



CITY OF HARRISONBURG PUBLIC WORKS

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City tree planting to support Chesapeake Bay water quality goals

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The City of Harrisonburg is advancing its environmental stewardship efforts through the establishment of a reforestation project that will contribute to long-term water quality improvements and habitat restoration.

The Rockingham County property, originally acquired in 2020, is being transformed into a large-scale reforestation site managed by Harrisonburg Public Works. The initiative supports the City's commitment to meeting its 2028 pollution reduction requirements under the [Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\) Action Plan](#).

Over the next several years, approximately 100 acres of former farmland will be converted into forest through a phased planting approach. The site is expected to include roughly 30,000 trees by 2028 and will remain forested in perpetuity to provide lasting environmental benefits.



(Above) Over 10,000 trees were planted in the first planting phase. Eventually around 30,000 trees will be planted at the site.

Planting efforts are already underway. Shenandoah Habitats, the City's contractor, planted 10,705 trees this spring across 34.95 acres. Additional planting phases are planned, with nearly 40 more acres scheduled for spring 2027 and the remaining 23.5 acres to be completed in spring 2028. Ongoing maintenance will continue between planting cycles to ensure the health and success of the young forest.

"This project is a great way to reduce pollution flowing to the Chesapeake Bay while also expanding forest habitat in our region," Public Works Sustainability and Environmental Manager Keith Thomas said. "We are excited for this project to help the city meet its 2028 Chesapeake Bay pollution reduction targets."

Once complete, the tree farm will play a key role in reducing nutrient and sediment runoff, improving downstream water quality and enhancing local ecosystems.

Find more information about Harrisonburg's environmental initiatives at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/MS4-permit-program>.

Written or oral questions and comments may be submitted to Public Works Outreach and Communications Specialist Maya Waid by emailing maya.waid@harrisonburgva.gov or calling 540-434-5928.

*The **City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*

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