



Downtown Master Planting Plan Survey Results & Revisions

September 22, 2026

Recap Plan



FOCUS AREAS



ENTRY GATEWAYS
Downtown Gateway – North & South Statue



DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION
Main Street Intersections



DOWNTOWN STREETS
Mason St. Medians, Water St., Main St., & Liberty St.



COURT HOUSE SQUARE
Court Sq. West & South – Tree wells & Trees



LANDMARK BUILDINGS
Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center
Public Safety Building
City Hall



CITY PARKS
Liberty Park
Denton park
Farmers Market



PARKING FACILITIES
Liberty St. & Elizabeth St. Lot,
Municipal Parking Lot, Water St. & Mason St. Parking Deck



CITY BEDS & PLANTERS
Liberty St. Bed



CITY TRAILS
Nature Trail
Art/Mural Trail

LANDSCAPE GOALS

CREATE A WELCOMING PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

Shaded, well-designed streets make walking comfortable, safe, and enjoyable year-round.

STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Green spaces and street trees foster pride and a sense of ownership among residents and local businesses.

ATTRACT VISITORS AND SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMY

Lively, green streetscapes encourage people to stay longer, explore shops, and attend downtown events.

DEFINE DOWNTOWN AS A DESTINATION

Distinctive plantings, art, and design features give Harrisonburg its own identity — a place people come to experience, not just pass through.



Disclaimer: This drawing is conceptual and was prepared to show approximate location, arrangement, and dimensions of site features. It is subject to change and is not intended to replace the use of construction documents. The client should consult appropriate professionals before any construction or site work is undertaken. The Community Design Assistance Center is not responsible for the inappropriate use of this drawing.

Harrisonburg: Conceptual Downtown Master Planting Plan
and Focus Area Designs

Site Inventory and Analysis
Focus Areas and Goals
March 28th, 2026

Recap Timeline



- Presented Draft Plan – May 2026
- Released Public Survey – June – July 2026
- Reviewed and Updated Plan – August 2026
- Seek Council Adoption – September 2026

Overall Survey Results



- 134 Total Responses

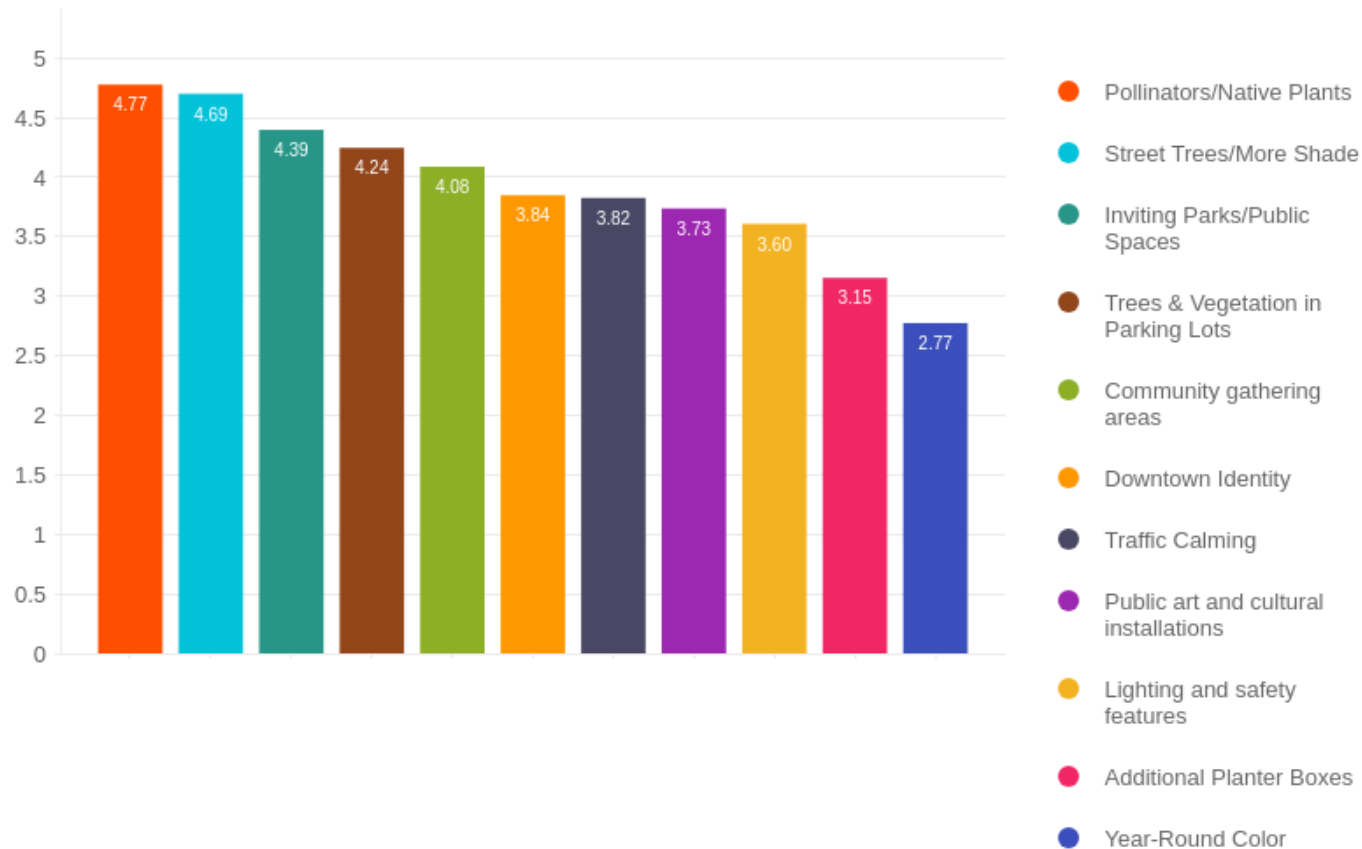
Questions	Average Ratings	Out of
How important is it for the City to invest in landscaping and street trees downtown?	4.70	5
Do you believe the proposed plan would improve the appearance of downtown?	4.07	5
Do you believe the proposed plan would make downtown feel more welcoming and comfortable?	4.07	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

Feature Preference



Please rate the importance of the following features:

Answered: 62 Skipped: 72



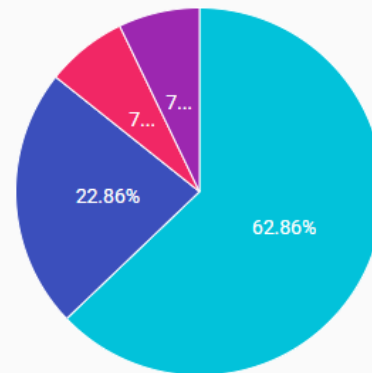
Maintenance and Funding



- “I'd encourage City to put resources, funding, and staff into maintenance...”
- “I would like to see more natives and perhaps a focus on low-maintenance plantings...”

Which statement best reflects your view?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 63



- The City should make a strong investment in both installation and long-term maintenance
- The City should install improvements only at a scale it can maintain with current resources
- The City should pursue the plan only with limited, low-maintenance plantings
- The City should rely mainly on partnerships, volunteers, or sponsorships to expand the plan

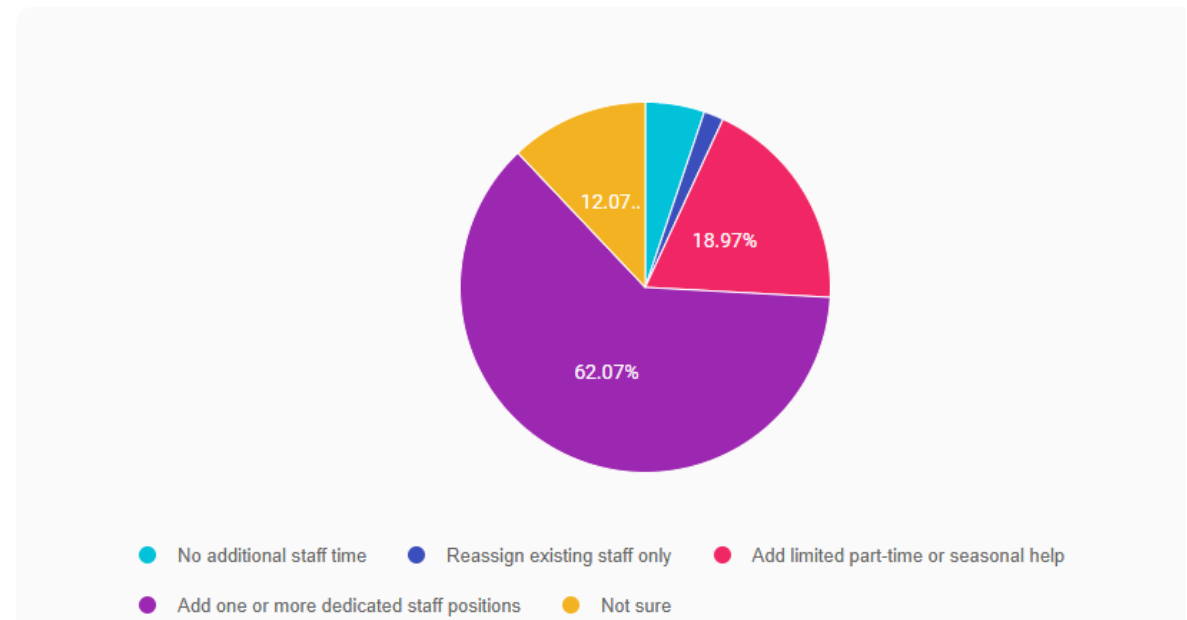
Staffing



- “Make sure that these improvements to Downtown can be sustained into the future with adequate funding and staffing.”
- “...ensure there is adequate city staff and budget.”

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: 75



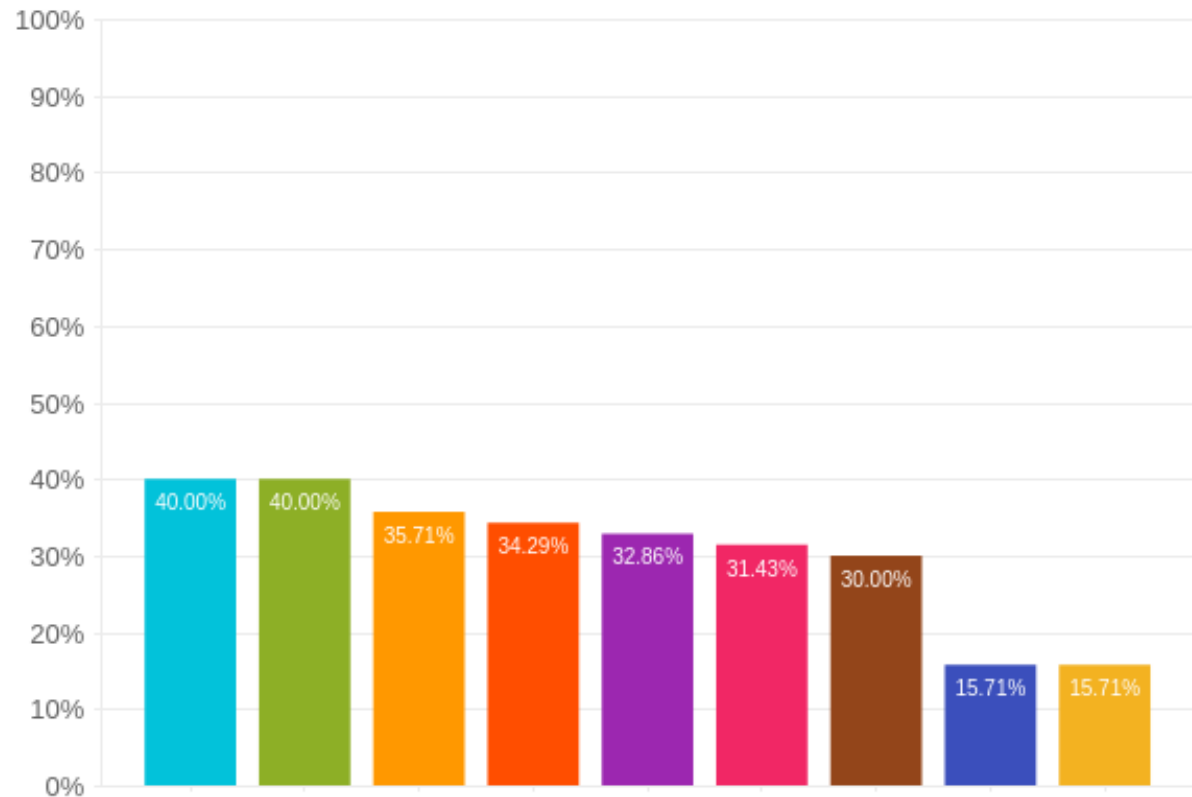
Implementation



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



Open Feedback Responses (positive)



- “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.”
- “More shade, pollinators, native plants”
- “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.”
- “More trees to provide shade in downtown areas.
Incorporating/making more inviting public gathering spaces.
Highlighting blacks run.”

Open Feedback Responses (negative)



- “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.”
- “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.”
- 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".
- “I would like to see more natives and perhaps a focus on low-maintenance plantings, but overall I think it is a great plan.”

Summary of Public Feedback



- Remove invasives
- Increase use of native pollinator plants
- Blend in traditional/ornamental plants, but do not make that the focus of the planting palette
- More street trees and landscaping are highly desirable
- Desire for City to invest funds and staff resources to installing and maintaining trees and landscaping
- Gateways, city parks highest priority areas.
- Downtown Intersections and Landmark Buildings are the lowest priority areas

Plan Revisions



- Incorporate Mission Statement, Key Goals, and Key Objectives from internal
- Removed invasive species and included reference to prohibit use of species found on DCR's Invasive Plant Species List
- Updated suggested plant list to include more native and pollinator species
- Revised 9 planting maps

Implementation



Complete

- Replaced tree at Court Square with Japanese Cedar

Next Steps

- Install tulips and daffodils in various beds
- Install roses at Liberty Park
- Install irrigation at Liberty Park, Hardesty-Higgins Visitor Center, and Main Street Tree Wells
- Purchase additional planter boxes with water reservoir
- Pursue additional staff to maintain landscape spaces