

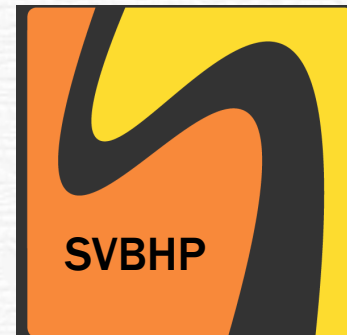
City Of Harrisonburg Small Area Plan for the Northeast Neighborhood



We'll get started at **11:30 am**
with the presentation.



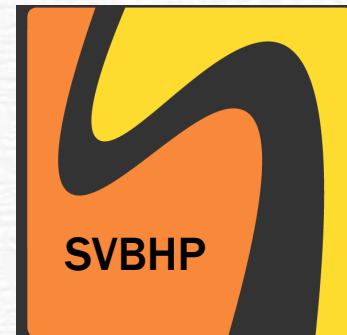
Please take this time to
provide your feedback at
Station 1 & to get food.



City Of Harrisonburg Small Area Plan for the Northeast Neighborhood



Public Visioning and Design Workshop
Saturday, February 15th, 2025
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.



Welcome & Project Overview

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

- Harrisonburg was selected in September 2023 to be the recipient of a Community Connectors Program grant through national nonprofit Smart Growth America and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- The community's team is led by the Northeast Neighborhood Association, Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance and the City government.



Welcome & Project Overview

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

Rebuilding trust between Northeast Neighborhood residents and the City, repairing past harms, and reconnecting today's Northeast Neighborhood to the heart of the city are our most important goals.

We commit to prioritizing the needs, wants, and desires of Northeast Neighborhood community members as we scope potential future investments in the community.



Where We Are Today

- Our Community Connectors team seeks to actively engage with and empower individuals, families and organizations in the neighborhood to share their stories and needs.
- This effort will be inclusive and community-driven.
- Our goal is to establish a Small Area Plan with recommended tangible actions to achieve the Northeast Neighborhood's vision.

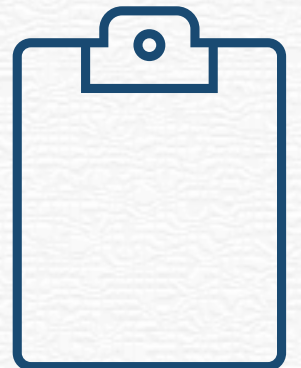


Overview of the Workshop



Agenda

- Sign-in + Opening **Activity 1** (30 mins)
- Part 1
 - Welcome & Project Overview
 - Overview of the Workshop
 - Engagement to Date
 - Visioning **Activity 2** (Exercise – 20 mins)
 - Key Findings from Existing Conditions and Plans
 - Emerging Priority Themes
- Part 2
 - Engagement **Activity 3** (1.5 hrs.)
 - Design Workshop + Report Back
 - Closing Remarks



Agenda

- Sign-in + Opening Activity
- Part 1
 - Welcome & Project Overview
 - Overview of the Workshop
 - Engagement to Date
 - Visioning (Exercise – 20 mins)
 - Key Findings from Existing Conditions and Plans
 - Emerging Priority Themes
- Part 2
 - Engagement Activities Planned for the Day (1.5 hrs.)
 - Design Workshop + Report Back
 - Closing Remarks



Photo Release Notice:

We will be taking photos during this event for documentation and outreach purposes.



By participating in today's event, you grant permission for your image to be used in reports and presentations related to this project.

◆ If you prefer not to be photographed, please let a team member know.

Thank you for your participation!

Community Engagement Goals for Today

Objectives for today

- **Engage the community** to build a shared vision for the Northeast Neighborhood Small Area Plan (SAP).
- **Confirm priorities for the SAP** – Reconnecting to Downtown, Safety and Security, Opportunity for All Economic Mobility, Gathering and Belonging, and Healthy Environments.
- **Initiate ideas for interventions** – design, infrastructure, policies, or programs.
- **Foster community ownership** of the planning process and encourage participation in future engagement and feedback for the Small Area Plan development through Summer 2025.

House Rules for Today

We are here to work together:

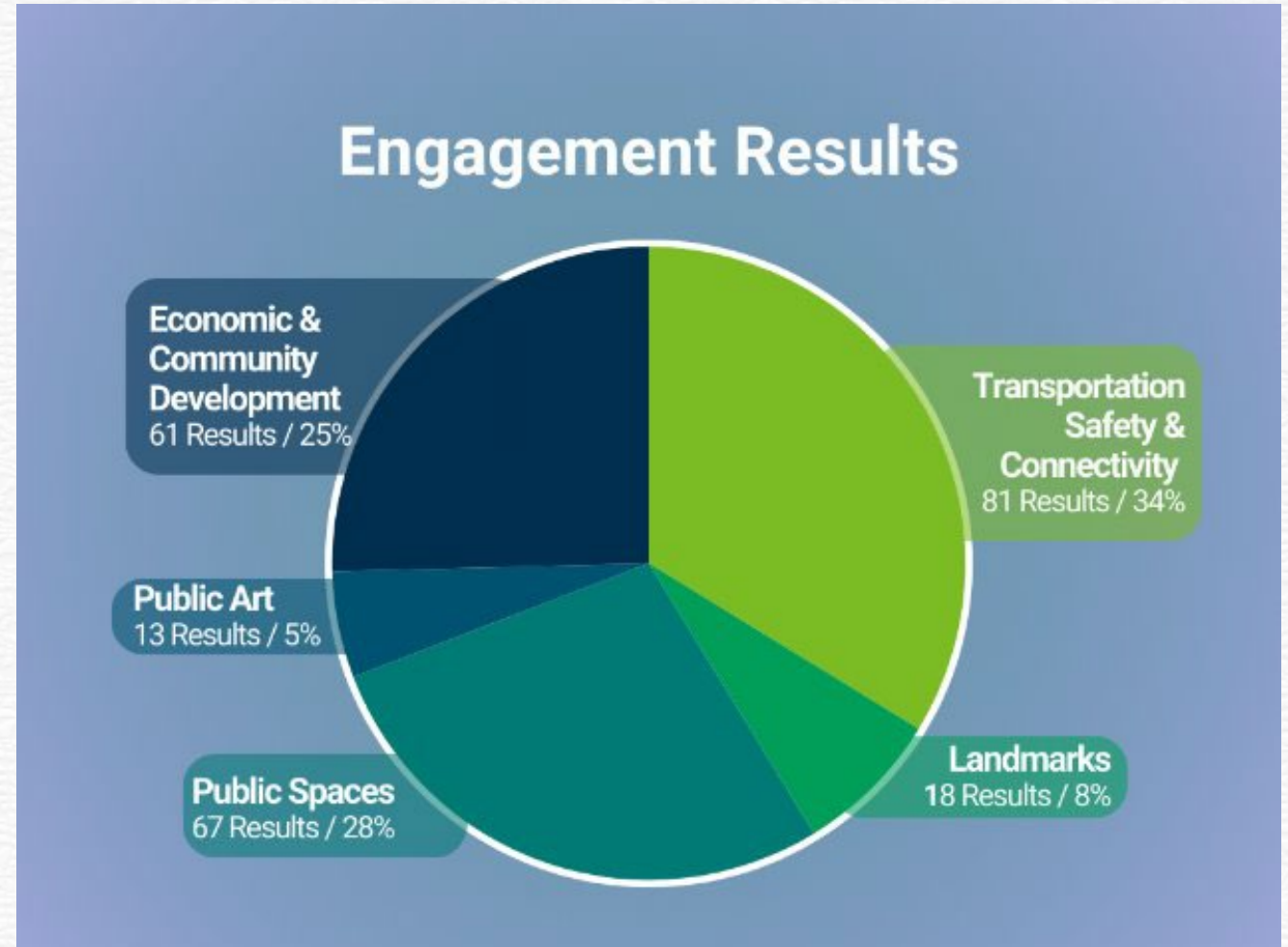
- **Respect Personal Boundaries:** Give others space and avoid making assumptions about comfort levels with physical contact, personal questions, or topics of conversation.
- **Active Listening:** Listen with empathy and without interrupting. Make eye contact when appropriate and show genuine interest in others' perspectives.
- **Step Up, Step Back:** Encourage people to share their ideas while also being mindful of how much space they're taking up in conversation.
- **Embrace Diversity:** Everyone is welcome, regardless of background, beliefs, or opinions. Appreciate different perspectives and be mindful of potential cultural differences and sensitivities resulting from lived experiences.
- **Take Breaks When Needed:** Recognize that discussing community challenges can be intense. People should feel free to take a step away from the gathering.

What We've Heard So Far

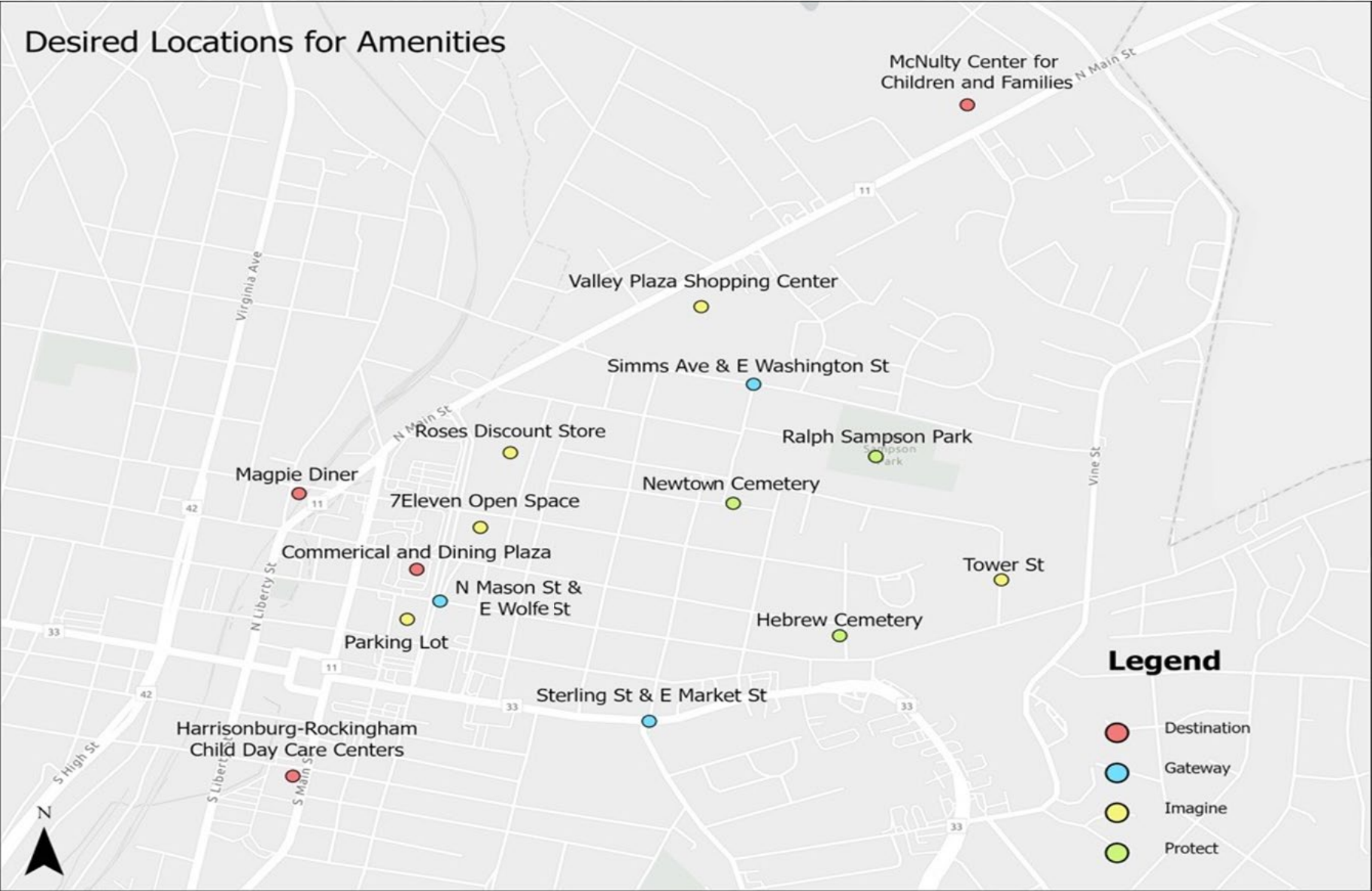


What We've Heard So Far from November 2024

- Celebrating Community Identity
- Preserving Cultural Heritage
- Addressing Past Harms
- Promoting Economic Opportunities
- Enhancing Public Spaces



Important Locations Identified from November 2024



Engagement Station

At the back of the room, you'll find a display of the feedback we've gathered from previous engagement events. We have grouped the feedback into **five priority themes**.

- ◆ **Review the themes** to see how your input has shaped our understanding.
- ◆ **Vote on what matters most** by marking the themes that resonate with you.
- ◆ **Share what's missing** by adding a sticky note with any additional thoughts or priorities.

Priority 1: Reconnecting to Downtown

Revitalize Northeast Neighborhood's image to strengthen its link to downtown focusing on the Mason St. Corridor

Initial Community Feedback

What we heard from previous engagement..

1. Mason St Crossings into downtown, better bike connectivity
2. Better/safer pedestrian and bike crossings at Mason st.
3. Improve image of Northeast
4. Remove the 'invisible wall'

Does this capture the priorities of the neighborhood? If not, what's missing?

*Take a sticky note and write down your thoughts...

Feedback on Priorities

Imagine this area in 5, 10, 25 years – what does it look like and how does it feel?
Place a dot next to your Highest Priority.

1. Reconnecting to Downtown

Revitalize Northeast Neighborhood's image to strengthen its link to downtown focusing on the Mason St. Corridor

2. Safety and Security

Improve transportation, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure, enhance street lighting and maintenance, address crime and housing insecurity, and foster trust between the community and law enforcement.

3. Opportunity for All Economic Mobility

Expand housing access, support local businesses, reimagine Rose's, engage youth, and ensure residents benefit from growth without displacement.

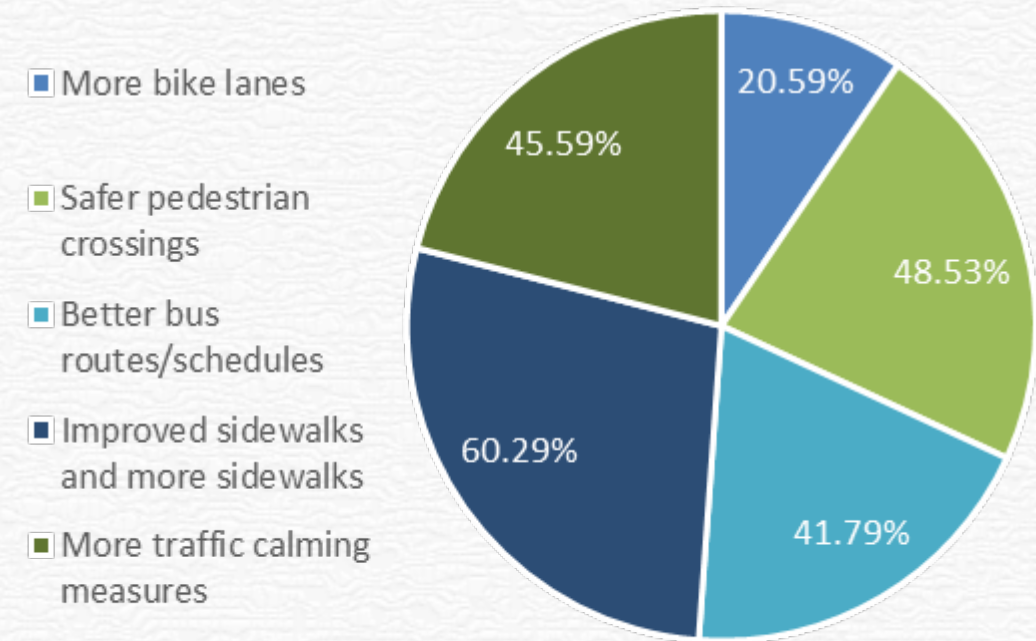
Community Survey Results

Top Challenges & Community Needs

Challenges Identified:

- ✓ **Infrastructure & Safety Issues** – More sidewalks, better lighting, traffic calming, and green spaces.
- ✓ **Housing Affordability & Homeownership** – Preventing displacement, maintaining neighborhood character.
- ✓ **Youth & Family Programs** – More sports, mentorship, job training, and safe gathering spaces.
- ✓ **Community Services & Small Businesses** – Residents want more grocery options, a revitalized Roses complex, and walkable local shops.
- ✓ **Historical & Environmental Preservation** – Concerns about gentrification and over-commercialization.
- ✓ **Inclusive Events & Engagement** – More community-building activities without religious or commercial agendas.

Which types of improvements would you like to see to address transportation, connectivity, and accessibility challenges?




Community Voice: “We need to grow while keeping it affordable, diverse, and people-focused.”

Community Survey Results

Community Strengths & What Residents Want to Preserve

- ✓ **Strong Sense of Community** – Neighbors look out for each other, multigenerational ties.
- ✓ **Rich Historical & Cultural Legacy** – Lucy Simms Center, historic churches, African American heritage.
- ✓ **Diversity & Inclusivity** – Mix of ages, backgrounds, and cultures.
- ✓ **Walkability & Location** – Close to downtown, green spaces, parks.
- ✓ **Affordable, Family-Oriented Housing** – Residents fear displacement and want to maintain homeownership.



 **Community Quote:** "I love my neighbors around me, the history, and the diversity. We need to preserve what makes this place unique."

 **Key Concern:** Residents fear **gentrification, overdevelopment, and rising rents** may threaten these strengths.

Community Vision for the Next 10 Years

More Green Spaces & Safe Streets

Walkable, bike-friendly, and well-lit.

Revitalized Community Spaces

Roses complex as a local hub with small businesses, gathering areas, and job training.

Increased Walkability & Connectivity

Expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, and safer pathways.

Affordable Homeownership & Smart Development

Community-led housing, not high-rise apartments.

Vibrant Cultural & Social Life

More festivals, block parties, arts, and youth programs.



Visioning



Vision Statement

A **Vision Statement** is a forward-looking, inspirational description of what the community wants to become. Explains where the community is now and what it aspires to be.

Elements of a strong vision statement:

- **Aspirational** – It describes an ideal future.
- **Inclusive** – It reflects the needs and hopes of the entire community.
- **Actionable** – It inspires real change.
- **Rooted in Identity** – It honors the history and character of the neighborhood.



Example Of Vision Statement

“Jackson Ward is an interconnected neighborhood that celebrates Black history, ownership, and culture while supporting a diverse community of current and future residents with quality housing, healthy spaces, and its community traditions of local arts, education, and entrepreneurship.”

- Vision from the [Jackson Ward Community Plan](#)

“Future development efforts on Cherry Avenue will respect and preserve the history and culture of the Fifeville neighborhood .

Cherry Avenue will be a vibrant mixed-use area that supports a diverse, thriving Fifeville community . New development and investment on Cherry Avenue and throughout the neighborhood will build a sense of community between long-time and newer residents and be accessible to residents at the most vulnerable end of the socio-economic scale.”

- Vision from the [Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan](#)

Visioning Exercise

This exercise is your opportunity to shape the vision for the Northeast Neighborhood. The vision statement we create today will help guide future decisions and investments in the community.

Instructions:

- Work together in **small groups (4-5 people)** to create a shared vision for the future of the Northeast Neighborhood.
- Reflect on the **past, present, and future** of the community.
- Answer the questions with your group and fill in the corresponding blank in the vision statement.
- Identify one person to share the vision in the report back.

We will report back in **20 minutes** to hear each vision statement.

Report Back

The Northeast Neighborhood has a rich history of

_____. Today, our community is known for

1

_____ and is a place where residents can

2

_____.

3

The Northeast Neighborhood will be a place of

_____ and a model of _____. It will be a

4

5

community where everyone has _____, and where

6

_____ guides every decision.

7

Together, we will build a future that is _____!

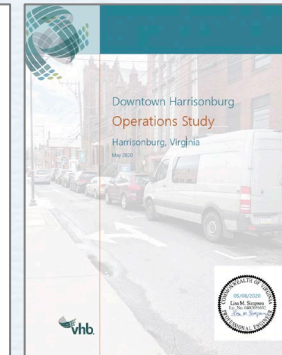
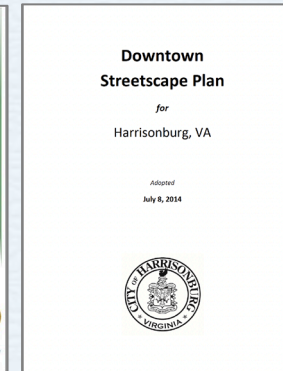
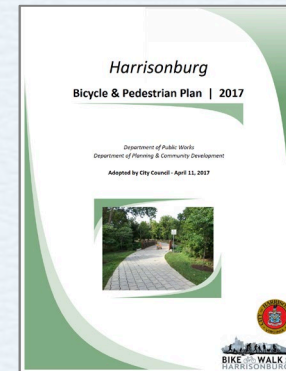
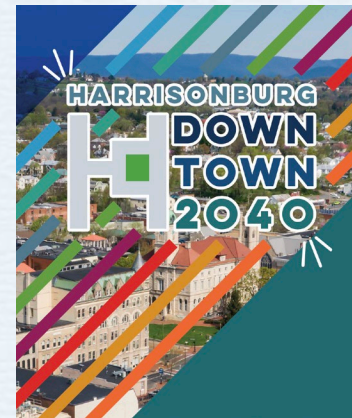
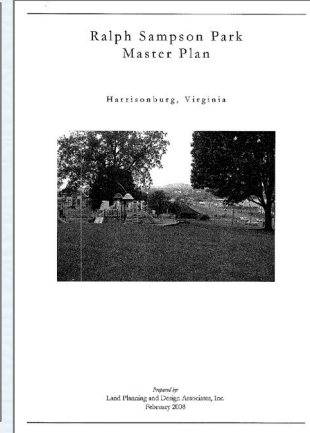
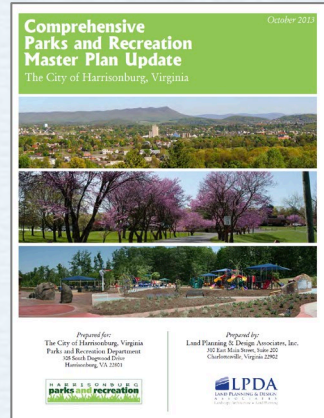
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BIO-BREAK
(15 minutes)

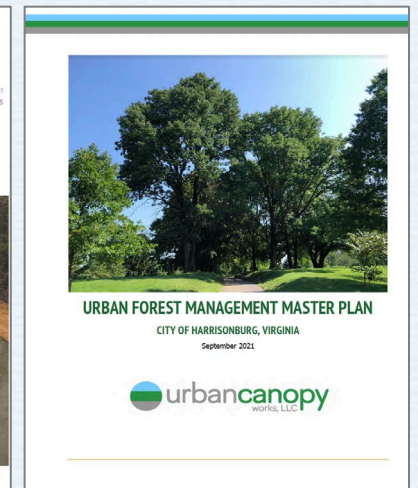
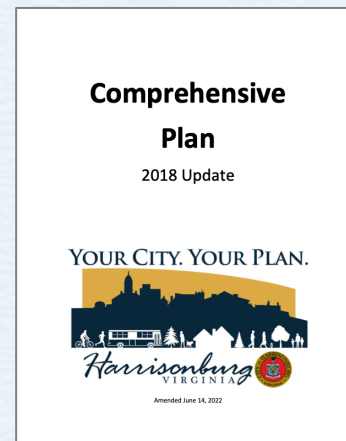
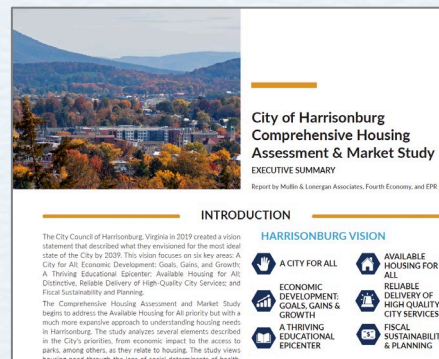
Key Findings from Existing Plans & Conditions



Cultural Identity, History, and Community Spaces



REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS



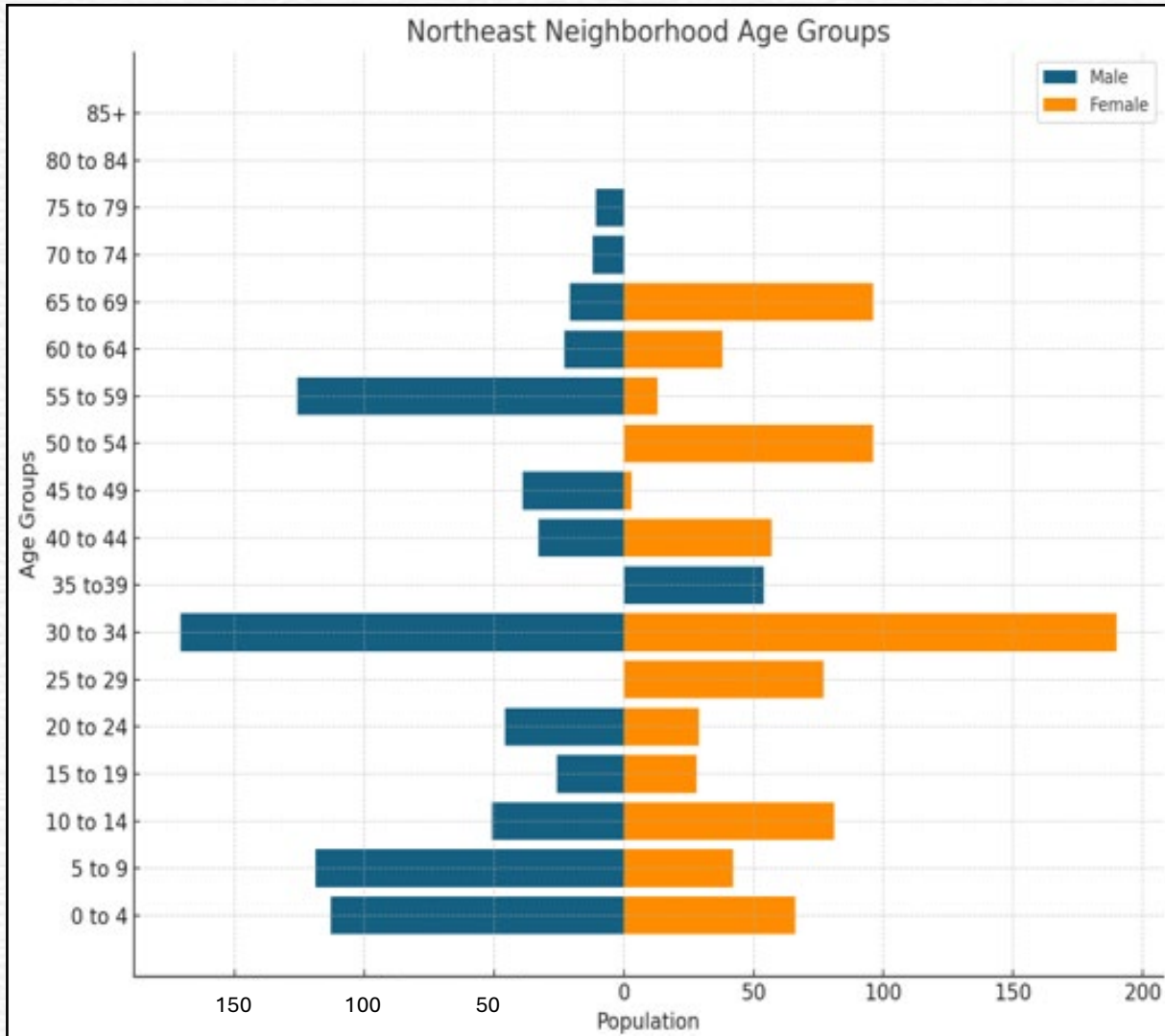
Housing Affordability & Economic Development

Infrastructure & Environmental Sustainability

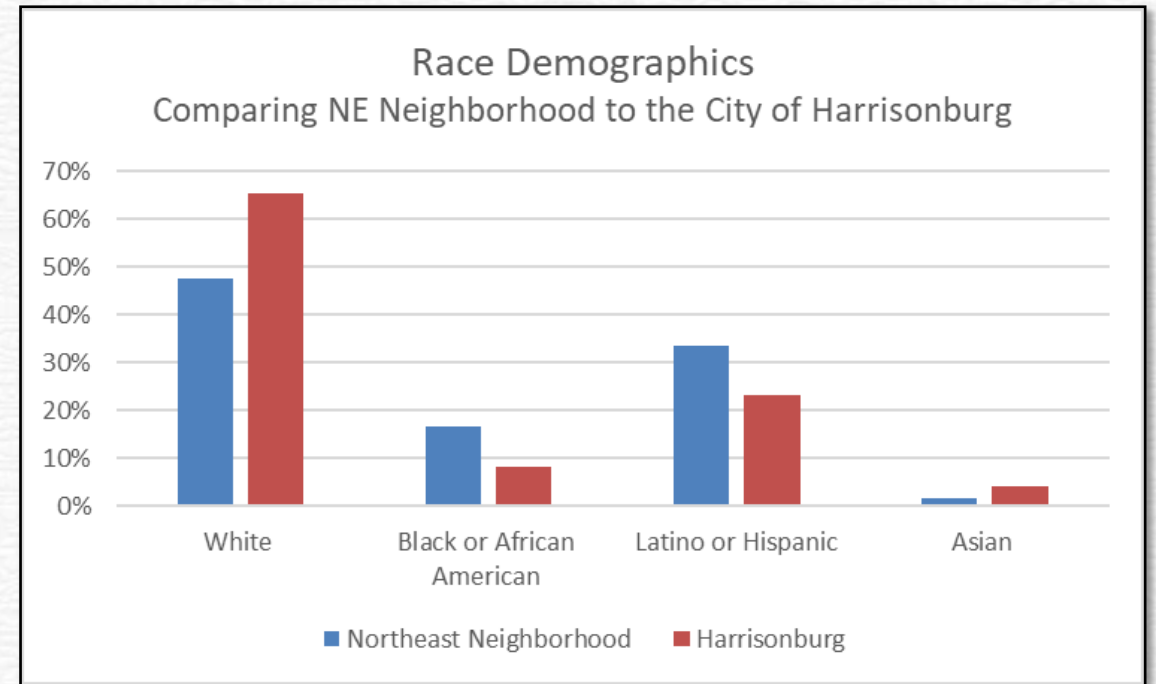
Review of Existing Conditions

- Demographic Data
- Housing Tenure
- Zoning Analysis
- Physical Character
- Transportation Network

Demographic Data

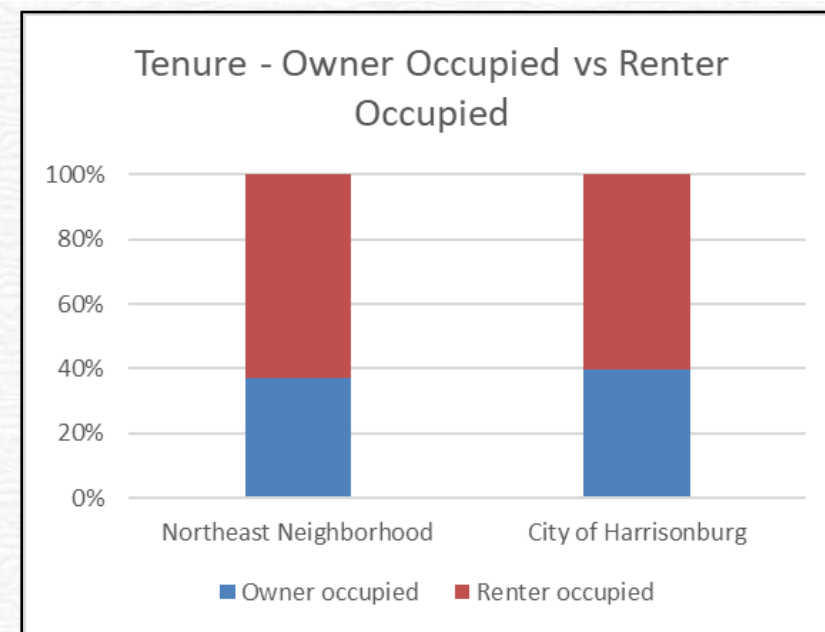
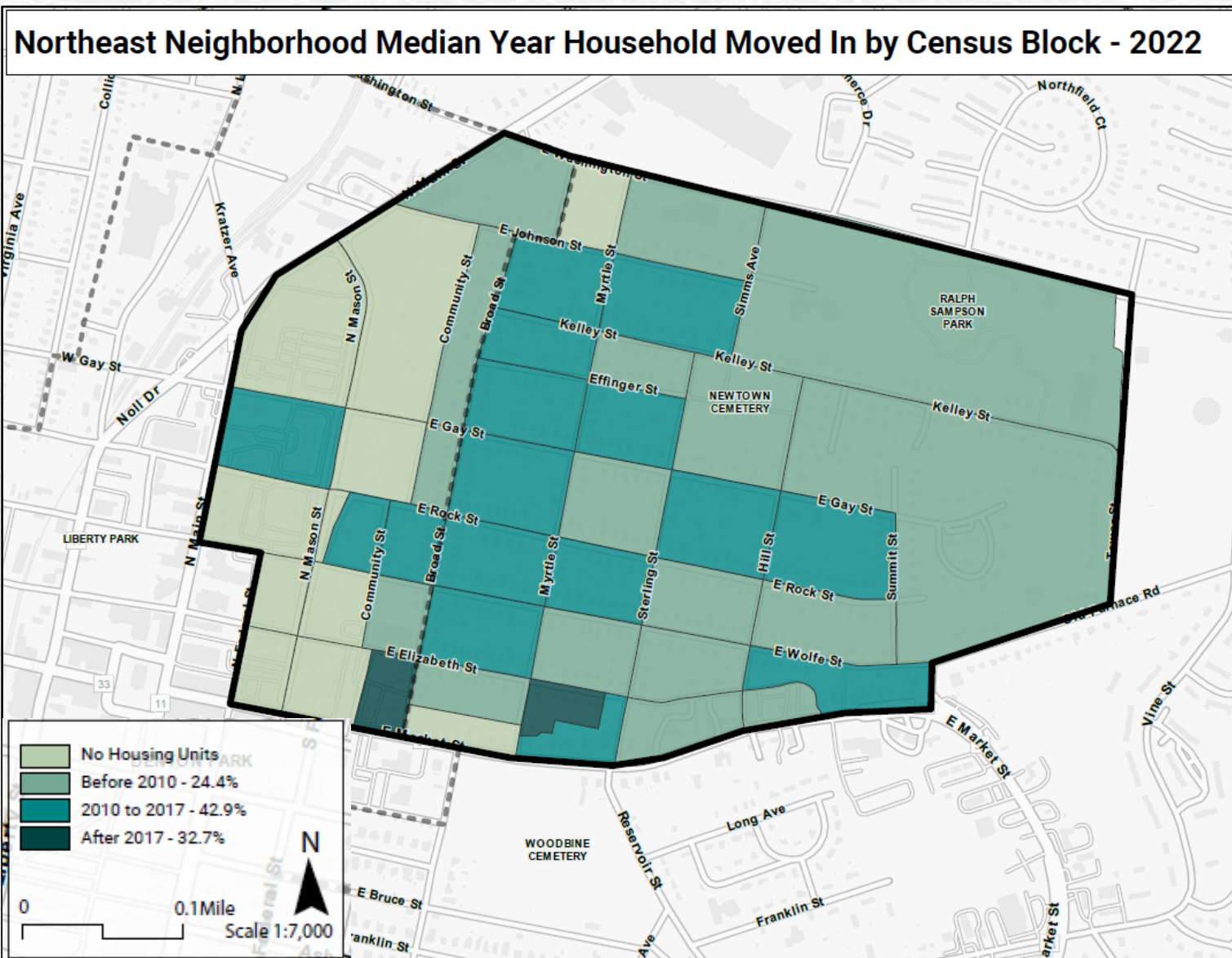


- Neighborhood has a **higher percentage of Black and Hispanic/Latino residents** than Harrisonburg overall.
- **Largest age group is 30-34**, with a balanced gender mix, indicating a **strong young adult presence**.
- Significant **0-9 age group** highlights a mix of **young adults and families**.



Housing Tenure

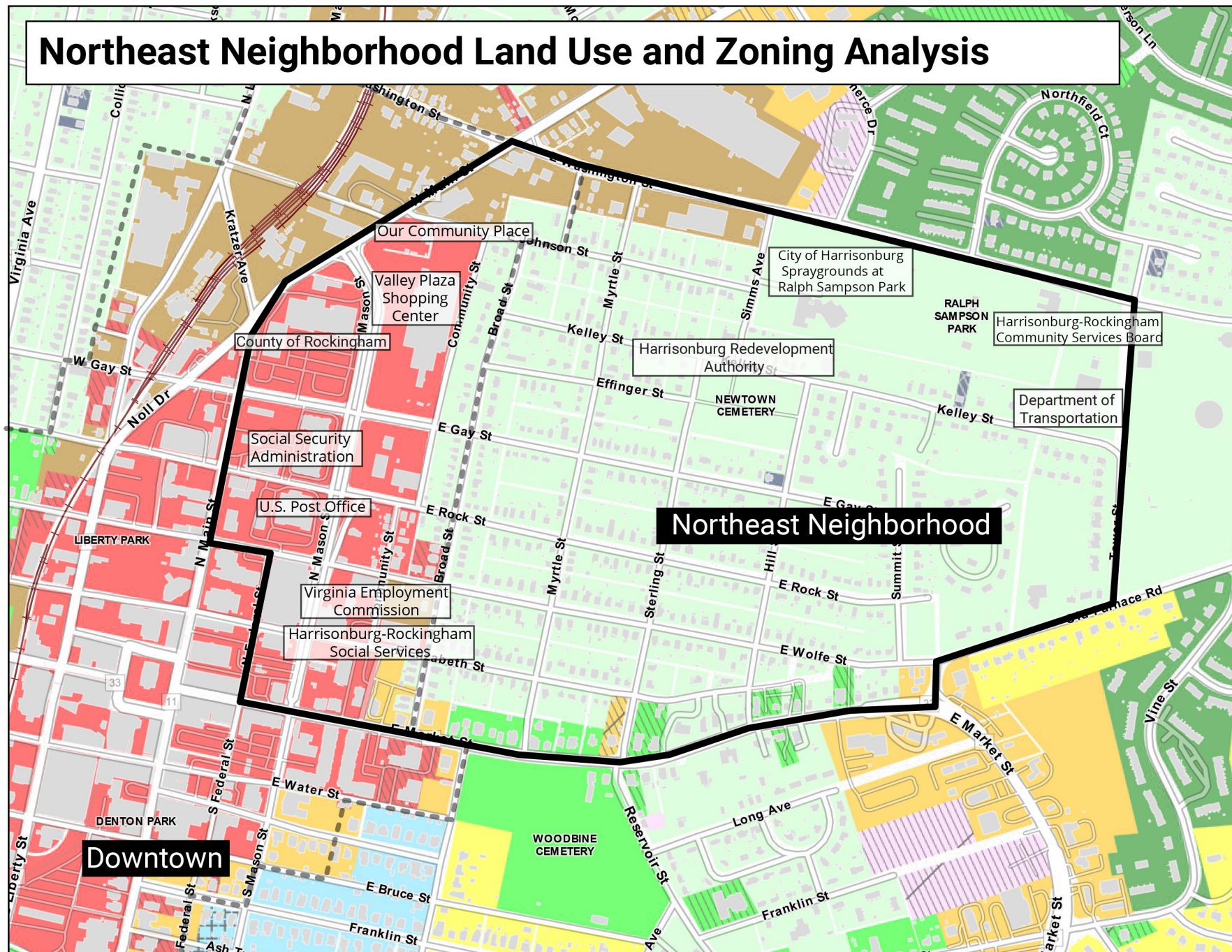
- Most of the Neighborhood has **long-term residents**, with many living there **for over 25 years** as well as new arrivals
- The **owner-to-renter ratio** mirrors Harrisonburg's.
- Housing mix includes single-family, multi-family, and rentals.



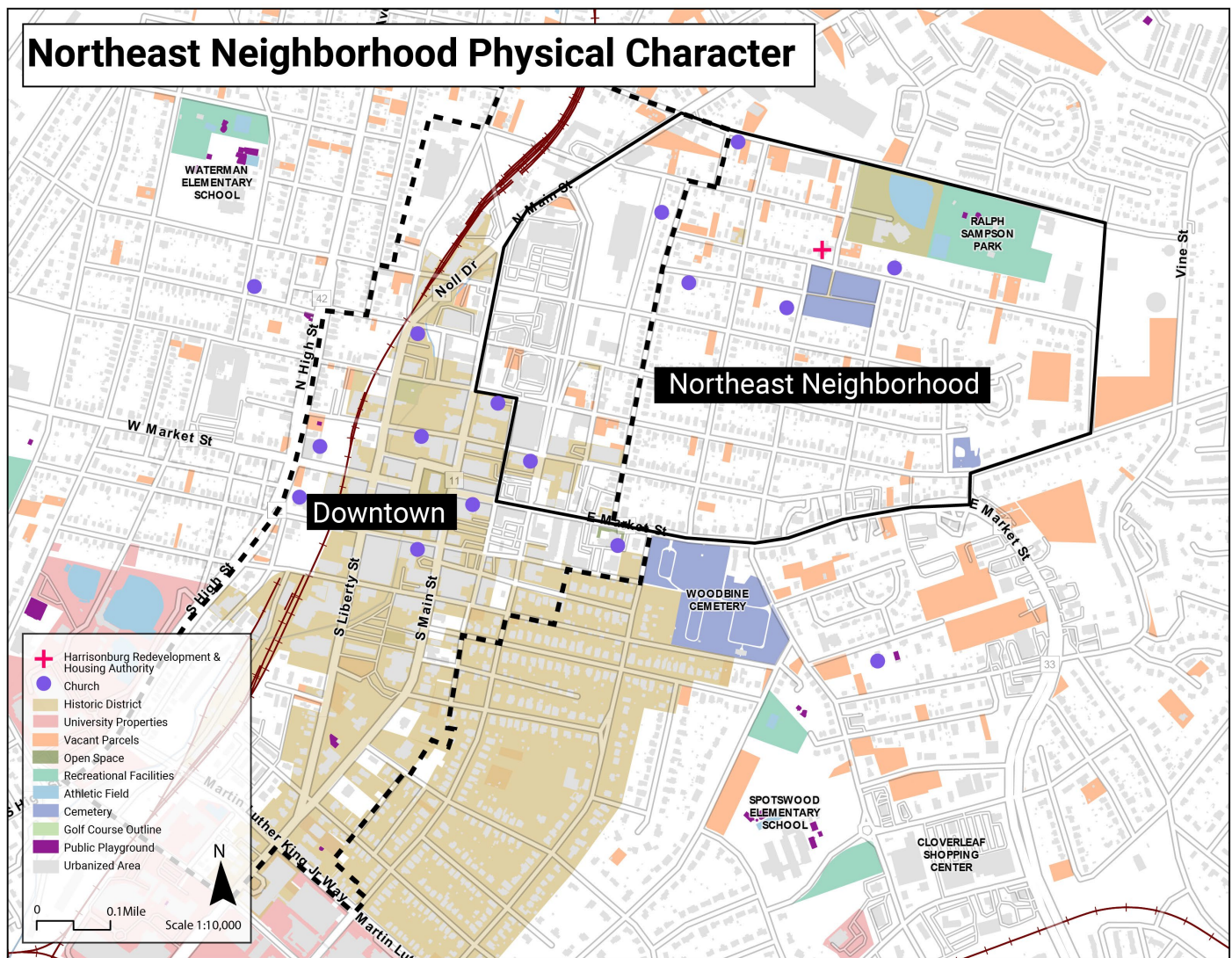
Zoning

One of the only areas that allows for a variety of housing types.

- B-1 Neighborhood Commercial District
- B-2 General Commercial District
- M-1 Light Industrial District
- R-1 Single-Family Residential District
- R-2 Low-Density Residential District
- R-2C Low-Density Residential District Overlay Institutional
- R-3 Multifamily Residential District
- R-4 High-Density Residential District
- R-5 High-Density Residential District
- R-6 Multifamily Residential District
- R-7 Multifamily Residential District
- R-8 Multifamily Residential District
- U-R Urban Residential



Physical Character

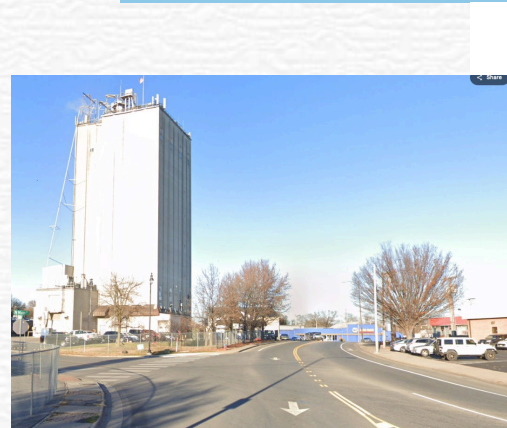


- There is a significant ratio of vacant parcels in the Northeast Neighborhood.
- The Historic District ends right at the Northeast Neighborhood border.

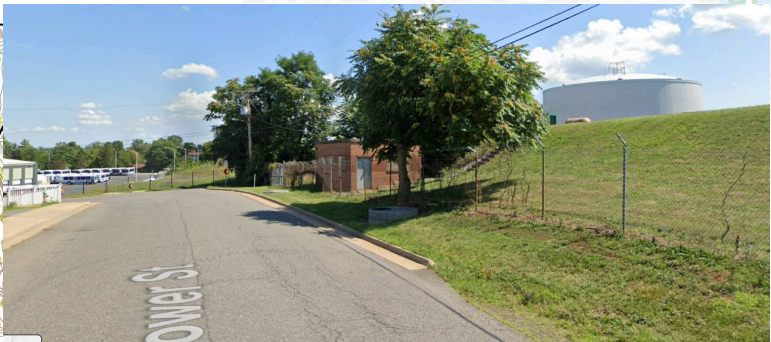
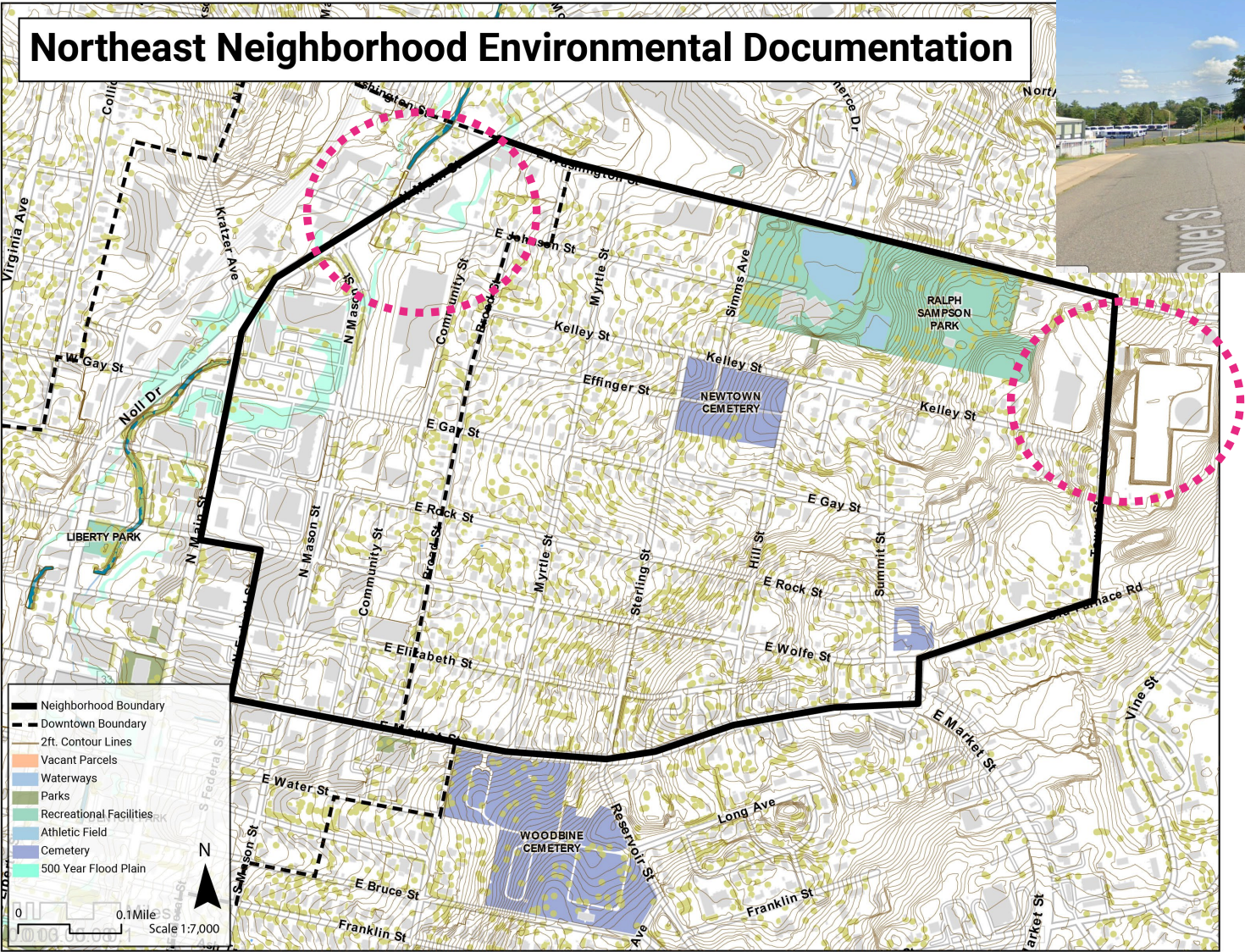
Vacancy Rate	
	Vacancy Rate
Study Area	3.5%
City of Harrisonburg	2.5%
Rockingham County	3.0%
State of Virginia	3.5%
United States	4.4%

Physical Character

Key elevation points on the neighborhood, visual landmarks

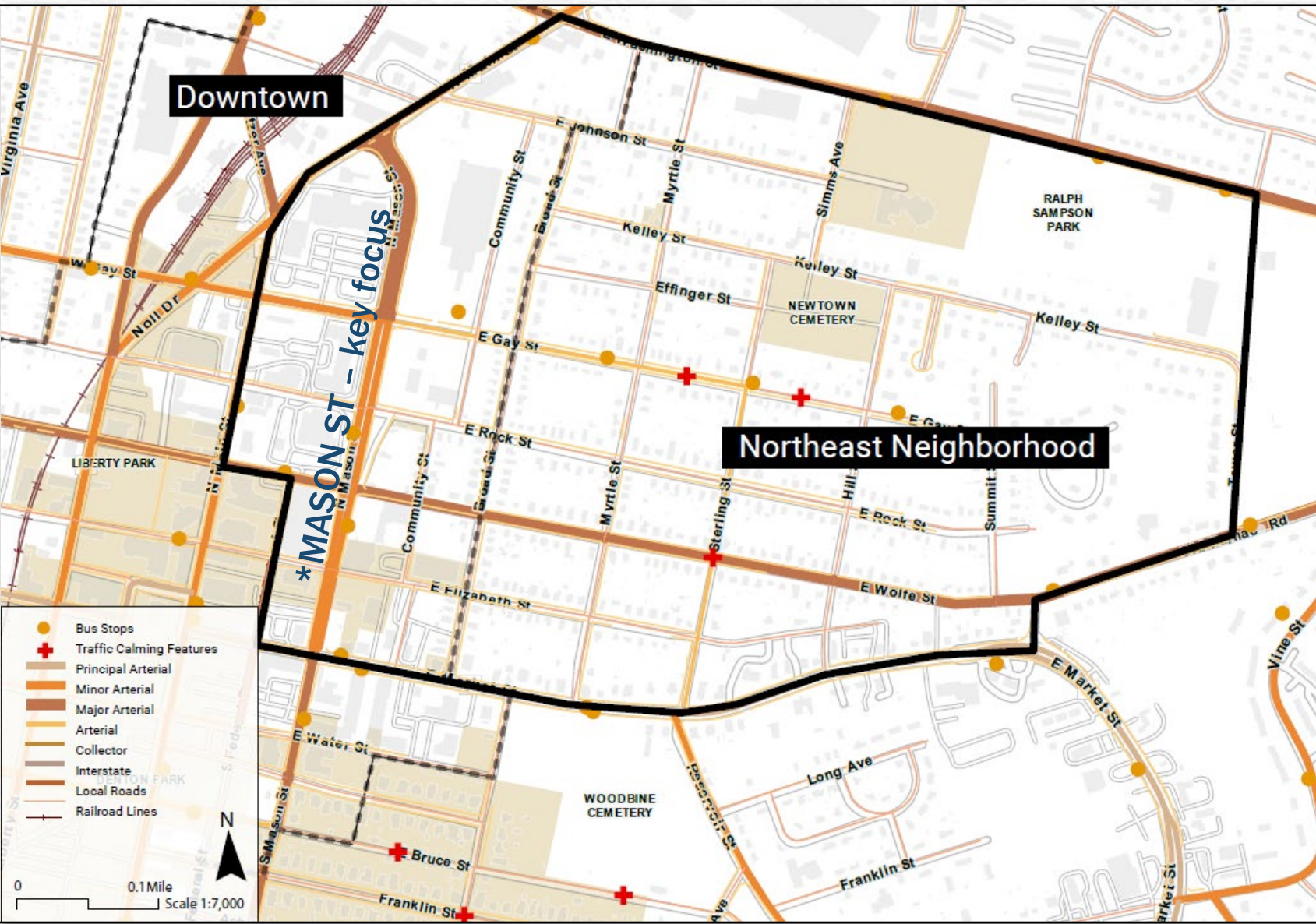


Feed Mill,
Roses



Transit center
Municipal
Complex
Water Tower

Transportation Network



- **Grid pattern** neighborhood with gaps in pedestrian infrastructure.
- City transportation plan **prioritizes multimodal options.**
- Limited public transit affects connectivity especially for residents with personal vehicles; improvements needed.
- **Safety concerns at key intersections** for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Mason St:** key connector to downtown, but also the “invisible wall.”

Emerging Priorities

Planning Themes



Emerging Priorities & Working Definitions

- 1. Reconnecting to Downtown:** Revitalize Northeast Neighborhood's image (physical and perceptual) and strengthen its link to downtown focusing on the Mason St. Corridor.
- 2. Safety and Security:** Improve transportation, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure, enhance street lighting and maintenance, address crime and housing insecurity, and foster trust between the community and law enforcement.
- 3. Opportunity for All Economic Mobility:** Expand housing access, support local businesses, reimagine Rose's, engage youth, and ensure residents benefit from growth without displacement.

Emerging Priorities & Working Definitions

4. Gathering and Belonging: Celebrate cultural heritage and diversity, acknowledge past harm, and build community connections through placemaking, public art, historic preservation, inclusive gathering spaces, and activities.

5. Healthy Environments: Promote environmental sustainability and community wellbeing through enhanced parks, recreation, urban water management, flood mitigation, ADA accessibility, and increased tree canopy.

Design Workshop Activity (60 Minutes)



- # LET'S THINK THROUGH AND MAP OUT IDEAS & STRATEGIES!



OVERVIEW OF THE DESIGN STATIONS

THEME BOARDS + MAPS

Priority 1: Reconnecting to Downtown

Revitalize Northeast Neighborhood's image to strengthen its link to downtown focusing on the Mason St. Corridor

Initial Strategies & Ideas

Re-envision Mason St



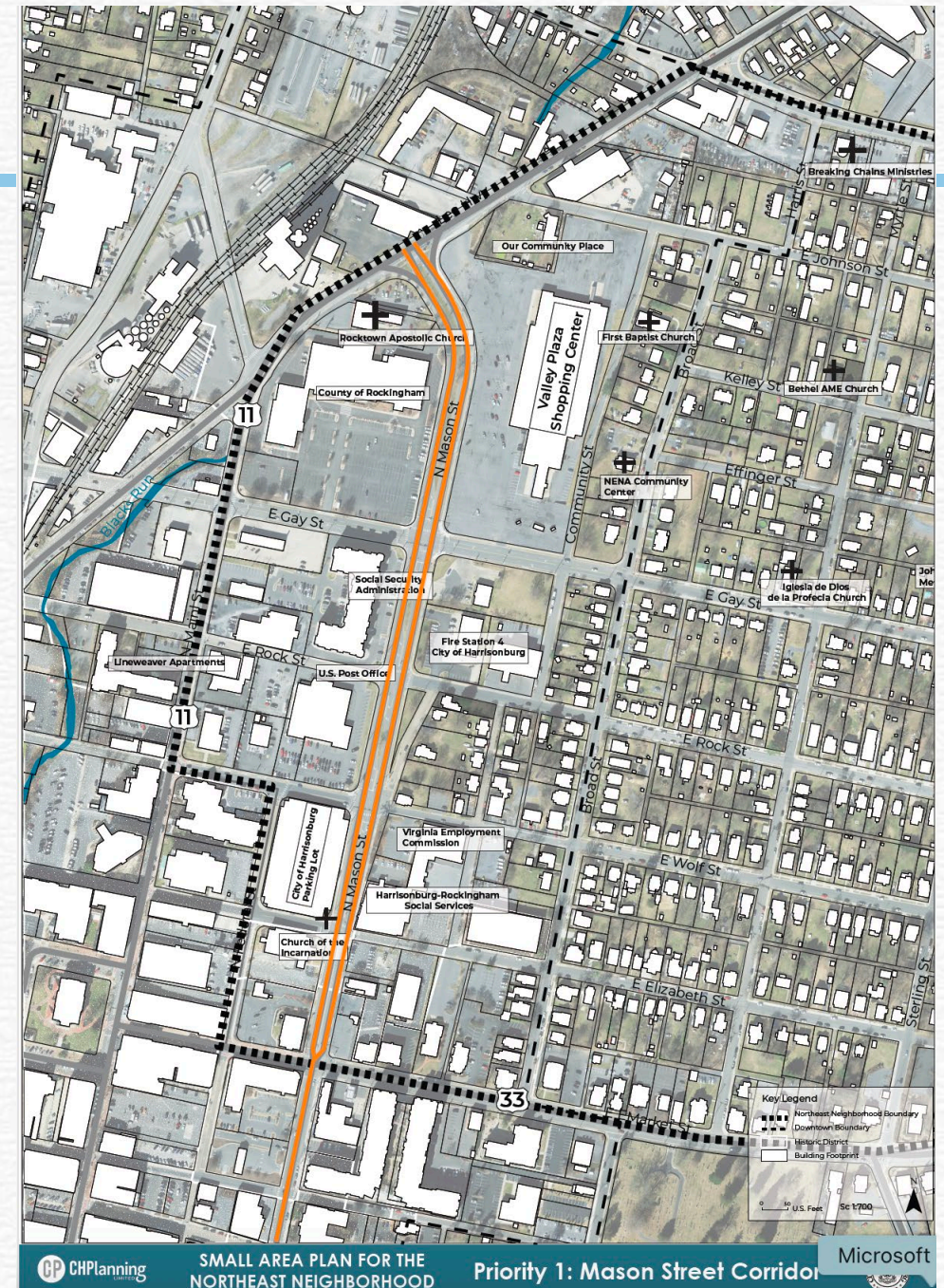
1. Mason St Crossings into downtown, better bike connectivity
2. Better/safer pedestrian and bike crossings at Mason st.
3. Improve image of Northeast
4. Remove the 'invisible wall'

Share your Ideas!

WHAT?
WHERE?
HOW?

AREA FOCUS ON MASON ST
CORRIDOR

Facilitator: Amy S.



Priority 2: Safety and Security

Improve transportation, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure, enhance street lighting and maintenance, address crime and housing insecurity, and foster trust between the community and law enforcement.

Initial Strategies & Ideas

Transportation

Safer Bike/ Pedestrian Infrastructure (Accessibility)

Crime

Unhoused

Maintenance & Enforcement



1. Safer streets with crosswalks



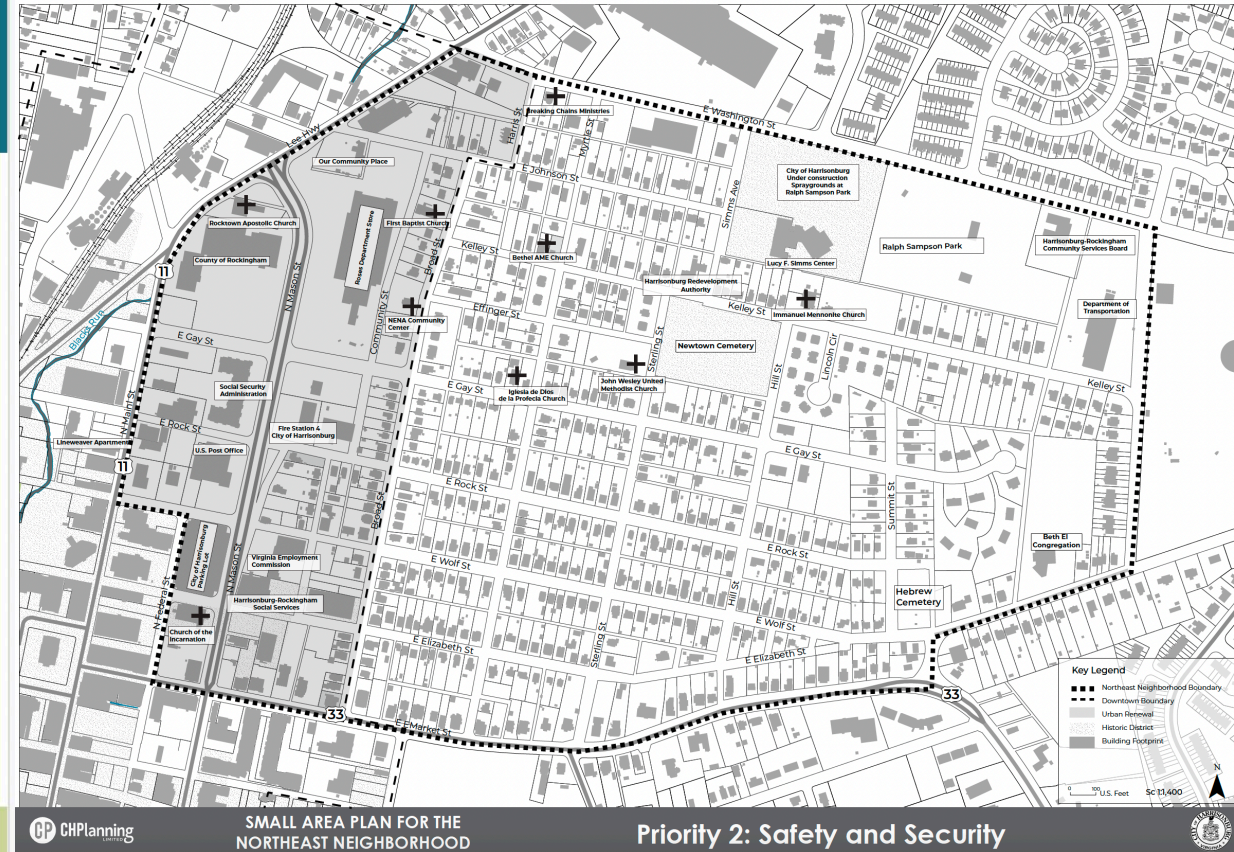
2. Improve sidewalks



3. 4-way stop signs

4. Improve street lighting
5. Cars parked in yards
6. Benches for bus stops
7. Surveillance cameras near Franklin Heights
8. Better relationship with police

Share your Ideas!



AREA FOCUS
OVERALL NEIGHBORHOOD

Facilitator: Michael P.

Priority 3: Opportunity for All Economic Mobility

Expand housing access, support local businesses, reimagine Rose's, engage youth, and ensure residents benefit from growth without displacement.

Initial Strategies & Ideas

Housing / Homeownership

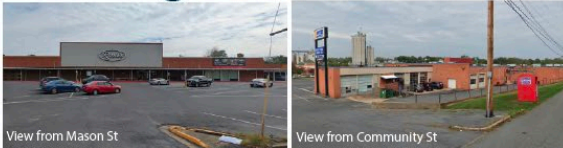
Support for Small Businesses

Wealth Building

Youth

Gentrification and Space

Re-imagine Roses



1. Affordable housing
2. Increased density through zoning changes
3. Infill development
4. Prevent current residents from displacement
5. Address gentrification
6. Homeowner Retention Support
7. Address HRHA housing, better care of their facilities and grounds
8. Information of grants for housing
9. Allow home business such as Convenience store
10. Local grocery/fresh market
11. Commercial businesses on Harris St.
12. More activities for youth and engagement
13. Manage the frats!
14. Celebrate diversity of race, age and perspectives

Share your Ideas!

Facilitator: Jakob Z.



AREA FOCUS
ROSES +
OVERALL NEIGHBORHOOD

Priority 5: Healthy Environments

Promote environmental sustainability and community wellbeing through enhanced parks, recreation, urban water management, flood mitigation, ADA accessibility, and increased tree canopy.

Initial Strategies & Ideas

Parks & Recreation

Urban Water Management

**Flooding projects, and
stormwater issues that
impact the cemetery**

ADA Accessibility



1. Street Trees



2. Community Gardens



3. Green Infrastructure
(Rain Gardens or
Bioretentions)



4. Recreational Spaces

Share your Ideas!



**AREA FOCUS
OVERALL NEIGHBORHOOD**

Facilitator: Paul H.

General Feedbacks and Thoughts

Add your feedbacks for the things that you enjoy or things you would like to see in the community.



Share your Ideas!

Facilitator: Andrea D.

Floaters:
Nyrma S. (*Spanish*)
Erin J.

Instructions for Design Workshop Stations

Each **station facilitator** will:

- **Guide the Discussion:** Review the priority theme, working definition, and the initial feedback we've received.
- **Encourage Participation:** Ask questions, prompt ideas, and ensure everyone has a chance to contribute.
- **Manage Activities:** Support participants with writing ideas on the board and marking locations on the map.
- We will rotate every **15 minutes** (*3 full rotations*).

We want to work with you today to develop solutions to the identified issues in your neighborhood. We want to gather as much feedback as possible!

Design Workshop Activity (60 Minutes)



BIO-BREAK
(15 minutes)

Report Back



Report Back

We want to hear **the key takeaways and recurring themes** raised from each group. Each facilitator will have **5 minutes** to share what they've heard in their group.

1. Reconnecting to Downtown
2. Safety and Security
3. Opportunity for All Economic Mobility
4. Gathering and Belonging
5. Healthy Environments
6. General Feedback

Next Steps



- Incorporate your feedback into the **Small Area Plan for the Northeast Neighborhood**, based on co-developed themes and strategies from today.
- A **mid-summer update** on the plan proposal will be shared, with opportunities for your input.
- Appreciate your continued support and engagement.
- For additional input, reach out to CBOs or Amy Snider from the City of Harrisonburg.

Closing Remarks





THANK YOU!

If you have any additional questions, please reach out to us at Amy.Snider@harrisonburgva.gov

