



# STAUNTON CITY COUNCIL 3-YEAR PRIORITIES TO ACCOMPLISH VISION FOR 2025

Adopted November 13, 2014

Revised at Council Retreat on April 28, 2015

The Council developed 3-Year Priorities to achieve its Vision for 2025 on September 26, 2014 and adopted these Priorities with the Vision on November 13, 2014. At a follow-up Council Retreat held on April 28, 2015, the Council further defined the purpose of the Priorities and also reviewed them, making several modifications.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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- 1 Aggressively recruit and secure favorable development for the Staunton Crossing site to include light manufacturing and/or mixed use (i.e. hotels, office park, retail, restaurants, residential) with a preference for employers with high-paying jobs
- 2 Prepare the Staunton Crossing site for development and work with developers in a way that secures the best competitive position for the city which may include:
  - Building the road\*
  - Demolishing buildings\*
  - Moving the State Police building and tower
- 3 Develop a strategy to support local businesses, including start ups and expansions, through incentives and consulting services to grow and hire more people with good paying jobs
- 4 Demonstrate our long term commitment to the corridor overlay plan by:
  - Enforcing and defending the ordinance as necessary
  - Bringing additional properties on each route into compliance, noting that the opportunity to model City's commitment only arises as properties improve or turn over
  - Bringing existing properties into voluntary compliance
- 5 Aggressively seek economic development for the city that achieves Council's vision
- 6 Continue to support tourism activities
- 7 Review ordinances that are related to economic development to ensure that the city is business friendly (Departments of Economic Development, Planning and Inspections, and Engineering)

## EDUCATION

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- 1 Provide funding to support the School Board's efforts to increase faculty and staff salaries to make the city competitive in the region
- 2 Secure funding for Lee High rehab/rebuild
- 3 Explore/access a program to provide mortgage assistance to teachers and other public employees

## CULTURE

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- 1 Investigate ways to support seniors through the installation of exercise equipment in the parks
- 2 Continue to support festivals with the provision of in-kind services
- 3 Complete the hiking and biking trails from
  - Gypsy Hill Park to Montgomery Hall Park
  - City center to the Crossing Property (if possible)
- 4 Continue to support the primary efforts of organizations that are enhancing arts and culture in Staunton by providing instrumentalities and tools that local government can bring to bear for success
  - Globe Theatre project
  - Performing arts center

## INCLUSIVENESS

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- 1 Devise a proactive strategy to achieve more citizen engagement, including holding regular meetings (i.e. town meetings) with the public to include opportunities such as:
  - Know the heartbeat of our citizens
  - Share information about specific topics and acquire input
  - Educate people regarding the public decision making process
  - Meet in diverse communities to identify their main needs and devise ways to meet those needs
  - Begin to openly and honestly discuss our perceived differences, whether racial, religious, or class-based
- 2 Review and modify as necessary all City policies to ensure that they are aligned to achieve inclusiveness
- 3 Develop a strategy to further promote the role of diversity in the history and development of the city so that we enhance civic pride, instill ownership, and create momentum for the vision
  - Consider using partners to compile the history (i.e. Smith Center)
  - Communications manager can assist with various strategies
- 4 Consider how we might honor Dr. Martin Luther King by naming a street after him\*

## RESILIENCE

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- 1 Continue to nurture growing local food economy through strategies such as the Farmer's Market, community kitchen, etc.
- 2 Increase the reserve fund balance to 15% (Note: City Council Increased fund balance to 13% in FY15, with intent to continue each year)
- 3 Explore ways in which we can cut the City's dependence on fossil fuels and provide information to Council on cost benefit/resources needed for strategies such as:
  - Installation of solar panels on a public building (i.e. demonstration of commitment)
  - Electric cars and natural gas vehicles
  - Electric vehicle charging stations\*
- 4 Continue Council's effort to prevent hydraulic fracturing in the George Washington National Forest\*

## RESPONSIVE, EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

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- 1 Implement interactive online opportunities to engage citizens (i.e. 311, Mind Mixer)
- 2 Move more transactions to the online environment and simplify City processes (i.e. tutorials, building permits, business licenses, bill paying)
- 3 Engage the communications manager to enhance communication regarding City services and initiatives such as citizen engagement, budget, inclusiveness, etc.

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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- 1 Study changes to the City's land use policies and ordinances to enable more mixed use development and gradually implement those changes
  - Encourage developers to build developments that enable more self-sufficiency
  - Ensure that we do not overly restrict builders so that it is too expensive to build
- 2 Continue to develop a long term financing strategy to ensure that we can meet major needs for public buildings that are not currently in the CIP
- 3 Complete and extend the streetscape plan as funds allow
- 4 Research the expansion/availability of public transit
- 5 Implement policies that encourage the improvement, development, or replacement of blighted properties
- 6 Work with Augusta County to ensure adequate court facilities in downtown Staunton and to create a framework for meeting future needs

**\* ITEM COMPLETED**