

Consider the FY2026-2027 through 2030-2031 Capital Improvement Program

Chair Baugh read the request and asked staff to review.

Mr. Fletcher said the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a multi-year presentation of planned capital projects of \$50,000 or greater with an appropriate financing plan to fund the projects. The CIP is prepared annually to facilitate planning and to set priorities among capital improvement needs over a subsequent five-year period. The CIP is designed to identify projects for all City departments, as well as for Harrisonburg City Public Schools, for which funding has already been committed or is being sought for within the five-year planning period.

Context & Analysis

Planning Commission's objective is to review and evaluate the CIP and, once the document is in an acceptable format, recommend the document for approval to City Council. The CIP is not a budget and inclusion of projects in the document does not guarantee that such projects will be funded by the City or by any external sources in the year presented or at the level proposed. The actual commitment of funds by the City for any capital item comes with the approval of the annual budget for each fiscal year. However, the CIP serves as an important planning tool for formulating the capital portion of the annual budget. As can be observed by reviewing previous CIP documents, the CIP is not a static plan. It is a part of annual planning and programming, where after each passing year, another year is added to the planning period to maintain the five-year forecast. Each year, costs, needs, and revenue sources are reevaluated.

Staff provided Planning Commission with the completed draft CIP at the December 10, 2025, Regular Meeting. The next day, the draft was posted to the CIP website at: <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/cip>. At the meeting, staff requested Commissioners submit comments and questions to staff prior to the official Planning Commission review so that responses could be prepared and provided in advance of the January 14, 2026, Meeting. The questions and responses are attached herein. As part of one of the submitted questions (associated with the Transfer Center project, CIP document page 145), a request was made to receive a copy of the 2022 Harrisonburg Multimodal Transit Center Feasibility Study. A copy of the study is included within the packet.

As explained last month, something that is different in the proposed CIP as compared to previous years is that there is no Sanitation Fund section. As explained in the Introduction of the CIP, “[d]uring this year’s review, the CIP Review Committee decided to eliminate the lone project that was customarily included in the Sanitation Fund—that being the City Landfill Closure & Monitoring project. The project was removed because the financial obligations associated with the

landfill monitoring program are routine and known obligations that are, and must be, accounted for in the annual budget. Because this project was removed, there is no Sanitation Fund section in the CIP document. Revenue projections associated with that fund, however, are still included in the Appendices.”

Mr. Fletcher presented charts and graphs illustrating Total CIP Request by Fund, Total CIP Request by Department, CIP Yearly Totals, and Total Funds Needed vs. Total Funds Available by Year.

Chair Baugh asked if there any questions for staff.

Commissioner Jezior said I had asked about the renovations [of City Hall and City Municipal Building]. I think the address in there is not for City Hall it was down Main Street. When I looked it up it was a completely different location.

Mr. Fletcher said what address is it? That could be a clerical error that we could get corrected.

Commissioner Jezior said its on page 19.

Mr. Fletcher said 345 South Main Street is the address of the Municipal Building so that is why it still captures 345 [South Main Street]. It will be determined at a later date exactly what the address will be. Again, this is just going to be one large complex. There has been some early discussions about what the new address would be, but it has not been formalized yet.

Councilmember Dent said as to the point about the cost note that the source for funding will be a bond. As in we issue a bond and it is debt, so it does not come out of the general fund or any such.

Commissioner Kettler said I am curious what that process looks like. You showed the graph showing the needs versus the actual funding for it as you stated there is quite a gap. What does that process look like whittling down a bunch of priority two items into what are we actually pay for this year?

Mr. Fletcher said I will be honest I am not sure I could accurately describe exactly what that process is. That is where the rubber meets the road situation. A lot of decisions that I am not part of. City Manager’s Office, City Council members those are the folks that are really deciding in every given year what money is going to be allotted for what projects. The department directors are very passionate about the projects that they think are needed for the City and they will make those pitches in the budget presentation which we are all working on right now. It is a great question and I cannot really answer the process but there is a lot of folks that are passionate about how their project should be provided.

Councilmember Dent said in short it is competing priorities. Even shorter, it is the budget. What actually makes it into the budget by priorities and importance and necessities. Tough decisions sometimes but hashed out among the departments as I understand.

Mr. Fletcher said it is but there is a community approach to it as well because if there are folks in the community that are really desiring a particular project there is nothing better than being engaged with your local government and show up to these meetings. Show up to City Council and say I read in this document, the CIP, about what this project is, and I really like this project, and I want you to prioritize that. I want you to try to find ways to make it financially feasible for us to be able to do it. That is definitely a way to go about it.

Chair Baugh said a fairly accurate and straight forward answer to your question is it is not the only reason we pay the City Manager the big bucks, but it is pretty close. That is really where all that stuff goes because here is a very good description of what it looks like on the front end the various departments put in their requests. Virtually every year I ask the City Manager on the first pass on the requested expenditures relative the anticipated funds there was a huge discrepancy. Really, the City Manager's Office takes the lead of discussing things with the various department heads. Council members in different years and depending on what projects are out there may or may not be involved at all. To a large extent unless Council members are proactive, some are more than others, the Council side of it is a lot of time the Council members see the night of the City Manager's budget presentation.

Councilmember Dent said not anymore. What our now City Manger Ande Banks has initiated is a wonderful process where we have a one-on-three or -four presentation to each of us where we get to say "well I do not know about that or move that up." Have our comments in a private meeting which for the most part we are saying I like what you are doing. There might be some cases where we have stronger priorities like where is the solar? Or whatever we might say. We are getting a good, advanced coaching once they have the draft budget prepared and an opportunity to have some comments and priorities shifted if we need too. That is a really excellent innovation that our current City Manager Ande Banks has done.

Chair Baugh said when Council gets it, it is balanced. You may like it or you may not like it and there may be a thing or two patches that some years rather than others. The lines on the graph level out.

Councilmember Dent said we are required by Virginia Law to pass a balanced budget every year. We cannot go into debt and print money like the Federal Government can. I mean we go into debt in the sense of issue a bond for construction like we did for the high school and so on. The budget itself is balanced including the payments on the debts. I will also confess that I was the bad kid

who did not do my homework over the holidays. Like a good bad kid student I was relying on the people who did their homework. I am looking at your questions and just flagging a few comments that I will just sort of say here for the first time, Fire Station 4, yes we need it. That has been part of the plan. In fact the plan was to do Fire Station 4 first because Fire Station 5 was just perpetually in the future until we got a big chunk of ARPA funding so we said let us build that one first and once that is in place go back and renovate or tear down and rebuild a completely more modern configuration of one story Fire Station 4. That is how that kind of came. I was a little surprised by Fire Station 2. It seems like it is coming awfully back-to-back. I know I should know this but where is Fire Station 2, is that the one on Lucy Drive?

Mr. Fletcher said no ma'am it is the one on Pleasant Valley Road.

Councilmember Dent said I did not realize that was so much in the queue. The Municipal Building I am thrilled about because that is such a beautiful building that has been sitting idle and we have barely keeping it maintained with just bare bones and gutted. It needs to be renovated. An interesting aside I am pretty sure we are moving ahead with the solar panels on Turner Pavillion with the funding I hope is in place from some block grant that we got for solar. That is planned to be the ground mount for the old Municipal Building. We learned at the City Council retreat, is a public meeting but I do not think there are public minutes on it, since it will be on all one complex we are not going to call that the Municipal Building and this is City Hall. It will be called City Hall North and South or some such. The atrium in between will be reconfigured to be more of a corridor. The voting moved down to the basement so that it is impeding on the corridor. Interesting comment about Water Street, nice idea to have it pedestrian only. Maybe someday we will see. This is kind of a touchy subject that I tend to gripe about the land for the new school. The alternative "None" is not necessarily the case. They say four elementary schools are above capacity, what about the other two? First line of defense is redistricting and second alternative that I at least have proposed and discussed is expand the existing schools. That is all to be hashed out at some length I am sure between City Council and the School Board. Solar at Rockingham High School, so glad that is happening. The Transfer Center report was very fascinating to go through; how these were the topped scored ones and all of them were eliminated but one because of other engagements. I do not know if we wanted to talk about that, but I looked through the potential sites and then the scoring and then walking through each one. The one site they have chosen is what...in a way it is a shame we lose the Roses current property because it is so central to downtown but where exactly is the Myers property, on East Market Street?

Mr. Fletcher said that is what that specific study had evaluated. They were looking at specific sites and evaluating what opportunities were there and what is always the case with anytime you build schools or new buildings for any kind of department is that you have to be able to buy a property that is available for sale that the property owners are wanting to sell to you. You do not always get the perfect situation.

Councilmember Dent said there were a couple that the City already owns. They were just sort of not...one is on Neff Avenue that is way out, we do not want it there. I was looking at the scores and just sort of walked down the top scoring until the one that is still viable was kind of being pursued at the moment. This also kind of raises my City Council flag if this is already publicly known that this property is being pursued those are the sorts of things we usually do in closed session.

Mr. Fletcher said again this was not a feasibility study evaluating potential parcels where something could be done. If you want more feedback, I can speak with the department director at Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT), Gerald Gatobu. I know that we are still evaluating opportunities throughout the City.

Councilmember Dent said there are a whole bunch more that are still in the queue. I was just kind of surprised to see that so publicly revealed but it is not about the actual contracting stuff that would be closed session.

Chair Baugh said I will just circle back to the school situation. I cannot remember exactly when it was, but something tells me that if we go back ten years we are still inside of the schools even telling us what to put in the CIP. We struggled to even get that in there. Again, it is, as far as a place holder, it is really letting us know what may be coming down the pipe. It has a wishlist, as a lot of stuff. I think when you really get down to it, the real reason you have the CIP, that the legislature makes us have a CIP, is not really for Harrisonburg. It is a useful exercise, and I think staff does a very good job of making the most of it, but in many respects what the whole process is for smaller jurisdictions that have a tendency not to plan at all until something hits them in the face. To make everybody go through these exercises not so much that they are great predictors of what you are going to end up with. Other than in the most general sense. At some points there will be a fifth Fire Station.

Vice Chair Porter said I just want to amplify something that Commissioner Jezior also had a question about which is the phase 2 of the Bluestone Trail as it relates to its proximity to the Rocktown High School. This is more commentary than anything and I look at all of the projects in here and I see a lot of worthy projects but when I think about matters that relate to safety particularly to students' safety. The fact there is currently not a decent walking path for students leaving Rocktown High School I think would be a significant concern of the City. Whether that be putting in some additional sidewalks down South Main [Street] or Route 11. Or completing this second phase to give us another alternative for folks to be able to bike and walk leaving the high school. That just seems like something to me that would be of significant concern before we have a tragedy of some kind. Pray to God that we never have anything remotely like it. I do see students that are walking up and down that street occasionally that appear to be coming from the high school

and I do not know that they are necessarily traversing in the most...they are doing what they can with what they have available to them. I would express that concern. I would also say that I would like to see a prioritization of sidewalks in several parts of the community that are not currently existing. I also look at the area around the Navigation Center where you have a large population of people that congregate there on a daily basis that most of them do not have transportation. Despite the bus shelter there a lot of them still choose to walk and most of them are having to walk on the front edge or the shoulder. Another area where I would be concerned about safety. That is just more of my personal commentary.

Mr. Fletcher said I can speak to the last one which is that there is a forthcoming project for sidewalks along North Main Street that will take you from basically around where the Navigation Center is northbound to the intersection of Mount Clinton Pike and Vine Street. Thank, I am trying to recall the South Main Street area... I know that we have plans for lane separations with a median along the section of South Main Street from the Stone Spring [Road]/Erickson Avenue intersection southbound to a particular distance.

Ms. Dang said to Mosby [Road]. There is one project that goes to Mosby [Road] and then there is another project further out that is Mosby [Road] to the interchange.

Mr. Fletcher said maybe not for this group but maybe for our folks who are listening at home, we have a robust pedestrian bicycle improvement plan. Our staff down at Public Works does a great job acknowledging where it is needed, documenting where it is needed, and applying for grants when appropriate. I am on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) committee and there are times that sidewalk construction is proposed. Again, there are many different needs even during the CDBG process. All points well taken and already noted and needed.

Vice Chair Porter said the land for the phase 2, is that currently in use for anything? Would you know that was the area that is going to be designated for the path.

Mr. Fletcher said for the extension of Bluestone Trail? Aside from the Public Utilities property, much of it is private property. For folks who are not familiar with that area, we have to traverse the railroad track and Blacks Run. Those are significant expenses for that. We have already crossed Blacks Run once in Purcell Park with the [Bluestone] Trail but those are significant expenses that we will have to deal with in the future for sure.

Vice Chair Porter said the Bluestone Trail is extremely well constructed. I have ridden my bike on it a few times as far as it goes. I just did not know if there was another option where we could have a gravel path or something that is maintained but not fully completed to this level in a sooner than later type of circumstance. I really do sincerely believe that there is a need for this going to Rocktown High School.

Commissioner Kettler said I absolutely agree with that. Part of what I was asking about potential siting for a new elementary school is exactly that. You build the high school so far from residential areas with no bike path access reasonably. Even if you build that bike path access later it is a whole lot farther for anyone to actually get there using that method. Even if you build it and spend all the money getting there is a lot harder than I being integrated in a more residential area. The siting, if you get that right, you can solve a lot of the other problems before they even exist.

Vice Chair Porter said ironically would it be passing the property that we just saw for consideration this evening? [Referring to 2600 and 2580 South Main Street.]

Ms. Dang said there is a little teeny tiny corner at the very end there. During this discussion about the rezoning, while that was not part of the rezoning, our colleagues at Public Works did have a conversation with the Stones. They will have more conversations about that.

Mr. Fletcher said any time any property is up for some type of conversation that is our responsibility. We are looking at these plans. We are understanding these plans and we are having these conversations like oh, this is actually exactly where we want the trail to go through would you consider building it for us? No. Okay would you consider dedicating an easement? Okay, great. These are significant expenses that the general public may not think about because the City has to buy land from people to make these improvements and then make the improvements. Any time these things are coming up we are having those conversations. We had that conversation with the Stones.

Ms. Dang said I will follow up with an email to you all to send you the web link. For the public there is a webpage that Public Works maintains, and it has links to Transportation projects and studies and plans and other initiatives they have. Transportation projects really lays out really well the projects over the next few years. There are projects anticipated in 2026, 2027 and so on. That webpage is harrisonburgva.gov/transportation-planning.

Mr. Fletcher said we also participate in Smart Scale. It mainly comes out of the Department of Public Works, and some of our staff participated in that effort, that we applied for these grants and are applying for money through the state. That particular pot of money is not even grants, it is just going to the highest rated scored project. We really have to figure out ways to make it a higher scoring project. We are competing all up and down the Staunton District. We have been successful with some projects and others that were in the CIP have not been successful.

Councilmember Dent said to that point about the Smart Scale, there have been some developments in the Commonwealth Transportation Board where they were really trying to cut back on the number of projects and emphasize highways and intersections and we were saying hello we are a

city we need the safety on Main Street where the high school is. Promoting the bike-ped traffic in the City kinds of projects that we do and have been really successful at getting funding for.

Commissioner Kettler said to be clear I am not planning on making any kind of recommended change but if we were to recommend some kind of change to the proposed CIP what kind of things might that be? Just transferring between priority two and three? Any other changes?

Mr. Fletcher said yeah it is more than that. You can suggest changes in priority if you think the justifications are incorrect you can do that too. If there are specific projects that you think more detail needs to be provided or maybe even changes to scope. It depends on what that scope is. We are open to any thoughts.

Commissioner Kettler said the only projects that I saw of like not really a whole lot of specificity was about classroom renovations. On that level I do not know how much real specificity I would be looking for.

Mr. Fletcher said we work with the schools. We kind of just take what they give us. We are not digging into their projects at the same level that we do on the City operations side. We are meeting with them. We meet with Shawn Printz and this more or less mimics what they have already had approved at the schoolboard.

Councilmember Dent said come to think of it I vaguely remembering last year or whatever when I brought that same concern saying there are no alternatives and thinking yes there are and wanting to have that CIP page changed accordingly. Can we do that?

Mr. Fletcher said there was a different explanation in the alternatives last year and in fact I questioned it myself and it was decided that what ended up in the CIP is what would be provided.

Chair Baugh said I was just going to throw out a couple of things that I have known to have come up over the years, one is it was not a yay or nay. The fact that the pages now include a reference to how it fits in with the Comprehensive Plan was something that came from Planning Commission that sort of said hey let us recommend to Council that. Not that we are not going to vote for this one, we set it up for the future at that stage when the departments are doing this to go ahead and include that. That is an example of something that has come out of this. The other one that comes to mind, if there was a particular project that sort of caught the attention of a few of the Planning Commission members and we spent a lot of time talking about it, I think we ultimately decided that... I do not think it was a majority that wanted to so far as recommending change to the CIP... That project still to this day has never been done. It was one of the ones where the reason for not doing it was not because it was bad idea. The answer to the question really was not to say we want to make it a higher priority, it is just so difficult and expensive and so on and so forth. It really is

and has been sufficient to say even at this level of yeah, we know this is going to come up at some point and I think it is one of those things as we have experienced... because you do not know that a funding opportunity will not come up in the next five years, you sort of push it out there and it sort of stays there for forever and ever. Maybe that is actually for these purposes it is okay.

Councilmember Dent said the classic example of that is Fire Station 5.

Chair Baugh said there are people who will tell you that was promised forty years before.

Mr. Fletcher said Fire Station 5 was in the CIP for many years. Erickson Avenue project was in the CIP for many years. When the opportunity is there, you take it.

Commissioner Kettler said the only thing that I am sort of conflicted about is not the Transit Center but the park and ride aspect of it. I think the Transit Center feasibility study goes into some depth as to why it would be beneficial. It also shows that it is both beneficial that the Center be close to I-81 and close to downtown. It is helpful to be in a place where people can get to it but it also helpful for it to have a ton of parking. Which seems like a bunch of criteria which do not work together at all. It is logical that those are all-important but it is confusing because a lot of them are contradictory. For inner city transportation, if someone wants to take the bus to get somewhere up and down the Valley or east to west, that is great. Parking there to get to a JMU game, I am less convinced by that. Those are my main thoughts about the park and ride.

Commissioner Alsindi said Mr. Fletcher, how far or close should the CIP be relevant and or a translation or demonstration of the Comprehensive Plan? It is just a question for me to always understand. My feeling is that hopefully I am wrong and I hope it is not insulting. Generally, I am asking this question. Would it be correct to say that they are mutually exclusive events, but they should not be so? When I look at the CIP, I look at it in the light of the Comprehensive Plan. When we say negotiate and when we say pressing issues and we say important and significant, to what? What is the benchmark? To me as far as I understand, correct me if I am wrong, the benchmark should be the north star, correct?

Mr. Fletcher said the Comprehensive Plan is your vision. Sometimes it can be like the pie in the sky desire of where we want to be. What Commissioner Baugh was pointing out about the thing we added to the project sheets to connect back to the Comprehensive Plan is what really shows the relevancy between the two because they really should be reflective of each other. If there is something that we have learned as staff in observing our operations and the services we are providing to the City whether it be needs for more sidewalks or a new street in a certain location the Comprehensive Plan really needs to reflect some of these things that we are planning and the public knows about it and that they can reflect and state their piece on it as well when we get to those stages.

Councilmember Dent said these codes under the goals and objective, those are what ties back to the Comprehensive Plan section?

Mr. Fletcher said yes. As I explained last month of how to read the sheets, when you look on the right-hand side it says goals and objectives. G14 that is goal 14 of the Comprehensive Plan and then some of them have objectives where it is like 12.1 and 12.2 you do then have to have the separate document. You have to have the Comprehensive Plan. You need to read that statement and then understand what those are. We go through that practice every year. We provide them with the goals and objectives and the department directors are evaluating “oh yeah, this particular project actually speaks to this objective in the Comprehensive Plan.”

Councilmember Dent said so that is what ties it together.

Commissioner Alsindi said it is this subjective feeling that I do not feel it is organically linked. Even for the cases that I have gone through that is one of my interest. I do not see the expression of Comprehensive Plan repeats itself as a tool whenever the CIP is under question or being discussed. I need to feel as an average citizen, I need to feel that there is a linear progress in the Comprehensive Plan in terms of time. This CIP for this year should take you from X1 to X2 if not linear and even exponentially. It should make that change. When we say vision, with all due respect, sometimes vision is seen as a synonym for a word called dream and that is not true. I see Comprehensive Plan is a more detailed translation for a vision and a vision is something that should be obtained, it is not a dream. That is why I would hope if I have to be able to do something pull up that and research how many CIPs really lead to dramatic changes in the Comprehensive Plan. I want to see Harrisonburg in the next ten or fifteen years become this different from this based on rational thinking, as much a possible.

Mr. Fletcher said I am actually almost thinking of it in the reverse, how much is the Comprehensive Plan reflecting in the CIP?

Commissioner Alsindi said that is why it is a living document. It should be evaluated every now and then.

Mr. Fletcher said if you have suggestions to help us build the bridge of whatever might be missing please call me and we can set up a time to talk.

Vice Chair Porter said I have a quick question that is the forerunner for some commentary but in terms of prioritization, you had listed off the first time you spoke to us about this priority in the last meeting. We saw the breakdown of what is priority one and priority two in raw numbers; could you run that by one more time?

Mr. Fletcher said I think there is only one or two priority ones.

Vice Chair Porter said I am asking the question more for setting up what I am about to say next but how many priority twos do we have?

Mr. Fletcher said you got me on that I do not know it off the top of my head. I would have to count them up. I can get you that answer quite quickly.

Vice Chair Porter said I would not have asked you that question. I felt like the last time you had spoken to us about those you quoted those numbers.

Mr. Fletcher said they are not in my mind at the moment.

Vice Chair Porter said I guess the point of all of that setup which did not land quite the way I was hoping it would. The fact is there is a lot of priority two here. As someone who is thinking about from both the community perspective, from Council's perspective and anybody who has to go through and make these budgetary decisions, it does not feel to me like there is enough differentiation within those priorities. I realize how they stack up over time as well, but it just seems to me...and again I do not know if this is a mandated process in terms of how the State requires it to be done. To me I would like to see more prioritization gradients within that to be able to give us a better tool to be able to evaluate those things. The difference between highly desirable and desirable, that is in the eye of the beholder, but also the fact is that if you were trying to make these decisions and obviously it is going to lend to some debate. It would be nice to have a little bit more of a gradation in terms of prioritization. Everything is kind of similar priority it really is not even useful.

Mr. Fletcher said I probably would not have explained it the way you did but everyone hears words like scope creep it is sort of like priority creep in a way with these projects because everyone believes in those projects when they are presenting them to the committee. We as a committee are deciding priority two, priority three. There are ones I can think of that went up and went down. Often times they are going up in priority and then they do not go back down.

Vice Chair Porter said how many priority fours and fives do not make it.

Mr. Fletcher said we do not even review them. We know they are there. The fours and fives have really fallen off over the years as to whether or not they even become a project that is even discussed with the committee. The system that we use was created by our IT Department. We did not buy any particular software. A lot of our departments use it as a budgeting tool so that they

have them in there. There are projects that we have removed over the years that maybe would have become part of a program rather than a project that might have been prioritized differently. If you have been here long enough you would be able to look at the CIP and realize we have removed a lot more projects because they have been routine. They are maintenance. They are on a cycle that we know of and they have to be paid for.

Vice Chair Porter said I think all the more reason to try to differentiate at least priority two. It just seems like there is just a glut of projects and I have a hard time understanding the relative deliberation that got us to this point without a little bit more differentiation.

Chair Baugh said Council is asking us to make a recommendation on this.

Vice Chair Porter said I would make a motion to accept the CIP as currently presented with no amendments.

Commissioner Jezior seconded the motion.

Commissioner Seitz said I would like to just note that my firm is the architect for the City Hall renovation project. I also just found out today we are short listed for the Harrison House. I just wanted to disclose that.

Mr. Russ said if you can state whether or not you can still impartially provide advice on this matter.

Commissioner Seitz said I definitely can. I do feel like I can impartially vote on this. It was very helpful, Mr. Fletcher, I forget how you phrased it, this is a proposal not a budget. If this was in fact voting on a budget, then I would recuse myself.

Mr. Fletcher said it is a planning tool.

Chair Baugh called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Seitz	Aye
Commissioner Jezior	Aye
Councilmember Dent	Aye
Commissioner Alsindi	Aye
Commissioner Kettler	Aye
Vice Chair Porter	Aye
Chair Baugh	Aye

The motion to recommend approval of the Capital Improvement Program passed (7-0). The recommendation will move forward to City Council on February 10, 2026.