

Chapter 2 Vision & Goals

Introduction

The preparation of the Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for the City to explore and articulate its vision for the future – what kind of city it would like to be in the next twenty years and beyond. This vision guides the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for action that make up the policies of this plan. By implementing the goals, objectives and strategies, the City will move toward realizing its vision.

Vision Statement

The City of Harrisonburg presents its vision for the future as follows:

The City of Harrisonburg – where citizens are inspired to work together to create a great place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to work and to prosper.

What is such a place? It is a city of safe and beautiful neighborhoods, where neighbors socialize and residents can walk safely down the street to worship, to play in the park, to go to school or even to shop or work. These are quiet, peaceful neighborhoods, beautiful in their architecture and landscaping. They offer many housing choices so each citizen has an opportunity to live in a decent home that they can afford and that is an asset to the neighborhood.

The City of Harrisonburg will be a great place to learn. It will offer excellent schools for our children to learn all they can to reach their full potential. Our great universities will be truly integrated into city life as centers of learning and culture offering opportunities to residents to experience and participate in the arts and to continue their educations.

This will be a city proud of its heritage, both cultural and natural, saving the best of its historic buildings and areas and preserving cherished green spaces. In our ideal city of the future, the air and the water in our streams will be cleaner in 2020 than they are today.

This will also be a city of efficient and effective service delivery. Clean, plentiful water will come from the tap and wastes will be handled efficiently, at low cost and in an environmentally sound manner. Transportation systems will work for citizens by offering many ways for people to get from here to there, and not just by car. The city will explore new technologies to assure the best, least costly services that conserve resources. Citizens will contribute to keeping the city working well by conserving water and energy and minimizing or recycling wastes.

Economic vitality will allow all to work and to prosper. The City of Harrisonburg will retain its place as the economic hub of the region through expansion of business opportunities. Such expansion may be achieved not only by new commercial and industrial development, but also by the revitalization of older and historic economic areas. A lively, revitalized downtown will play a central role in civic life. The commercial areas at city gateways will provide a good impression and welcome visitors and residents alike.

How will this great city be achieved? ...by engaging all its citizens to work toward the vision, by tapping into their skills and experience, and by engendering community spirit and pride.

Goals for Achieving the Vision

The City of Harrisonburg sets the following goals for the next twenty years and beyond. These goals will inspire us to action - to devise the measures and policies necessary to make this city a great place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to work and to prosper.

- Goal 1. To improve the quality and compatibility of land use and development.
- Goal 2. To promote novel patterns of development like those developed early in the City's history – vital, well planned and well integrated mixed-housing and mixed-use urban areas of distinct character.
- Goal 3. To strengthen existing neighborhoods and promote the development of new neighborhoods that are quiet, safe, beautiful, walkable, enhance social interaction, and offer a balanced range of housing choices.
- Goal 4. To meet the current and future needs of residents for affordable housing.
- Goal 5. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of educational opportunities for all ages.
- Goal 6. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of arts and cultural opportunities for all ages.
- Goal 7. To celebrate the City's heritage and preserve and protect its historic resources as essential elements of the City's economic health, aesthetic character, and sense of place.
- Goal 8. To preserve and enhance the City's natural resources and encourage development that is compatible with nature.
- Goal 9. To meet the recreation needs of every citizen by providing comprehensive leisure opportunities and developing and maintaining a safe, well-distributed park and recreation system.
- Goal 10. To develop and maintain a safe and convenient transportation system serving all modes of travel, such as, automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.
- Goal 11. To support a vital city with community facilities, infrastructure and services, which are efficient, cost-effective and conserving of resources.
- Goal 12. To ensure the provision of utility services to residents, businesses and customers.
- Goal 13. To ensure the public safety and encourage the provision of excellent health services for all people.

- Goal 14. To retain and enhance the City's role as the economic and tourism hub of the region, offering a variety of jobs in those sectors that enhance the City's ability to expand its economic base.
- Goal 15. To enhance and revitalize existing residential and commercial areas.
- Goal 16. To coordinate and collaborate with Rockingham County, Rockingham Memorial Hospital, James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University, faith based organizations, and others to meet these goals.
- Goal 17. To engage all citizens to work collaboratively in planning, developing, and promoting the City as a great place.
- Goal 18. To keep this plan vital and useful by regularly reviewing its recommendations and the progress toward meeting them.