

Downtown Master Planting Plan Revisions

Mission Statement

Landscaping for the City of Harrisonburg should demonstrate responsible environmental stewardship, cost-effectiveness, and efficient maintenance while being aesthetically pleasing year-round.

Key Goals of Landscaping

- Right plant, right location
- Create appealing landscapes
- Promote the use of plant species native to our area or climate-adapted
- Support wildlife and pollinators by creating suitable habitats
- Protect existing, desirable plant communities
- Limit landscape maintenance needs
- Improve stormwater management
- Reduce the heat island effect
- Utilize the urban wood program

Key Objectives of Landscaping

- Use the Friendly City Friendly Planting approach
- Appropriately landscape spaces per the built environment and need of the space (e.g. parks, streets, and right-of-way).
 - Right plant, right location;
 - Expand natural habitats, when and where possible; Provide shade, when and where possible; and
 - Enhance the beauty of public spaces.
- Create cohesiveness of public spaces by developing a standard for furnishings, lighting, and signage aesthetics.
- Reduce stormwater runoff and the heat island effect.
- Utilize and promote the urban wood program when and where possible.
- Incorporate pollinators.
- Set an example for private residents and businesses, including recommendations for downtown businesses.
- Coordinate with transportation projects, beautification, and traffic calming.
- Expand the desirability and safety of the walking and biking environment.
- Promote the City's brand statement, when and where possible. The heart of our branding is "Friendly by Nature" with connections to our agricultural roots and surrounding outdoor recreational and natural amenities.
- Enhance first impressions and long-term perception by developing distinctive planting and landscape features at gateways into the City, primary business corridors, and Downtown, and at entries into public facilities.
- Commit to appropriate staffing levels for maintenance.

Landscape Philosophy and Aesthetic

Different areas of the City will have different thresholds for aesthetics: the planting bed in front of a landmark building should be maintained with higher standards than a remote patch of forest. This plan cannot enumerate every possible scenario. It will be the responsibility of the City's professional staff to use their best judgement and knowledge to apply these guidelines and recommendations to specific areas throughout the city.

Revisions to Downtown Master Planting Plan

1. Several planting maps have been revised to remove invasive or strongly undesirable plants (see below section)
2. Updated recommended plant list (see below section)
3. Specific reference to exclude plants found on the latest version of DCR's Invasive Plant Species List (Latest version can be found at DCR's website: [Invasive Plants Species List](#))
4. Include summary of public feedback along with complete survey results.

Implementation, staffing, and maintenance

A CIP project has been created to implement the landscape plan. More information will be available with the upcoming CIP release. Proposed improvements include

1. The City has already replaced the tree at Court Square with a Japanese Cedar
2. Installing tulips and daffodils in various beds downtown
3. Installing roses at Liberty Park
4. installing irrigation to Liberty Park
5. Installing irrigation to Hardesty-Higgins Visitor Center
6. Installing irrigation to Main Street tree wells
7. Purchasing additional planter boxes
8. Pursue additional staffing to maintain landscape spaces

Updated Plant List

Downtown Landscape Plant List

Wildflowers:

Agastache
Astilbe
Trillium
Cranesbill
Hosta
Coral Bells
Hellebore
Butterfly Milkweed
Wild Bergamot
Blazing Star
Black-eyed Susan
Purple Coneflower
Wild Lupine
New England Aster
Giant Hyssop
Zigzag Goldenrod
Virginia Bluebells
Eastern Red Columbine
Orange Coneflower

Herbs:

Lavender
Russian Sage

Groundcover:

Appalachian Sedge
Broad-Leaved Sedge
Moss Phlox
Wild Blue Phlox
Coral Bells
Green-and-Gold

Shrubs:

Daphne
Camellia (fall to spring bloom)
Gardenia
Skimmia japonica
Abelia (spring through fall bloom)
Sarcococca (winter bloom)
False Indigo
Black Chokeberry
New Jersey Tea
Winterberry
Lowbush Blueberry
Maple leaf Viburnum
Inkberry Holly
American Beautyberry
Virginia Sweetspire

Trees:

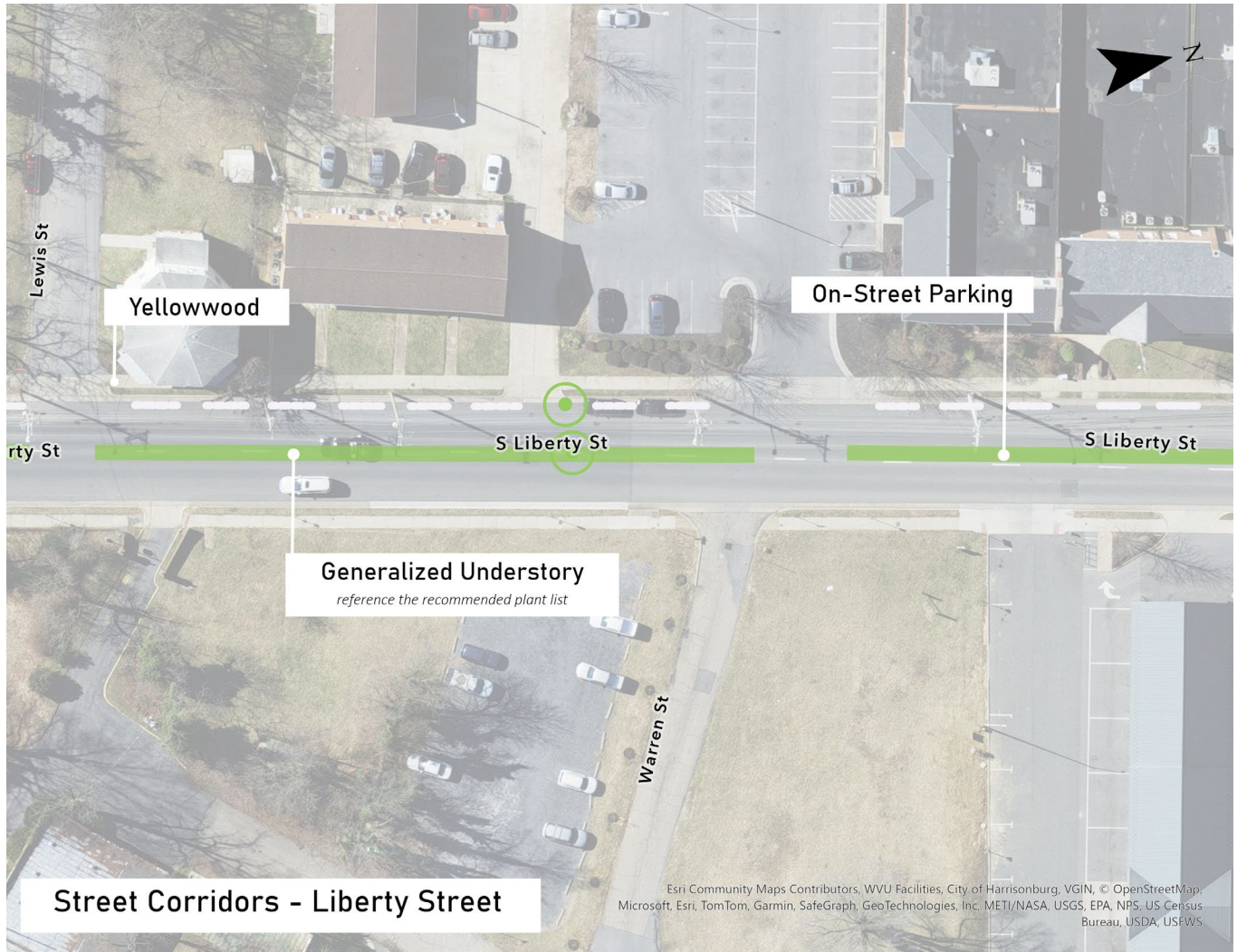
Downy Serviceberry
Red Maple
Redbud
Yellowwood
Black Gum
White Fringe Tree
Elm
Honey Locust

Revised Maps

The following maps supersede those found in the Conceptual Downtown Master Planting Plan and Focus Area Designs dated April 30, 2026.





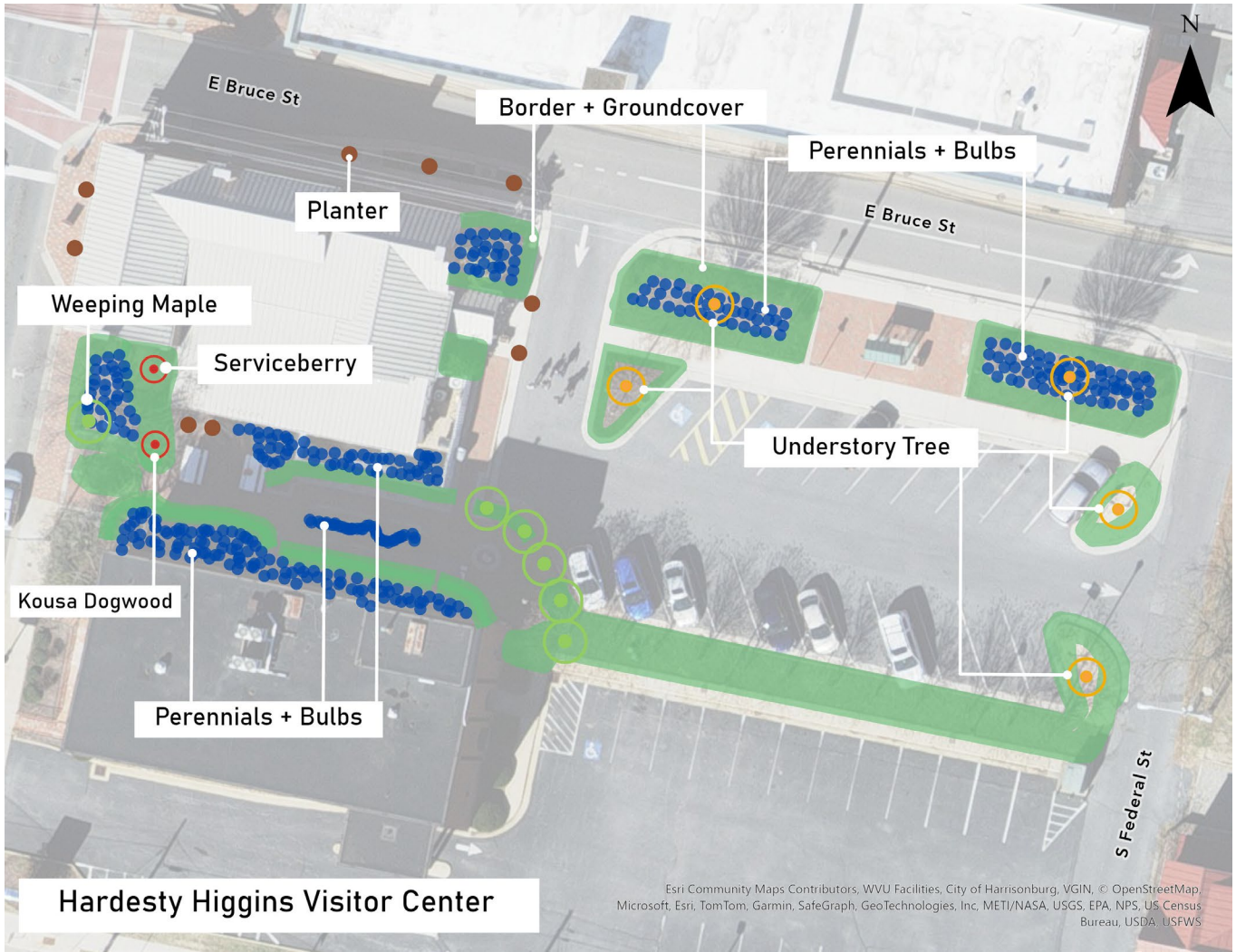


Street Corridors - Liberty Street

Esri Community Maps Contributors, WVU Facilities, City of Harrisonburg, VGIN, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USEWS











Landscape Survey Summary

Downtown Master Planting Plan | Public feedback results

This document was prepared using GovAI to summarize survey results. Aggregate survey data is included after the summary for transparency. All GovAI-generated content was reviewed by City staff before use.

Executive Summary

Respondents strongly value investment in downtown landscaping and street trees. Feedback supports a greener, more attractive, and more walkable downtown, while calling for a native-first plant palette and a credible long-term plan for maintenance, staffing, and funding.

Key messages

- There is very strong support for City investment in downtown landscaping and street trees: 84.06% rated it “very important,” with an average rating of 4.70 out of 5.
- Respondents believe the plan can improve the downtown experience: 76.47% gave a positive response on improving appearance, and 77.94% gave a positive response on making downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable.
- The clearest recurring open-ended concern is the plant palette—especially 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.
- The public favors a plan centered on native plants, shade trees, parks/public spaces, and trees in parking areas over decorative planter boxes and year-round color.

Overall perceptions of the plan

Survey measure	Result
Importance of City investment in downtown landscaping and street trees	4.70 / 5 average; 84.06% “very important”
Plan would improve downtown appearance	4.07 / 5 average; 76.47% positive
Plan would make downtown more welcoming and comfortable	4.07 / 5 average; 77.94% positive
Plan fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg	3.49 / 5 average; 58.82% positive
Satisfaction with overall vision	3.37 / 5 average; 53.23% positive
Likelihood to support implementation	NPS +12.86 (32 promoters; 15 passives; 23 detractors)

Elements respondents want implemented first

Element	Selected by
Entry gateways	40.00% (28)
Downtown city parks	40.00% (28)
City trails	35.71% (25)
City beds and planters	34.29% (24)
Court House Square	32.86% (23)
Downtown street medians	31.43% (22)
City parking lots	30.00% (21)
Downtown intersections	15.71% (11)
Landmark buildings	15.71% (11)

Implementation, staffing, and maintenance

Question	Result
Preferred City investment approach	62.86% favor a strong investment in installation and long-term maintenance
Alternative approach	22.86% favor implementation only at a scale maintainable with current resources
Staffing for new downtown plantings	62.07% support one or more dedicated staff positions
Seasonal / part-time assistance	18.97% support limited seasonal or part-time help
Street trees: likelihood of walking, shopping, or spending more time downtown	83.82% gave a likelihood rating of 71–100; 47.06% gave 91–100

Design preferences and feature priorities

Feature	Average importance (1–5)
Support for pollinators / native plants	4.77
Street trees / more shade	4.69
More inviting parks / public spaces	4.39
Trees and vegetation in parking lots	4.24
Community gathering areas	4.08
Downtown identity	3.84
Traffic calming	3.82
Public art and cultural installations	3.73
Lighting and safety features	3.60
Additional planter boxes	3.15
Year-round color	2.77

Planting style ranking: Native/pollinator-focused planting ranked first (score 3.34), followed by mostly green with limited blooms (3.03), bright and bold colors (2.93), subdued/pastel colors (2.90), and ornamental-focused planting (2.82).

Open-ended feedback

The written comments reinforce the quantitative results. The themes below summarize repeated messages; individual comments often raised more than one theme.

Open-ended question	Repeated feedback
What respondents like most about the concept	More trees, shade, greenery, beautification, and a more inviting pedestrian experience. Respondents also noted the value of a cohesive long-term vision, Court Square/public-space improvements, and environmental benefits such as urban cooling and wildlife support.
What respondents find problematic	A strong, repeated concern about non-native or potentially invasive plants and a desire for more native, pollinator-supporting species. Other recurring concerns were water use, labor intensity, long-term maintenance, plant suitability, and the risk of neglected plantings.

Open-ended question	Repeated feedback
Additional suggestions	Adopt a native-first, drought-tolerant, and lower-maintenance approach; add more street trees and shade; provide dedicated staff and funding; consult local subject-matter experts including knowledgeable staff.

Considerations for Next Steps

- Proceeding with a greener downtown concept is consistent with the strongest survey feedback, particularly where it advances shade, tree canopy, and more inviting public spaces.
- Before advancing implementation, consider revising the conceptual plant palette to prioritize native, ecologically beneficial, and site-appropriate species and to avoid species respondents identified as invasive or unsuitable.
- Pair capital implementation with an operating plan that identifies maintenance standards, watering needs, staffing support, and ongoing funding. Public support for investment is strongest when maintenance is treated as part of the project.
- Phase early investments around the highest-ranked locations—entry gateways, city parks, trails, beds/planters, Court House Square, medians, and parking lots—while emphasizing high-impact shade and tree-canopy opportunities.
- Use local expertise and partnerships to strengthen the plan and build confidence, including input from knowledgeable City staff and local horticultural, native-plant, or arboretum resources.

Public Feedback on Downtown Master Planting Plan

Response Statistics

826

Survey Visits

134

Total Responses

58

Completed Responses

76

Partial Responses

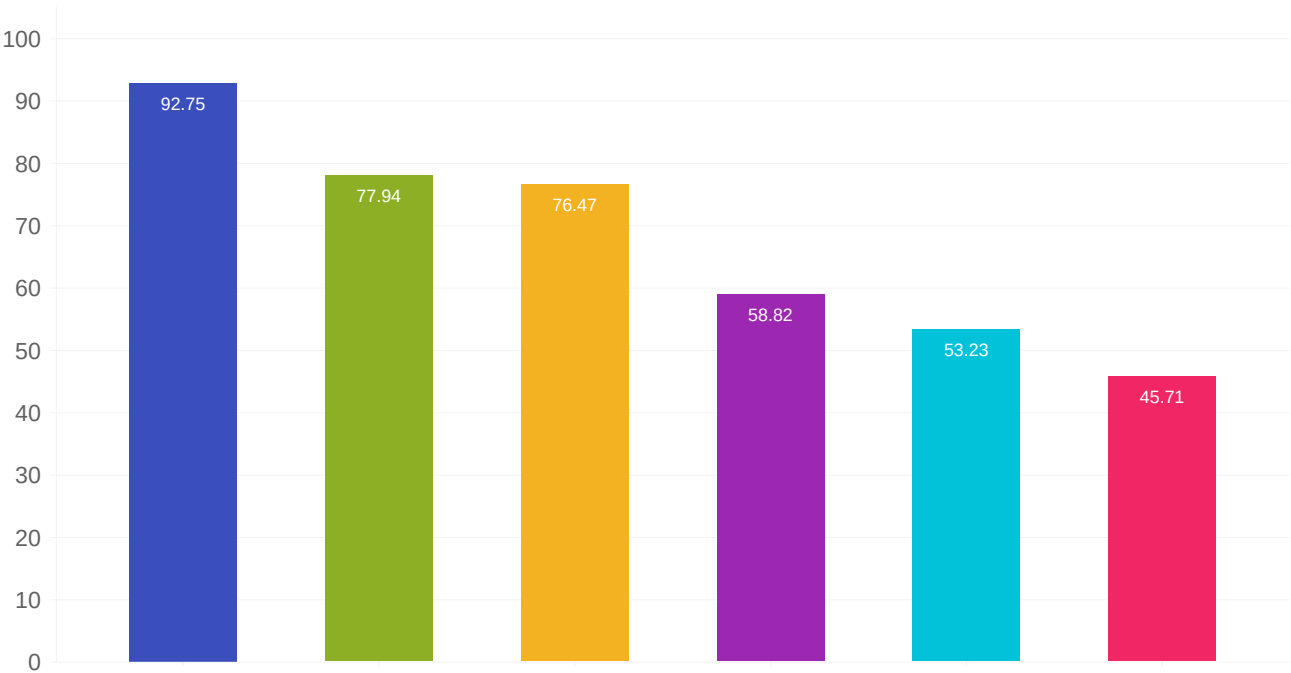
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Disqualified Responses

0

Over Quota Responses

Overall CSAT Score

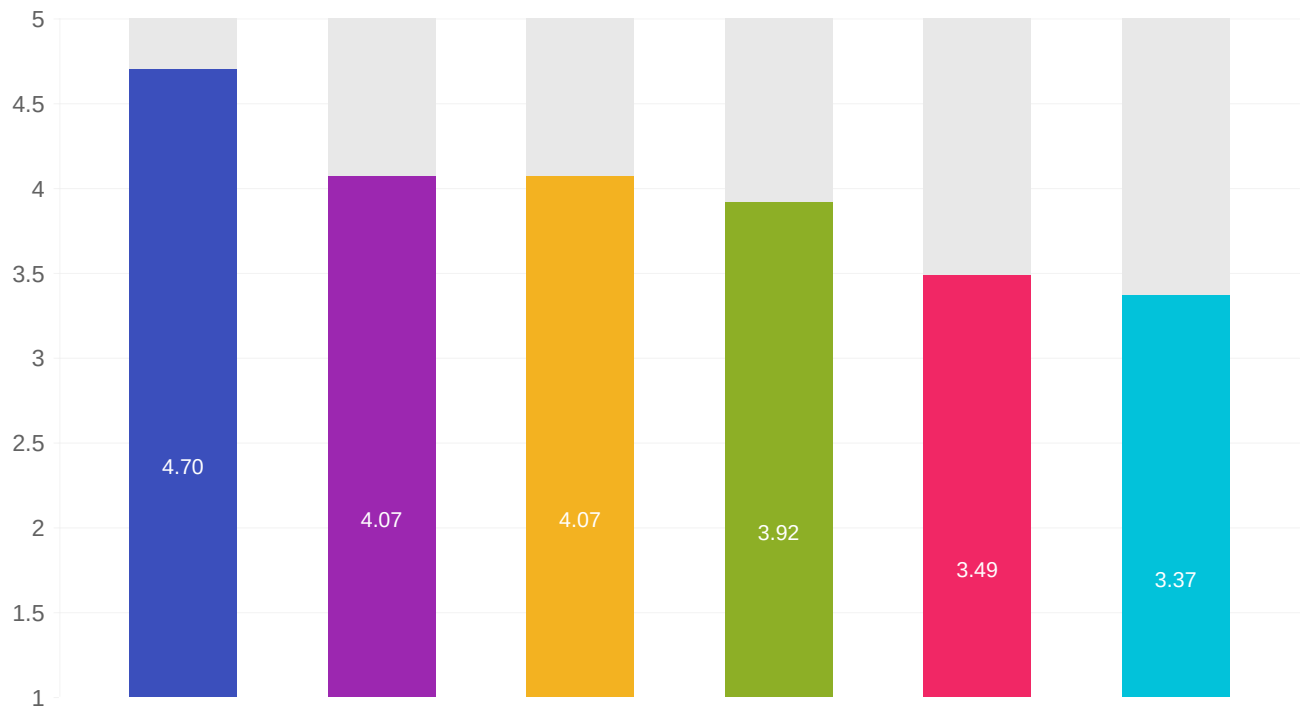


- How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?
- Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?
- Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?
- Do you feel the proposed landscaping fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg?
- How satisfied are you with the overall vision of the landscape plan?
- How likely are you to support the implementation of this plan?

Questions	Negatives	Neutrals	Positives	CSAT Score
How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?	3	2	64	92.75
Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?	11	4	53	77.94
Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?	12	4	52	76.47
Do you feel the proposed landscaping fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg?	16	12	40	58.82
How satisfied are you with the overall vision of the landscape plan?	14	15	33	53.23
How likely are you to support the implementation of this plan?	23	15	32	45.71

Overall CSAT Score: 67.65

Average Ratings



- How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?
- Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?
- Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?
- Please rate the importance of the following features:
- Do you feel the proposed landscaping fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg?
- How satisfied are you with the overall vision of the landscape plan?

Questions	Average Ratings	Out of
How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?	4.70	5
Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?	4.07	5
Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?	4.07	5
Please rate the importance of the following features:	3.92	5
Do you feel the proposed landscaping fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg?	3.49	5
How satisfied are you with the overall vision of the landscape plan?	3.37	5

Overall average survey rating: 7.86/10

Downtown Master Planting Plan

Review the Downtown Master Planting Plan

Short on time? [View to Downtown Master Planting Plan Presentation](#)

If you wish you can also review the full [Downtown Master Planting Plan Report](#)

No Responses

General

Q1

How satisfied are you with the overall vision of the landscape plan?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 72

Rating	Response percent	Response count
 (Very Dissatisfied)	12.90%	8
	9.68%	6
	24.19%	15
	33.87%	21
 (Very Satisfied)	19.35%	12

Average rating: 3.37

Q2

How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 65

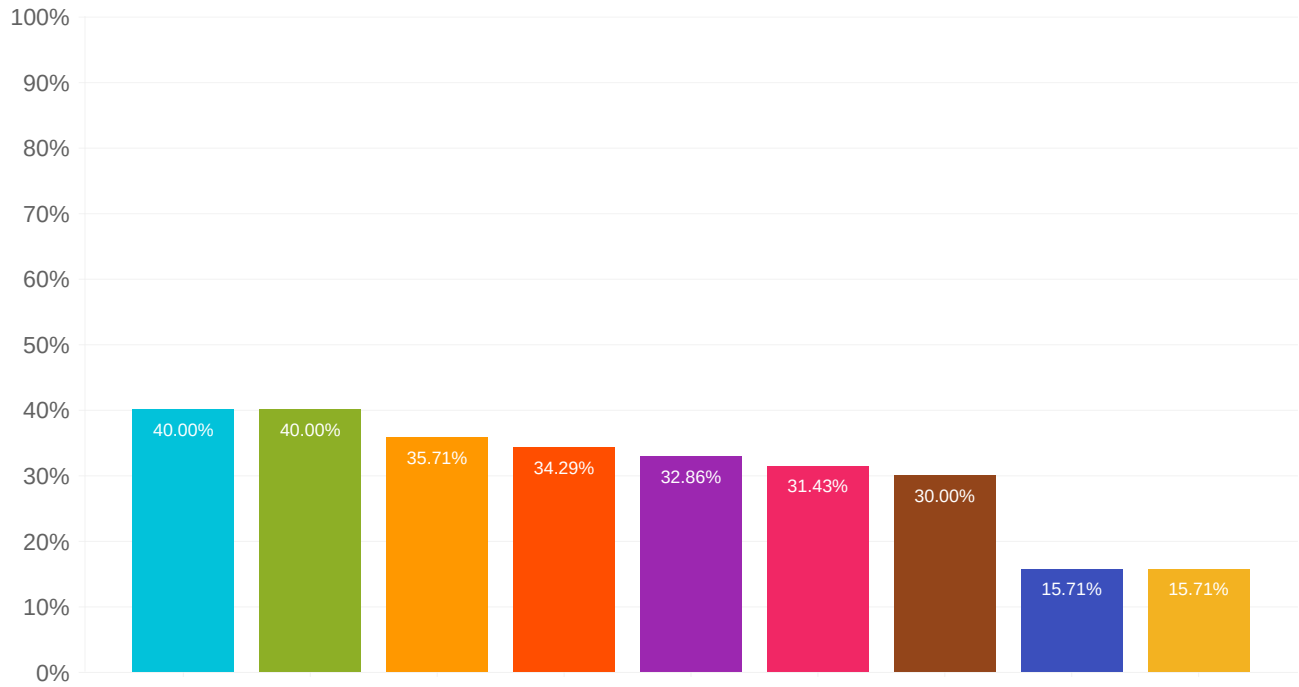
Rating	Response percent	Response count
1 (Not Important At All)	2.90%	2
2	1.45%	1
3	2.90%	2
4	8.70%	6
5 (Very Important)	84.06%	58

Average rating: 4.70

Q3

Which elements in the plan do you consider the most important to implement first? *(select up to three (3) elements)*

Answered: 70 Skipped: 64



Entry Gateways

Downtown City Parks

City Trails

City Beds & Planters

Court House Square

Downtown Street Medians

City Parking Lots

Downtown Intersections

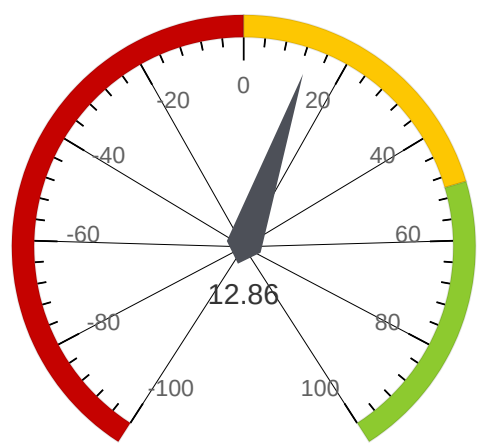
Landmark Buildings

Choices	Response percent	Response count
Entry Gateways	40.00%	28
Downtown City Parks	40.00%	28
City Trails	35.71%	25
City Beds & Planters	34.29%	24
Court House Square	32.86%	23
Downtown Street Medians	31.43%	22
City Parking Lots	30.00%	21
Downtown Intersections	15.71%	11
Landmark Buildings	15.71%	11

Q4

How likely are you to support the implementation of this plan?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 64



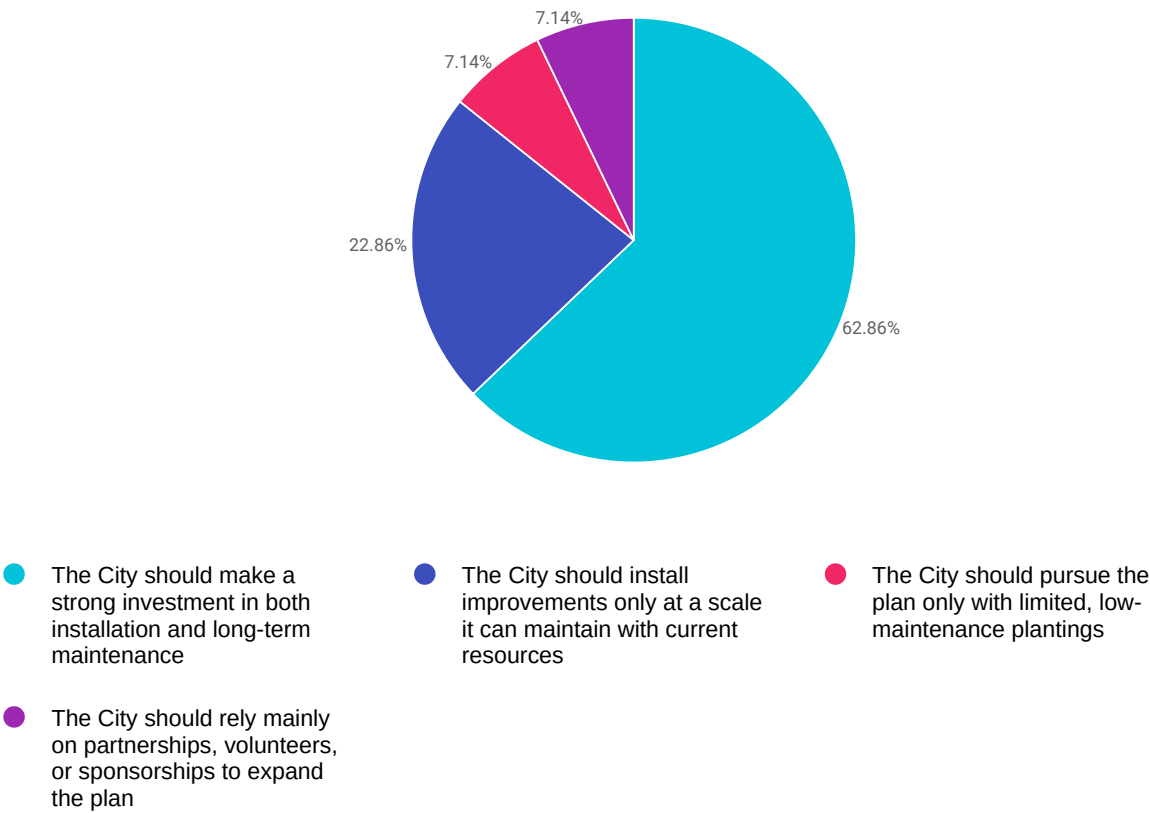
Detractors (0-6)	Passives (7-8)	Promoters (9-10)	Net Promoter Score
23	15	32	12.86

Net Promoter Score: 12.86

Q5

Which statement best reflects your view?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 64



Choices	Response percent	Response count
The City should make a strong investment in both installation and long-term maintenance	62.86%	44
The City should install improvements only at a scale it can maintain with current resources	22.86%	16
The City should pursue the plan only with limited, low-maintenance plantings	7.14%	5
The City should rely mainly on partnerships, volunteers, or sponsorships to expand the plan	7.14%	5

Creating a Welcoming Experience

Q6

Do you feel the proposed landscaping fits the character of downtown Harrisonburg?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 66

Rating	Response percent	Response count
1 (Does not fit at all)	17.65%	12
2	5.88%	4
3	17.65%	12
4	27.94%	19
5 (Fits very much)	30.88%	21

Average rating: 3.49

Q7

Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 66

Rating	Response percent	Response count
1 (No)	7.35%	5
2	10.29%	7
3	5.88%	4
4	20.59%	14
5 (Yes! Very Much!)	55.88%	38

Average rating: 4.07

Q8

Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 66

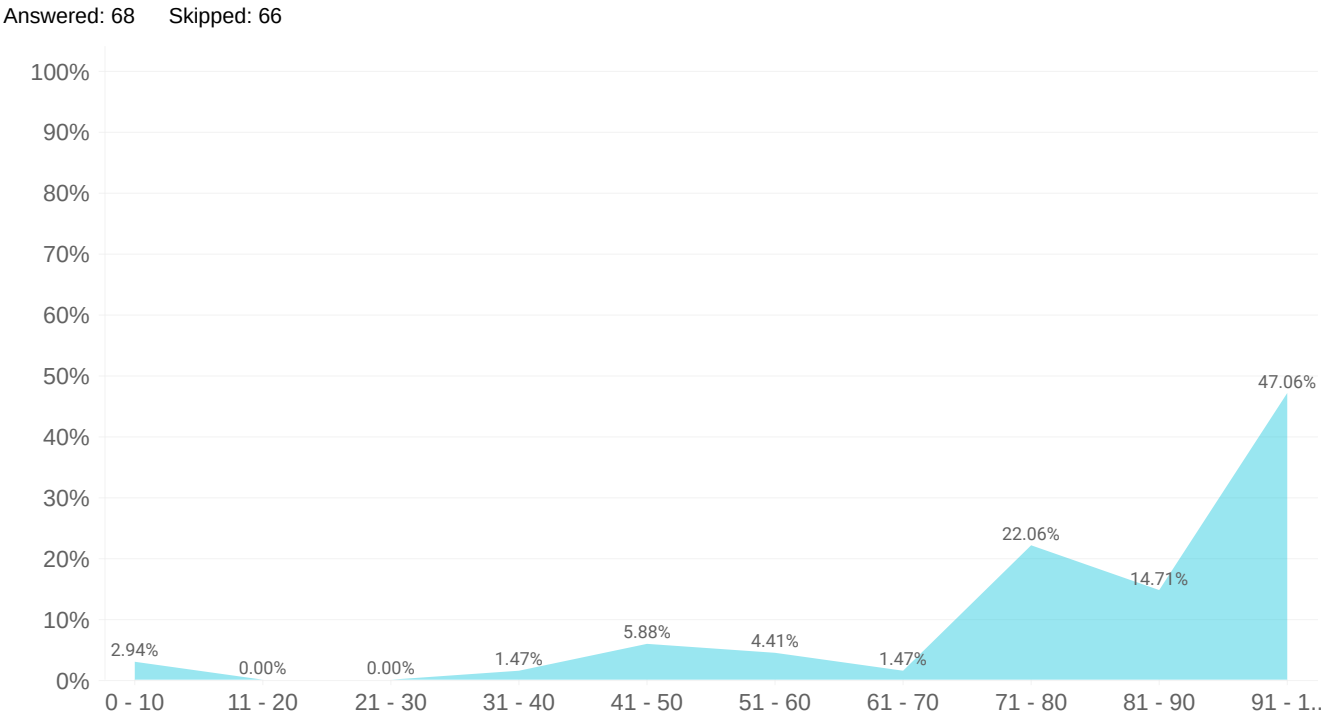
Rating	Response percent	Response count
1 (No)	11.76%	8
2	4.41%	3
3	5.88%	4
4	20.59%	14
5 (Yes! Very Much!)	57.35%	39

Average rating: 4.07

Q9

Would additional street trees make you more likely to walk, shop, or spend time downtown?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 66



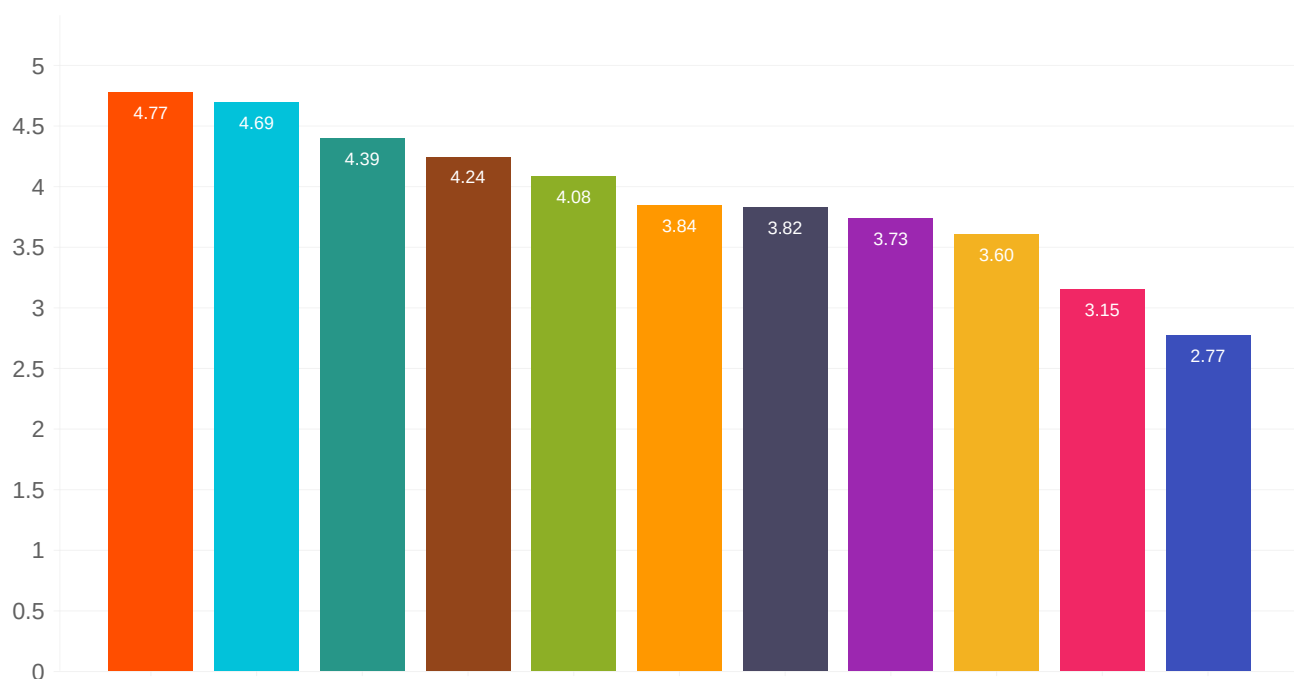
Choices	Response percent	Response count
0 - 10	2.94%	2
11 - 20	0.00%	0
21 - 30	0.00%	0
31 - 40	1.47%	1
41 - 50	5.88%	4
51 - 60	4.41%	3
61 - 70	1.47%	1
71 - 80	22.06%	15
81 - 90	14.71%	10
91 - 100	47.06%	32

Style

Q10

Please rate the importance of the following features:

Answered: 62 Skipped: 72



- Support for Pollinators/Native Plants
- Street Trees/More Shade
- More Inviting Parks/Public Spaces
- Trees & Vegetation in Parking Lots
- Community gathering areas
- Downtown Identity
- Traffic Calming
- Public art and cultural installations
- Lighting and safety features
- Additional Planter Boxes
- Year-Round Color

Row	(1) Not Important (1)	(2) Slightly Important (2)	(3) Moderately Important (3)	(4) Very Important (4)	(5) Extremely Important (5)	Average rating	Response count
Support for Pollinators/Native Plants	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	4.84% (3)	12.90% (8)	82.26% (51)	4.77	62
Street Trees/More Shade	1.61% (1)	0.00% (0)	3.23% (2)	17.74% (11)	77.42% (48)	4.69	62
More Inviting Parks/Public Spaces	4.84% (3)	0.00% (0)	6.45% (4)	29.03% (18)	59.68% (37)	4.39	62
Trees & Vegetation in Parking Lots	3.23% (2)	3.23% (2)	17.74% (11)	17.74% (11)	58.06% (36)	4.24	62
Community gathering areas	3.23% (2)	1.61% (1)	16.13% (10)	41.94% (26)	37.10% (23)	4.08	62
Downtown Identity	4.84% (3)	8.06% (5)	22.58% (14)	27.42% (17)	37.10% (23)	3.84	62
Traffic Calming	9.68% (6)	3.23% (2)	20.97% (13)	27.42% (17)	38.71% (24)	3.82	62
Public art and cultural installations	9.68% (6)	6.45% (4)	19.35% (12)	30.65% (19)	33.87% (21)	3.73	62
Lighting and safety features	8.06% (5)	11.29% (7)	25.81% (16)	22.58% (14)	32.26% (20)	3.60	62
Additional Planter Boxes	11.29% (7)	17.74% (11)	32.26% (20)	22.58% (14)	16.13% (10)	3.15	62
Year-Round Color	17.74% (11)	22.58% (14)	35.48% (22)	12.90% (8)	11.29% (7)	2.77	62

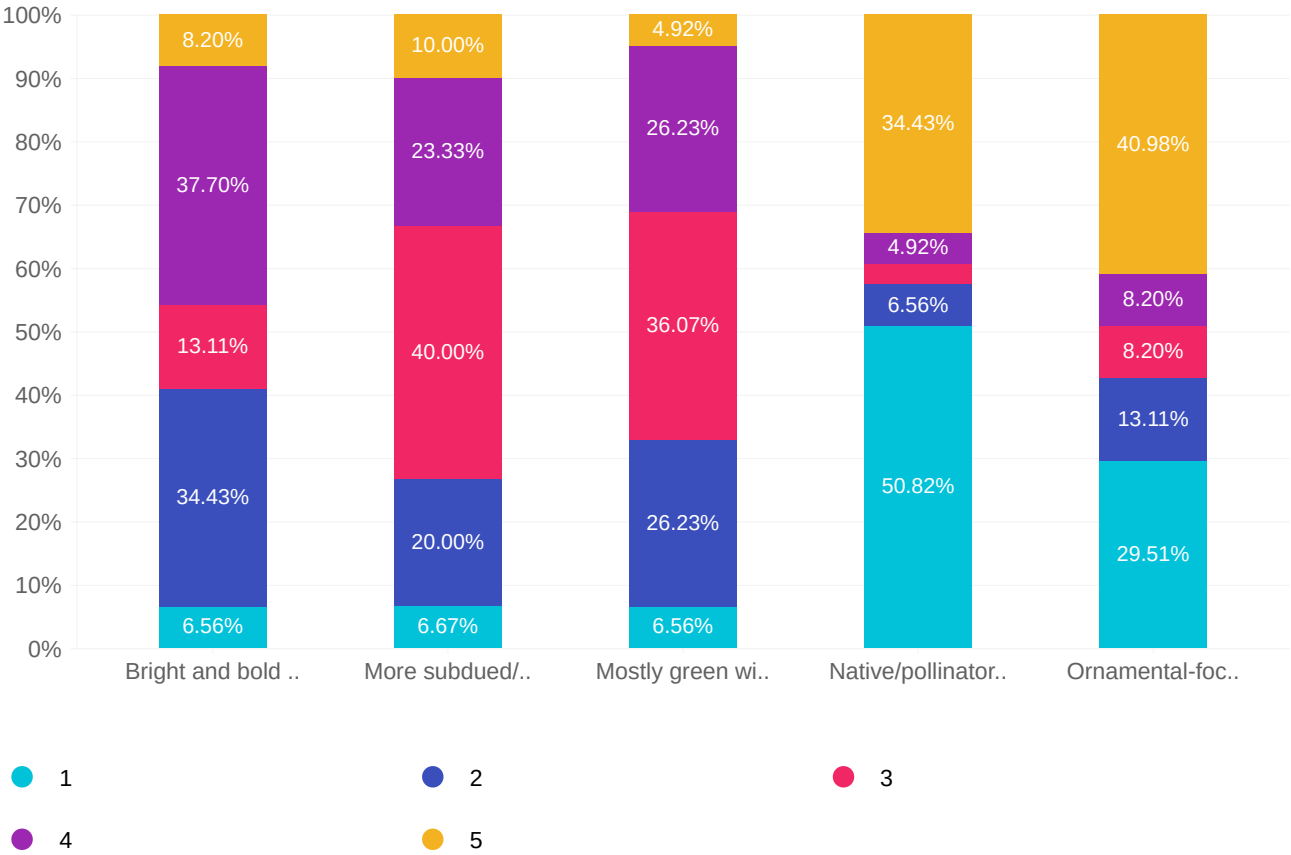
Average rating: 3.92

Row	Range		Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Variance
	From	To				
Support for Pollinators/Native Plants	3	5	4.77	5.00	0.53	0.28
Street Trees/More Shade	1	5	4.69	5.00	0.69	0.48
More Inviting Parks/Public Spaces	1	5	4.39	5.00	0.98	0.96
Trees & Vegetation in Parking Lots	1	5	4.24	5.00	1.07	1.14
Community gathering areas	1	5	4.08	4.00	0.95	0.90
Downtown Identity	1	5	3.84	4.00	1.16	1.35
Traffic Calming	1	5	3.82	4.00	1.26	1.59
Public art and cultural installations	1	5	3.73	4.00	1.27	1.61
Lighting and safety features	1	5	3.60	4.00	1.27	1.62
Additional Planter Boxes	1	5	3.15	3.00	1.23	1.50
Year-Round Color	1	5	2.77	3.00	1.22	1.49

Q11

How would you rank the following planting styles?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 73



Choices	1	2	3	4	5	Score	Rank	Response count
Bright and bold colors	6.56% (4)	34.43% (21)	13.11% (8)	37.70% (23)	8.20% (5)	2.93	3	61
More subdued/pastel colors	6.67% (4)	20.00% (12)	40.00% (24)	23.33% (14)	10.00% (6)	2.90	4	60
Mostly green with limited blooms	6.56% (4)	26.23% (16)	36.07% (22)	26.23% (16)	4.92% (3)	3.03	2	61
Native/pollinator-focused planting	50.82% (31)	6.56% (4)	3.28% (2)	4.92% (3)	34.43% (21)	3.34	1	61
Ornamental-focused planting	29.51% (18)	13.11% (8)	8.20% (5)	8.20% (5)	40.98% (25)	2.82	5	61

Final Thoughts

Q12

What do you like most about the landscape conceptual design plan?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 84

1. The parking lots need shade, and trees would not only help with that but make it look more inviting.
2. More plantings downtown is hugely important. The prettier they are, the better.
3. No much. The downtown should sustain itself. Please stop raising my property taxes
4. Year round color and interest.
5. 1) More shade - because it's hot to walk and bike around downtown in the summer. 2) More flowers and blooms throughout the growing season - just make everything more cheerful
6. Mix of trees and varied plantings
7. Great variation and focus on most trafficked parts of downtown
8. The plan is beautiful. I like the native species but there aren't many on the plan. More would be better.
9. It's simply beautiful. It has the potential to turn dull and neglected spaces into sources of pride.
10. The fact that City staff have input on the work that they are to maintain and that you are looking for public comment.
11. I really enjoy the focus on the urban forestry, especially at locations where people will be walking around downtown. I think this help with the urban heat and allow for residents/tourists a more enjoyable and safe travel around downtown.
12. It would help Downtown feel more welcoming. The addition of street trees have so many benefits.
13. Diversity
14. I trust the expertise that went into forming this plan and I hope that the city council does also and approves it. The master plan document of 2021 is extremely impressive, so much great info and explanation of it all.
15. It provides city leaders a vision of what downtown can be like. Other communities similar to Harrisonburg have a vibrant downtown landscape and maintenance crew.
16. Making inviting walking corridors (flowers, shrubs, trees); temperature cooling (trees); a coherent plan reflects the pride we have in our community.
17. Much of the intent, purpose and location selections are great.
18. More trees to provide shade in downtown areas. Incorporating/making more inviting public gathering spaces. Highlighting blacks run.
19. Looks great!
20. The idea that a natural world is more inviting
21. I like the focus on natives and pollinators. I think that if the plants are chosen with care and consideration we can maintain year round color (at least green!) in most places.
22. Integrating people into the natural world, adding color to the grey infrastructure of the built environment
23. I'm all for lots of trees, lots of plants, and general beautification.
24. The additional thought.
25. Tree's downtown

26. We need more greenery to make downtown an inviting place that people want to spend time in. I think adding shade will be an important part, and softening the all-concrete-and-asphalt aesthetic will make folks want to spend a lot more time downtown. I also really like that there is an effort to "repurpose" Court Square. I wonder if it could even be converted into an all-pedestrian area (ex. Charlottesville's "downtown mall")? This would draw business to the area which currently has some vacant spots, and would make it a lively cultural center.
27. I appreciate the effort to use trees to provide shade and help keep the city cooler.
28. The inclusion of street trees and additional green spaces in Downtown Harrisonburg. Plant more trees, please!
29. The few native included
30. I appreciate the overall plan and the extent of the plantings. 1
31. I love that our city is seeing the value of green spaces and the living environment.
32. I love the vision for Court Square and converting the street into a public space. I love all the ideas for trees.
33. I liked how visual it was in it's presentation of information.
34. More shade, pollinators, native plants
35. Knowing the city cares to work on this
36. -entryways to downtown -trees -colorful/pollinator friendly/seasonal -attractiveness
37. Adding more beauty to downtown through addition of plants
38. In a word—insipid.
39. bringing more green and nature into the city
40. It is very thought out well organized.
41. 1. The plan's overall landscape goals (p. 3 of presentation) and basic concepts (p. 5 of presentation) are quite good. 2. Including a lot of trees (mostly native species) and vegetation along streets and in parking areas is fantastic! Daylighting Blacks Run and treating it as amenity rather than an embarrassment is awesome! The city should use this plan as an opportunity to maximize native plantings to support water quality improvement and habitat creation. Streams in cities (including Blacks Run) are vectors for invasives. This provides a chance for remediation of this at least downtown. Blacks Run landscape improvements using native plants in places like behind Beyond restaurant that are currently unexplored opportunities could be great for adjacent businesses and make the walk from Water St to Court Square a desirable feature. 3. Most aspects of the Liberty Park plan that expand the use of native plants are good. Treating the geometric formal beds with roses and plants that feel more formal might be nice, and there could be a nice opportunity for juxtaposing formal and natural in a way that feels really good. 4. Realizing Court Square as a public plaza is also a great idea. Yesterday when we were downtown for Best.Weekend.Ever. I could easily imagine how cool this would be. 5. Harrisonburg's EAP includes instructions to maintain and increase the city's tree canopy, evaluate opportunities for underutilized public and private lands, and consider rehabilitating and creating new natural habitats within the city limits. With the right revisions to focus on native species and eliminating invasives, this downtown landscaping plan could be instrumental in achieving these objectives. As the EAP states, "To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations."
42. More greenery is better. Always.
43. The fact that adding more greenery will make the entirety of downtown more inviting, more shaded, decrease noise and pollution, beautify city walks, and very importantly, help the local wildlife.
44. I like the addition of flowers, trees, and shrubbery in parking lots and walking corridors downtown. I think it makes downtown look more cared for and inviting.
45. More inviting and protection for wildlife
46. Creating visual beauty and providing shade
47. I love that this plan will add more street trees, which are in short supply downtown. We need many more street trees!
48. I like the cohesive feel, the intentional aspect of landscaping and beautification, and the desire to do something beautiful downtown. It is a very hardscaped corridor that needs some softening. I like that there are different levels of design concepts and that this could be phased. The goals make a lot of sense. i love the idea of making downtown an attractive destination where people just want to come (and hopefully make a few unplanned purchases) or mind walking a greater distance to their parked car because the walk is lovely. Trees and bushes that have leaves that seasonally change color would be great and less fussy to deal with than flowering plants. I am really excited about the possibilities of the wayfinding concepts. I wish there were more ideas for gateways and statement arrival sculptures. But overall, this whole plan is pretty cool.

49. Lots to celebrate here. Increased tree coverage and shade, Court Square as walkable, person focused plaza. Use of Natives. Treating Blacks Run as an actual amenity and source of beauty/connectedness. color, life, beauty as valuable. This is an exciting design! I'd see opportunity to work with local non profits to help support maintenance, even as staff time will be essential.
50. Nothing. This plan is hateful and this survey is rigged to force people to rubber stamp what staff wants to do.

Q12 - Sentiment Analysis



Choices	Response percent	Response count
Anger	4.17%	2
Disappointment	0.00%	0
Sarcasm	6.25%	3
Neutral	25.00%	12
Happy	52.08%	25
Extremely Happy	12.50%	6



Choices	Response percent	Response count
trees	28.00%	14
plantings downtown	22.00%	11
City staff	20.00%	10
shade	16.00%	8
plan	16.00%	8
plants	12.00%	6
people	10.00%	5
color	10.00%	5
fact	10.00%	5
parking lots	8.00%	4
spaces	8.00%	4
Court Square	8.00%	4
blacks run	6.00%	3
greenery	6.00%	3
inviting	6.00%	3
communities	6.00%	3
flowers	6.00%	3
beauty	6.00%	3
addition	6.00%	3
focus	6.00%	3
plantings	6.00%	3

walk	6.00%	3	
vision	4.00%	2	
maintenance crew	4.00%	2	
wildlife	4.00%	2	
places	4.00%	2	
walking corridors	4.00%	2	
design concepts	4.00%	2	
evaluate opportunities	4.00%	2	
species	4.00%	2	
business	4.00%	2	
pollinators	4.00%	2	
presentation	4.00%	2	
beautification	4.00%	2	
environment	4.00%	2	
work	4.00%	2	
landscape goals	4.00%	2	
sources	4.00%	2	
pride	4.00%	2	
effort	4.00%	2	
summer	2.00%	1	
survey	2.00%	1	

temperature cooling	2.00%	1
shrubs	2.00%	1
variation	2.00%	1
blooms	2.00%	1
comment	2.00%	1
document	2.00%	1
expertise	2.00%	1
explanation	2.00%	1

What aspects of the plan do you dislike or find problematic?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 84

1. I find the maintenance could be problematic.
2. My only concern is not with this plan, it's that city parks like Purcell have way too much grass that no one uses, so they should be the focus of a plan like this too.
3. City government should provide a safe and legal atmosphere in which any business can have a chance. It should not prioritize one region or ones groups desires over others. More vocal does not mean more support, it only means those with agenda are more organized. I do not shop downtown. Ever. However, I do need access THROUGH downtown in my large semi truck, my personal vehicles, and my bicycle. A city should provide for all of the above in a reasonable fashion, not cater to the loudest current bandwagons of change. If we want to make the city more livable, affordable, and friendly to local residents, let's ditch JMU and then have the downtown actually cater to local residents, not those who come and go and create a disruptive, chaotic feeling. Please stop raising my property taxes to benefit those who don't live here and/ or don't contribute financially . Please, make Harrisonburg a city for those who live here. Please stop raising my property taxes
4. I think there should be even more trees, flowers, shrubs - this is our home, make it a destination!
5. It'd be great to see a greater integration of native plants into the plan over time. I'm also wondering who will keep all the planters watered regularly so the flower stay alive -- we seem to have long stretches without rain.
6. Far too little focus on native plants, and honey locust trees are a poor choice for downtown. Redbuds and oaks would be better.
7. If you spruce up parking lots, it makes it less likely that you'll get rid of parking lots. We should get rid of some parking lots.
8. The plan is beautiful but very labor intensive. There are a lot of non-native species, too many annuals, many of the plants will need to be maintained throughout the growing season for best performance and there are a lot of plants that will require annual maintenance. Not a single hickory tree the most superior tree species in my opinion. Also, although beautiful, I don't think having pollinator friendly species is good in all areas, especially parking areas, as there are plenty of people allergic to bees and I know that my husband avoids areas with flowers for parking as he is afraid of bees getting into the car.
9. I'm very uncertain that the city has the maintenance capacity to implement even the most simple of plans.
10. I find the fact that there are City staff that think ornamental vegetation is the way to go problematic. City Green space staff put a lot of meaningful time and effort into designing pollinator spaces to promote and benefit pollinators, but aren't supported with manpower to keep these areas maintained and beautiful and adding spaces.
11. I would rather see more trees and pollinator gardens than potted plants. I think too many potted plants will almost make downtown look "staged", but trees and pollinator gardens will give the feel that we are still in "nature".
12. Remove any invasive species and instead focus on native species to the maximum extent possible.
13. Many non native plants !
14. none
15. Should not plant invasive plants.
16. Use of invasive species such as creeping jenny, euonymus, nandina, liriope.
17. Not enough trees at the gateway entrances, particularly on 33 E approaching downtown from the east. Also not enough native/too many invasive species
18. The abundance of non-native species. Plant native for sustainability/less maintenance and to complement the city's location between the national park and forest.

19. All of this looks beautiful but PLEASE make a commitment to maintain the plants. There are so many well intentioned public spaces particularly in downtown that aren't maintained...so what's the point of wasting resources if there is no commitment to maintain the plants! For instance, the city planted a number of trees and plants at the top of Campbell St a few summers ago by the wall. The plants are a mix of unruly and barely alive. It would look better with no plants than its current unkempt and neglected appearance. I really hope there is follow-through on maintaining this vision but I don't have a lot of faith in our city government. I'd be thrilled if we simply had few hours of dedicated staff hours committed to picking up trash, cleaning the sidewalks and power-washing the gross EIFS/concrete exterior of the HCPS and Court/jail complex buildings. I understand the parking garages are old but they are disgusting...I don't let my children touch the handrails in the stairwell, the garages reek of urine (human), and the sidewalks surrounding the perimeter of the Water Street garage are covered in bird poop. I'd love to sit in the pocket park across from the library and enjoy water plants but when it's used as a de facto backpack/ sleeping bag storage for pan-handlers, a smoking/vaping lounge, and occasionally a sleeping spot for the highly sedated, zombie-like Asian woman that roams downtown, I have to wonder why bother trying to have nice things???? I hope that beautiful plants and flowers can enhance Downtown Harrisonburg. But landscaping alone will not solve deeper issues. Before investing in new plantings, we need to focus on the basics: cleanliness, maintenance, and making visitors, residents, and business owners feel safe. If the City chooses to move forward with additional landscaping, it must also commit to maintaining it. Neglected flower beds, dead plants, and overgrown spaces send the opposite message and can make an area feel less cared for, not more. Attractive streetscapes are wonderful, but without a long-term maintenance plan, we're simply spending resources on something that will quickly deteriorate. Let's get the fundamentals right first—and ensure any beautification effort can be sustained. Otherwise, we're not beautifying downtown—we're creating another maintenance problem and wasting limited resources.
20. Concerned that it will not be maintained as needed after planting
21. I do not like the idea of a rose garden in Liberty Street park. Not all of the trees proposed seem to be native. Why? Why did the city not intervene with what happened at the court house?
22. Some of the recommended tree and plant species are questionable in regards to performance and suitability - will discuss this directly with staff
23. There's so much here that's problematic, and just so many missed opportunities. Please don't approve this as written. The overall 'idea' --add plants to make Harrisonburg downtown awesome--is correct. The plants suggested themselves and the method is not correct. 1) You've got actual known invasives or near-invasive plants on this plan. (euonymous, nandina) 2) Little to no effort for native plants 3) You're depending on a volunteer program, but in my experience the most passionate volunteers are those who are also ecologically minded, and these planting choices--while pretty--aren't native or particularly sustainable. Having to replant seasonally is nuts. 4) It seems like choosing so many maples when maples are not a type of tree that we need to add more of according to the Urban Forestry Plan --it's important to our urban tree canopy to have a biodiverse set of plantings, or we'll end up someday with another Ash Borer type situation. 5) Emphasizing native plants and perennials is good for our environment, but also cheaper to maintain both in time and water once established. This planting plan is beautiful but not sustainable in multiple directions. 6) Do we even have the right kind of soil downtown for ericaceae? If we put plants in the ground that are going to struggle even with TLC from volunteers, we're just pouring money down the drain.
24. Not doing it.
25. More homeless people will be around bothering citizens since there will be shade. Stop the panhandling!
26. I would like to see more natives and perhaps a focus on low-maintenance plantings, but overall I think it is a great plan.
27. Harrisonburg's climate is perfectly suited for growing native plant species. It is absolutely unacceptable for there to be any invasive and non-native plants listed in this design. Harrisonburg is an agricultural community and the people here value taking care of the land. To plant nonnative and invasive plants within the city limits, quite frankly, sends a message that the city is completely disconnected from our planet and our ecosystems. Harrisonburg should be leading the charge when it comes to executing thoughtful, innovative landscape designs that preserve our biodiversity and enhance our ecosystems. There are many nonprofits and community groups that are experienced in restoring landscapes with native plants -- there is no excuse for Harrisonburg to turn a blind eye on this.
28. I am really disappointed to see several invasive and/or non-native plants in the plan, such as crepe myrtle, lirioppe, and nandina. It would be such a shame to include these plants that others are working so hard to remove from their landscaping, when we have so many proponents of native plants in our community. Karl from The Natural Garden or Elise from Wilder Landscapes would be great people to talk to for native plant alternatives to these invasive/non-native species. A local elementary school recently had a "Nandina removal community work day" and it would be lovely if the city would follow their lead.
29. Not a fan of invasive species (e.g. nandina). Found that the plan relied too much on non-native ornamentals (e.g. lirioppe, pachysandra, periwinkle). There are lots of better native plant options that can beautify Downtown, while also improving wildlife habitat. The planting list in general seems a bit basic and could use some fine tuning from folks who know more about native species. No nandina and no lirioppe. Downtown Harrisonburg isn't JMU. Don't try to copy and emulate what they do on their campus. Don't go for a purple and gold theme.

30. Invasive species are included on the list! You have GOT to be kidding!! Please don't make problems worse! Do not plant ANY invasives and seriously limit (or eliminate) all non-natives. There are so, so many great native options and plenty of local people willing to help with design/planting suggestions. Harrisonburg is increasingly becoming a destination for outdoor life and culture. Please continue to lean into these positive trends.
31. There are multiple invasive or non-native plants listed in the plan, such as various Japanese Maples and Liriope. It is vital to the overall health of our local environment that we no longer plant non-natives, focusing solely on planting and maintaining native plants for their ability to support insects, birds and other wildlife. Incorporating more native berry producing shrubs or small trees would substantially benefit the songbird population. In that vein regarding long-term maintenance, it is also important that we leave the over-wintering habitats in place that further support the ecosystem. Pollinator gardens are no help if the insects have no habitat to spend their larval or egg stages in winter.
32. There are at least two plant species in the plan that are listed on the Virginia Invasive Plant Species list and one tree species in the plan that is not well suited for an urban environment especially here in the valley. Euonymus fortunei and Nandina domestica are on the invasive plant list. I am surprised that a VT group would create a design without considering this important aspect. The pin oak, Quercus palustris, listed in the plan requires an acidic, loamy soil and is not well suited to the compacted, alkaline soils of the urban environment. When planted in such environments, the trees exhibit chlorosis (yellowing of leaves) and generally do not thrive. Another reason the pin oak is not suited is it's habit of sweeping downward lower branches. Not best for pedestrian areas. Better alternatives for the poor soils of the urban environment are the Shumard oak or black gum tree.
33. I have concerns about certain invasive species being recommended for downtown and a departure from the perennial, native, pollinator-friendly plants that have become popular in the community.
34. I feel like it's a lot of information for the general population who aren't working with this data or thinking about this data on a daily basis to take in all at once.
35. Nandina
36. Inclusion of known invasive species such as nandina and euonymus
37. The choice of plants looks like they cut out pretty pictures from old copies of Southern Living. This prepackaged comment program is just as bad. The city does need a landscape plan that functions to cool the urban heat island, control runoff and erosion, make the city a habitat for humans, birds, and pollinators. This just doesn't do any of that.
38. not enough natives and pollinator plants
39. The amount of INVASIVE plants you have on this list is crazy. We should be planting native plants that support our ecosystem. In this survey it speaks of a downtown identity and I think an excellent one to build would be native plants of the Shenandoah valley. We are so lucky to live in such a gorgeous place with such wonderful plants and wildlife. We need to continue and expand the pollinator plantings and continue to think of the other wildlife we may support in this city as well. The children of Harrisonburg, my children, deserve a place to live that is an example to the nation of what it could look like to embrace ecological gardening and planting to reduce climate change. Imagine a future Harrisonburg that is leading the nation in what ecological city gardens could look like! Education for children around every corner. Evidence that we love of our little slice of heaven and want to support it around every corner!! Would that not be amazing? The public work department already does amazing work with this. I know this plan can be revised and the invasive and non native plants can be replaced. A great place to start would be keystone plants supported by the work of Doug Tallamy or the list the Xerces society put out of the most beneficial plants to support the local food web. Please consider this! I would love to see downtown Harrisonburg bloom!

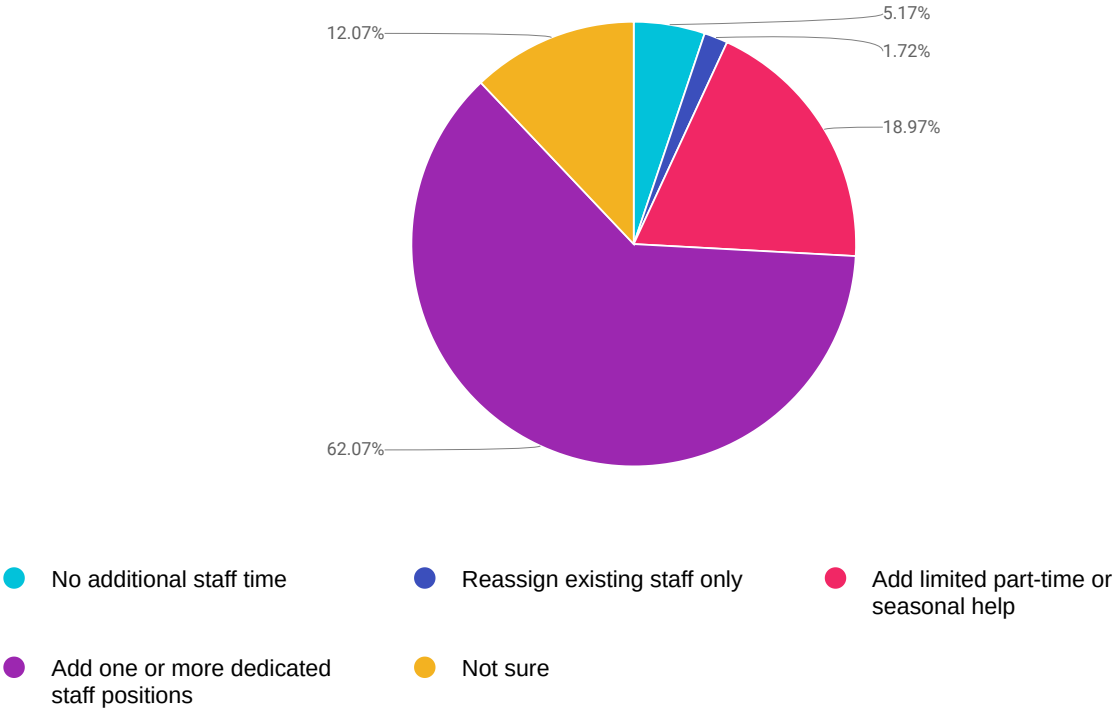
40. 1. Invasive, arguably invasive, and emerging invasive plants are in the plan! EXPLICIT POLICY NEEDED: NO INVASIVE PLANTS, PERIOD. What self-respecting city in 2026 would plant invasives?? 2. Native plants are severely under-represented and often overlooked. Almost none on Court Square. 3. Native plant list developed by Public Works staff is solid and should be attached to the plan as addendum. Native plants are critical to supporting pollinators and wildlife and are integral to the city's historical legacy and brand. 4. Need to make changes to planting plan because not all plants recommended are well-suited to their specified location. Need to acknowledge that flexibility in implementing the plan is needed, as some plantings will succeed and others will fail, especially as the climate continues to heat up. Prioritizing the use of native plants should be reinforced. 6. A palette of generic commercial landscaping plants is specified for Court Square. Is this how we want to "frame the historic square?" (p. 17). Instead, why not frame the historic and cultural heart of Harrisonburg with native Virginia plants that reflect the unique natural history of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the actual framework within which our city thrives? After all, our history and natural history are what make Harrisonburg a destination and gateway that is "Friendly by Nature." 7. In this plan, there is a desire to emphasize "year-round color." However, there is a mistaken belief that year round color requires non-native plants. To get year-round color with native plants, include early blooming, mid-season, and late-season blooming plants. As DCR explains, "the native flora of Virginia offers a surprising variety of color, form, and texture to gardeners and landscape designers. In fact, many familiar and popular landscaping plants such as black-eyed Susan, columbine, and bee balm are native to Virginia. Designing with natives allows the creation of distinctive natural landscapes including woodlands, meadows, and wetlands with unique regional character." 8. There have been concerns about native plants not surviving. This isn't because they are native plants. It is because they need careful attention to receiving the right watering through the first year and/or until they are fully established. My feeling is that plants that are drought tolerant are the way to go as drought seems to be the new normal. 9. The plan recommends enlisting volunteers for some aspects of maintenance. First, ensure there is adequate city staff and budget. Also, be sure the types of volunteer roles are those that can include community members in appropriate levels of decision making and agency rather than just free labor. If they feel they are being listened to and that their input and ideas matter, volunteers could play an important and mutually beneficial role.
41. Too many non-natives. Too many trees in concrete boxes. Trees in concrete boxes die quickly. Not a good idea. There's nothing vertical with native vines. No discussion of additional wildlife that may take up residence. Will you just kill opossums? skunks? Needs to be thought through. Also, rats.
42. It doesn't extend past the downtown area and into surrounding streets :)
43. I feel there are too many non-native species being proposed. The downtown gateways are proposed to have begonia, impatiens, liriopse, marigolds, and many other plants that do not support our ecosystem and pollinators. Native plants are easier to maintain in our environment, tolerant to drought, and provide food and habitats for our insects and animals.
44. The ducks and fish are getting totally poisoned exposed out in city areas with no protection and wildlife is generally suffering in summer with heat and attitudes being careless with litter they shouldn't eat. More no litter signs
45. Definitely no nandina
46. I wish we could provide more resources to create a green downtown.
47. We need many more street trees! I would highlight the Federal Street walk/bike corridor as a prime example of an area that has plenty of space for street trees and landscaping, and yet is currently all concrete. It gets extremely hot in the summer, and deters usage. It could be an absolutely beautiful corridor with the addition of more street trees and landscaping.
48. Harrisonburg has built an identity and brand around natives and pollinators. I have learned so much about using them during the pollinator month events and have embrace the approach to landscaping my own yard like so many other locals have done. Blending year-round vegetation with an emphasis on more natives is my preference...it feels like maybe this plan wants more non-natives for year-round interest with some pollinators and natives sprinkled in. There were a few invasives recommended, which I hope we stay away from especially since the state finally passed a law to require nurseries to label their invasive plans so people are aware. I would like the city to align with the spirit of that law.
49. Troubled by the use of non native and even invasive species, like Liriopse and Nandina. Does not fit or make sense with city character, goals of project, or environmental common sense. Lets carry the native and celebration of our area through the entire thread of the project. I'd encourage City to put resources, funding, and staff into maintenance, as well as allowing for some flexibility in planting. Some plants will root well, others not. Better to be flexible with native varieties than to adhere to a strict planting plan of non natives.

50. This plan was drafted by a group of people who were described as "stakeholders." A FOIA request revealed that they were all city staff. This disdain for the residents of Harrisonburg is typical of the Alexander Banks VI administration. It is problematic and I dislike it. The "stakeholders" themselves were clearly dominated by the most hateful among them -- members of Parks and Recreation. Their hateful influence, backed by the City Manager, is reflected in the use of the word "pride" in the landscaping plan. The use of the term "pride" in connection with landscaping is extremely offensive. It reflects a mindset of using nature as a proxy for exclusion that makes people ashamed of their relationship with nature. Just as people have increasingly come to see shaming people about their bodies as hurtful and offensive and socially unacceptable, more and more people will be emboldened to say what the vast majority already think: that this landscaping plan that makes a display of dominating nature is also [sick and offensive.](<https://wildones.org/joey-santore/>) Harrisonburg is in a biological hotspot on the continent. We should be celebrating that. The city should be leading the way in celebrating that natural is normal; chaotic and complex is beautiful; pioneers remediate our damage; what is already here is good and we should be in right relationship with it. Assigning staff to force nature into being something broken is wasteful, harmful, and perverse.
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Q14

How much should the City invest in staff time to maintain new downtown plantings, including watering, pruning, seasonal change-outs, and general upkeep?

Answered: 58 Skipped: 76



Choices	Response percent	Response count
No additional staff time	5.17%	3
Reassign existing staff only	1.72%	1
Add limited part-time or seasonal help	18.97%	11
Add one or more dedicated staff positions	62.07%	36
Not sure	12.07%	7

Do you have any additional suggestions or feedback on the landscape plan?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 96

1. There should be a more concerted effort to implement this plan in partnership with local groups and community members...city beautification should be a combined effort, not solely a government effort. With a City already at budget capacity, creative solutions/partnerships that still enable this plan to move forward without unduly adding to budget/staffing limitations would be ideal. No other thoughts specific to this plan (seems like a good plan). For the future, recommend (1) not relying so heavily on surveys and instead looking for more meaningful community engagement to review plans like this and (2) rethinking survey questions as I frequently found myself saying that none of these options were representative of what I thought.
2. Please make the city leave vable for those who actually look very here. Please stop raising my property taxes
3. If we do this, do it right - don't skimp. Get volunteers and community to help to keep costs down.
4. I'd love to see more shade/trees along Mason Street and along Elizabeth Street. Both are very hot to walk/ride in the summer. I do love the addition of trees to some of the open parking areas.
5. Work closely with the JMU arboretum in identifying and sourcing the best native plants.
6. City Hall should be first on the list! Landscaping there is terrible and is a poor reflection of the City. I think a neat approach to this idea would be "Adopt-a-Flowerbed" or allow citizens or groups to sponsor a tree. I would imagine there would need to be guidelines on what can be planted, but how fun would it be to have active community participation? Again, the plan is absolutely beautiful but I think there should be a focus on native species, allow for community support, and a selection of plants that are lower maintenance. Watering so many planters will be problematic in a drought and not a wise use of our water resources then the empty planters or dead plants will look worse than nothing at all.
7. It's probably skewed a bit too much non-native. Some of the imagery seems to be JMU property, you'll have to make sure that is a smooth and complimentary transition.
8. Use recommendations from staff, instead of a consultant. Promote the usage of native pollinator plants and promote the usage of the Urban wood program. Stop using so much boring concrete. Celebrate what makes Harrisonburg special instead of trying to fit the mold of another community.
9. Solid plan!
10. More native plants - shrubs- trees.
11. Again, I am very impressed with the master plan and hope it is referred to and followed when making decisions. Sincere appreciation to those who make it happen.
12. I like the general ideas and areas of focus. I have more issue with the plant choices. Please use as many natives as possible; this will lower maintenance in the long run. And for non-natives, stay away from invasive plants.
13. Grateful there is intention and energy going into this.
14. Close the short section of Court Square between the courthouse and Court Square Theater permanently. It is closed now for pipe work and traffic still does just fine. Make that a permanent park.
15. Overall a very good plan - go forth and implement!
16. I don't mind adding help to city staff, but let's be smart about it; and let's listen to whatever the city staff who is knowledgeable about the Harrisonburg landscape is saying. If we're going to try to be a sustainability-focused city (and sure, let's!), this plan as written I don't think gets us there. 100% add lots of more trees. 100% do a planted car park transformation. 100% make an awesome trail. But let's let the science guide us in terms of sustainable landscapes and green infrastructure. Let's reduce mulching needs, reduce recurring planting needs. We should be adding plants that provide environmental value and are long-lasting. And if we're going to call it a city arboretum, are we going to manage it as an arboretum--an intentional collection of trees for study? Did anyone talk to the JMU arboretum about that? Maybe you could get some synergy going there.
17. Should have kept the sheriff's office work crew to maintain the beds! Don't ruin the landscape plan if homeless are down there waste of money. My family avoids downtown for that reason the panhandling is out of control fix that before spending money to improve the the area
18. I STRONGLY support this - let's make it happen soon!!
19. Listen to your local Virginia Master Naturalist and Virginia Native Plant Society chapters -- it is clear that your heart is in the right place (we should all be planting more plants) but you really have a great opportunity to set an example for other communities by making a native-first landscaping plan that not only enhances our city but also provides critical habitat and forage for the birds and bugs we share this planet with. If you pass this half-baked plan and plant a bunch of nandina and liriopse in the city, we will revolt.

20. Please, please, PLEASE consider eliminating the non-native plants from this plan. Please. Didn't we already have this conversation during the Court Square landscaping update last year?!
21. Focus on planting street trees and increasing welcoming green spaces Downtown. Ideally, more pedestrian only areas could be developed to create welcoming vehicle-free zones. More pedestrian plazas would be great. Seriously though, plant more trees, and don't skimp out on native plant diversity in the planting plans. Make sure that these improvements to Downtown can be sustained into the future with adequate funding and staffing. Don't plant a bunch of plants and then just walk away from it. Also, does the City have easements to all the proposed trail areas? Seems like that could be a logistical nightmare to acquire the necessary permissions.
22. Plant ecologically beneficial native species! There are SO many choices!
23. I'm disappointed that a 30 minute cursory review of the plan revealed a few glaring issues with plant selection. Has the city reached out local resources for feedback on the design? The Edith Carrier Arboretum or well regarded local arborists and/or landscape design companies come to mind.
24. Focus on perennials (to cut down on annual plantings/labor). Focus on native, pollinator-friendly plants and native trees.
25. I think preparing for a dryer hotter future is something the city should be doing as it relates to a landscape plan. Focusing on drought tolerant species and species that would help reduce the heat island effect in cities.
26. Definitely would make downtown more inviting especially we are nationally recognized for our program
27. It makes no sense to have a "plan" that does not include the parks. The inspiration for the city should be the High Line in NYC. Mt. Lebanon outside of Pittsburgh has incorporated native plants that are beautiful and function to provide shade, control runoff, and provide habitat. The plant choices in this "plan" are largely annuals, exotics, or unsuited for the dry, sunny, high pH soils of the city. It has plant containers that need constant watering instead of in ground where they would catch and hold runoff. This is eye-candy instead of function.
28. Please, please plant native. Introducing more Invasive plants harms everyone.
29. Thank you to city staff and city council members for deciding to gather community input rather than approving the plan without it, and without close examination. This is very much appreciated. It is also recommended that before it is brought to city council for a vote, that there be an open house where city staff and council are available to discuss the plan with the public, and another opportunity for public input online. Treat it similarly to the role that open houses have played in developing the Liberty Street plan.
30. Native. Native. Native. Don't put trees in concrete boxes. Let downtown businesses, civic organizations, volunteers adopt parts of the new landscape. You need the Link building, etc., so people can live downtown to really revitalize.
31. I think the entry to downtown sign (the blue and yellow one) looks dated - specifically the color combination and the ribbons behind the lettering. It reminds me of something you'd see at an elementary school, and not a city that is modernizing it's aesthetics. I know it's an extension of the city's branded signage, but please consider making this particular one a bit different since it's the entry point to downtown. Something like the natural colors on the first example on this page would feel a lot more in harmony with the outdoorsy culture of Harrisonburg. <https://onsightindustries.com/site-furnishings/community-entry-sign/>
32. I have been impressed with the city's focus on pollinators in recent years and the landscaping around the city that includes medians with native plantings. I hope this plan can be re-imagined to build on that work and swap out non-native plants, shrubs, and trees with native alternatives. I especially would like to see more redbud trees included.
33. I'm not educated in wildlife but I'm a photographer u see details and devopments. If I can help by showing more beauty to our city or more inviting for people to come let me know. Thank you
34. This is important and part of my dream of having a more walkable and inviting downtown.
35. If City Council wants to attract more people to live in dense housing downtown, then it is of vital importance for them to prioritize making downtown an attractive and beautiful place to live. This is one of the easiest things that city Council can do to attract more downtown development, and it is something that is their sole responsibility (I.e., private developers cannot and will not improve downtown street trees and landscaping at the same scale that the city is capable of doing). Look at how much money JMU invests in its landscaping, and think about the great return in investment that it achieves in making it a beautiful campus that attracts people to return from the moment they step foot on campus. Why not make our downtown just as beautiful, and help to attract the dense housing, downtown business, and abundant tourism that many on city council desire? (and of course, the environmental benefits of downtown street trees are also amazing - reduced urban heat island effects, stormwater run-off, etc.). Please, City Council, prioritize this investment in our downtown - your residents of today and future generations will thank you!
36. Attractive curb appearance is so important. I hope that there could be some additional resources spent on staff time for this, but I do not know what is needed and feel like its not worth it to make an uninformed selection for the last question. However I am a bit wary of the recommendation about working with volunteers to reliably weed and water - that is probably overly optimistic.

37. This is exciting, moving to a downtown that looks, feels, and supports community and community building. Let's do this.
38. Repeal the tall grass and weed ordinance and fire Brian Mancini. Let him go back to Dinwiddie County with his insulting 12 inch grass hand gestures. He put rocks over the native plants where the bike trail enters Westover park, and then destroyed the plants that defiantly sprouted through the rocks. He should similarly be shown no mercy. The framing of this sham input process is infuriating. We don't want this. We don't want the city hiring contractors to pull "weeds" out of medians. We don't want money being wasted destroying what is natural and covering it with "plantings" in mulch. That isn't beautiful. To appropriate a notorious phrase from the business garden fight: it is an abomination against what mother nature does. The sick and oppressive relationship between city government and residents, reflected in the vision of "a city for all" which doesn't include governance "by the people," is mirrored in the relationship between city government and nature in this landscaping plan. It is a one-way relation of domination. Staff wonders why plants won't grow and keep dying, and city council wonders why Harrisonburg has shot up into the top ten most fiscally stressed localities in Virginia, why our children are in profound distress, why our mortality and morbidity leads the state and all positive measures of the effect of city government lag. Along with firing Brian Mancini as well as nepotism hires of members of hate groups and militias who are mostly from the county, we need to clean out the City Manager's office, the City Attorney's office, and send Thanh Dang to the private sector.
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