.
   Strategy 16.4.3 To promote Harrisonburg to manufacturing businesses in partnership with the Shenandoah Valley Partnership.

Objective 16.5 To promote entrepreneurial activity across all segments of the population, by providing support and incentives to attract businesses to start in the City.
   Strategy 16.5.1 To identify barriers to entry for new businesses and barriers to growth for existing businesses, and rectify common obstacles.
   Strategy 16.5.2 To help entrepreneurs identify locations/sites where they can successfully start and grow their businesses.
   Strategy 16.5.3 To continue the Entrepreneurial Spark speaker series to inspire and connect potential entrepreneurs with successful entrepreneurs.
   Strategy 16.5.4 To connect businesses with the Small Business Development Center in order to assist them with improving their web presence.
   Strategy 16.5.5 To encourage small home-based business initiatives by assisting businesses with navigating state and local regulations and amending local regulations to allow more small home-based businesses where possible and appropriate.
   Strategy 16.5.6 To develop a campaign to promote economic development incentives and commit to annually budgeting for effective programs like the City’s Business Loan Program.
   Strategy 16.5.7 To identify opportunities to support entrepreneurial activities for Harrisonburg’s diverse ethnic and immigrant communities.
   Strategy 16.5.8 To expand partnerships with educational institutions and economic development organizations in the region to foster business creation, regional initiatives, business growth, and employment pipelines.
   Strategy 16.5.9 To increase awareness of tourism marketing opportunities and to provide assistance to local businesses.
Reviewing the objectives:

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<tr>
<th>Is the intent of each objective clear? If not, how can it be made more clear?</th>
<th>In general, do you agree with the intent of this objective? If not, why not?</th>
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*If we achieve these objectives, will we have achieved this goal?*

*What is missing? Where might there be gaps?*

Additional feedback you would like the planning commission or city staff to receive.
Reviewing strategies:

“Strategies begin to answer the question, ‘How can we accomplish our objectives?’ Strategies might include creating or implementing projects, programs, or regulations.”

Is the potential impact of the strategies included in the draft clear?

What additional strategies might you suggest for any of the objectives related to the goal?