

PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN  
OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD  
CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): John Schoster Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N):      If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

YES, DON'T TAKE H<sub>2</sub>O FROM A RIVER <sup>SHENANDOAH</sup> FOR DRINKING H<sub>2</sub>O.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

LAND USE : RESTRICTIONS ON CLEARING EXISTING VEGETATION (ESPECIALLY TREES), AND REQUIREMENTS FOR A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF DEVELOPED LAND IS GREEN, STORM H<sub>2</sub>O; ~~DO~~ LIMIT GROWTH AS BOULDER CO. AND YOU WIL NOT NEED SUCH AN EXTENSIVE AND EXPENSIVE STORM H<sub>2</sub>O SYSTEM.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

EUROPEAN BIFF LANES IN MANY AREAS ARE BUFFERED FROM NORMAL TRAFFIC, AS WELL AS IT SHOULD. <sup>E</sup> STOP WIDENING ROADS, IF PEOPLE WANT TO DRIVE A CAR ITS THERE CHOICE. — CONJESTION,

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign-in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by June 26, 2019.

Visit [www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house) for more information.

Additional Comments

STOP ALLOWING OBNOXIOUS SIGNS ALONG THE HIGHWAY. MAKE THE TRANSITION OVER A DECADE LONG OR SHORTER.

THE SAME WITH OVERHEAD TOWER LINES. GET RID OF THEM, SOUTH MAIN STREET LOOKS LIKE A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY.

THESE IDEAS ARE NOT NEW AND HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED FOR FIFTY YEARS IN SOME PARTS OF OUR COUNTRY.

FOLD HERE FIRST

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return Address

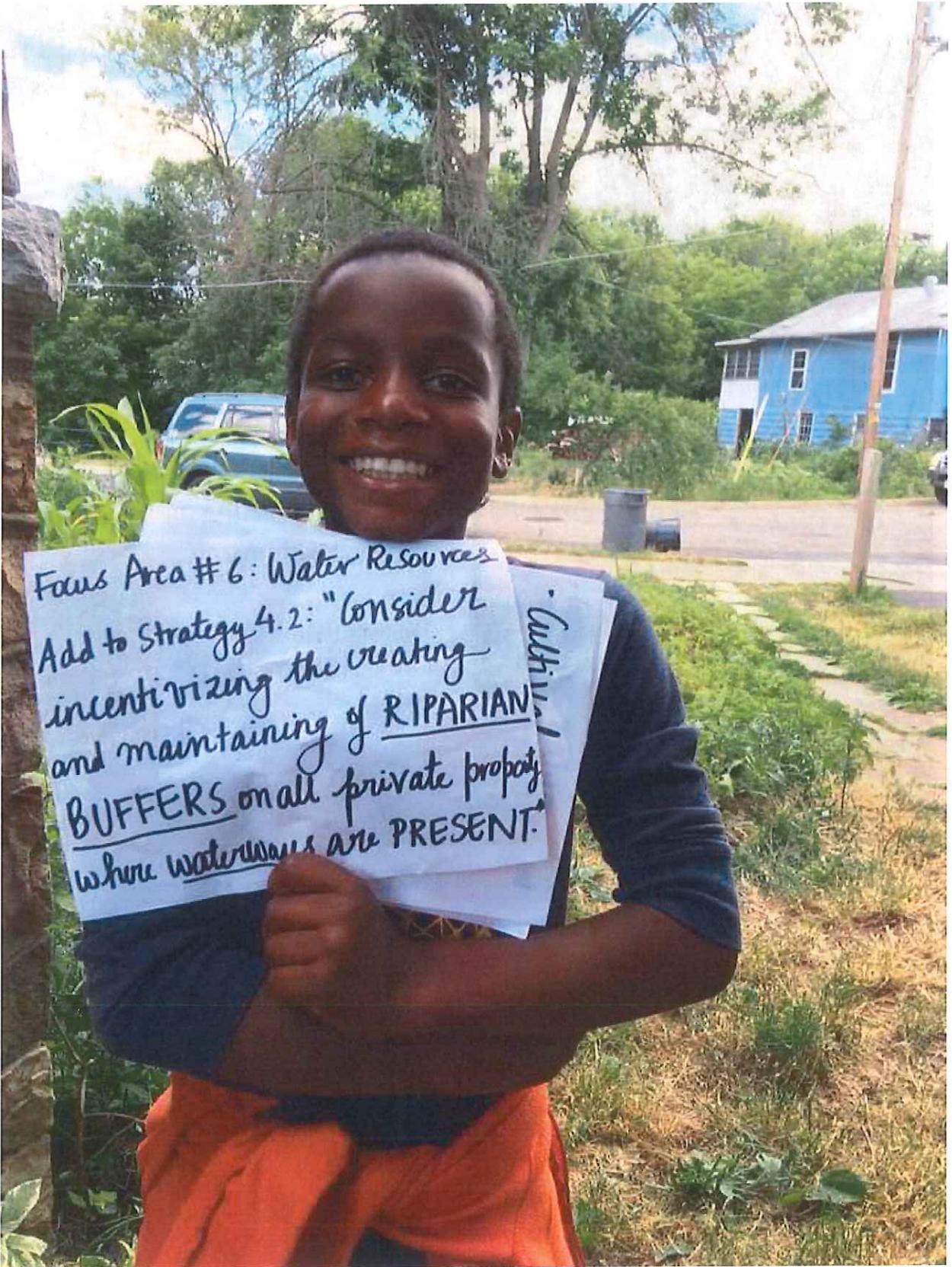
PLACE POSTAGE  
HERE, POST  
OFFICE WILL NOT  
DELIVER WITHOUT  
PROPER  
POSTAGE.



City of Harrisonburg  
Rebecca Stimson  
Department of Public Works  
320 E. Mosby Road  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

FOLD HERE LAST

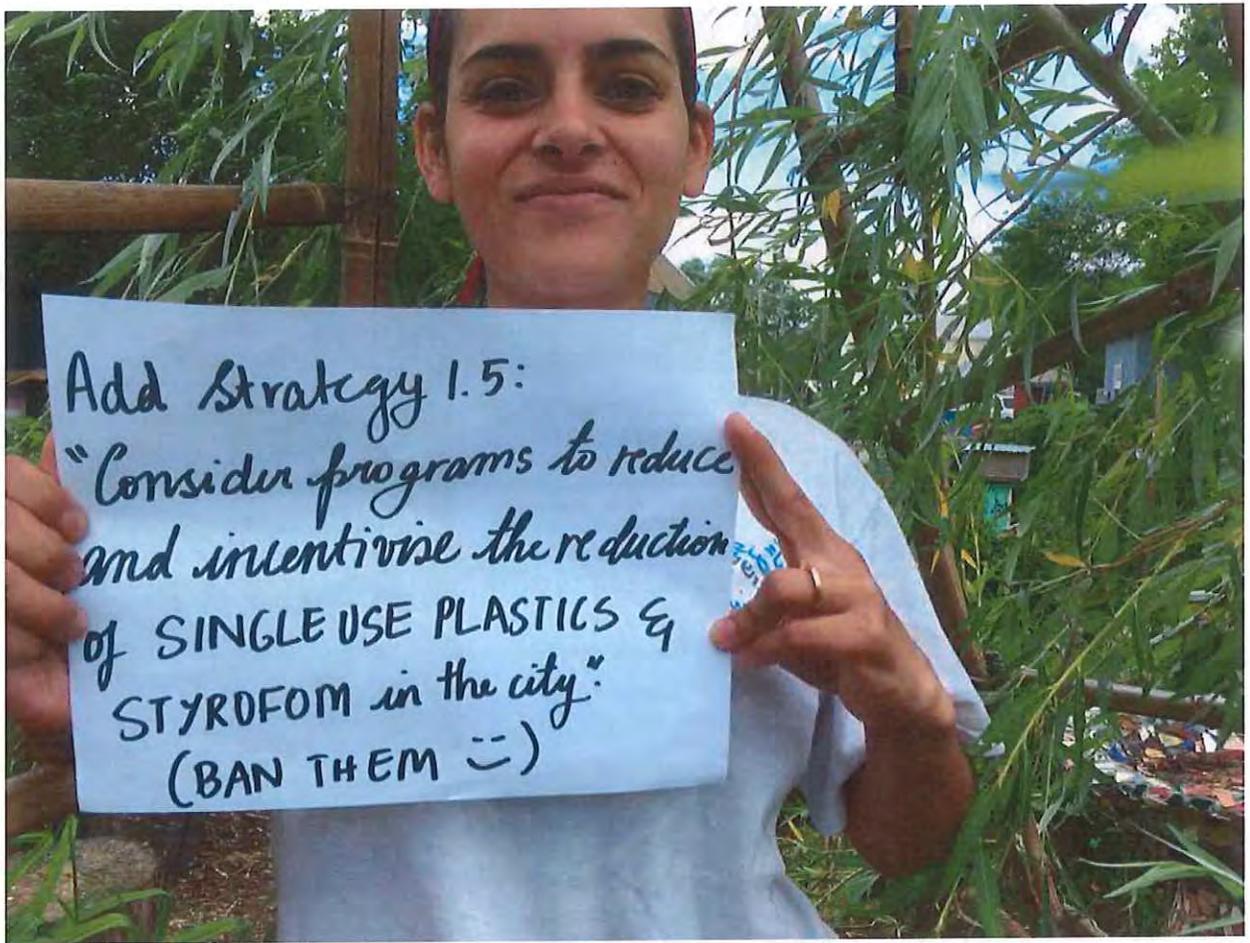
Please submit this form during the open house, email it to the address on the reverse side, or mail it to the above address.



Focus Area # 6: Water Resources  
Add to Strategy 4.2: "Consider  
incentivizing the creating  
and maintaining of RIPARIAN  
BUFFERS on all private property  
where waterways are PRESENT."

Cultural





Add Strategy 1.5:  
"Consider programs to reduce  
and incentivise the reduction  
of SINGLE USE PLASTICS &  
STYROFOAM in the city."  
(BAN THEM 😊)



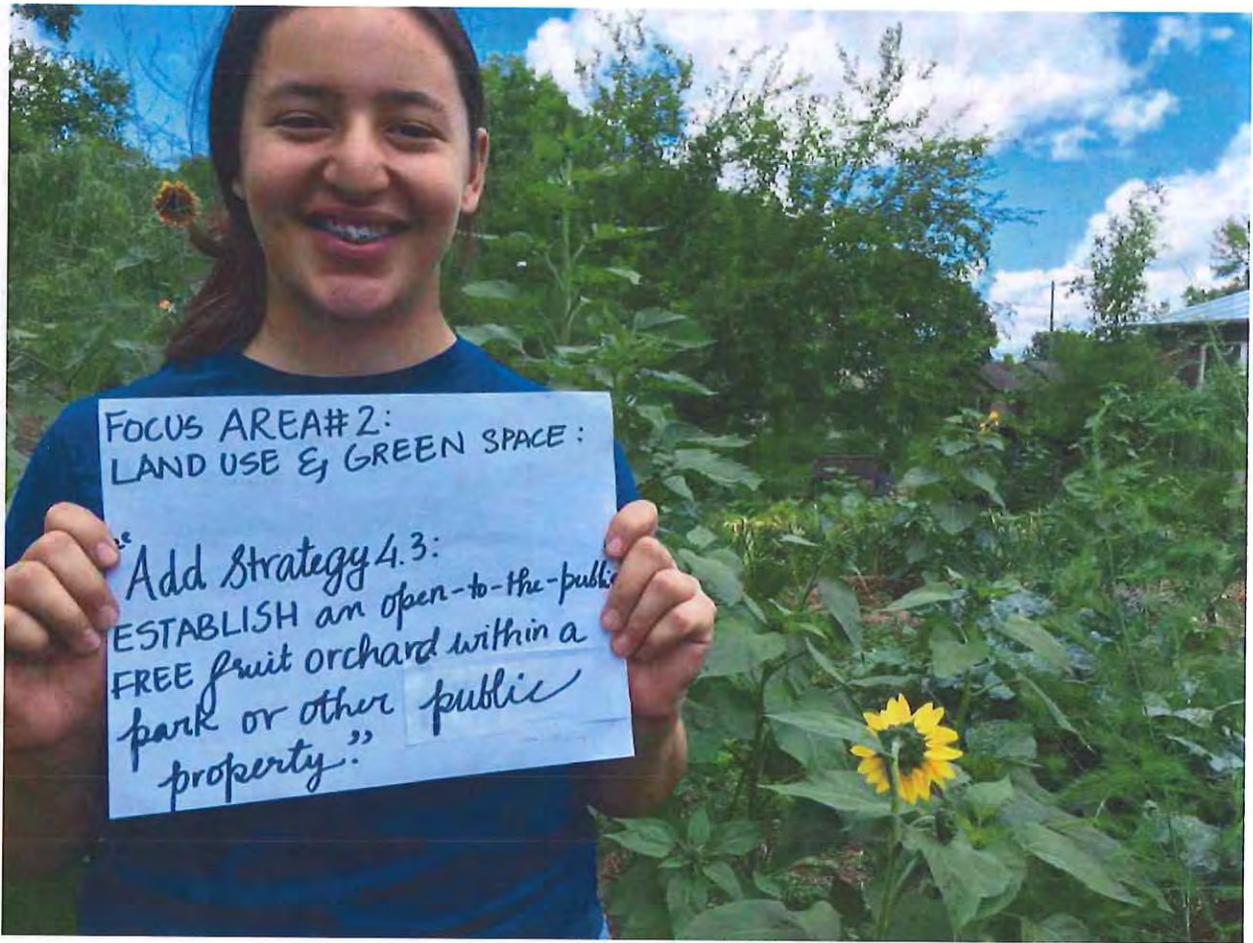
FOCUS AREA #4: SUSTAINABLE  
TRANSPORTATION

Add Strategy 4.3:

"Create more infrastru-  
cture for BICYCLES."

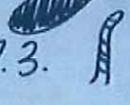


FOCUS AREA #5: Waste & Recycling  
1. Add to Strategy 1.1:  
"Consider establishing  
a PAY-AS-YOU-THROW  
system" & credits for  
RECYCLING & COMPOSTING





FOCUS AREA #3: Regional  
FOOD Systems

ADD Composting  
to strategy 2.3. 

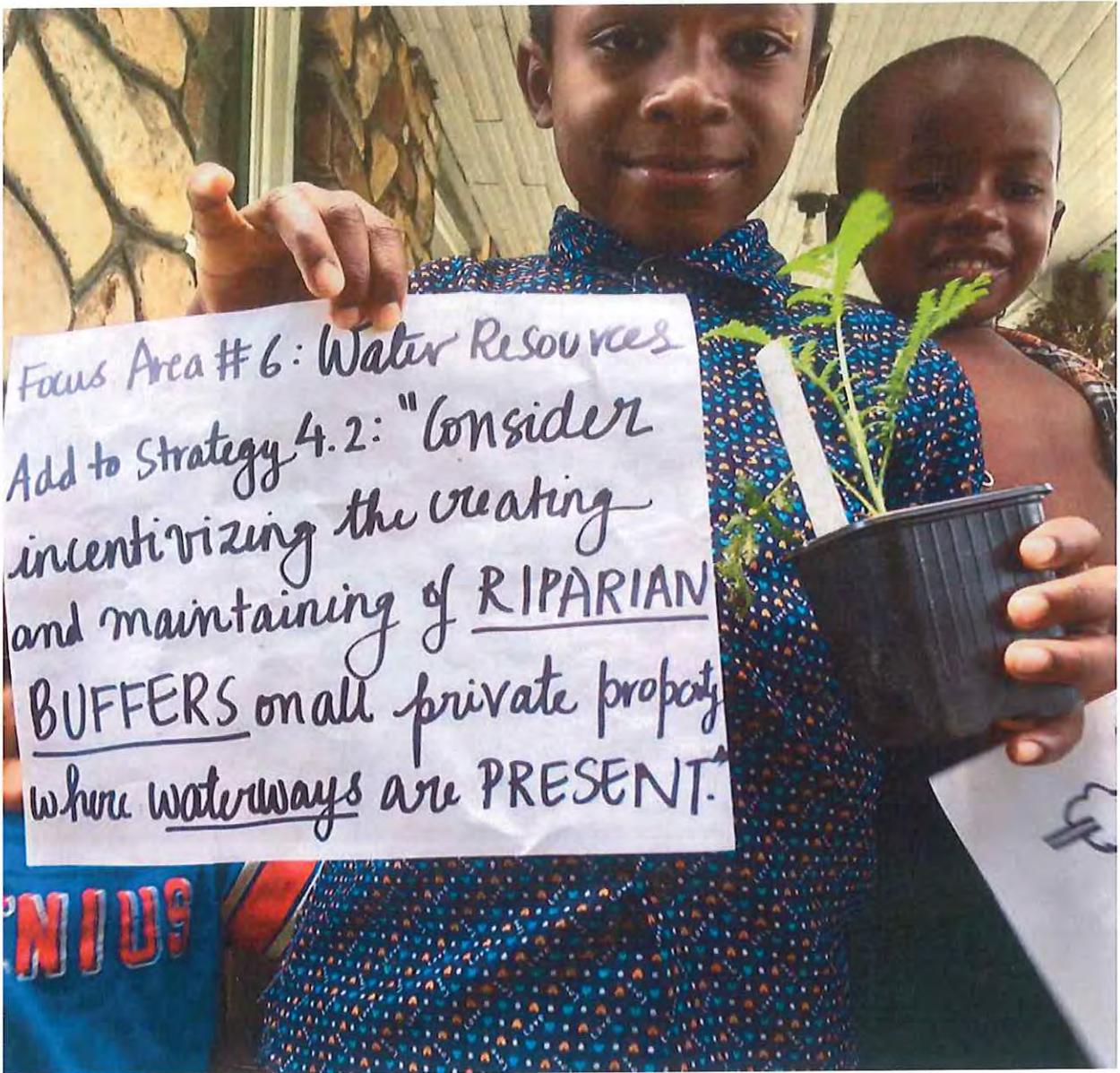


Focus Area #6: Water Resources  
Add to Strategy 4.2: "Consider  
increasing the creating  
and maintaining of RIPARIAN  
BUFFERS on private property  
where waterways are PRESENT"

...with valuing an  
agriculture that  
renews the land  
instead of  
extracts from it  
☿ ☿ ☿

City Partnership with  
BLACKS RUN FOREST  
FARM to curate the  
stream encourages →

- GROWING nutritious food  
& MEDICINE in a  
flood plain
- Welcoming the BIODIVERSITY  
of plants, birds, insects,  
etc...
- Clearing water through  
Stream Restoration



Focus Area #6: Water Resources  
Add to Strategy 4.2: "Consider  
incentivizing the creating  
and maintaining of RIPARIAN  
BUFFERS on all private property  
where waterways are PRESENT."



Focus Area #6 Water Resources  
Add to Strategy 4.2: "consider  
concentrating the creating  
and maintaining of RIPARIAN  
BUFFERS on all private property  
where waterways are PRESENT"

valuing an  
agriculture that  
renews the land  
instead of  
extracts from it  
🌳 🌳 🌳

City Partnership with  
BLACKS RUN FOREST  
EPA to curate the  
stream encourages →

GROWING nutritious food  
+ MEDICINE in a  
flood plain  
• Welcoming the BIODIVERSITY  
of plants, birds, insects  
et...  
• Clearing water through  
stream restoration

Name	Comment
Nidhi Vinod	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Thank you for working on this, Environmental Action Plan is extremely important for the city to adopt.</p> <p>Here are some of my suggestions:</p> <p>To have a second overarching goal should be added in order to preserve, protect, and restore environmental quality for the benefit of all residents; as the benefits of environmental initiatives should be distributed fairly and justly across all city residents.</p>
Brooke Imber	<p>I would love to see more edible plants around town and composting for everyone.</p> <p>I am glad for all the solid, good work done by city employees, Councilman Baugh and the Environmental Performance volunteers. Most of the document presents important and attainable goals. But I believe that the lack even of aspirational goals on renewable energy is a serious omission. Surely HEC will be amenable to help; other Virginia cities operating directly with electricity from Dominion have set goals and nobody fainted or went to jail.</p>
Anne Nielsen	<p>Plastic shopping bags should be eliminated entirely, with an interim step of charging customers five cents each to incentivize the use of reusable bag.</p>
Carl Goetz	<p>Thank you for your hard work in putting together this first draft. There is still work to be done but I am so happy that this city is making these issues a priority!</p> <p>Thank you for your effort in building out the Environmental Action Plan.</p> <p>I would like to see it more clearly outlined how Harrisonburg City will keep HEC aligned with our goal to be a more Environmentally Friendly City. I would also like to see words like "Consider" removed in favor of action words.</p>
Jess Garmer	<p>This is so important! Thanks for starting the process.</p>
Alicia Maldonado-Zahra	<p>Ban plastic and styrofoam; encourage sustainable and compostable items.</p> <p>Encourage composting and bike riding.</p> <p>I urge the City of Harrisonburg to develop a plan for eliminating single use plastics and styrofoam from our community. I would also love to see a city-wide composting service.</p>
Allie Emerick	

I have watched our city flourish for decades, but now is not the time to rest on our laurels. We are deep in the middle of racial/ethnic/religious conflict; the wealth of our nation is being grasped by a powerful few at the cost of many; and our mother Earth is dying. We must preserve the best of our city while acknowledging her flaws and work together to build up the natural world as we let loose the gates and bars that house our minority and impoverished citizens for every ragged offense possible...draining their meager coffers while the entitled among us march on to glory. Those offenses could be paid by serving our community as stewards of our plant and wildlife...of our waterways. Much better to build pride in creating a biodiverse community rather than languishing in a cell.

June Wells

Melissa Weaver

Thank you for doing this for our city!

Michaela

We need the climate change action plan!

make it easy for residents to do their part in limiting waste. We also need more bike paths that allow residents to travel safely through town and limit their fossil fuel consumption.

Bryce

make it easy for residents to do their part in limiting waste. We also need more bike paths that allow residents to travel safely through town and limit their fossil fuel consumption.

1. Please include language in the Environmental Action Plan to have measurable standards. This plan is meaningless if information cannot be measured to know whether the city has succeeded in reaching its goal. Perhaps a first step in this language is to explicitly set up baseline marks for each category to be established by a certain year, perhaps December 2020.
2. Include language that addresses the justice of climate action - our city needs to be proactively mindful of our poorest residents as address the climate crisis. City actions must be accessible to all income levels, and this should be stated in the Environmental Action Plan.
3. Enhance the composting component of Focus Area 3, Goal #2. Can the city initiate Green Bin pickup for home and small business composting?
4. Thank you for beginning this serious look at addressing the climate crisis. I always want the city to do more to address climate change, so I'm grateful the conversation is moving in earnest, and I understand that to get where we are has taken significant effort from citizens and city staff.

Brendan Erb

The Climate Action Alliance of the Valley (CAAV) offers the following comments on Harrisonburg's Draft Environmental Action Plan (EAP) Phase 1. We applaud the city's effort to focus on this important initiative. While the plan raises many possibilities in terms of actions, it does so in a way that in many instances is not specific or based on metrics. The draft seems to be more of a "plan to make a plan" without a clear path as to who makes decisions as to what actions might "make the final cut" and in some instances without a clear timetable. We hope that the final version will be strengthened to remove these weaknesses.

We also note that the plan does not include a recommendation or action item for the city to appoint a sustainability coordinator. Such a position would likely pay for itself by being able to generate grants and saving the city money through the various initiatives identified in the Phase I draft and in future actions. There has been an effort in the past based on a recommendation from Renew Rocktown. The prior effort did not result in the creation of a city position to drive coordinated and sustained efforts toward greater sustainability, but it led to the creation of the Environmental Performance Standards Advisory Committee (EPSAC) and, eventually, to this draft EAP. The city needs someone directly in charge of, and responsible for, implementing the final EAP and the city's sustainability efforts in general. This url from CAAV's website contains some relevant information about the prior effort, including details about a coordinator position: <https://climateactionallianceofthevalley.org/2013/03/09/how-about-a-harrisonburg-sustainability-coordinator/>.

### Introduction

Paragraph 1 on p. 7 describes the EAP as a "road map for city leaders, staff, and community members to implement sustainability visions and principles" with possible foci for action plans. However, many if not most of the draft EAP's strategies begin with "Consider . . ." In the context of an "action plan," most if not all strategies should be more than merely aspirational and should preferably not be ideas that may (or may not) be considered, let alone acted upon. This leading paragraph, together with the Table of Contents, does not mark the EAP as a serious attempt at changing the status quo.

Similarly, paragraph 2 on p. 7 lists a number of aspects of sustainability but omits the important goal of greenhouse gas reduction, a surprising omission, given Goal 1. Although some goals and strategies, taken together, appear to include "policy changes" and "incentives," the details, particularly in Focus Area 1, fail to promote credible action plans.

Under "Scope of Plan," the phrase "improve the environment and sustainability" appears, again without clear definitions of either what would improve the environment or promote sustainability. Further, defining goal statements as "overarching statements describing the direction the community wants to go" and as "end states for each focus area [that] reflect the values of the community" appears reasonable until one considers what one would logically assume to be implementing strategies, only to find that the strategy is only to "consider" rather than doing something. Even though the goal statements are "qualitative [in] nature," we wish this action plan would include quantifiable goals and strategies using appropriate metrics; yet such specifics are largely absent. Worse, the "strategies and tasks may be implemented by city departments, private businesses, or community organizations." One has to assume that such strategies and tasks also may not be implemented—again, surprising within an "Action Plan." The good news is that implementation of strategies and tasks that the plan identifies does

not mean that they are the only possible implementation actions that could be taken. The bad news is that the plan's identified strategies and tasks seem optional.

### Goal 1—Reduce Overall, Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Emissions and the Intensity of Greenhouse Gases Emitted from Different Activities

#### Public and Private Sector

Goal 1 should be part of any environmental action plan (p. 8). However, it is the single overarching goal of the EAP. Since the plan is supposed to augment an “existing city plan . . . and proposed measures to accelerate advancements in sustainability,” it would be useful for the plan to include additional overarching goals that speak to the “critical pieces of achieving sustainability goals,” identified as “economic vitality, environmental protection, and health and well-being.” Although Goal 1 is worded strongly, using the action word “Reduce” GHG emissions, the two strategies for this goal are weakened by the hedge “consider.” If after considering possible actions, the city elects not to “complete a GHG Emissions Inventory” and/or set “targets for GHG Emission Reductions,” it would follow that the strategies of the 6 Focus Areas might be ignored.

The five goals of Focus Area 1 are good as far as they go (pp. 8-9). Goal 1 makes sense: the city cannot reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions until it knows how much GHG it currently produces. Its implementing strategy 1.1, however, seems to duplicate the two strategies listed for the overarching goal. Accomplishing Focus Area 1's Goals 2, 3, and 4 in a substantive way should achieve some level of GHG reduction but in the absence of targets or objective measures, it's not clear how the city will be able to document its progress in reducing GHG emissions.

Goals 2, 3, and 4 appear to be tied to the city's energy use, whereas Goal 5 does not. Rather, it seems limited to the private sector. The public sector is defined to exclude the city's municipal electric utility (Harrisonburg Electric Commission [HEC]), even though its stakeholders clearly include the “public” and the “community”. Because it “operates independently from the City,” HEC seems to be considered a private entity. Given that the city cannot meaningfully accomplish Goals 2 through 5 without reducing energy generated from fossil fuels, implying the need for active participation of HEC, the language in the 2nd paragraph of Public and Private Sector suggesting that HEC will not participate in implementation of any of the 5 goals seems to obviate Goals 2 through 4 and consequently weaken the proposed action plan.

The third paragraph similarly appears undermine Goal 5. Rather than pointing out why the city cannot regulate the private sector without the authority to do so, the plan should acknowledge that the city can ask its elected representatives to introduce necessary enabling legislation for otherwise prohibited “incentives and suggestions.”

#### EAP Phases of Development

A proposed timeline for each phase would help Harrisonburg residents understand how soon the city might see significant reductions in its GHG emissions. The description of the draft characterizing Phase 1 as “lay[ing] the groundwork for future phases of EAP development and implementation of strategies towards environmental sustainability” is vague. Particularly in the absence of a timeline and by recommending consideration rather than action in most of the 14 strategies, one is left to guess what the city council's approval of Phase 1 would actually mean. For example, one cannot “set targets for GHG emissions reduction” (Strategy 1.2 on p.

11) if one does not first complete the GHG emissions inventory, but Strategy 1.1 on p. 11 says only to “consider” doing so.

### Goal 1

The 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph (pp. 10-11) usefully describes GHG effects. This discussion would be more effective if it also described more fully the specific sources of GHG from human activity. Doing so would clarify why the EAP is needed and why the six focus areas and related strategies to reduce GHG are included. For example, major sources of fossil fuel-driven GHG are electricity production, transportation, and agriculture. In order to move forward on GHG emissions, Harrisonburg residents and businesses need to link these three major sources of GHG emissions and the changes production, transportation, and agriculture will need to make to reduce them.

Strategy 1.1 (p. 11) recommends considering joining the ICLEI. Not only should the city actually join ICLEI, it should identify other organizations, such as Resilient Virginia (<https://resilientvirginia.org/>) and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance or ILSR (<https://ilsr.org/>), through which it can educate itself about what other communities have done and obtain advice from those public employees who have implemented projects that might also work in Harrisonburg. There are other organizations with a wealth of experience and track records for making things happen. Rather than starting from scratch, identifying and adapting good ideas whose worth has been proven will save staff resources.

### Focus Area 1—Buildings and Energy

Goal 1: The “Where We Are Now?” section would benefit by summarizing the city’s specific results to date and links to any reports. Otherwise, we can’t know our current starting point.

Goal 2: The “Where We Are Now?” section should include summaries of past actions and links to reports. Strategy 2.3 should include specifics of the cost analysis. Also, the listed tasks seem redundant. Given the language on p. 9 regarding HEC’s relationship to the city, Strategy 2.4 seems surprising, though actually determining the cost effectiveness of reducing “on-grid energy generation” is certainly needed to lower production of Harrisonburg GHG emissions. We hope the city can produce its own renewable energy, enable energy efficiency (EE) in municipal facilities, and incentivize EE among homeowners, landlords, and businesses. The city should do more than “consider” the various tasks listed. Instead, the plan should propose priorities for actually performing the tasks with clear timelines and objectives.

Further, given the financial interest both the city and HEC currently have in consuming more rather than less energy, the EAP needs to include a strategy and goals to deconstruct this interest. It is not clear, especially from discussions at recent HEC Commissioner meetings, that HEC views its mandate from the city to include reduction of GHG, increased use of renewable energy (RE) such as solar (or even support of its customers’ production of electricity with RE), or active support of greater energy efficiency measures. If the city is serious about reducing GHG in a significant way, it needs full participation of HEC. It is time to review existing policy and code defining the city’s relationship to HEC to ensure that it clearly authorizes HEC to participate fully in the strategies and goals of the EAP, particularly Focus Area 1. What was set up many years has worked well and HEC has carried out its mandate effectively and efficiently. But that mandate is inadequate in the 21st century, given the changes in technology that have made RE a viable alternative to fossil fuel generation and the pressing need for all communities to reduce their GHG. The city and HEC must figure out the best way to accomplish

this and make the necessary adjustments to policy and law. Doing so will provide HEC with the necessary direction to identify and make appropriate changes to its operations and, perhaps more importantly, to determine the requirements of its next contract with its energy provider. Negotiations for that contract will begin soon, if they haven't already done so. The current contract terms restrict HEC from incorporating more RE into its energy sources and does not fully or directly support the goal of reduction of GHG in the city.

Goal 3: The description and “Where We Are Now?” section should reference standards for Energy Use Intensity (EUI) or at least acknowledge the need to identify and employ such standards. This recommendation would apply to all 3 strategies.

Goal 5: Again, the “Where We Are Now?” section would benefit from summaries of past actions and links to any reports. Strategies 5.1 and 5.2 might be improved by studies of how other cities and towns have addressed such needs and identifying available grant money. For example, the city might look at Department of Energy grants such as Sol Smart and at CPACE. Missing from all 3 strategies are specific ways of promoting energy reduction renewable energy sources for existing residential buildings. The PACE program could one model. Working with HEC to develop alternative revenue sources (e.g., on-bill financing) might mitigate revenue losses from reduced energy consumption. These strategies’ “Responsible Party” needs to include HEC and define what is meant by “Community Organizations”; arguably, the city will need to partner with different public, non-profit, and private entities to accomplish different tasks for all 5 goals of this focus area. Strategy 5.3’s tasks are unclear. They should be clarified and strengthened. E.g., “publicizing the advantages of these properties” seems both disingenuous.

Here are a few links that provide ideas/actions/approaches. CAAV would be happy to provide additional links upon request.

Municipal Utility RFP: <https://reisingergooch.com/virginia-municipal-and-cooperative-utilities-issue-rfp-for-solar-storage-and-stand-alone-storage-resources/>

MN Community Solar: [https://ilsr.org/minnesota-community-solar-saves-all-utility-customers-money/?utm\\_source=Energy+Self-Reliant+States&utm\\_campaign=e1bac19ccc-Energy+Self+Reliant+States+1+12+151+8+2015+COPY+01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_86e661ed1e-e1bac19ccc-82765733](https://ilsr.org/minnesota-community-solar-saves-all-utility-customers-money/?utm_source=Energy+Self-Reliant+States&utm_campaign=e1bac19ccc-Energy+Self+Reliant+States+1+12+151+8+2015+COPY+01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_86e661ed1e-e1bac19ccc-82765733)

Municipal & Other Utility Regulations: [https://ilsr.org/in-op-ed-for-pioneer-press-john-farrell-explains-how-minnesotas-energy-regulators-fall-short/?utm\\_source=Energy+Self-Reliant+States&utm\\_campaign=e1bac19ccc-Energy+Self+Reliant+States+1+12+151+8+2015+COPY+01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_86e661ed1e-e1bac19ccc-82765733](https://ilsr.org/in-op-ed-for-pioneer-press-john-farrell-explains-how-minnesotas-energy-regulators-fall-short/?utm_source=Energy+Self-Reliant+States&utm_campaign=e1bac19ccc-Energy+Self+Reliant+States+1+12+151+8+2015+COPY+01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_86e661ed1e-e1bac19ccc-82765733)

Danville VA Municipal Utility’s Solar: <https://www.virginiamercury.com/2019/06/10/solar-is-powering-part-of-danvilles-resurgence/>

Moral Necessity of Acting: <https://www.baconsrebellion.com/wp/moral-hazard-and-sea-level-rise/>

#### Focus Area 2—Land Use and Green Space

We suggest that the city eliminate or reduce the amount of FREE PARKING. We need more affordable housing more than we need downtown parking lots. While we appreciate that readily available parking is good for business, free parking increases congestion by encouraging auto

traffic. Plus, revenue from parking lots brings far less than property taxes on buildings, making free parking punitive to property owners who actually improve their properties--i.e. Harrisonburg tax base would improve exponentially. Also, Harrisonburg should review ordinances on setbacks and zoning, making it possible for homeowners to build apartments in their yards to rent or house family members, thus increasing density.

### FOCUS AREA 3: REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Goal 1. The language of Goal 1 could be strengthened by adding “Awareness about and Accessibility to . . . .” However, “Where are we now?” section seems inadequate. It’s difficult to believe the Business Loan Program is the only way the city currently supports local food access. Does the City really do nothing in support of the Farmers Market? Does the Health Department do nothing to support public education about nutrition that involves local food systems? If the Business Loan Program is the only thing the city has to show for this goal, at least add additional details about the state of this program, such as a) how much of the funds are allocated to local food businesses on average over the past few years; and b) how much of the funds (if any) go unaccounted for on average over the past few years. Finally, Goal 1 should adopt something like the following for measuring success: Reduce common barriers to community gardening and urban agriculture by 2025.

Goal 2. The language of Goal 2 is good. Please add the fact that Climate Action Alliance of the Valley pays for most composting program through public donations. Also consider adding the non-profit Soil Cycles collection service, if it is permissible to include activities not directly under City’s purview in this snapshot.

For all strategies, we suggest that you substitute more aggressive verbs than “consider.”

Strategy 1.1. For tasks under this strategy, can Parks and Rec offer educational programming on how to develop and manage community gardens, in addition to “community organizations”?

Strategy 1.2. The tasks are all good, but does the City have any means of encouraging businesses to accept SNAP? (If so, then add this to the strategy).

Strategy 2.1. Please add “adoption of low- carbon agricultural equipment and techniques” to the list of urban agricultural education topics.

Strategy 2.2. Please change the last task to “climate friendly food choices and lifestyles” instead of “food choices and climate friendly lifestyles.” You could something about “promote plastic-free and minimal waste food packaging among businesses and consumers.”

Strategy 2.3. On the last task, we suggest that you add “and provide additional funds to support expansion of the composting drop off and/or collection services, if funds are available.” (By 2030, we expect the city to have an opt-in compost pick public service for residential areas and businesses!)

### Focus Area 4--Sustainable Transportation:

We commend Harrisonburg for including, and taking steps toward, sustainable transportation. Here are some additional suggestions.

Transportation includes our land use choices, our public transit, our municipal vehicles, and vehicles owned and operated by residents, guests, and businesses. Harrisonburg can increase ride sharing, biking, and walkable neighborhoods.

Goal 1 includes a review of electric buses for HDPT. If Harrisonburg aims to continue operating any non-bus vehicles, the city should consider electrification and alternative fuels for all vehicle classes. At a minimum, Harrisonburg should track the fuel use, fuel costs, and emissions from the city owned vehicles of school, pupil transport, police, shared sheriff, executive, refuse, street cleaning, and transit buses. All diesel equipment older than 2008 should be immediately retired due to their emissions. Other agencies and departments in the city should be involved beyond HDPT. Harrisonburg, if continuing to use diesel and petroleum imports, should consider assessing internal fees on the fuel to allow to build internal budget to move to \$.40 per gallon equivalent electric vehicles with available technology today or follow Roanoke and purchase used EV vehicles.

Goal 2 should meter the emissions from the oil-fired heating system (it's still 20 pounds per gallon) or buy additional biological waste oils rather than using once-used motor oil. Goal 3 should include reviews of additional routes, road diets, parking limitations, and lane restrictions on increased transit ridership. It might also explore whether citizens other than students will be served by the system.

Goal 6 Fuel efficiency could include city vehicles; the city should report what vehicles are in their inventory, their miles per gallon (fuelconomy.gov has all this info), and annual fuel use. Harrisonburg should present a budget amount equivalent to costs necessary to install bicycle and pedestrian facilities to city schools allowing access to sidewalks in the school areas. Harrisonburg can remove parking minimums. The city can promote bicycles and walking rather than city-owned vehicles for executive, public works, police, and school transportation. In addition to supporting the federal incentives, the city has authority to reduce the property tax for electric vehicles and for hybrid vehicles.

Goal 7 The city can install EV Chargers at government facilities rather than support them through new construction.

#### Focus Area 5—Waste Reduction and Recycling

A Pay-As-You Throw (PAYT) system should be implemented as soon as possible. PAYT increases recycling.

Harrisonburg has been able to maintain a plastics numbers 1 and 2 recycling stream while other municipalities have had to give them up along with other plastics. The Recycle Convenience Center and Recycling Mobile Unit drop-off programs appear to be well run and successful. Harrisonburg should investigate the cost and benefits of offering some evening hours for these programs.

Because schools are a significant gathering point, they might be popular drop-off locations and could be monitored by designated individuals or classes within each school. Visiting the landfill would be a valuable addition to the school curriculum, providing a meaningful way to learn about this resource burial and ways to divert and reduce this “waste” stream. These students, after all, will be the ones who suffer if Harrisonburg and other communities fail to significantly reduce GHG emissions.

Composting as a category should be under the recycling section rather than the reuse section.

With estimates of 20-50 percent of all municipal trash considered compostable, efforts to divert organic trash towards composting are worthwhile:

- Advertise curbside pickup services available through Black Bear Composting and Soil Cycles.
- Support backyard composting by having how-to info on the website and offering discounted bins through volume ordering, as is available through [GEOBINS](#).
- Develop and support a [master composters program](#), like that facilitated by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, to advance local composting efforts.
- Support community composting by helping to coordinate space, communications, tools, and feedstock.
- Work with schools by identifying individuals/ classes in each school to host composting in their cafeterias as well as food-share programs for uneaten/ otherwise discarded foods.
- Plan for a "Compost Garden" in one of our public parks. The new one downtown would be especially appropriate to complement the existing drop-off bins. It might include demonstrations of backyard composting set-ups and some raised bed gardens amended with the finished compost. [Here](#) is one example.
- Add a compost drop-off option to the Recycle Convenience Center.
- Encourage use of an online platform for connecting organics waste streams with closest collectors/processors like

<https://sharewaste.com/share-waste> or <https://ilsr.org/composting/map/>

- Facilitate the construction and oversight of community compost bins at each park and/or neighborhood as described in <https://www.inquirer.com/science/climate/philadelphia-compost-food-waste-20190619.html>

Harrisonburg, like every community, needs their own commercial-scale composting facility to divert organics including yard debris, pet wastes and compostable “plastics”/ service ware from its landfill.

The City’s [Alternatives for Unwanted Items](#) webpage is helpful for residents. It could be more user-friendly. Expanded information, images, a map with all the options, could improve its use-value. “Reuse” (non-landfill disposal) options change so often that this listing can be hard to maintain without using public input. Perhaps the city can crowdsource the reuse information or try a social media platform as a method of discovering new options that could be moved to the website after confirmation. E.g., H&M stores take all fabric/clothing for recycling if unsuitable for reuse (ripped, stained, worn-out). Goodwill does this as well. A textile (not just reusable clothing/ fabrics) drop-off at the Recycle Convenience Center would improve our recycling rate. Some businesses like Bring Your Own offer Terracycle drop-off bins for designated products like dental-related packaging and used up writing implements.

Allow for a volunteer-run "thrift store" at the landfill where reusable items being thrown away can be salvaged and sold to support whatever group is willing to staff it.

Focus Area 6—Water Resources

We hope that the city protects our watershed. In the future, we will be relying more on the South Branch of the Shenandoah River for our water supply. This river's watershed would be impacted by the Atlantic Coast Pipeline if it is built on the current proposed route. Our concern for the watershed is complicated by the unknowns with pipeline construction of the unusual pipe width, high pressure of the methane being transported, and difficult steep karst terrain. To protect our watershed, we need to focus on these threats now.

We also want to increase the city's tree canopy. This action not only improves our regional water quality but is one of the most effective ways to capture carbon and reduce the devastating effects of the climate crisis.

## Phase 1 Environmental Action Plan Comments

Submitted by Pete Bsumek, Chair Shenandoah Group, Sierra Club

On behalf of the Shenandoah Group of the Sierra Club I would like to thank city council, city staff responsible for working on the EAP draft, and the members of the Environmental Performance Standards Advisory Committee (EPSAC) for their commitment to developing an action plan and all their hard work in drafting this plan. We are excited to see that the city is making a commitment and implementing a forward-looking plan to address environmental sustainability and environmental justice.

What follows are our comments and suggestions for improving the plan.

**First, overall plan structure and organization:** We are quite pleased to see that Goal 1 (which appears to be the only overall goal in the plan) commits our city to reducing “overall, community-wide greenhouse gas emissions and the intensity of greenhouse gasses emitted from different activities” (see page 10). However, the use of the term goal here is somewhat confusing as the term goal is also used throughout the document in relation the focus areas.

Along these lines, it is not clear whether this goal functions as a guiding goal that frames the whole plan, or whether it is just another goal among many, which is related to many different focus areas.

We would suggest redefining and naming this goal as “Overall Goal” or “Main Goal” or even “Guiding Goal.” In addition, since not all the goals and strategies in each of the focus areas are necessarily and/or directly related to reducing greenhouse gasses, we also recommend the addition of a second and third “Guiding Goal.” These goals would focus on adaptation and resilience to changing environmental conditions and environmental justice and could be phrased as something like:

Guiding Goal 2: Preserve, protect, and restore environmental quality in order to ensure community adaptability and resilience to changing environmental conditions.

Guiding Goal 3: Ensure that environmental benefits and risks are fairly and justly distributed in our community and that the benefits and risks of environmental initiatives are fairly and justly distributed for all city residents.

We believe that these “guiding” or “overarching” goals would provide clear direction to city council, city staff, and community members as to the purpose of the goals and strategies articulated in the focus areas. They would also provide a clearer structure to the plan and its development in the implementation stages to follow phase 1.

Guiding goal 3 is especially important to us, as it is crucial that the burdens and costs of an environmental action plan should not unfairly disadvantage communities and neighborhoods that have historically been burdened with more of the costs and less of the benefits of

economic development and public policy. Rather, we see an EAP as an opportunity to redress some of these historic inequities.

**Second, soft equivocal language:** While we understand that this is just phase one of our city's plan, much of the language utilized to frame strategies is quite soft and lacks a clear commitment to "action." In other words, an action plan to address environmental issues should do more than "consider" things. *It should commit to goals and strategies. In this regard, it is essential that the action plan unequivocally make clear that the guiding goals are commitments to action and not merely "aspirational goals."* Such a statement would provide the city council, city staff, and community members with a clear understanding that the action plan is in fact an action plan that commits our city to implement policies, initiatives, and such that will further the overarching or guiding goals of the plan. It will also make clear that the soft and equivocal language currently utilized at the strategy level of the document is not meant to enable inaction or weak half-hearted commitments to those goals, but rather, simply indicates that we do not as of yet have enough information to know which strategies will be most effective.

**Third, avoiding the silo effect:** Because environmental sustainability is implicated in all or virtually all city policy and initiatives, it is important that the goals of the EAP are considered in relation to all future decisions. Language should be drafted and inserted into the preamble/introduction which clearly indicates that ALL new city policies, initiatives, etc. should be assessed in terms of or considered in relation to the EAP and their implications with regard to goals of EAP. In other words, we should avoid situations where other goals (say for example, development goals and initiatives) work at "cross purposes" to the EAP.

**Forth, renewable energy:** It is hard to imagine an EAP that effectively addresses climate change and meaningful reduction of greenhouse gasses that does not include a goal of increasing the use renewable energy.

While we understand that the draft plan articulates and rehearses a perceived relationship between the city and the Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC), which suggests it is inappropriate for the city to set goals for the development of renewable energy. We believe that this articulated relationship does not require that the city's EAP be mute about renewable energy. If the two entities are separate, this only strengthens the case for inclusion of renewable energy in the EAP. For example, it is more than reasonable for a customer to make clear to a wholesaler or retailer what kind of products and services they would like to purchase.

At the very least the city can make clear that it wishes to utilize clean renewable energy to power its municipal buildings and other facilities. Indeed, the draft plan points out that many local governments throughout the country and the state have done just that by making commitments to utilize a percentage of renewable energy by particular dates.

**Finally, specific goals and strategies:** In concert with our colleagues and allies at Renew Rocktown we would like to call your attention to the following link, which provides several suggestions for additional goals and strategies related to particular focus areas:

<https://tinyurl.com/y653ppbu>

Thank you for all your hard work and for the opportunity to submit our comments and on the Phase 1 Environmental Action Plan.

Pete Bsumek  
Chair, Sierra Club—Shenandoah Group  
[pkbsumek@gmail.com](mailto:pkbsumek@gmail.com)  
540-421-4105

PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN  
OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD  
CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Ellen Swecker Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well    Well    Neutral    Poor    Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Goal 1: Reduce Overall, Community-Wide Greenhouse Emissions should be a Focus Area. (It is confusing stating this as a goal, and then using goals under Focus Areas). Anyway this is big enough to have a larger focus and should include solar energy use as a strategy. This lack is why I put neutral on the plan. Poor seemed unfair as did well.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Any strategy that starts with the word "consider," as most do, does not reflect what action will be taken. Consider means "thinking about carefully." What exactly is needed to think about? The action needed should be described. Better yet is to begin with action statements such as words like "create, establish, inventory, educate, improve" and so forth. What you need to think about maybe should say, "Research relevant material to discern" ..., "determine the viability of..", analyse the cost effectiveness of..." Whether you mean it or not, the word "consider" comes across as weak and ineffective. I don't think that is what the plan intends.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

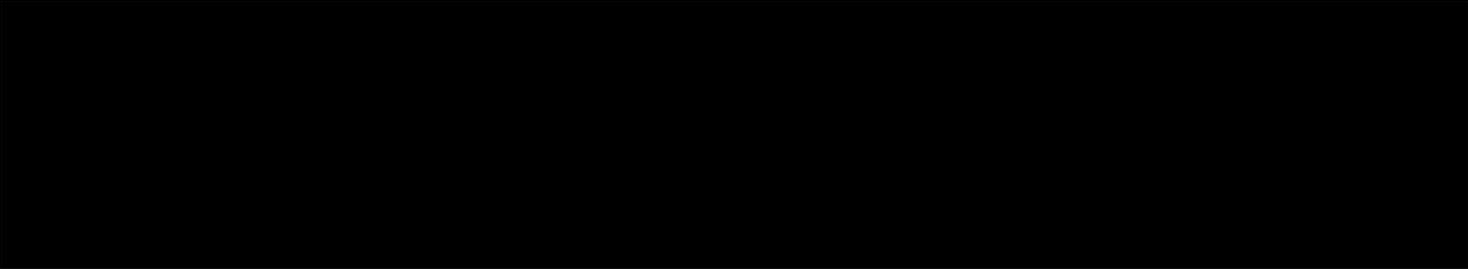
Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by June 26, 2019.

Visit [www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house) for more information.

**Rebecca Stimson**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2019 11:05 AM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** EAP comment



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# PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

## OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

### CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Name (Optional): Tom Benevento Phone/email (Optional): 540-433-2363

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N):      If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on address-ing?  
(Circle one)

Very Well Well Neutral Poor Very Poor \*\*\*Well

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1. \*\*\* The plan needs to add a Renewable Energy Focus area that creates a goal for city council to amend city code requesting that HEC incorporates clean and renewable energy into the city grid with a goal of 25% by 2025 and 100% by 2045.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign-in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by June 26, 2019.

Visit [www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house) for more information.

# Open House

June 5, 2019

5pm — 7pm

## COMMENT SHEET

City Hall Atrium

409 S. Main St.

Harrisonburg, VA 22801

City of Harrisonburg

Rebecca Stimson

Department of Public Works

320 E. Mosby Road

Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Additional Comments

Return Address

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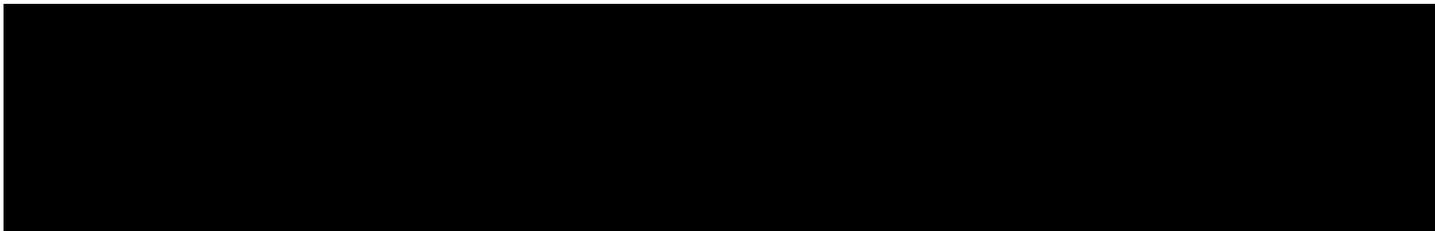
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Please submit this form during the open house, email it to the address on the reverse side,  
or mail it to the above address.



## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** Alleyn Harned [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2019 12:38 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** Some Environmental Action Plan Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

### Focus Area 1:

Harrisonburg should establish a city specific goal for the volume of renewable energy in use in the city – the fossil energy we purchase is an economic loss and locks us into contracts that defeat other goals for reducing overall community-wide greenhouse gas emissions and greenhouse gas emissions intensity. Harrisonburg should have a per year minimum percentage of renewable energy goal which should include a public path from nearly one percent today to achieve 100% at a specific timeframe. This plan should be established now in the EAP. Goal should be minimum of 25% by 2025.

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### Sustainable Transportation general comments:

It is wonderful that Harrisonburg is taking steps towards sustainable transportation, including setting goals. Those existing goals are appreciated and some additional suggestions.

Transportation includes our land use choices, our public transit, our municipal vehicles, and vehicles owned and operated by residents and guests and businesses as well leaning on increasing methods of shared rides and our bikeable and walkable neighborhoods.

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Goal 1 begins a review of electric buses for HDPT – this is good and if Harrisonburg aims to continue operating any non-bus vehicles Harrisonburg should consider electrification and alternative fuel options for all vehicle classes. At a minimum Harrisonburg should track the fuel use, fuel costs, and emissions from the city owned vehicles of school, pupil transport, police, shared sheriff, executive, refuse, street cleaning, and public works in addition to the transit buses. All diesel equipment older than 2008 should be immediately retired due to their steep emissions. Other agencies and departments in city should be involved beyond HDPT. Harrisonburg if continuing to use diesel and petroleum imports should consider assessing internal fees on the fuel to allow to build internal budget to move to \$.40 per gallon equivalent electric vehicles with available technology today or follow Roanoke and purchase used EV vehicles.

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Goal 2 should meter the emissions from the oil fired heating system (its still 20 probably pounds CO2 per gallon, and there also are likely criteria pollutants) or buy additional biological waste oils not just using once-used motor oil.

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Goal 3 should include review of additional routes, road diets, parking limitations, and lane restrictions on increased transit ridership, should explore if more members of the Harrisonburg community beyond students could be served by the system. Student population is only a portion of city population and transit should proportionately engage all residents.

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Goal 6 – fuel efficiency could include city vehicles – city should take note of what vehicles are in their inventory and their miles per gallon (fueleconomy.gov has all this info) and per year fuel use and publicly report this, and perhaps support city fleet fuel efficiency standards. City should consider presenting a budget amount equivalent to costs necessary to install bicycle and pedestrian facilities to each city school to the city schools to allow students to access sidewalks on the blocks containing our schools. Remove parking minimums. When possible utilize bicycles and walking as city vehicles for executive, public works, police, and school transportation. In addition to supporting the federal incentives, city has authority and should reduce the property tax for electric vehicles and for hybrid vehicles.

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Goal 7 – encouraging EV Chargers can be at government facilities as well and should be supported not through new construction (that didn't work for sidewalks) but through other additional tools community standards.

Thank you for your consideration.



## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** Jared Stoltzfus [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 6, 2019 3:28 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** EPSAC Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Rebecca,

I was glad to be able to attend the open house and talk with everyone there! I made these comments to the respective groups, but wanted to follow up here as well.

One thing that I wanted to be explicitly stated is that with all of these goals, there will not be any additional financial burden on low income families. Some ideas for how to achieve this will be outlined in sections below. Another overarching concept that I hope is explicitly stated is that while some of these action items may incur significant costs, the costs of inaction down the road will be significantly worse. I also agree with the general comments provided by Renew Rocktown.

Promoting solar and efficiency/conservation as stated in Goal 5 of Focus area 1 is a good concept, but I was hoping for more details in how that promotion would occur. (Condensed version: more specifics on how to encourage solar and efficiency- I have a few ideas) I would like to see a suite of electricity pricing options from HEC that would protect their financial interests, while still encouraging conservation and efficiency. The power required by a standard household should be extremely affordable, with additional use getting progressively more expensive. This would both create incentive for household reductions, and on-site production, potentially without dramatically impacting revenues. I think it should also be noted that an increase in electric cars, and continued development in Harrisonburg will result in increased power demand, despite solar production and efficiency measures. Another pricing mechanism would be time of use plans that make energy more expensive during peak hours. This would help limit HEC's peak use, while also improving payback periods for solar arrays. It seems like there would be faculty at EMU, JMU, etc that could create software models that could simulate a number of these scenarios, and there are other cities that have already undertaken such measures, so we should be learning from them. Regarding solar, and electricity in general, I also feel like the unspoken expectation that HEC be a profit center for Harrisonburg is also counter to the sustainability goals, and in effect subsidizes homeowners who don't have to pay ~\$5M in taxes to the city each year.

The other areas I have interest and expertise are in waste, and regional food systems. I'm specifically interested in the ways that organic waste, and specifically food waste, can be re-integrated into the food system, either through donation to food banks, or used as feed for chickens and pigs. Other organics not suitable for those uses can/should be composted for later re-use in city projects. The composting doesn't need to be professional, or result in high grade compost either... just grind up yard debris with food waste and cover it up! I imagine the city has ample space to do something like this, and with organics comprising 40% or more of the waste stream, we should be able to make a serious dent in what is sent to the landfill! Obviously curbside collection of household food scraps isn't a great idea, but could the city partner with small collection services, like Soil Cycles to provide the service? What about pairing small farmers on the outskirts of town with regular supplies of food scraps for their livestock? EMU cafeteria scraps alone could raise ~2,000 lbs of pork in a school year- what would happen if all the schools partnered with a farmer? A program like this just needs the city to provide some financial support (through an RFP for innovative waste solutions?)

I also had an in-depth conversation with the Water Department folks, and pitched the idea of progressive pricing to them as well. They did say that we're down to 2 tiers from 4, and that the big users are paying more than they used to. I don't know how much household use varies across the city, but a basic amount of water should be available very

cheaply, but anyone watering lawns should be paying significantly more to discourage that practice. The water dept could also offer grants to help large industrial users become more water efficient. I understand the Shenandoah River water supply connection is going to happen, but hope that it almost never needs to be used!

This is probably more than enough info, but I'd be happy to stay connected. I also think that if we aren't using the resources at the local universities to analyze these various questions it would be a missed opportunity.

Thanks for reading!

--  
Jared Stoltzfus

## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** Jeff Heie [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2019 2:27 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** EAP comments

Hi Rebecca

I would like to make the following comments related to the Environmental Action Plan:

1. I suggest that the EPSAC Committee invite major stakeholders in the city to a professionally facilitated meeting to encourage institutional feedback on the plan prior to presenting the plan to the City Council for their approval of the plan. These stakeholders could include: JMU, EMU, Sentara, Chamber of Commerce, poultry industry, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, and others. It would seem that this type of feedback would encourage buy-in to the EAP.
2. I suggest a second overarching goal for the EAP. In addition to the first goal of reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions, I would add a second goal of "preserving, protecting, and restoring environmental quality for the benefit of all citizens."
3. Focus Area #5: I suggest adding Strategy 1.5 to Goal #1: "Consider programs to reduce and incentivize the reduction of single use plastics and styrofoam in the city."
4. I suggest that electricity generation be included in the EAP for the following reasons:
  - HEC is a city-owned utility
  - HEC operates under the governance of city code
  - If greenhouse gas emissions are a major concern of the EAP, then it would be irresponsible for the city to not address the GHG emissions caused by electricity generation considering that electricity generation is responsible for at least 50% of GHG emissions in most Virginia cities.
  - Given HEC's long term procurement contract with Dominion Energy, there is concern by HEC that they have no control of GHG emissions caused by electricity generation. There are several actions that could be taken by the city that do not threaten the long term contract and would be effective at addressing GHG emissions. These actions should be explored further and added to the EAP.

Thank you for recording my comments!

-Jeff Heie

## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** charlotte shristi [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2019 3:57 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** comments on Environmental Action Plan

Dear Ms. Stimson,  
Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the EAP's first draft!

I am a strong proponent of cities taking leadership in preparing for the future, especially in the current era of confusion about and inaction to address climate change on national and international levels.

Only by thinking ahead and taking bold action now, will we reduce dire social and financial consequences down the road associated with climate change. I applaud Harrisonburg's city council members and staff for their foresight.

Harrisonburg's EAP needs to be further strengthened with strong language, clear action steps and metrics for evaluating success. It should include renewable energy goals, which Harrisonburg is in a unique position to address, with a public utility (HEC). The plan should take into consideration how to equitably distribute benefits to all residents. The plan needs to include ways to greatly reduce what's going into the landfill, such as collecting and composting biodegradable material (kitchen and yard waste) and recycling.

Thank you for your hard work on this project and desire to be responsive to the community!

Sincerely,  
Charlotte Shristi

## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** Dave Pruett [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 6, 2019 8:57 AM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** Comments of Draft EAP

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Rebecca and EPSAC Members:

I would like to thank the members of EPSAC for the monumental efforts that have gone into the EAP, a bold sustainability vision for Harrisonburg's future.

The potential benefits to our community are huge. Holding the roll-out of the draft in the atrium of City Hall was an inspired idea. It generated public interest and put names and faces on the city staff and citizens who have worked tirelessly and collaboratively to create this comprehensive draft.

ITEM 1: Focus Areas and Goals--"very well" (Very comprehensive plan, well thought out and integrated.)

ITEM 4: Additional Comments:

There are two "elephants in the room" that remain more-or-less unaddressed in the draft. I understand that there are compelling reasons for each omission. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge them and to try to seek workarounds of the obstacles.

1.) JMU's footprint in Harrisonburg is enormous. JMU contributes 40% of Harrisonburg's population and I'd guess more than half of its greenhouse gases. I learned only recently that JMU operates almost completely independently of the City. That's unfortunate. It would be much more efficient if Hburg and JMU could join forces rather than inventing the sustainability wheel independently, potentially working at cross purposes. How can we make that happen, if not officially, then voluntarily? I'd suggest sending a City emissary to the speaker of the faculty senate to get a conversation started.

2). The lion's share of the City's GHG emissions come, almost certainly, from power generation. We are one of few municipalities to have a public utility, HEC.

It therefore makes sense to have a representative of HEC on EPSAC and to incorporate HEC into the sustainability plan. To be even more specific, citizens of Harrisonburg need and deserve options for the purchase of energy from renewable sources, even if there is a small premium for the option. Even more specifically, Energy Share could morph into a voluntary energy subsidy that would allow lower income families to elect renewable sourcing, even if slightly more expensive.

Finally, not a comment so much as a reflection. Years ago I was involved in high-performance computing; that is, using supercomputers to solve difficult problems in physics. Supercomputer time was very expensive, and some of these computer runs required hundreds of hours of time to complete. It was therefore necessary that each computer code be optimized to run as efficiently as possible. We did this by "profiling" the computer code to find where the computational bottlenecks were. We then focused first on clearing the worst bottlenecks, and then moved onto the next, and the next, etc.

It has dawned on me that evaluating the City's carbon footprint to establish a benchmark is analogous to the computer-code "profiling" that I used to rely on. This process will reveal which emissions categories are the "worst offenders." Efforts can then be directed there first, at the lowest-hanging fruit, so to speak.

Benchmarking is so important because there are always surprises. The worst offenses are never where one anticipates them to be. In discussions yesterday, I learned from a City employee, for example, that only 5% of Roanoke's carbon footprint was contributed by the municipality. The rest came from the citizenry. Hburg will probably get a similar result.

All of this is to say that Phase II of the EAP is crucial to the overall success of the EAP. Bravo for recognizing this and putting in front and center.



PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN  
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CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Simone Horst Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well  Well  Neutral  Poor  Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Focus Area 4, Goal 3--Increase Public Transport Ridership.

I appreciate the work that is going into increasing public transit ridership in the city, but I notice that it is nearly exclusively geared towards JMU. I live in the Northwest neighborhood near Red Front and work at EMU and have been disappointed to find that there is no viable bus route for me to reliably get to and from work in a direct or timely manner. I would appreciate more attention given to routes that are outside of JMU's area, though I recognize that it may not be cost effective to implement these.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Focus Area 5, Goal 1--Strategy 1.1

I strongly support a Pay-As-You-Throw system.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by **June 26, 2019**.

Visit [www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/eap-open-house) for more information.

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Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Suzanne Fiederlein Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well  Well  Neutral  Poor  Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

I have cross-cutting comments that relate to several of the focus areas (energy/buildings, land use, transportation). Please see my comments below.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

I applaud this initiative by the city and the community engagement in the process. The city can't meet sustainability goals without considering energy needs, the place of solar in those needs, and the role of the HEC. Also, the city and JMU need to work together more in developing plans and setting goals. JMU is the huge "elephant in the room" that has got to work more collaboratively with the city on plans and how to mitigate its impact on city traffic and energy consumption. City efforts to increase the use of public transportation and preserve green space and tree canopy is undermined by JMU's new building construction (including parking garages). How can the city and JMU work together more effectively to promote the environmental goals?

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by **June 26, 2019**.

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CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Adrie Voors Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N):      If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well     Well     Neutral     Poor     Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Focus area 5:

Goal 3, strategy 3.1: offer some evening hours for recycling drop-off.

Collaborate with our schools to host drop-off bins monitored by designated classes who can incorporate waste reduction in their curriculum.

Add textile recycling to the drop-off. This includes non-reusable clothing, bedding, and other fabric based things. Goodwill advertises that they can do this.

Add recycling of organic wastes (ie composting) as an option. If this doesn't fit the city's definition of recycling, it could use its own category. There is a huge potential of landfill diversion with composting, ideally by a municipally run or contracted commercial-scale composting operation but also through everything from promoting backyard composting to community run composting spots, and promoting curbside pickup services and drop-off programs.

Most people don't understand that the increasingly popular plant-based compostable serviceware, especially cups and "plastic" utensils, need to go to a commercial-scale composting operation or they are worse than regular plastic once in a landfill due to their methane emissions. We should promote use of compostable serviceware where reusable is not an option and provide a means for it to get to a suitable composting facility.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Creating a "sustainability coordinator" position has been instrumental in pushing EAP-type agendas forward in many other communities. This position can coordinate efforts between departments and generate grant funding, ultimately saving the city money.

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PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN  
OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD  
CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Doug Hendren Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): Y If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well     Well     Neutral     Poor     Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Goal #1 is to reduce the City's GHG emissions, the majority of which are attributable to HEC (Roanoke's figure was quoted as 60%). HEC belongs to the City and operates under City code. It is admittedly complex, but we undermine the EAP by omitting HEC altogether. Given the different stakeholders, how might we keep a "placeholder" in this EAP draft that acknowledges issues around HEC's Dominion restrictions as well as its City relationship, but encourages seeking creative win-win opportunities that will make both HEC and Harrisonburg thought leaders in the state of Virginia?

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

First, this is an Action Plan! "Consider" is not an action word! The strategies should be stated in ordinary, short, English phrases. Let's not tie our shoelaces together with timid language! Our grandchildren will use it to ridicule us!

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Deep thanks to the many City Staff involved in crafting the EAP draft. It is a privilege to be involved in this process, and I have been greatly encouraged by the all around professionalism and competence of the Staff members I have worked with.

I hope that all public comments will be available for EPSAC review.

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COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Timothy Godshall Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N):      If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well     Well     Neutral     Poor     Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

I really like the focus on community gardens in Regional Food System Strategy 1.1. Also I strongly support a pay as you throw solid waste policy, strategy 1.1 under waste reduction, as well as stragy 4.3 of increasing household hazardous waste collection

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

I support the vision laid out in this document. I would like to see as many of these strategies employ ed as possible. I notice that many of the items are stated as things to be considered. I hope that the se considerations are acted upon. I also am disappointed to see renewable energy generation omitt ed as a focus area. Electrical production is such a major area of greenhouse gas emissions, it is ess ential that Harrisonburg focus on that as part of this plan. This can be done by influencing HEC to p

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COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Ramona Sanders Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): Y If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

All goals should be measurable, to know if the City has made progress

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Add a second over-reaching goal to the EAP "Preserve, protect, and restore environmental quality for the benefit of all residents. The benefits of environmental initiatives should be distributed fairly and justly across all city residents."

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Electricity generation is a significant portion of green-house gas emissions by the City; these emissions should be addressed and included as a goal for renewable energy.

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Additional Comments

I would like for the City to consider putting solar panels on all City-use buildings and share the amount of savings. I would like for the City to continue curb side pick up of recyclables. As residents age, it get harder to take recycling to Waterman on a weekly basis, plus the man with the moveable unit finds a need to put his hands on the women. This has to stop!

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11 JUN 2019 PM 2:17



City of Harrisonburg  
Rebecca Stimson  
Department of Public Works  
320 E. Mosby Road  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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1

# PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CITY OF HARRISONBURG

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June 5, 2019  
5pm – 7pm



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## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well

Well

Neutral

Poor

Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Focus Area 1: Buildings and Energy -  
This focus should have a goal of transitioning the electricity used in the City to electricity generated from renewable resources. This will mean working closely with HEC and HEC should have an official representative on the EAP.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Strategy 1.1, of Goal 1, Focus Area 1, and Strategy 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 of Goal 2, should remove the word "consider" these just should be done. Please stop wasting my tax dollars by how our municipal buildings are built, lighted, heated, and cooled. Energy use intensity of buildings is important for life cycle costs of building. I am rather outraged

Given Harrisonburg's location as an urban center in the Shenandoah Valley, and that the City has not been incorporating it into its public building projects in the past 15 years. The time is long past to conserve our tax dollars in how we build our buildings.

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we build our buildings

Additional Comments

its proximity to the Shenandoah National Park and extensive forest land, and its relative closeness to some of the darkest night skies on the eastern seaboard make Harrisonburg the ideal location to be a regional leader in how to harmonize the needs of an urban area with protecting, preserving, and enhancing the environment for future generations. This is our civic duty and our basic responsibility for ~~future~~ the future. We need action now; we need to try things, fail, learn, and try again. To do anything less is to be a participant in obscene immorality.

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## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional) : \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well

Well

Neutral

Poor

Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

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3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

*Recycling management, Strategy 3.1 - consider offering recycling pick-up for communities with less access.*

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4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

*Definitely in favor of compost promotion, the possibility of "pay-as-you-throw", and expansion of pollinator gardens/habitats*

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6)

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COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional) : \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

*Sustainable Transportation, Goal 5: Harrisonburg should adopt a 'complete streets' policy in which all new and reconstructed roads are connective and safe for all modes of transportation. This addresses environmental sustainability as well as socioeconomic equity.*

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

*Sustainable Trans*

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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(A)

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5pm – 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Dudley Bonsal Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N):      If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Land Use and Green Space, Goal 1 - Just as Goal 7 of Sustainable Transportation highlights the relationship between land use and transportation, this goal ~~focuses on~~ can also address transportation in regard to how parking is configured for new development and redevelopment. Too often, parking is located along the property line. It makes adjoining sidewalks much less desirable for walking.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

I strongly support the elimination of minimum parking requirements in Harrisonburg, as mentioned in Sustainable Transportation, Strategy 6.1.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

In some relation to Sustainable Transportation, Strategy 6.1, I encourage ~~more~~ consideration of ~~an~~ additional designated on-street parking, and ~~some~~ perhaps with metering in high-demand areas. On-street parking can help to offset the need for parking lots (too many in Harrisonburg, even downtown) and it can also provide a buffer for walking and other sidewalk activity.

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Additional Comments

For ~~the~~ Focus Area 2, in the first paragraph, what is meant by "natural vegetation...and/or vegetative technologies"? What are "vegetative technologies", and how would they constitute green <sup>infrastructure</sup> ~~space~~ without natural vegetation?

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5

# PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Open House  
June 5, 2019  
5pm - 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
409 S. Main St.  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): E. Brubaker Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well

Well

Neutral

Poor

Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

The language of the goals are excellent + speak to a diverse set of needs. However we need a goal around energy generation to renewable energy sources. Let's be a leader, increase locally produced energy, clean + renewable.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Strategies need measurable targets. Language around "considering" is only helpful if paired w/ specific, measurable goal. My 4 month old needs us to do more than "consider" doing right on waste, clean air, climate mitigation, etc

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

I am thrilled Harrisonburg is working on this plan. While we are late, we are moving. Let's match the urgency that our residents demand. Let's lead.

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign-in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by **June 26, 2019**.

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City Hall Atrium  
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Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Cathy Capeland Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]  
I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): Y If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

The priority of Greenhouse Gas Emissions needs to be high, so that the information can be seen by all early and we can have a clear idea of the changes that need to happen. I think that can help motivate Council & other stakeholders.

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Focus Area 2, Goal 4: work with experts to plan where more pollinator areas should be (so that they are adequately spaced)

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Focus Area 5, Goal 2, Strategy 2.3: I'd like to write a bill to address this very issue. I'd also like to work closely with you to design & write bills so that the EAP has more state-funded aspects to lessen the locality burden.

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5pm - 7pm



City Hall Atrium  
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Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional): Ritchie Vaughan Phone/email (Optional): [REDACTED]

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N) (N) If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well    Well    Neutral    Poor    Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

\* A lot of these <sup>strategies</sup> ~~goals~~ just add bureaucratic cost to projects rather than directly addressing impacts on the ground (inventories, audit teams, committees, etc.)  
\* Really big fan of Waste - Goal 1. That's smart. Charlottesville does this with trash bin permits. And we need Waste Goal 3!

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

\* I think Focus Area 3/Food is outside the city's role. I don't think this is productive relative to the other focus areas.  
\* Focus 4/Transportation Goal 6 will require changing development plans because biking & walking require being within a 2 mile radius of your destination... and a lot of residences/jobs/stores are way more than 1-2 miles apart (Focus 2 Goal 1)

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

You should make this more focused; the city can't realistically pursue 50 eco-projects simultaneously. Please identify low hanging fruit strategy #1, #2, & #3 so that we focus on the high-impact, easier stuff 1<sup>st</sup>. That will be more impactful & efficient.

Please leave this comment sheet with staff at the sign-in table, mail your comments to the addressee on the reverse side, or email your comments to [Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Stimson@HarrisonburgVA.gov). Please submit your comments by June 26, 2019.

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5pm – 7pm



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Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## COMMENT SHEET

Name (Optional) : \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be contacted to discuss the plan further (Y/N): \_\_\_\_ If yes, complete information above.

1. How well do the Focus Areas and Goals represent priorities that you feel the City and community should focus on addressing? (Circle one)

Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poor      Very Poor

2. Do you have comments on specific Goals? Please list the Focus Area and Goal, for example: Water Resources, Goal 1.

Sustainable Transport, Goal 4 & Goal 5 can either complement or cancel each other. Please make sure "improved traffic" doesn't just mean cars move at the expense of other road users!

3. Do you have comments on specific Strategies? Please list the Focus Area and Strategy, for example: Water Resources, Strategy 4.2.

Waste Reduction, Strategy 1.1: Absolutely necessary in order to incentivize/implement any of this focus Area, but must be done w/out harming vulnerable groups like refugees/migrants/homeless.

4. Use the space below or the reverse side for additional comments.

Overall I like the focus areas\* but hope the pre listed in no particular order as they need to be done concurrently.  
\*focus area 3 seems out of place?

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Additional Comments

Keep up the good work and I hope  
that this gets implemented efficiently.

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NEED A CLEARER OUTLINE OF THE DOCUMENT ★

includes addresses the following

John Z comment

this is not a description of goals. This says what they are

Plan Organization

The EAP is organized into six sectors, areas in which action can be taken to improve the environment and sustainability. Each sector has goal statements, which are overarching statements describing the direction the community wants to go. Goals describe a desired end state for each sector and should reflect the values of the community. Goal statements are qualitative and nature. Each goal has a section that answers the question: Where are we now? The City has already taken steps to achieve some goals and those actions are described within the EAP. Each strategy within the goal describe possible approaches and methods for attaining the goal. Strategies may be implemented by city departments or community partners. The tasks listed for each strategy are actionable items that are steps towards meeting each strategy.

Done done  
66E

Sectors

- Buildings and Energy: Improving energy efficiency and reducing energy use in buildings will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions). There are opportunities to promote energy generation on-site at public and private properties. There are also ways to reduce the energy consumption of the water and sewer systems that provide services to properties in Harrisonburg.
- Land Use and Green Space: The City of Harrisonburg aims to regulate and guide the use of land and open space to promote positive social and environmental outcomes and an efficient use of resources.
- Regional Food Systems: A food system is generally understood to be the chain of activities connecting food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management. Every day we make dozens of choices about what we eat, what we buy, how we use or consume these items, and how we dispose of them at the end of their useful life.
- Sustainable Transportation: Sustainable transportation includes alternative fuel public transportation fleets, increasing usage of public transportation, traffic signal optimization, increasing bicycle and pedestrian options, and more.
- Waste Reduction and Recycling: The City of Harrisonburg seeks to determine a sustainable, long-term, and fiscally responsible refuse and recycling program that consistently supports and promotes the reduction of solid waste, the reuse of usable items, and the recycling of materials.
- Water: The watersheds and water systems we depend on to provide clean drinking water must be protected for public health as well as protection of aquatic ecosystems.

that all?

Goals

All the goals from all sectors will be listed here before this plan is made available for public comment.

Cost

Within each strategy there are a list of tasks, identified responsible parties, and cost. Costs are intended to illustrate the magnitude of a tasks' cost, not necessarily represent its true cost. Costs are represented as ranges:

I think costs can only be calculated in Phase II+III

\$ 0-10,000

GOAL 6 - where does 2% of Peak come from? I would like to see clear documentation of this before it is stated



## Introduction

isa  
↓

The Environmental Action Plan (EAP) serves as a road map for city leaders, staff, and community members to implement sustainability visions and principles. Sustainability is defined by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” To-date, the City of Harrisonburg has taken steps to address the quality and care of our natural resources; however, the latest science indicates that more ambitious actions are required to mitigate the impacts of environmental degradation and the changing climate that will affect our community’s health, economy, and well-being.

The EAP builds upon existing city plans, programs and strategies, and proposes measures to accelerate advancements in sustainability, of which economic vitality, environmental protection, and health and well-being are collectively considered to be critical pieces of achieving sustainability goals. Adopting and implementing the EAP will help the City support global targets for a stable climate. The plan includes policy changes in the public sector and incentives in the private sector, as well as, recommended actions for both the public and private sectors.

More direct language

Implementing policies and incentives for our City will not only address environmental concerns but will also have many co-benefits. For example, improved energy efficiency in buildings can reduce energy costs. Improving access to multi-modal transportation can increase public health, improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase safety. Communities that make sustainable development choices are better positioned to preserve landscapes, support robust food systems, and maintain the health and integrity of watersheds, forests, and wildlife habitats.

not only ↓  
increases

↓  
reduces

### Environmental Performance Standards Advisory Committee

Members of the Environmental Performance Standards Advisory Committee (EPSAC) have led the effort to develop the EAP. EPSAC was established in 2017 to help the City “create a set of environmental performance and sustainability standards for public and private development and redevelopment projects”. On October 23, 2019, EPSAC presented to City Council and requested staff time be appropriated to create an EAP. City staff then worked with EPSAC on creating this document which is Phase 1 of the EAP.

### Community Input

Information about the community input process will go here.

### Scope of Plan

The EAP covers sustainability initiatives in both the public and private sector.

This document is Phase 1 of the EAP which describes goals, co-benefits, and strategies, and identifies tasks and responsible parties (such as a city department, private businesses, or community organizations).

These Phases are important.  
Highlight them more clearly.

Phase 2 of the EAP will begin after adoption of Phase 1 by City Council. Phase 2 will include gathering data and conducting study of municipal and community activities in order to develop baselines to be later used to measure progress towards achieving goals.

During Phase 3, EPSAC and City staff will work together to update the EAP. Considering baseline data and all learned information, targets will be established with statements that define a percentage reduction or increase by a specific year. Goals and strategy statements may also be revised at this time. The updated EAP will be presented to City Council for consideration to adopt.

### Public Sector

The EAP includes policy changes and regulations for the public sector. The public sector includes Harrisonburg City Government as well as Harrisonburg City Schools. The Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC) is a municipal utility, but operates independently from the City.

#### Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC)

Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC) purchases power for resale to its 21,000 customers from Dominion Energy at four separate delivery points. The Harrisonburg City Council created HEC in October 1956 as an independent, nonpolitical commission with the first Board of Commissioners being sworn in to office in January of 1957. As a part of the creation of the Commission, by City Code, a minimum of 5 percent of total revenues is to be returned to the City annually as well as a payment equal to the amount of taxes that would be owed as if they were a private utility.

In January 2011, through a contract with the Virginia Municipal Electric Association (VMEA), in which HEC is one of seven members, HEC entered a 20-year power supply contract with Dominion Energy in effect through May of 2031. The contract is a full requirements contract, which means that HEC cannot purchase power from any other entity nor can it build generation, renewable or otherwise, to offset energy purchases from Dominion. Additionally, the retail customers of HEC may not enter into contracts to purchase power from any other entity, however, rooftop solar installations by its customers are allowed behind the customer's meter under HEC's parallel connection agreement (net metering agreement). As of February 2019, there are 133 solar panel systems (113 residential and 20 commercial installations) connected under this arrangement.

Energy efficiency and alternative energy initiatives are included in the EAP. These initiatives may have impacts on HEC operations. The relationship between these initiatives and HEC is not within the scope of this plan - the plan does not outline how something like increased solar panels on school property would impact HEC operations. Additionally, the EAP does not suggest changes to what type of energy is purchased by HEC.

### Private Sector

The EAP includes incentives and suggestions for making changes in the private sector. Since Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, no policy changes to regulate the private sector are outlined in this plan. For example, the EAP can outline ways to encourage and incentivize private citizens to reduce plastic consumption, but it cannot suggest the City adopt a regulation to ban plastic shopping bags in the City.

ADENDUM

It is too distracting here, and takes away from the flow of the document

Short + sweet  
How about something like this, or better?

The city of Harrisonburg gets its electricity from HEC. HEC is a municipal utility, but since it operates independently from the city, the relationship between the EAP initiatives and HEC is not within the scope of the EAP.



\$\$ \$10,000-50,000

\$\$\$ \$ 50,000

In some cases, the cost only accounts for the cost of hiring a consultant and does not account for the cost of city staff time to manage the consultant or to contribute to task. In other cases, the cost might only account for the cost of materials and equipment, and not for the cost of city staff or community organization's time to create or install.

**Goal 1 - Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions is the overarching goal of this EAP.

Where Are We Now?

*I'm not sure this is a goal within each sector. Not sure how this should be included.*

Many of the existing initiatives described within the sector chapters contribute to reducing greenhouse gasses.

**Strategy 1.1 - Complete GHG emissions inventory**

The first step towards reducing GHG emissions is understanding where our emissions are coming from. There are two inventories that will be completed: the community-wide inventory which includes emissions created by the community as a whole (electricity, vehicle miles traveled, etc.) as well as the municipal inventory, which would capture emissions created by municipal operations (municipal fleet, energy used by city buildings, etc.).

Task	Responsible Party	Cost
Become a member of ICLEI. Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), formerly the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives provides tools and support for local governments to inventory greenhouse gas emissions.	City Manager's Office, City Council	\$
Complete community-wide inventory.	City Department TBD	\$
Complete municipal inventory.	Facilities Manager	\$\$
Conduct new community-wide and municipal inventories to measure progress. (It is recommended that community-wide inventories be completed once every two years and municipal inventories be completed once every three to five years.)	City Department TBD; Facilities Manager	\$\$

**Strategy 1.2 - Set Targets for GHG Emission Reductions**

Use the GHG emissions inventories and goals set by the Compact of Mayors and Paris Climate Agreements of 2015 to guide setting goals for GHG emissions reductions in the City. Hundreds of

22

communities across the USA have set similar targets, including the Town of Blacksburg, the Cities of Charlottesville, Roanoke, and Richmond, and Arlington County, and Fairfax County.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Analyze the emissions inventories and recommend to City Council targets for reductions.	EPSAC	\$
Set targets for emissions reductions. Recommendations will be presented by EPSAC and city staff during Phase 3 of EAP development and presented to City Council to consider for adoption.	City Council	\$

2

## Buildings and Energy

Commercial and residential buildings account for 39 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States annually, due to heating, cooling, lighting, and powering electrical equipment (United States Green Building Council). Improving energy efficiency and reducing energy use in buildings will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions).

### Co-Benefits

Co-Benefits to improving energy efficiency and reducing energy use in buildings include: Saving money through reduced costs for heating and cooling, improved thermal comfort and indoor air quality, local jobs in the energy efficiency field, hedging against utility price increases and improved health due to reduced fossil fuel combustion.

### Goal 2 - Understand the City's Energy Use

Creating an inventory of energy used by municipal operations is the first step to understanding the consumption, environmental impact, and areas that could be improved upon.

#### Where Are We Now?

Initiative	Summary	Status
Create and support the Facilities Management Program	Harrisonburg has a Facilities Manager who monitors energy use in municipal buildings.	Complete

#### Strategy 2.1 - Inventory Energy Used by Municipal Operations

The energy inventory would describe energy use of different areas of municipal operations, including, but not limited to: fleet vehicles, buildings, street lighting, and distribution of water and sanitary sewage.

Task	Responsible Party	Cost
Create a standard operating procedure for the inventory, including: what software will be used to complete the inventory, and what should be included (electric, gas, water, and sanitary sewer)	Facilities Manager	\$
Complete the inventory. Include local partners such as James Madison University or private consultants.	Facilities Manager	\$
Establish an inventory maintenance plan that includes how often the inventory should be updated and who is responsible.	Facilities Manager	\$

*FALL 2*  
*EMU* ← they are doing a lot. Their knowledge could be beneficial

52

Share findings of energy inventory with other city departments and the public	Facilities Manager, Director of Communications	\$
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**Goal 3 - Decrease Energy Use Intensity of Municipal Buildings**

Energy Use Intensity, or EUI, expresses a building's energy use as a function of its size and other characteristics. It is usually expressed as energy per square foot per year and is calculated by dividing the total energy consumed by the building in one year by the total gross floor area of the building.

Where Are We Now?

Initiative	Summary	Status
Facilities Management Program	Harrisonburg has a Facilities Manager who monitors energy use in municipal buildings. The Facilities Manager coordinates maintenance and energy efficiency upgrades on municipal buildings.	Complete

**Strategy 3.1 - Create a City Internal Energy Team**

The Internal Energy Team (IET) may consist of current staff members and/or new positions that will be trained in a high level of proficiency in HVAC, electrical, and plumbing skills, specifically focusing on energy efficient design.

Task	Responsible Party	Cost
Establish the IET. The IET would be led by the Facilities Manager.	Facilities Manager, City Manager's Office	\$
Assess municipal buildings, facilities, and energy uses to identify maintenance needs and capital improvements. All buildings should be audited initially, and then conditioned or occupied buildings should be audited every five years.	IET	\$\$
Establish an operations and maintenance program and capital improvement schedule, prioritized based on needs and available funding.	IET	\$\$\$
Create procedures so that the IET is consulted on the design of mechanical/electrical/plumbing in new building and retrofit projects so the team's knowledge and expertise of equipment and systems maintenance can be incorporated in design decisions.	IET	\$

Arch?

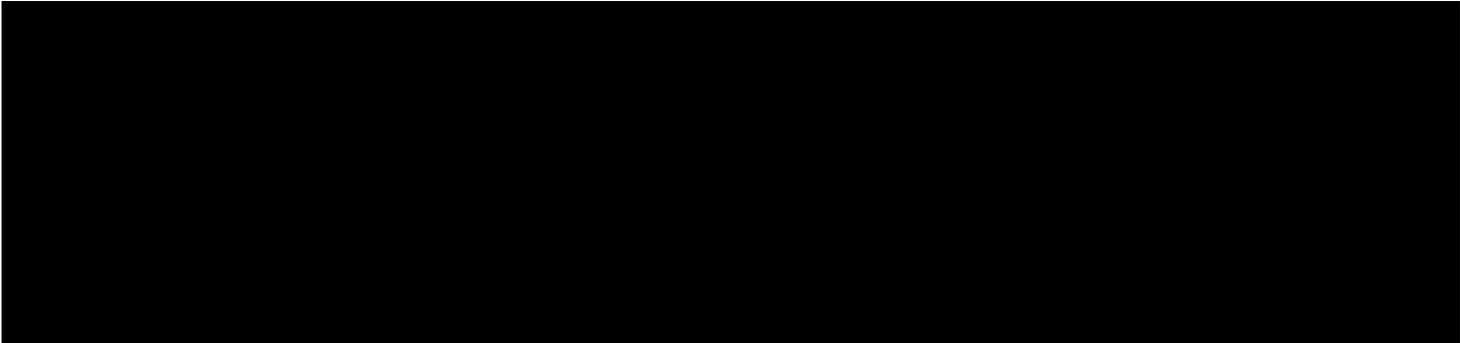
and architectural firms

## Rebecca Stimson

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 28, 2019 2:03 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Stimson  
**Subject:** Environmental Action Plan comments - updated

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed



### General:

"gases" is spelled "gases" and "gasses". consistency needed. I think the former is preferable, but either acceptable (sure I'm not the first to bring this up)

Likewise, "buses" is spelled "buses" and "busses". consistency needed.

Numbering system: For clarity, I think all Goals should have a leading number tying them to the Focus Area to which they are associated. For instance, Goal 5 on p18 would become Goal 1.5 and then Strategy 5.1 below that would become 1.5.1, etc. Likewise, all Tasks should be numbered in the same scheme, eg, the Task, "establish an Energy Audit Committee" on p19, would become Task 1.5.1.2. This will aid greatly when referring to various sections and avoid confusion.

### Specific:

p9 Because HEC is such an important part of energy use & environmental impacts in the City, there should be some mechanism to review that HEC policies are in sync with the EAP where possible, perhaps including such language in the HEC mission, and inclusion of HEC on the Internal Energy

Team. Not suggesting in any way that the City manage HEC, but it is critical they form a good working partnership on this topic.

p10 Under Goal 1 there are two instances of the term Greenhouse Effect being used. This term, although universally used, is misleading and incorrect if it makes one think of a greenhouse. Without getting all sciency, I strongly believe the term should be put in quotes, ie, "Greenhouse Effect", with perhaps a footnote which includes a reference that describes the proper mechanism of how the earth is heated by GHGs for those interested

p10 fourth sentence under Goal 1 - change "greenhouse gases" to "GHGs"

p10 fifth sentence under Goal - revise to "The additional carbon dioxide and other GHGs trap radiation ...."

p10 seventh sentence under Goal - revise to "... the earth's temperature is on course to rise ..."

p11 add a task, perhaps under Strategy 1.2, - the City should consider divesting its investments in entities involved in the production of fossil fuels. I just saw (June 11 DNR) where Charlottesville did this.

p13 under Strategy 2.1, state that the IET should definitely include staff from HEC (as mentioned above)

p19 in the 2nd task under Strategy 5.1, state that this program should not replicate any program HEC has, but should work in partnership

p30 In the "where we are now" section under Goal 2, the word "available" is used twice (redundancy). Also I think it would be good to add the words "for organics recycling" on the end of this statement.

p32 In the 4th task under Strategy 2.3, remove the words "at City Hall". Promotion of this endeavor should not be restricted to only City Hall

p32 Add a 5th task under Strategy 2.3 to encourage restaurants and other food processing concerns in the City to recycle food waste

p36 Strategy 3.2 - the term "1/4 mile improvements" is first used. What is this? Is it in the right place since Strategy 6.3 references filling sidewalk gaps within 1/4 mile? Maybe a short definition would be helpful here.

p43 Under Goal 1 of Focus Area 5, in the "where we are now" section it is stated that there is no program. The current recycling program clearly supports the reduction of refuse in landfills. This should be stated here with reference to the "Where we are now" section under Goal 3 (p46) for details.

p43 Strategy 1.1 - glad to see PAYT in there. Would just like to see some wording like "... PAYT or other system that would incentivize residents to reduce refuse ..." so as to allow other options. Not that I know what these other options would be off the top of my head.

p43 add task (perhaps under Strategy 1.2, perhaps other) which speaks to the City upping its own game regarding recycling in their offices & other buildings, etc. The City could then promote/showcase their system as a model to other businesses & establishments.

p44 add a task to Strategy 1.3 stating something like - consider a review of the "Refuse" & "Solid Waste Management Fee" structures that residents see on the water bills to better reflect current practice and any new systems such as PAYT. Consideration should be given in this review to ensure that any particular sector is not overburdened.

p45 Second item under Goal 2's "Where we are now", the Support of Community Composting, should go with Goal 3 on p 46. Organics to compost is more recycling than it is reuse. Likewise, Strategy 2.4 should move to under Goal 3, recycling.

p46 Update "Where we are now" under Goal 3 to reflect the mobile recycling unit being stationed in different neighborhoods during the week.

p46 under Strategy 3.2, add the following tasks:

a) consider adding bins to the RCC site and to the mobile recycling unit into which residents can drop off organics (food waste) for composting. If this then goes to an industrial composting site, such as Black Bear Composting, consider educating the public on what additional items can be deposited in these bins, such as soiled paper or cardboard.

b) consider adopting some evening hours for the mobile recycling unit in the various neighborhoods to give residents more options

c) consider mulching all yard waste vs. adding to landfill as daily cover.

p47 correct spelling of "units" in third task under Strategy 3.2

p47 change "Now" to "No" in fourth task under Strategy 3.2; at least I think that is how it is supposed to read

p49 correct spelling of "sheriff" in Strategy 4.4 (2nd line)

more **General**:

Sustainability Coordinator. At my first read/scan through this document, I was thinking the IET was a committee that was, in a sense, taking the place of a Sustainability Coordinator. After talking with Adrie and reviewing again, I see that the IET is only associated with Focus Area 1. For oversight and coordination of the various Departments, it seems there needs to be either a single coordinator (call it a Sustainability Coordinator or other) or a committee for the implementation and future review of the EAP. If it is a committee it would make sense that it be headed by the City Manager's office. One advantage of a single coordinator is that he/she would have responsibility for the big picture and be better at keeping all the pieces coordinated. On the other hand it is a new position that requires funding. The committee approach would have members from all the Departments involved (including HEC). An advantage here is that the members have more intimate knowledge of the workings of their respective Department. Of course these members need to be allowed the time to do their EAP work.