



HARRISONBURG | VA
FRIENDLY BY NATURE



September 22, 2026, City Council Meeting

Title

Downtown Master Planting Plan – Keith Thomas, Public Works

Summary

The Public Works Department will present results of a public survey and revisions to the Downtown Master Planting Plan to City Council.

Recommendation

N/A

Fiscal Impact

N/A

Context & Analysis

In recent years, the City has expanded several environmental initiatives including the pollinator, stormwater, and urban forestry programs as well as the expansion of green infrastructure citywide. As part of these initiatives, several studies and plans have been developed including the Downtown Streetscape Plan, Pollinator Management Plan, and the Urban Forestry Management Plan. The Downtown Master Planting Plan focuses on the City's downtown district to envision landscape features and plantings to create an updated and cohesive appearance.

A public feedback survey was available during June and July and received a total of 134 responses. Respondents strongly value investment in downtown landscaping and street trees. Feedback supports a greener, more attractive, and more walkable downtown. The clearest recurring open-ended concern is the plant palette, especially the plan's use of non-native or potentially invasive species and limited use of native, pollinator plants. The second consistent concern is implementation capacity. Respondents want long-term maintenance, watering, staffing, and funding addressed before or alongside installation.

Utilizing the public feedback, Public Works incorporated several revisions to the plan including removed invasive species, updated planting list, revised planting maps, and included the mission statement, key goals, and key objectives of landscaping as developed by an internal cross-departmental group. Public Works will present the public feedback and revised plan to City Council for consideration and adoption.

This plan was made possible through grant funding from the Virginia Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Program and the Virginia Tech Community Design Assistance Center (CDAC).

Options

1. Adopt Downtown Master Planting Plan

Attachments

1. Presentation
2. Revisions & Public Feedback to Downtown Landscape Plan- Sept 2026