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For Immediate Release – June 2, 2022

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Virginia Housing grant to support study on two City-owned properties

Effort will determine feasibility of developing both lots following recommendation of housing study

HARRISONBURG, Va. – A \$50,000 Community Impact Market analysis grant from Virginia Housing will soon help the City of Harrisonburg move forward on a recommendation from the 2021 Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study.

The study recommended for the City to issue RFPs and solicit proposals from private developers for development of housing on two City-owned properties – the first a 7.7-acre lot bisected by Central Avenue in the area of Keister Elementary School, and the second a 7.6-acre lot on Neff Avenue in the area of A Dream Come True Playground. The Virginia Housing grant will allow the City to obtain technical assistance to complete feasibility research, preliminary architecture and engineering, and site planning for both properties – valuable and limited commodities that present the greatest opportunity for the City to directly encourage the development of the affordable or mixed-income housing needed for the community.

The research funded by the grant will help City staff move this recommendation forward by evaluating the physical infrastructure needs and constraints, designing several conceptual site layouts for consideration, and assessing the financial feasibility of developing these concepts into affordable or mixed-income housing.

Harrisonburg City Council has identified Available Housing For All as a key component of its Harrisonburg 2039 vision plan, seeking to develop a comprehensive approach to community housing needs and supporting the availability of affordable, diverse housing options for all. The grant can help move the City in that direction by providing information to be used in a future request for proposal for development.

“We need housing solutions that support our residents and allow our city to grow and thrive, so we are very excited to be able to take a step forward on that effort thanks to Virginia Housing,” Harrisonburg Housing Coordinator Liz Webb said. “With this grant, we’ll obtain expert research about the potential to develop these City-owned assets. This information will be a valuable tool that can help guide the decision-making process.”

The City will soon release an RFP to select a consultant or consultant team to provide the technical assistance funded by the grant.

Find more information on the Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study at www.harrisonburgva.gov/housing-study. More information on the City’s housing efforts will be posted online in the near future.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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