

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 9:21 AM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Tue, 08/12/2025 - 09:21

Submitted values are:

Name

Taylor Evans

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6.b.

Comment

I have worked in land conservation in the Shenandoah Valley for more than half a decade - developments like these help preserve the farmland and forestland of the surrounding county. I support the rezoning proposed and hope City council will do the same. I have my misgivings with the aesthetics, but I trust Council will do what they can to minimize parking, traffic, and visual impact via proffers from the developer.

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Amy E. Snider
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 11:31 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Fw: The Link

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Karen Thomas <taya_va@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 11:05:09 AM
To: Deanna R. Reed <Deanna.Reed@harrisonburgva.gov>; Monica L. Robinson <Monica.Robinson@harrisonburgva.gov>; Laura A. Dent <Laura.Dent@harrisonburgva.gov>; Bcc: Nasser AL Sa'adum <n75n79@hotmail.com>; Dany R. Fleming <Dany.Fleming@harrisonburgva.gov>
Cc: Ande Banks <ande.banks@harrisonburgva.gov>; Amy E. Snider <Amy.Snider@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good morning Harrisonburg City Council,

My name is Karen Thomas, a resident of 158 East Johnson St. Harrisonburg. I am writing to oppose rezoning 473 South Main Street from R-3 to B-1C. I know the city needs more housing, but this is not it, The Link will be only affordable to college students from JMU, EMU and the young professionals that are coming to Harrisonburg to work at the colleges, hospital and high paying jobs.

Just as this council is not the council that voted for the devastating destruction of our northeast neighborhood, also known as Newtown, R4 and R16, I truly hope you all do not want to be remembered as the council that destroyed the beautiful historic downtown. That is exactly what this proposed project will do.

Community Connectors group along with City Staff are just starting to try and repair some of that damage and make Mason Street more pedestrian, bike friendly and welcoming for the residents of northeast and the city, I don't see that happening with a six story building of 265 apartments on Main Street.

Thank you for your time,

Karen Thomas

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 11:15 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer; Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: Public comment about The Link

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Isaac Witmer <isaacw@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 11:13 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: Public comment about The Link

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Hello, I'm a resident of the Northwest Neighborhood.

We just had the hottest summer on record. The summer before that was the hottest summer on record. This is a trend that is going to continue.

I know everyone is concerned about climate change, but we don't yet understand how drastic we are going to have to adjust to meet this new reality.

Part of the transition will be moving to much more efficient city layouts. Cities that promote walkability and bikeability. Cities that are dense. Apartment buildings that can hold a lot of people, and reduce energy costs.

When I bought my house in 2017, after living in the city for 7 years, I wanted to buy a place that was near downtown, because I wanted to be able to walk to Klines or Court Square Theatre. Living downtown is a dream, and right now only a few people can participate in that: those that are willing to pay for very expensive housing.

The house I bought was 20 minutes walk away. These houses will be a 5 minute walk.

That transforms the way people do life in our city. More people close to businesses, and less cars on the road.

Everyone knows that sitting in traffic is no fun, but yet we continue to build our cities in a way that requires more traffic, not less.

Today a project is before us that has an opportunity to lean into what the more dense version of Harrisonburg City could look like.

We need to lean into that instead of pushing it away. It will make the "fundamental change" that we're required to make, a bit easier to swallow.

Please vote to support The Link, and other high density projects like it.

Thank you

- Isaac

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Carl Larsson <profcarllarsson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 12:44 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Please include in the record - Agenda Item 6.b

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Ms. Ulmer:

I respectfully submit my community perspectives piece for *The Citizen*, “**A Gentle Plea to Keep R-3: The Richness of Restraint in Harrisonburg’s Downtown Historic District**” (August 10, 2025), to be included in the official record for the August 12, 2025 Harrisonburg City Council meeting, Agenda Item 6.b (Rezone 435–495 S. Main St. & 282–298 S. Liberty St. — “The Link Apartments”). I also request that it please be attached to the agenda item file so Council and the public can access it.

The full text appears below my signature.

URL for the article at *The Citizen*: <https://hburgcitizen.com/2025/08/10/community-perspective-a-gentle-plea-to-keep-r-3/>

Thank you for your time and help in receiving this article for the public record.

Sincerely,

Carl Larsson
487 S Mason St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801

A Gentle Plea to Keep R-3

The Richness of Restraint in Harrisonburg’s Downtown Historic District

A Perspectives Piece published in The Citizen, August 10, 2025

As an associate professor of finance at JMU whose doctoral work focused on commercial real estate finance, I care deeply about how economic growth can shape community life. I’m grateful for Brent Finnegan’s [thoughtful essay](#) on “The Link,” and I share in his hopes: a downtown of neighbors living in community, with fewer car trips, and a stronger tax base. My concern with the Link is very practical: the plan before City Council on August 12 is not yet structured in a way that can fully attain those good ends.

The project’s name – “The Link” – promises outward connection, yet its design leans inward. A six-story wall at the gateway to the Downtown Historic District would interrupt the mountain views and

wide-open sightlines that make the public spaces by City Hall and Turner Pavilion feel open and shared. Most of the proposed building's ground-level frontage appears to be private; only a small corner of the 2.75 acre lot looks like public-facing retail space. With garage parking and private amenities, daily life risks moving behind secured doors rather than out onto porches and sidewalks. We can add homes here without losing the neighborly warmth that defines Harrisonburg.

I love walking downtown and commuting by bike whenever possible, but much of our city is still accessible only by car. Many of the estimated 500-700+ residents of the proposed development will need cars for trips to class and work, for running errands, and for out-of-town travel. If demand for parking exceeds the available spaces, those cars will not disappear; they will search for already scarce curb spaces, crowding out shoppers and visitors. That is not the boost to downtown business that any of us intend.

Mr. Finnegan is correct that a B-1C zoning would bring in more property tax revenue to the city. Yet the likely impact on our city budget is both modest and uncertain. An estimated ~\$600,000 in incremental property taxes would amount to only a ~0.14% increase in our total city budget. And if the building leans heavily toward student housing and is later acquired by the university for on-campus beds, it could move off the tax rolls completely. Thin and speculative fiscal gains should not outweigh lasting questions of fit, scale, and place—especially on a block so central to the identity of our beloved city.

It's true that the Downtown 2040 plan calls for reinvestment in South Downtown. The Downtown 2040 plan, however, also clearly reminds us that "Main and Liberty Streets are the primary front doors to Downtown. They should aspire to the highest standards in design as they reflect the first impression visitors have of Downtown." (City of Harrisonburg, p. 44). In the absence of an architectural review board in Harrisonburg, it is the responsibility of City Council to ensure that these high standards are met. An out-of-scale wall of apartments at our front door would be incompatible with the way in which we desire to welcome all who come seeking the gentle character and warmth of the Friendly City. And because the developer's proffers do not strictly lock in today's renderings, the building's final materials and detailing may differ, unless more specific design commitments are secured in writing today.

Alternatively, a well-designed R-3 project could usher in a new community of neighbors on this plot while preserving the existing scale of its historic surroundings. A 3-story townhome, apartment, or condo development interspersed with greenery would be both economically feasible and a welcome addition to this block. Imagine walking through the property and seeing friends on their front steps, mature trees keeping watch over the rooflines, and perhaps—if the property owner so wishes—the beautiful Lindsey Funeral Home preserved, continuing to grace South Main Street as one of our city's most elegant historic buildings.

Larger, six-story buildings can find homes on underused B-1 sites elsewhere without crowding out our fragile historic core. Good growth fits its surroundings and enhances livability for all.

If the applicant insists on pursuing something larger than R-3 here, City Council should look for measurable, binding proffers that truly link private profits and public good. For example, the

developer could commit to conducting a sun-and-shadow analysis and include setbacks and step-downs that ease the transition to nearby homes like the historic Octagon House; it could proffer on-site parking sized to demonstrated demand to reduce the risk of parking spillover on the curbs adjacent to nearby businesses, public spaces, and houses of worship; it could increase the proffered minimums of 8 exterior and 90 secure indoor bike parking spaces; and commit to a longer run of active, street-level commercial space to enliven the block. The developer could commit to installing green or solar roofs with third-party certification, and incorporate more specific, binding design proffers to help ensure quality is preserved from rezoning through construction. Let the promises live in the proffers, not only in the pictures.

Concern over the current proposal is not confined to one neighborhood. Downtown belongs to all of us – city, county, and out-of-town visitors alike – and a quickly growing petition, with over 1,000 signatures collected as of August 8th, reflects a broad interest in preserving the scale and character of our historic district.

Saying “no” to this rezoning is not a vote against development. It is a patient “yes” to growth that builds community, honors our historic district, and keeps downtown open and welcoming to all. I invite neighbors to read the public rezoning application, consider the alternative uses of this land, and kindly let City Council know—by email, by petition, or at the public hearing on Tuesday, August 12 at 7 p.m.—that we can welcome more neighbors while also asking for a design that truly links us all.

With gratitude for everyone working towards the common good of our city, I respectfully ask City Council to vote no on this rezoning—and to wait with hope and anticipation for a proposal that better fits our shared front door.

Carl Larsson, Ph.D., is an associate professor of finance at James Madison University. He lives in Harrisonburg along with his wife and two young children. The opinions expressed here are his own.

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:26 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Wed, 08/06/2025 - 20:26

Submitted values are:

Name

Kelsey Reider

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

No agenda is currently posted on the page so an item number is not available

Comment

I oppose rezoning the downtown parcel The Links from R-3 to B-1C. This project has too many units and will negatively affect folks who already live downtown as well as anyone who visits downtown.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

reider.12@gmail.com

4197071635

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 3:00 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Cc: Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: The Link Public Comment

Hi Pam,
Would you please share this message with City Council, Ande, and Amy?
Thank you,

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: KD <kcdouglass10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council Members,

I am unable to attend the August 12th meeting and want to express my opposition to this zoning change.

I am opposed to any housing that does not accommodate the greatest housing need in Harrisonburg: affordable housing for low wage-earners without whom the local economy would not flourish. This project first and foremost is about financial gain at the expense of

- a) community housing that meets the needs of a majority of Harrisonburg citizens and wage earners
- b) a downtown area that cannot accommodate such a structure and its population without jeopardizing the efforts over the last 30 years to make downtown an open, vibrant and welcoming space for all, and
- c) is detrimental to the environment by the addition of brick, mortar and pavement and the associated by-products to a downtown area that, if redeveloped, that should align with a project that reflects environmental awareness and purpose.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Kate

--

Kate Douglass (she/her/hers)

M.A. International Development and Global Health
RPCV Panama 2010-2012
(929)431-9585

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 1:12 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Cc: Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: The Link Public Comment

Hi Pam,
Would you please share this message with City Council, Ande, and Amy?
Thank you,

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: LAURA DOUGLASS <lbdouglass@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:34 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To: City Council Members
From: Laura Douglass
Re: Proposed Zoning Changes for The Link

I am unable to attend the August 12th meeting and want to express my opposition to this zoning change for the following reasons:

1. The magnitude of this structure and related parking area and access to these spaces will impact the traffic flow throughout downtown and the neighborhoods surrounding it. The "monster" will feed on all paths that lead to it in countless ways. The Link will not exist in a bubble.
2. The magnitude of this structure and related parking area does not align with existing structures. It would be overwhelming and dominate the downtown space.
3. I am opposed to any housing that does not accommodate the greatest housing need in Harrisonburg: affordable housing for low wage-earners without whom the local economy would not flourish. This project first and foremost is about financial gain at the expense of a) community housing that meets the needs of a majority of Harrisonburg citizens and wage earners b) a downtown area that cannot accommodate such a structure and its population without jeopardizing the efforts over the last 30 years to make downtown an open, vibrant and welcoming space for all, and c) is detrimental to the environment by the addition of brick, mortar and pavement and the associated by-products to a downtown area that, if redeveloped, that should align with a project that reflects environmental awareness and purpose.

Sincerely,

Laura Douglass
Harrisonburg City Resident since 1991

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Pamela S. Ulmer
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:56 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: FW: The Link Public Comment

From: Christopher Tipton <catipton@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Aloha Thanh Dang,

Below is a copy of an email I sent to city council members' individual email addresses. I'm sending it you also so that it is included for next Tuesday's meeting.

Aloha Harrisonburg City Council,

I will be unable to attend your upcoming meeting on 12 AUG 2025. Thus I am submitting my testimony regarding the rezoning for the Link Project in this email.

I urge you to perform the rezoning to allow this project to proceed. You will surely hear opposition from current residents at Tuesday's meeting. Please allow me to speak for those in support who cannot have a voice - future residents who would live in this property.

These families and students would benefit from living in a property that does not force each of them to own a personal vehicle. They would reap the benefit of living in a walkable and bikeable neighborhood, with kids from elementary school all the way through JMU being within walking or biking distance of their classrooms. Nearly all development on the south side of I-64 has been car-dependent, resulting in more and more traffic as each new resident adds to the congestion. Projects such as the Link, with its medium-density and centralized location, provide residents with an alternative to using a personal car; this is the only way to reduce traffic.

The Link is not just apartments. In a glaring omission, the opposition's flyer makes no mention of the retail space on the ground level. Such mixed-use properties used to be the norm, not the exception. These stores will not only benefit those who will call the Link home but also those who currently enjoy visiting downtown.

When the opposition has run out of rational arguments, they inevitably land on the excuse of "character". "Character" is just another way of saying "I don't want things to change." But locking cities into a single design or style via zoning is the recent exception in our history, not the rule. If we truly want our downtown to thrive, we must undo these restrictive zoning rules.

Regards,

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 12:56 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Mon, 08/04/2025 - 12:55

Submitted values are:

Name

Bernd Kaussler

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Rezoning – 435, 445, 457, 473, 483 & 495 South Main Street and 282, 288, 294 & 298 South Liberty St (R-3 to B-1C) (The Link)

Comment

Dear members of the city council

We are residents at 540 S Mason Street and we are writing you to strongly oppose the proposed changes to the rezoning of 435, 445, 457, 473, 483 & 495 South Main Street and 282, 288, 294 & 298 South Liberty St (R-3 to B-1C) in order for a new development to be built

We are asking you to vote "No" on the rezoning of the Lindsay Funeral Home property from R-3 to B-1C.

A 6-story, 265-unit building with up to 760 bedrooms at the gateway to downtown would overwhelm our infrastructure, clog already narrow streets like Paul, Grattan, and West View, and erode the historic charm that makes Harrisonburg's Old Town and downtown so special.

It seems perfectly obvious that the proposed parking is insufficient, with just 335–360 spots for potentially 760 residents—putting undue strain on surrounding neighborhoods and local businesses. Having lived in Old Town for 18 years, claims that most residents won't own cars are unrealistic and dismissive of our concerns and experience.

Rezoning to accommodate this outsized project would set a dangerous precedent that favors short-term profit over long-term, community-centered planning. It would absolutely ruin downtown as a livable

space.

We support smart, sustainable growth—but it must fit the scale, spirit, and character of our historic city.

We are asking the council to vote NO to protect the heart of Harrisonburg.

sincerely

Bernie and Diar Kaussler
540 S Mason Street

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

kausslerb@gmail.com

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 12:46 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Mon, 08/04/2025 - 12:46

Submitted values are:

Name

Kevin Gabel

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

not listed yet

Comment

I am a Harrisonburg citizen who lives in Old Town and loves our downtown, I respectfully request that you table the request for rezoning for The Link proposal, and use the time for city wide feedback and deliberation. The property being considered for this proposed development is truly a gateway to our lovely downtown. The scale of the proposed structure is massive and will have a significant and permanent impact on our downtown in many different ways. It is a tremendous responsibility you have to our city and its residents to get it right. A city wide deliberation would allow time for community input and engagement that increases ownership and appreciation for your role as city council.

Let's make sure we have a sight line that is pleasing and consistent with our historic downtown. We want a plan that matches the scale, the traffic flow and parking needs without compromising the city's long term vision.

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 9:30 AM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Mon, 08/04/2025 - 09:30

Submitted values are:

Name

Gloria Mast

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Not listed yet

Comment

As a Harrisonburg citizen who loves our downtown, I respectfully request that you table the request for rezoning for The Link proposal, and use the time for city wide feedback and deliberation. This space is truly a gateway to our lovely downtown and will be a permanent structure, as you well know. It is a tremendous responsibility you have to our city and its residents to get it right. A city wide deliberation would allow time for community input and engagement that increases ownership and appreciation for your role as city council. Our role is to our community, not to the developer of course.

Let's make sure we have a sight line that is pleasing and consistent with our historic downtown. We want a plan that matches the scale, the traffic flow and parking needs without compromising the city long term vision.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 1:07 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Sun, 08/03/2025 - 13:07

Submitted values are:

Name

Lynette Mast

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

not yet listed

Comment

As a Harrisonburg citizen who loves our downtown, I respectfully request that you table the request for rezoning for The Link proposal, and use the time for city wide feedback and deliberation. This space is truly a gateway to our lovely downtown and will be a permanent structure, as you well know. It is a tremendous responsibility you have to our city and its residents to get it right. A city wide deliberation would allow time for community input and engagement that increases ownership and appreciation for your role as city council. Our role is to our community, not to the developer of course.

Let's make sure we have a sight line that is pleasing and consistent with our historic downtown. We want a plan that matches the scale, the traffic flow and parking needs without compromising the city long term vision.

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

lynette.mg.mast@gmail.com
5408102060

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 1, 2025 4:59 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/01/2025 - 16:59

Submitted values are:

Name

Ella Leichty

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

N/A

Comment

As a Harrisonburg citizen who loves our downtown, I respectfully request that you table the request for rezoning for The Link proposal, and use the time for city wide feedback and deliberation. This space is truly a gateway to our lovely downtown and will be a permanent structure, as you well know. It is a tremendous responsibility you have to our city and its residents to get it right. A city wide deliberation would allow time for community input and engagement that increases ownership and appreciation for your role as city council. Our role is to our community, not to the developer of course. Let's make sure we have a sight line that is pleasing and consistent with our historic downtown. We want a plan that matches the scale, the traffic flow and parking needs without compromising the city long term vision.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 1, 2025 10:41 AM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/01/2025 - 10:40

Submitted values are:

Name

Sara Leichty

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-09-12

Agenda Item Number

no agenda released yet

Comment

As a Harrisonburg citizen who loves our downtown, I respectfully request that you table the request for re-zoning for The Link proposal, and use the time for city wide feedback and deliberation. This space is truly a gateway to our lovely downtown and will be a permanent structure, as you well know. It is a tremendous responsibility you have to our city and it's residents to get it right. A city wide deliberation would allow time for community input and engagement that increases ownership and appreciation for your role as city council. Our role is to our community, not to the developer of course. Let's make sure we have a sight line that is pleasing and consistent with our historic downtown. We want a plan that matches the scale, the traffic flow and parking needs without compromising the city long term vision.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

sara.leichty@gmail.com

5404217929

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Saturday, August 9, 2025 8:56 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Sat, 08/09/2025 - 20:55

Submitted values are:

Name

Merv Webb

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Rezoning Kyger Funeral Home property to B-1C

Comment

B-1C Re-zoning: As a 50 year resident of Harrisonburg, I am very much opposed to the rezoning of the parcel for the proposed development in 473 R-3. Such a large apartment complex will not only take away from the character of our downtown area, but also create heavier burdens in terms of traffic and parking. We already have a very large apartment development (Frazier Quarry) taking place in western Harrisonburg. Why the rush to approve a second large project.....even before knowing what impact the first one will have on our town.....and taxes! Don't rezone this parcel.....please. Why is there not equal opportunity for building nice, single family homes in Harrisonburg?

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

mervwebb@comcast.net

5404331325

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Saturday, August 9, 2025 6:01 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Sat, 08/09/2025 - 18:00

Submitted values are:

Name

Vincent Harkins

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6b. : Opposition to rezoning parcels on South Main Street for "The Link"

Comment

I oppose rezoning this parcel from R-3 to B-1C. I have lived in Harrisonburg my entire life. It is concerning to see how the Planning Commission and City Council seem to have no regard to resources supporting the ongoing growth within the City. At some point we need to say stop and support and improve what we have. Items I am concerned about are fire protection, police protection, water supply to name a few. At one point Switzer Lake provided all of the water needed for the city, now we source water from the Shenandoah River as well. The more we build the more of a demand and drain on our resources. Second concern, is the further destruction of the downtown area. Historic Harrisonburg gets whittled away piece by piece. There is no need to further join or link the JMU community with downtown Harrisonburg, that seems to be well established. I ask the City Council to vote against this rezoning and this development.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

veharkins15@gmail.com

5404217413

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 10, 2025 9:42 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Sun, 08/10/2025 - 21:42

Submitted values are:

Name

Dawn Keplinger

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6 b. Re-Zoning R-3 to B-1C — PLEASE VOTE NO!

Comment

this is not a good decision for this area downtown. It will make parking so much harder to find, will possibly increase the need for yet another local school (or two), increase traffic to ridiculous levels, and jeopardize safety due to increased craziness with driving through our very crowded downtown. We have a unique area, with a "small town" feel to it, please do not ruin that by adding this monstrosity! Thank you. PS - with the 18 wheelers already rolling right on through Main Street, jeopardizing small children crossing the streets to the Children's Museum, the library, and other areas, we already have a major problem on our hands. This too must be stopped before someone loses a life due to the inability of a huge truck to stop quickly.

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 10, 2025 5:52 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Sun, 08/10/2025 - 17:51

Submitted values are:

Name

Sharon Cote

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6b

Comment

Though I am not opposed to developing the 10 lots occupied by the proposed "Link Apartments" under their current R-3 designation, I am strongly opposed to both the rezoning request and this project, and would like to share my reasoning with city council members and the Harrisonburg community.

First, the proposed project is not in keeping with the "Harrisonburg Downtown 2040 Plan". In particular:

i. The project only includes 2000 sq ft of commercial space. While this may be technically consistent with the definition of multi-use development, it is not in keeping with the spirit of the plan. Whatever use the space gets is likely to have only a small impact on the residents of The Link, never mind benefit other residents of Harrisonburg.

ii. The units are not targeted at families and/or other permanent Harrisonburg residents, nor is there any low-income housing. The planning commission memorandum dated July 9, 2025 states that "there is a high probability that college students would be interested in residing at this location" In contrast, if the 10 parcels are not rezoned (i.e., continue to be R-3), the types of housing envisioned by the comprehensive plan are more likely to be constructed. These crucial parcels could help downtown grow as a community neighborhood and a tourist destination.

Second, despite the conclusions of the limited "Traffic Impact Analysis", the proposed project is likely to

worsen congestion in and around the downtown. In particular:

i The additional proposed parking spaces for cars is roughly four times higher than the proposed storage for bicycles and most visitors are likely to come by car. This proposed development is not bicycle-friendly.

ii.. The 500-700 lessees, other residents, and guests are likely to make multiple trips per day to and from "The Link", not just regular commuter peaks. These trips will likely be to/from East Campus, Food Lion Shopping Center, Walmart Shopping Center, E. Market St. Shopping and West Campus. This will have a significant impact on Paul, Eastover, MLK, Myers, Reservoir, and Mason (and possibly other streets as well as drivers to and from The Link learn how to avoid traffic and traffic lights by taking small detours).

iii. The increase in traffic will impact pedestrian safety in and around both the project and Spotswood Elementary School, and make it more difficult/dangerous for trash collectors, etc.

iv. There are known limitations to the methodology used in basic traffic impact analyses.

Per the FHWA's own wording " This methodology does not directly account for the following conditions that can occur between intersections:

- Presence or lack of on-street parking
- Driveway density or access control
- Lane additions leading up to or lane drops leading away from intersections
- Impact of grades between intersections
- Any capacity constraints between intersections (such as a narrow bridge)
- Midblock medians and two-way left-turn lanes
- Turning movements that exceed 20 percent of the total volume on the street
- Queues at one intersection backing up to and interfering with the operation of an upstream intersection"

Most of these FHWA bullet points seem relevant with respect to streets in our city likely to receive increased traffic as a result of this project. The conceptualization of certain streets as "minor connectors" vs. neighborhood streets also seems to be an important consideration. Some of these streets do connect to busy roads but are primarily neighborhood streets and, in some cases, are ones that have already been recognized as needing traffic calming measures.

Third, the proposed project is likely to have a significant negative impact on parking downtown. In particular:

i. The 360 spaces being provided for them is considerably smaller than the 500-700 lessees, other residents, and guests. This means that they will likely need more parking spaces which could have an impact on the parking lot at the Baptist Church, the parking lots near City Hall and the Farmers' Market, on-street parking on Main St., Liberty St. and the surrounding streets.

ii. It will either be impossible or expensive to keep the lessees, residents, and their visitors from using the municipal spots on level one.

Finally, the proposed design is not in keeping with the character of the immediate and surrounding neighborhood or with the "Harrisonburg Downtown 2040 Plan," which rightly states "Main and Liberty

Streets are the primary front doors to Downtown. They should aspire to the highest standards in design, as they reflect the first impression visitors have of Downtown." This will not be the case if the proposed project goes forward because:

- i. It will change the visual impact of the Baptist Church.
- ii. It will overshadow the proposed park.
- iii. It will overshadow the newly-renovated and beautiful City Hall.
- iv. It will have a drastically different setback from other properties as we enter downtown.
- v. Though there are a large number of trees shown in the artists' renderings of this project, they may be replaced (at the developer's discretion) by shrubs or ornamental grasses, which is not in keeping with the current inventory of large, old trees.
- vi. It looks like the building exterior will be made entirely of contemporary siding materials and lack architectural elements that tie in with this historical entry point into downtown.

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 1:19 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Mon, 08/11/2025 - 13:18

Submitted values are:

Name

Ilana Kurtzig

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6b related to rezoning for the Links Apt.

Comment

I'm writing to oppose rezoning to make room for a giant apartment building right in town. Harrisonburg is such a cute town with a lot of opportunity for reasonable development in the city without a Soviet-style block of apartments right in at the entrance to the city. I understand and support density for the city and favor increasing housing in town and in the surrounding area. I think it can be done in a fashion that supports small businesses, brings more people downtown and brings more people to live in Harrisonburg. A giant building and (another giant) parking lot I don't think will accomplish these goals. Please consider increasing housing/density in other ways starting with repurposing the parking lots that already cover 1/3 of the city and repurposing some of the buildings already standing in town. I have no association with JMU or EMU and live in Harrisonburg because it's a nice little town in a beautiful area of the country. I've seen pretty quickly how JMU can subsume parts of the city and how its needs can take priority over the needs of residents who live here for reasons not related to the university. A city-block building I can see very quickly slipping into the hands of the university, to the detriment of the city and its residents. For all of these reasons I oppose rezoning downtown areas for this type of development. Please put money into supporting small businesses to open up and grow into the downtown area. This is the way to revitalize the town. Thank you!

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information
frauleinkurtzig@gmail.com

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 10:11 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer; Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: The Link Public Comment

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Rob Alexander <robwalex@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 9:38 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Thanh:

I hope this email finds you well and enjoying the pleasures of forward-thinking community development!
:) My words below are comments I am sharing with members of City Council in individual emails. Thanks!

Rob

Council Members:

I write this note to support the rezoning of the Lindsay Funeral Home property from R-3 to B-1C. I currently have the privilege of serving as the Chair of the City of Harrisonburg's Environmental Performance Standards Advisory Committee and, while I am speaking in this email as a resident and not on behalf of EPSAC, I invoke this role as we are tasked with supporting the Environmental Action Plan.

In the EAP, approved by the City Council, there is a Goal Area titled Land Use and Green Space. Strategy 1.3 of this Goal states "Continue to Promote High Density, Compact, and Mixed Use Development, Where Appropriate". Concurrently, the Downtown 2040 plan produced in collaboration between the City and HDR, identifies this exact property as 'underutilized property ripe for reinvestment' and envisions that we 'integrate new housing close to City Hall to activate the south side of the Farmers Market' to bring up to '580 new homes to Downtown, 50,000 square feet of new commercial space, and an additional 300 new parking spaces'.

Finally, as Planning Commission notes, the rezoning of this property to allow for high density housing is consistent with our current Comprehensive Plan.

Linking the EAP, the Downtown 2040 Plan, and the current Comprehensive Plan, all produced with robust public input, leads to the logical conclusion that a higher density development for this property than R-3 is exactly what needs to happen.

I contest my neighbor's notion that keeping the area zoned R-3 preserves 'livable' scale as their materials insist as the 'livability' they are considering is the livability of right now, not the livability of a future Harrisonburg that addresses its housing crisis, maintains a sustainable footprint, and accommodates continued population growth.

Approving the rezoning request is the right step towards the future Harrisonburg that we need to see.

Should you approve the rezoning, know that there are still design changes that can improve this proposed redevelopment to ensure more sustainable housing, energy footprint, and transportation for our Downtown, including the alteration of student-focused units to be more adaptable to non-student residents, but those comments can wait for the appropriate moment.

I look forward to hearing your deliberation.

Sincerely,

Rob Alexander
977 S. Dogwood Dr.
Harrisonburg, VA

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 11:19 AM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Mon, 08/11/2025 - 11:18

Submitted values are:

Name

Holly McCartney

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6.b.

Comment

I oppose rezoning this parcel from R-3 to B-1C. R-3 zoning would allow development of housing of up to 3 stories that would blend better with the property's surrounding public space and neighborhoods. Please leave R-3 alone for this area.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 5:28 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/08/2025 - 17:28

Submitted values are:

Name

Carey Petit

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Item 6.b: Consider a request to rezone 435, 445, 457, 473, 483 & 495 South Main Street and 282, 288, 294 & 298 South Liberty St (The Link Apartments)

Comment

This R-3 to B-1C rezoning request (for The Link Apartments) is not about what is best for local residents or our community in the long run. It is about money, plain and simple. As I understand it, the developer behind this rezoning request even offered to double their purchase price from \$3M to over \$6M, if the seller could get the rezoning request pushed through. Why would they be willing to do that? How much free government money do they stand to gain in subsidies by labeling their planned The Link project as "affordable housing?" How many millions does the developer stand to make on this deal as a whole? If the rezoning is approved, and subsequent Link apartment complex is built, when the developer is done, they will walk away and never look back. The developer does not care about how B-1C zoning and the proposed Link apartment complex will impact the community, or about the safety of future Link residents. But the City Council has to care. The Council must care. The community needs the Council to care. B-1C zoning and the subsequent "The Link" complex create deep concerns about: fire and rescue capabilities; the lack of required parking facility/garage safety inspections and repairs; parking and traffic impacts; green space elimination; and the negative aesthetic impacts of a standalone high-rise apartment complex on the downtown historic district.

What is so compelling about The Link project that it warrants making a huge exception to the current R-3 zoning code? Changing the zoning to B-1C would bring serious safety concerns over the planned Links complex. The B-1C zoning 75ft height allowance creates very real fire safety issues with the proposed six-story apartment complex, since local fire departments only have one truck even capable of reaching that height.

B-1C zoning would also facilitate building a residential parking garage as part of the Link apartment complex, and in so doing create serious safety concerns from the lack of requirements for regular inspections or maintenance of parking garages. There are no federal regulations that require regular safety inspections of parking garages. Very few states even have such requirements. And neither does Virginia or the city of Harrisonburg, as far as I know. As a mainly residential parking garage, The Link parking garage would receive more regular, consistent daily use than nearly any other parking garage in Harrisonburg. And will, in turn, have an even greater need for such safety inspections and upkeep. How will the City Council ensure that happens?

B-1C zoning also has much more lax parking requirements than the current R-3 zoning. Rezoning would allow the proposed Link complex to include over 700 bedrooms, each potentially with someone needing a parking space. The parking garage will not accommodate them all. That is a huge impact to neighbors and all those who currently utilize the surrounding street parking and parking lots, especially after Liberty St on-street parking is eliminated in the "Liberty Street Project."

B-1C zoning also lacks set-back requirements which would enable The Link complex to eliminate the existing green space on that lot, when green space is a precious and shrinking commodity.

Lastly, the requested B-1C zoning would be an unwarranted and hugely singular exception to the three-story height restriction of the many surrounding R-3 zoned neighborhoods. The proposed six-story, curb to curb Link apartment complex would be an unprecedented high-rise residential apartment complex in the middle of downtown Harrisonburg. And be a blight to the aesthetic of the remaining historic portions of town.

I strongly urge the City Council to vote NO to changing the current R-3 zoning to B-1C for the Lindsey Funeral home lot and those adjacent to it.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

4783976074

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 5:28 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/08/2025 - 17:28

Submitted values are:

Name

Carey Petit

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Item 6.b: Consider a request to rezone 435, 445, 457, 473, 483 & 495 South Main Street and 282, 288, 294 & 298 South Liberty St (The Link Apartments)

Comment

This R-3 to B-1C rezoning request (for The Link Apartments) is not about what is best for local residents or our community in the long run. It is about money, plain and simple. As I understand it, the developer behind this rezoning request even offered to double their purchase price from \$3M to over \$6M, if the seller could get the rezoning request pushed through. Why would they be willing to do that? How much free government money do they stand to gain in subsidies by labeling their planned The Link project as "affordable housing?" How many millions does the developer stand to make on this deal as a whole? If the rezoning is approved, and subsequent Link apartment complex is built, when the developer is done, they will walk away and never look back. The developer does not care about how B-1C zoning and the proposed Link apartment complex will impact the community, or about the safety of future Link residents. But the City Council has to care. The Council must care. The community needs the Council to care. B-1C zoning and the subsequent "The Link" complex create deep concerns about: fire and rescue capabilities; the lack of required parking facility/garage safety inspections and repairs; parking and traffic impacts; green space elimination; and the negative aesthetic impacts of a standalone high-rise apartment complex on the downtown historic district.

What is so compelling about The Link project that it warrants making a huge exception to the current R-3 zoning code? Changing the zoning to B-1C would bring serious safety concerns over the planned Links complex. The B-1C zoning 75ft height allowance creates very real fire safety issues with the proposed six-story apartment complex, since local fire departments only have one truck even capable of reaching that height.

B-1C zoning would also facilitate building a residential parking garage as part of the Link apartment complex, and in so doing create serious safety concerns from the lack of requirements for regular inspections or maintenance of parking garages. There are no federal regulations that require regular safety inspections of parking garages. Very few states even have such requirements. And neither does Virginia or the city of Harrisonburg, as far as I know. As a mainly residential parking garage, The Link parking garage would receive more regular, consistent daily use than nearly any other parking garage in Harrisonburg. And will, in turn, have an even greater need for such safety inspections and upkeep. How will the City Council ensure that happens?

B-1C zoning also has much more lax parking requirements than the current R-3 zoning. Rezoning would allow the proposed Link complex to include over 700 bedrooms, each potentially with someone needing a parking space. The parking garage will not accommodate them all. That is a huge impact to neighbors and all those who currently utilize the surrounding street parking and parking lots, especially after Liberty St on-street parking is eliminated in the "Liberty Street Project."

B-1C zoning also lacks set-back requirements which would enable The Link complex to eliminate the existing green space on that lot, when green space is a precious and shrinking commodity.

Lastly, the requested B-1C zoning would be an unwarranted and hugely singular exception to the three-story height restriction of the many surrounding R-3 zoned neighborhoods. The proposed six-story, curb to curb Link apartment complex would be an unprecedented high-rise residential apartment complex in the middle of downtown Harrisonburg. And be a blight to the aesthetic of the remaining historic portions of town.

I strongly urge the City Council to vote NO to changing the current R-3 zoning to B-1C for the Lindsey Funeral home lot and those adjacent to it.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

4783976074

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 4:30 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/08/2025 - 16:29

Submitted values are:

Name

Sean Allen

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6b

Comment

I like the plan to rezone the properties to B-1C and the proposed housing development at 473 s main st.
More housing in the area while benefit the city, residents and students alike

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

No

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 12:17 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Fri, 08/08/2025 - 12:16

Submitted values are:

Name

David Bernstein

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

6b

Comment

It would be inappropriate for the City Council to vote in favor of the proposed rezoning request before requesting another traffic impact analysis because there are several questionable aspects of the existing Liberty Multifamily Development Traffic Impact Analysis (dated March 2025) . In particular:

- The trip generation model used likely underestimates the number of trips to and from the proposed development.
- The trip distribution and traffic assignment models likely underestimate the impacts on the collectors in the study area. In addition, some collectors are not considered (e.g., W. Views St. and Franklin St.).
- Traffic congestion in the study area is not limited to the AM and PM peaks. Traffic congestion is fairly consistent throughout the day. This should be taken into account when considering any new development project.

Detailed Discussion of the Trip Generation Model

Unfortunately, the ITE Trip Generation Model does not include a land use that accurately captures the nature of the proposed project. The traffic impact analysis classifies the proposed project as Code 221 (i.e., Mid-Rise Multifamily Housing) with 290 units which leads to the number of new trips described in row 1 of Table 2 (and the corrected Table 6 above). However, it is important to recognize that the proposed project will have 360 parking spaces and will likely have considerable more than 360 lessees. The Rezoning Request Proffer Statement (Dated: June 4, 2025; Revised July 1, 2025) states that the maximum number of residential dwelling units shall not exceed 265, a minimum of 25% of all dwelling units will consist of studio or one-bedroom apartments, and a maximum of 40% of all dwelling units will consist of 4 bedroom apartments. This means that if the project contains only 1 and 4 bedroom units it will have 583 bedrooms; if it contains 1,2, and 4 bedroom units it will have 676 bedrooms; and if it contains 1, 3, and 4 bedroom units it will have 769 bedrooms.

Using the same trip generation rates but different numbers of "units" corresponding to the number of spaces or bedrooms, there would be a significantly larger number of trips as shown in the following table:

Table 6 Adjusted – Total New Trips on Surrounding Streets

Qty Units	AM Total	AM Entry	AM Exit	PM Total	PM Entry	PM Exit
360 Spaces	133	31	102	140	86	55
583 Bedrooms	215	50	165	227	139	88
675 Bedrooms	249	58	191	263	161	103
768 Bedrooms	283	66	217	300	183	117

The trip generation section of the report also ignores the number of trips that will be generated by the 65 municipal parking spaces that will be included in the proposed project.

Detailed Discussion of the Trip Distribution and Traffic Assignment Models

The turning movements in the "Build 2027" model westbound on Paul St. at Mason St. are identical to those in the "No-Build 2027" model. This ignores the fact that some percentage of the trips from the East Campus, the Walmart Shopping Center, and E. Market St. shopping to the proposed project will use Paul St. to get to MLK Jr. Way.

The thru and left turn movements in the "Build 2027" model eastbound on Paul St. at Mason St. are identical to those in the "No-Build 2027" model. This ignores the fact that some percentage of the trips from the proposed project to East Campus, the Walmart Shopping Center, and E. Market St. shopping will use Paul St. to get to MLK Jr. Way. In addition, the right turn movements are assumed to increase by 4 during

the peak and 12 during the off-peak. This means that the model assumes very few trips from the proposed project to West Campus will use Paul St. to get to S. Mason St.

The turning movements in the "Build 2027" model westbound on E. Grattan St. at S. Main St. are identical to those in the "No-Build 2027" model. It is not clear what the origins and destinations of the current trips are now, but it seems very unlikely that the number won't increase as a result of the proposed project

The turning movements in the "Build 2027" model northbound on S. Mason St. at MLK Jr. Way are identical to those in the "No-Build 2027" model. This ignores the fact that some percentage of the trips from the East Campus to the proposed project will use S. Mason St. to get to Paul St. and MLK Jr. Way. The traffic counts at the corner of S. Main St. and E. Grattan St. were collected on Thursday 12/5/2024 which was the next to last day of classes at James Madison University. Hence, they are likely to be an under-count. This causes a problem with the turning movements at the corner of S. Main St. and Paul St. in the "Build 2027" model because the left-turn movements at that intersection are assumed to be the same as those at S. Main St. and E. Grattan St.

If you would like a formatted-version of these comments, please feel free to contact me.

Would you like to be contacted by city staff?

Yes

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

david.howard.bernstein@gmail.com

540-271-4749

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 1:42 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer; Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: The Link Public Comment

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Matt Wade <mattwade25@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 12:42 PM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon

I write today in support of the The Link residential development on the Lindsey Funeral Home property in downtown Harrisonburg.

The City lacks available land to build the type of dense housing that it needs to accommodate future growth. An underutilized funeral is not an efficient or productive use of this location. A mixed-use, dense residential development is a more effective and productive use of this prime location because it will generate economic activity and tax revenue for the city. It will allow young families to live in the City and generate positive economic and demographic outcomes for Downtown.

It will alleviate traffic because it will create a more walkable downtown with more people living downtown instead of driving in from other places.

It will address the housing shortage in Harrisonburg for young families and young professionals.

It will encourage more green space around the City by countering the sprawl of townhome communities.

The character of Downtown will not be impacted as we already have a 4 story residential (Urban Exchange) and a 6 story hotel (hotel madison), a multi-story municipal building, multi-story Dentons building and a multi-story Ice House building. In fact, the character of Downtown will only be enhanced by this development.

Replacing a funeral home (something for the dead) with a dense, mixed use residential development (something for the living) will only be a net positive for the City.

Sincerely,

Matthew Wade

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 1:42 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer; Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: Support for link rezoning

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Jada K <jkhochareun16@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:35 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: Support for link rezoning

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi,
I support the link rezoning.
Thanks,
Jada Khochareun

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 1:42 PM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer; Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: Support for link rezoning

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Katie Mozingo <katiezingo10@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:29 AM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: Support for link rezoning

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I support

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: noreply@harrisonburgva.gov on behalf of City of Harrisonburg, VA
<noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 1:17 PM
To: Michael E. Parks; Pamela S. Ulmer
Subject: Webform submission from: Agenda Comment Form

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Submitted on Thu, 08/07/2025 - 13:16

Submitted values are:

Name

Brenda Durden

Type of Meeting

Harrisonburg City Council

Date of Upcoming Meeting

2025-08-12

Agenda Item Number

Rezoning R-3 to B-1C (The Link)

Comment

I oppose Rezoning this city parcel from R-3 to B-1C. I am a city resident. This is not a good location for crowded housing or parking. No college housing should be allowed in any more city approved affordable resident housing projects.

If you would like to be contacted, please provide preferred contact information

dudden_family44@hotmail.com

Pamela S. Ulmer

From: Thanh Dang
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:17 AM
To: Pamela S. Ulmer
Cc: Adam Fletcher
Subject: Fw: The Link Public Comment

Good morning, Pam,
Please share the message below with City Council.
Thanks,

Thanh Dang, AICP | Deputy Director of Community Development
(540) 432-7700 | Thanh.Dang@HarrisonburgVA.gov

From: Lucy Weston <lucy.a.weston100@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 2:51 PM
To: Thanh Dang <Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov>
Subject: The Link Public Comment

WARNING: External email. Be cautious when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To City Council Members:

I have resided in Harrisonburg on Hillcrest Drive (just next to JMU property and within easy walking distance of the proposed site) for 27 years. I consider JMU a good neighbor and I consider our student residents to be assets to our community, for the most part. I and many of my neighbors walk and bike our area on a daily basis. One particular city zoning decision in the past has greatly affected my neighborhood in terms of hazardous student traffic and poor parking considerations—the commercial development of the property right across from the JMU entrance on Port Republic Road. The rezoning of this parcel from residential to commercial was not recommended by the City Planning Commission, nor the many neighbors from surrounding areas who petitioned against it, yet the City Council decided that the parcel should be rezoned in favor of the business interests of Cottonwood Commercial. I and my neighbors don't believe that the subsequent city tax revenue from business tenants in that location, especially when there was/is already a lot of vacant commercial property in town, have justified the rezoning and development at that location.

The now-proposed "Link" project is a much bigger and impactful project. We need more housing in town, but this particular project is a bad idea because it is (1) too big, (2) too central, (3) too neglectful of the surrounding neighborhood, (4) not taking into consideration the number of cars which will actually arrive in town with the student tenants, and (5) is being bank-rolled by commercial investors who don't live here and are already not responsive to city resident concerns. If this company wants to build more housing, why don't they consider smaller units scattered throughout the downtown area, so that the impact of each unit would be more easily absorbed into its particular locale? I suspect that this company has made the "link" proposal because its profit margin is maximized by such a large, single project located on one of the last large green space parcels in the downtown area.

Please vote "NO" to "The Link."

Respectfully,

Dr. Lucy Weston
1230 Hillcrest Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

cell 540-246-9474