

# City of Staunton Comprehensive Plan Update



## Public Input Open House Thursday, May 4, 2017 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Gypsy Hill Park Gym Staunton

The Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) for the update of the Staunton Comprehensive Plan will hold a Public Input Open House for the residents of the City of Staunton. **The Open House will provide citizens, businesses, and special interest groups with the opportunity to review the Plan's Priority Initiatives and provide input and comments.** Please take time to get involved with the Comprehensive Plan update process. Your input and support are vital to the success of Staunton's future.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Rodney Rhodes, Senior Planner for the City of Staunton by phone at 540-332-3862 or by email at [rhodesrs@ci.staunton.va.us](mailto:rhodesrs@ci.staunton.va.us) or Rebecca Joyce, Community Program Manager for the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission by phone at 540-885-5174 or by email at [rebecca@cspdc.org](mailto:rebecca@cspdc.org).

## **City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)**

### **OPEN SPACE/ENVIRONMENT**

- Conserve open space and protect the remaining environmentally sensitive areas in the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region before they are faced with development pressures.
- Encourage sustainability and conservation practices.

### **COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

- Enhance the physical attractiveness of the City through a broad program addressing lighting, signage, and litter control; tree plantings and landscaping; and architecturally appropriate design standards for buildings or structures fronting corridors and thoroughfares.
- Preserve and capitalize on the City's rich historic and architectural character.

### **PLANNING**

- Encourage appropriate new development that is well-planned, compatible, and contributes to the resource base of the City.
- Develop compatible mixed uses as the norm, rather than the exception.

### **NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING**

- Create walkable neighborhoods with emphasis on pedestrian safety and reducing the need for short vehicle trips by residents of high density neighborhoods adjoining major destinations such as the parks, schools, downtown, library, and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Ensure that Staunton's housing stock is an adequate mix to support the citizenry and the City's tax base.

### **REHABILITATION AND RE-USE**

- Promote the conservation and reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings.
- Revitalize blighted and vacant properties.
- Redevelop older, high density areas within the City where utilities and infrastructure already exist.

## **City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)**

### **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**

- Reduce the emphasis of parking quantity and increase the importance of parking design and use.
- Provide a variety of transportation options and designs that balance pedestrian, bicycle, auto, and public transportation within the City and among key destinations.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE AND GOVERNMENT**

- Ensure quality and effective public services that meet the needs of residents and businesses while being proportionate to the City's economic base and resources.
- Ensure that the regulatory and approval processes make it easier and more profitable to attract and maintain the type of development the community desires.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Continue development of a vibrant and active downtown area with enhanced business and residential opportunities.
- Aggressively pursue an economic development program that strengthens and broadens the City's economic base, with an emphasis on clean living wage opportunities desirable to the local citizenry
- Take steps to stabilize the population.
- Actively encourage public and stakeholder participation and input for land use and development decisions.

## Priority Initiatives

### **OPEN SPACE/ENVIRONMENT**

**Conserve open space and protect the remaining environmentally sensitive areas in the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro region before they are faced with development pressures.**

- a. Encourage developers to designate open space and environmentally sensitive areas first and then design developments around those elements.
- b. Encourage and/or provide incentives for useable open space to be included in all existing and new developments.
- c. Encourage appropriate use of agricultural-forestal districts.
- d. Support efforts to preserve Betsy Bell and Mary Grey mountains. Enhance use of the public area at Betsy Bell and look into the feasibility of conservation easements for both Betsy Bell and Mary Grey.
- e. Limit water and sewer access in areas slated for preservation and open space.
- f. Support development of greenways in the City (especially along streams and creeks).
- g. Work with organizations, agencies, and neighboring localities within the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Region to:
  - i. Develop a regional inventory of environmentally sensitive areas which includes recovery or mitigation of environmentally sensitive areas already affected by development.
  - ii. Promote strong land conservation and direct development towards existing developed or designated growth areas through creation of compatible ordinances within the region.
  - iii. Continue efforts to address stormwater management.
  - iv. Begin planning for conservation of viewsheds and open space along both sides of Rt. 262.
  - v. Promote practices that preserve Lewis Creek as a natural asset to the region.
- h. Discourage further development in the floodplains.
- i. Follow the suggestions and implement the recommendations of the Central Shenandoah Valley's Regional All Hazards Mitigation Plan, paying particular attention to those elements directly related to Staunton.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- j. Protect and enhance streams and creeks in and around the City, including Lewis Creek, Asylum Creek, Gum Springs Branch, and Poague Run. Activities may include:
  - i. Monitor and improve the water quality. Utilize both public sector and volunteer resources.
  - ii. Organize volunteer litter clean-ups and encourage participation in the "Adopt-a-Stream" program.
  - iii. Educate public officials and the citizenry as to the roles that streams and creeks have played in the historical and economic development of the City and surrounding area. Examine ways to embrace them as economic and physical assets.
  - iv. Pursue potential development of nature observation stations along the stream and creek corridors.
  - v. Undertake riparian restoration where needed. Also encourage landowners to take advantage of cost-share programs for native tree and shrubs plantings along stream and creek corridors running through private lands.
  - vi. Work with Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee to develop a city-wide watershed recognizability program. Such as a standard "guard rail" at all stream crossings to draw residents attention to the presence of the streams passing below the road.
- k. Identify environmentally sensitive areas and assets for Staunton and develop plans for protecting these areas.
- l. Encourage identification and remediation of environmentally compromised areas of the City.

### **Encourage sustainability and conservation practices.**

- a. Promote and support energy conservation.
- b. Seek alternative energy sources for buildings such as geothermal, green roofs, and water turbines.

## **COMMUNITY CHARACTER**

**Enhance the physical attractiveness of the City through a broad program addressing lighting, signage, and litter control; tree plantings and landscaping; and architecturally appropriate design standards for buildings or structures fronting corridors and thoroughfares.**

- a. Support enhancement and priority implementation of the City's Master Landscaping Plan - especially along entrance corridors and the pedestrian network.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- b. Support increased landscaping of school grounds.
- c. Develop a homeowner landscaping and stormwater management education program to demonstrate the potential for beautification of neighborhoods, as well as environmental and financial advantages of landscaping. Along with education, provide planning assistance, design advice, and incentives for property owners' landscaping improvements.
- d. Work aggressively to prevent and control litter, through an extensive public education campaign demonstrating the environmental, health, and financial costs to taxpayers caused by littering.
- e. Seek ways to control light pollution. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Developing education and incentive programs that highlight the environmental, health, and financial benefits of controlling light pollution and encourage appropriate light design and fixtures.
  - ii. Conducting an assessment of all City-owned facilities, schools, parks, and sports facilities to develop a plan for shielding and/or retro-fitting inappropriate lighting fixtures in order to reduce light trespass, up-lighting, and glare. Promote more energy efficient light sources. Begin shielding city street drop lighting fixtures until they can be retro-fitted with appropriate fixtures.
  - iii. Restricting light trespass from commercial and non-residential establishments onto residential properties. Encourage the shielding of commercial drop lighting until lighting can be retro-fitted with appropriate fixtures.
  - iv. Working with Dominion Virginia Power to supply more efficient, shielded dusk-to-dawn security lights for their customers.
  - v. Requiring appropriate lighting fixtures for all newly developed, redeveloped, or renovated commercial and public facilities. Working with lighting suppliers, contractors, and architects to use more energy efficient and appropriately designed lighting fixtures for their customers.
- f. Seek ways to control excessive pigeon, vulture, vermin, and deer populations.
- g. Continue to support, implement, and maintain an entryways and corridors overlay zone.

### **Preserve and capitalize on the City's rich historic and architectural character.**

- a. Continue support for and cooperative efforts with the Historic Staunton Foundation.
- b. Continue City's emphasis on historic preservation and compliance with the historic preservation ordinance.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- c. Educate the public on the long-term importance (quality of life, financial, etc.) of maintaining historic standards, despite the added levels of review and requirements.
- d. Assess performance, strengths, and weaknesses of the current historic districts ordinance. Identify opportunities for improvements in achieving desired goals in the most effective manner with the least burden for property owners and developers.
- e. Look to areas beyond the boundaries of the current historic districts for opportunities to add to the districts or to create new districts.
- f. The City, working with neighborhoods and the Historic Staunton Foundation, should identify properties throughout the City of historic or architectural significance - especially those along entrance corridors, thoroughfares, and in transitional neighborhoods.
- g. Support historic preservation and tourism efforts in the City's historic districts. The five historic districts are the Beverley Historic District, the Wharf Historic District, the Stuart Addition Historic District, the Gospel Hill Historic District, and the Newtown Historic District.
- h. Support research into the historic structures in the traditional black community of the Johnson Street Area and possible eligibility as a historic district.
- i. Study potential for a Valley Museum of African-American History to be located at the Booker T. Washington Community Center.
- j. Develop a revolving loan fund (publicly funded, privately funded by the community, or a public-private partnership) to purchase, rehabilitate, and/or resell historic properties whose owners are unwilling or unable to properly maintain the properties.
- k. Take steps to preserve the architectural character of older neighborhoods that may not be included under the "historical" category, but are equally important to the look and feel of the city, especially pre- and post-WWII neighborhoods.
- l. When developed, redeveloped, or renovated, require commercial and retail structures that adjoin residential areas to utilize architectural facades and site features that are consistent with and/or complementary to the surrounding neighborhood(s).

### **PLANNING**

**Encourage appropriate new development that is well-planned, compatible, and contributes to the resource base of the City.**

- a. Promote the development of Planned Unit Developments and Planned Business Developments with mixed uses, higher densities, more compact designs, usable open space, and protection of viewsheds and environmental features.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- b. Provide incentives for infill development.
- c. Require utilities in all new developments to be underground rather than overhead, where appropriate.
- d. Promote return of front porches and useable front yards. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Encourage new residential parking structures and garages to be located to the side or rear of the home.
  - ii. Limit the number of houses in subdivisions with garages that protrude beyond the front building line.
  - iii. Encourage driveways and parking areas for single-family residential dwellings to terminate on the side or at the rear of houses, not in front (except on-street parking, where applicable).
- e. Educate the public, development community, local officials and staff on the principles and advantages of smart/good development (environmental, health, and financial) and of density and compact building options when properly planned in concert with public and private entities.
- f. Re-evaluate land use and zoning at Richmond Road and Frontier Drive extended to incorporate a mix of commercial, retail and light industrial uses.
- g. Work with the Frontier Culture Museum to encourage that the DeJarnette Property is developed in a manner compatible with Staunton's overall goals and objectives (i.e., architecturally appropriate designs and uses that complement the downtown efforts).
- h. Work with Augusta County to jointly plan the land uses along the Rt. 262 Loop, so that they are consistent with the goals and objectives of both localities; to minimize sprawl; to maintain limited access; and to ensure that residential areas adjoining the Loop do not become over-commercialized.
- i. Develop appropriate neighborhood-commercial service zones at the planned Springhill fly-over and at the Morris Mill Road interchange.
- j. Examine potential planned business uses for properties to the south and north of Rt. 250 West, where they meet Rt. 262.
- k. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to determine the appropriate location of additional access off Rt. 262.
- l. Develop a master plan for properties adjoining Rt. 262 both between I-81 and Rt.11 and between Rt. 11 and Springhill Road, including street access, utilities extensions, and appropriate land uses.
- m. Coordinate planning on corridors with efforts to promote quality of life and architectural character.



## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

### **Develop compatible mixed uses as the norm, rather than the exception.**

- a. Use zoning tools, design guidelines, and neighborhood and stakeholder input to encourage a balanced mix of uses within neighborhoods, especially transition areas.
- b. Encourage appropriate at-home businesses in residential areas and small business owners "living where you work" in commercial and transitional mixed-use zones.
- c. Encourage residential use of upper floors in downtown and in commercial areas that adjoin neighborhoods.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING**

### **Create walkable neighborhoods with emphasis on pedestrian safety and reducing the need for short vehicle trips by residents of high density neighborhoods adjoining major destinations such as the parks, schools, downtown, library, and neighborhood commercial areas.**

- a. Make restoration and development of a quality pedestrian network a key priority for capital project funding and implementation. Also, initiate an extensive maintenance and enhancement program for existing sidewalks (including repair, landscaping, weed control, street trees, planting strips, and appropriate lighting) and encourage the City to include sidewalk improvements as part of the annual Public Works budget.
- b. Require appropriately landscaped and sized sidewalks within all new developments or major redevelopments with established design, performance, and maintenance standards for sidewalks based on area density and proximity to primary pedestrian destinations.
- c. Create a Pedestrian Access Plan and expand the City's Sidewalk Plan;
  - i. Map the current location of all existing sidewalks and identify widths, conditions, maintenance needs, and access to destinations.
  - ii. Create an implementation schedule for the development of an interconnected pedestrian network.
  - iii. Encourage other types of access beyond pedestrian access.
  - iv. Improve the continuity of sidewalks, pedestrian, and other forms of access throughout the City to improve the transition through neighborhoods and other parts of the City.
- d. Include "walkability" as a primary design criteria for all new public and private development and redevelopment projects.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- e. Begin a program to make existing, high-density neighborhoods that surround primary destinations more "pedestrian friendly" and make the destinations more accessible to residents of those neighborhoods.
- f. Maximize the safety of students utilizing the school "walk-zone" and encourage and enable walking to school through such programs as "Safe Routes To School".
- g. Complete the pedestrian corridor on Churchville Avenue to connect Downtown to Gypsy Hill Park.
- h. Pursue public safety efforts that ensure neighborhood streets along the pedestrian network are as safe as possible from high speed traffic and crime.
- i. New developments should be integrated into the surrounding neighborhood by requiring the connection of new roads to existing roads of the adjoining neighborhood if at all possible. Avoid cul-de-sacs & isolated neighborhoods if at all possible.
- j. Promote a mix of apartment houses, townhouses, duplexes with shops, small parks, offices, etc.

### **Ensure that Staunton's housing stock is an adequate mix to support the citizenry and the City's tax base.**

- a. Work with agencies and the development community to identify ways to best maintain ample housing choices and affordability without concentrating lowest and highest income levels in one area.
- b. Limit the further breaking up of existing single family homes into multi-unit structures, while also promoting the development and use of accessory dwelling units (such as separate entrance basements, attics, over garages) where the owner lives on premises in the primary dwelling unit.
- c. Encourage and facilitate development of apartments, condominiums, and townhouses for upper floors of downtown commercial buildings.
- d. Develop a city-wide housing plan that addresses housing issues at all levels, including affordable housing, blighted areas, historic restoration, and housing for the elderly.
- e. Encourage the City and the Redevelopment and Housing Authority to take a more active role in addressing housing needs throughout the city.
- f. Seek ways to encourage potential homebuilders to choose established neighborhoods for appropriate infill projects where infrastructure and services already exist.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- g. Work with real estate agents and other groups to promote the attraction and distinctiveness of living in older neighborhoods.

### **REHABILITATION AND RE-USE**

#### **Promote the conservation and reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings.**

- a. Provide tools and incentives for private rehabilitation of all older structures, not just those in historical or blighted neighborhoods (e.g., grants, low interest loans, planning and design, environmental hazard abatement advice and assistance, rehab strategy, tax abatement).
- b. Review the Rehab Abatement Program to see how it could be revised to allow for less extensive rehabilitation (than is currently required) for the homeowner to benefit.
- c. Educate the public on how to economically and safely address potential environmental hazards (lead paint, asbestos, and mold).
- d. Develop a revolving loan fund (publicly funded, privately funded by the community, or a public-private partnership) to rehabilitate and/or redevelop properties that do not fit the criteria for the Block-By-Block or Habitat For Humanity programs.
- e. Work with faith-based and community organizations to provide for general upkeep of homes where residents are physically or financially unable to maintain the property.
- f. Maintain a prioritized inventory of potential projects that organizations or volunteers could perform for the benefit of a neighborhood or the City in general.
- g. Continue to apply for funding from state, federal, private, and non-profit programs for neighborhood improvements throughout the City.
- h. Emphasize proactive maintenance of existing structures and properties.

#### **Revitalize blighted and vacant properties.**

- a. Continue support for and expansion of rehabilitation programs.  
For example:
  - 1. Block By Block
  - 2. Habitat For Humanity
- b. Inventory vacant properties and buildings throughout the City and identify potential uses that could or would be viable with appropriate zoning changes.
- c. Encourage the City Treasurer to aggressively pursue the auction of tax delinquent or abandoned properties.

## **City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)**

- d. Seek ways to address the issue of absentee landlords in blighted areas and aggressively encourage or require maintenance and upgrades of deteriorating properties.
- e. Develop a community partnership between public safety officials and residents to address issues of crime (particularly, drug dealing) in blighted neighborhood areas.

### **Redevelop older, high density areas where utilities and infrastructure already exist.**

- a. Make neighborhood revitalization a high priority of the City.
- b. Develop plans and programs for retro-fitting existing single-use developments into walkable, mixed-use viable neighborhoods.
- c. Examine lot size, setback, and parking requirements for opportunities to improve flexibility in older neighborhoods and redevelopment areas.
- d. Encourage compatible, in-fill development on vacant lots.
- e. Encourage continued redevelopment of commercial brownfields areas.
- f. Develop a prioritized list of potential redevelopment opportunities. Provide planning and design assistance for potential investors and developers, as well as opportunities for public-private partnerships.
- g. Encourage compatible local businesses to locate within residential neighborhoods.
- h. Support efforts to improve and revitalize the business strip along West Beverley Street from Lewis Street to the intersection of West Beverley Street and Frederick Street at Thornrose Cemetery (Including mixed uses, where appropriate, on West Beverley from Jefferson to Thornrose).
- i. Support continued revitalization and redevelopment of the Johnson Street area.
- j. Support efforts to improve and revitalize the Central Avenue business corridor bounded by Lewis Street, Churchville Avenue, Augusta Street, and Frederick Street.
- k. Support efforts to improve and revitalize the business strip along West Beverley Street from Thornrose Cemetery to the city limits.
- l. Encourage appropriate reuse of the large vacant structures throughout the City such as the Staunton Manor property on Rt. 250 west.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**

**Reduce the emphasis of parking quantity and increase the importance of parking design and use.**

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- a. Scale commercial parking requirements to typical use, rather than capacity use, by lowering the minimum level of parking required and limiting the total amount of hard surface parking permitted.
- b. Reduce parking requirements by allowing and promoting shared parking and dual use - especially for redevelopment, transitional areas, and planned mixed-use development.
- c. Require landscaping and a safe, user-friendly pedestrian network with designated walkways and crossings within commercial and public parking areas.
- d. Maintain incentives for retro-fitting excess hard surface commercial parking areas to landscaped areas.
- e. Where appropriate, move parking to side and rear of commercial and public buildings rather than the front.
- f. Examine ways to ensure maximum utilization of downtown parking garages and public lots.
- g. Consider extending local parking zones for neighborhoods adjoining Downtown. Minimize the cost and inconvenience of obtaining and using residential passes.
- h. Consider additional parking garages in the City.

### **Provide for a variety of transportation options and designs that balance pedestrian, bicycle, auto, and public transportation within the City and among key destinations.**

- a. Develop alternative approaches to street designs in order to ensure that the roads and intersections are scaled to the neighborhoods.
- b. Evaluate each new VDOT project from the standpoint of sidewalks, pedestrian safety, bicycle access, and the impact on existing neighborhoods before final design.
- c. Install traffic calming devices for heavily traveled thoroughfare streets that go through neighborhoods (example: Donaghe Street, Springhill Road, Grubert Avenue, Stuart Street, North Augusta) and streets going through school "walk-zones."
- d. Develop safe, designated street crossings and ingress/egress points so that pedestrians from adjoining high-density neighborhoods can walk to and from primary destinations (parks, schools, library, downtown, neighborhood commercial areas, etc.) without the need for short vehicle trips.
- e. Re-examine traffic routing patterns for opportunities in which through traffic might be dispersed or re-routed, rather than being concentrated through older, established neighborhoods.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- f. Maintain ways to provide tourists with easier access from Interstates 81 and 64 to downtown and traffic routing in and around the downtown area to ensure the best possible viewsheds for those entering the City's core.
- g. Collaborate with employers and neighboring localities to promote ride-sharing and at-home work options.
- h. Develop the Montgomery Avenue Connector Road.
- i. Maintain strong opposition to the Virginia Department of Transportation's proposed plan for a Service/Access Road Exit off I-81 for Staunton.
- j. Extend trolley routes and provide better information on schedules.
- k. Continue to make Staunton more bike-friendly by adding more bike racks, especially at trolley stops, creating more bike lanes especially as streets are built or widened, linking greenways with bike trails and paths, and reorienting sewer grates to make it easier for bikes to ride across.
- l. Pursue safe pedestrian networks in and between all neighborhoods.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE AND GOVERNMENT**

**Ensure quality and effective public services that meet the needs of residents and businesses while being proportionate to the City's economic base and resources.**

#### **Recreation:**

- a. Provide appropriate facilities and programs to adequately meet the recreational needs of the general community.
- b. Continue to support and provide facilities for active and passive recreation activities that provide opportunities for social interaction, including soccer, baseball, softball, football, basketball, swimming, skateboarding, rollerblading, crafts, knitting, and bird-watching.
- c. Work with the local YMCA and similar organizations to provide joint programs and to supplement each other's offerings.
- d. Maintain a wide variety of recreation programs for seniors.
- e. Continue to support the network of parks; small and large.

#### **Public Safety:**

- a. Closely monitor personnel and equipment needs of the public safety departments (police, fire, rescue) to ensure that an optimum level of public safety and protection is maintained for Staunton's citizens, homes, and businesses.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- b. Continue and promote public safety education and prevention programs for police, fire, and rescue services in schools, neighborhoods, and other settings.
- c. Develop a volunteer "Crime Watch" program for parks, public areas, and along the pedestrian network leading to and from destinations.
- d. Develop a "Fire Watch" program for any areas of the city that border forested lands and have high potential for wildfires.
- e. Continue support for "closest to call" joint response agreement with Augusta County Fire Department.
- f. Ensure that the City is prepared in the event of a natural disaster or terrorism here or in neighboring regions where it could significantly affect the City or its residents.

### **Schools:**

- a. Support efforts to maintain a quality school system, but recognize the constraints of the City's entire budget.
- b. Encourage the continued renovation and upgrade of existing, neighborhood-based schools.
- c. Encourage more utilization of schools as neighborhood focal points and gathering centers for after hours and community activities when schools are not in session.
- d. Study potential for utilizing school grounds and playgrounds as neighborhood "mini-parks" on weekends and during summers when schools are out of session.
- e. Continue to capitalize on the excellent schools, colleges, and universities in the region to assist with the implementation of planning objectives. Utilize student interns and classes to conduct research; and seek input from professors and students in developing innovative options and in evaluating alternative approaches.

### **Library:**

- a. Support continued maintenance/enhancement of the Library facilities and encourage family-friendly programs and services.

### **Social Services:**

- a. Ensure that Staunton only has responsibility for a proportionate number of social service clients for its size and capabilities.

### **Utilities and Infrastructure:**

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- a. Discourage extension of water and sewer utilities into areas where they might promote the development of identified environmentally critical areas.
- b. Continue to fund and seek funding for critical stormwater control facilities and flood mitigation activities.
- c. Continue to require sidewalks and curb and guttering for all new developments and major renovations, but allow for flexibility in design, so long as the edge of the street is maintained and stormwater is controlled.
- d. Make the City of Staunton a model of energy efficiency and renewable energy utilization. Encourage green initiatives and integrate emerging technologies.

### **Ensure that the regulatory and approval processes make it easier and more profitable to attract and maintain the type of development the community desires.**

- a. Work with stakeholders (including developers, contractors, investors, real estate agents, architects, land surveyors, and bankers) to evaluate the regulatory and approval processes.
- b. Develop zoning regulations and design goals in a graphical / pictorial format.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/TOURISM**

### **Continue development of a vibrant and active downtown area with enhanced business and residential opportunities.**

- a. Continue to support the Staunton Downtown Development Association and the downtown revitalization efforts.
- b. Support efforts of Staunton Cultural Development Alliance, American Shakespeare Center, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, R.R. Smith Center for History and Art, Staunton Performing Arts Center, Frontier Culture Museum, and others to expand arts and cultural opportunities for Staunton's residents and visitors.
- c. Encourage development and redevelopment that stimulates increased pedestrian activity in the downtown and adjoining transitional areas.
- d. Promote outdoor dining, outdoor sales by downtown businesses, festivals, community gatherings, and other activities that encourage pedestrian activity and increase social interaction in the downtown area.
- e. Pursue the establishment of more "basic services" businesses such as a grocery store, laundry, and pharmacy for residents of downtown and adjoining neighborhoods.



## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- f. Pursue the establishment of more downtown businesses that cater to children and families.
- g. Continue to educate commercial owners and potential business operators on the benefits available within enterprise zones.
- h. Continue to work with the County of Augusta to pursue alternatives to maintain the Augusta County Court facilities in Downtown Staunton.

**Aggressively pursue an economic development program that strengthens and broadens the City's economic base, with an emphasis on living wage opportunities desirable to the local citizenry.**

- a. Support the goals of the City's Economic Development Plan, including:
  - i. Short Term Priorities:
    - Destination retail
    - Tourism
    - White collar service businesses
    - Manufacturing (for industrial parks)
  - ii. Long Term Priorities:
    - Workforce skill development
    - Development of higher paying jobs
    - Small business development
- b. Promote and fill the Greenhills Industrial Park and the Staunton Gateway.
- c. Work cooperatively with Augusta County and Waynesboro to achieve joint economic development goals.
- d. Continue to endorse the Central Shenandoah Valley's Regional Strategic Initiatives.
- e. Actively participate in the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, the Shenandoah Valley Technology Council, the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Investment Board, the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, and similar organizations that promote the economic health and well-being of Central Shenandoah Valley residents and businesses.
- f. Support the efforts of the Staunton Convention and Visitors Bureau, American Shakespeare Center, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, R. R. Smith Center for History and Art, Staunton Performing Arts Center, Frontier Culture Museum, and others to make Staunton and the surrounding area a tourism destination.
- g. Pursue development of key special projects including the Globe Theater, and the Staunton Performing Arts Center.
- h. Work cooperatively with Augusta County and Waynesboro, as well as the Shenandoah Valley Travel Association to achieve joint tourism goals.

## City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives (In No Particular Order)

- i. Support an agricultural processing plant in the area to give farmers a way to market and process farm products locally.
- j. Encourage medical and educational uses in the downtown area.
- k. Maintain support for a “green business” incubator located in Staunton.

### **Encourage a demographically diverse and growing population.**

- a. Recruit a mix of young professionals, families, and recent retirees to Staunton.
- b. Develop incentives for young adults to return to the city after completing college or after starting a family.
- c. Capitalize on the financial resources and life experiences that new retirees bring to the City.
- d. Ensure adequate facilities and programs are available to support the City's older citizens.
- e. Empower Staunton's older citizens to remain active in the community. Encourage volunteerism, promote the hiring of seniors, and foster an Advisors Guild or Mentor Program in which retired persons share their knowledge and talents with young people.

### **Actively encourage public and stakeholder participation and input for land use and development decisions.**

- a. Promote and help groups like Community Involvement and Awareness, Rebuilding Augusta, Habitat for Humanity, as well as faith-based, civic, and service organizations to play key roles in neighborhood improvement and revitalization efforts - especially in older, established neighborhoods. Strongly encourage development of neighborhood and commercial associations, such as the Newtown Neighborhood Association and the Newtown Center Business Guild.
- b. Assist neighborhood groups in conducting "neighborhood visioning" exercises to design specific goals for neighborhoods and to identify area needs and desires.
- c. Bring the development community (including developers, investors, contractors, architects, real estate agents, bankers, and business owners), as well as other key stakeholders, into the neighborhood visioning processes for a private sector perspective on how neighborhoods might be developed, redeveloped, or rehabilitated.
- d. Hold joint meetings at least annually, or more often as needed, between Staunton, Augusta County, and Waynesboro Planning Commissions to identify regional solutions to common issues and objectives.

**City of Staunton – Priority Initiatives  
(In No Particular Order)**