



September 9, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting

## Title

Consider a request to amend the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the minimum lot width for single-family detached dwellings in R-8 — Nyrma Soffel, Community Development

## Summary

|                           |                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zoning Ordinance Sections | Amend Ordinance Section 10-3-59.5                                                                                                       |
| Purpose                   | To reduce the minimum lot width for single-family detached dwellings in the R-8, Small Lot Residential District from 35 feet to 30 feet |
| Applicant                 | City of Harrisonburg                                                                                                                    |
| Planning Commission       | September 9, 2026 (Public Hearing)                                                                                                      |
| City Council              | Anticipated October 13, 2026 (First Reading/Public Hearing)<br>Anticipated October 27, 2026 (Second Reading)                            |

## Recommendation

Option 1. Recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment.

## Context & Analysis

In 2026, the General Assembly of Virginia enacted HB 1212 (<https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20261/HB1212>), which amended the Code of Virginia by adding Section 15.2-2286.2. The new section requires localities with populations of 50,000 or more to adopt and maintain at least one zoning district classification that permits a single-family dwelling on a lot with a minimum lot area not exceeding 3,000 square feet and a minimum lot width not exceeding 30 feet. The amendment became effective on July 1, 2026. If approved, the proposed Zoning Ordinance (ZO) amendment will bring the ZO into compliance with Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2286.2 by having one zoning district classification satisfy the lot area and lot width requirement.

The R-8 district currently requires a minimum lot area of 2,800 square feet, which is below the 3,000-square-foot threshold established by the new state requirement. However, the minimum lot width is 35 feet, which exceeds the maximum width threshold established by the new state requirement. The proposed amendment would amend ZO Section 10-3-59.5, Area and dimensional regulations, to reduce the minimum lot width for a single-family detached dwelling from 35 feet to 30 feet to comply with the new state requirement. All other requirements within ZO Section 10-3-59.5 would remain the same.

Staff recommends approval of the ZO amendment.

**Options**

1. Recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment.
2. Recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment with modifications.
3. Recommend denial of the Zoning Ordinance amendment.

**Attachments**

- Current Ordinance Reflecting Recommended Amendments