

Chapter 2: Vision

The vision, along with the Goals and Policies in Chapter 3, are the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. Together, they paint a picture of the Lynchburg in the year 2030. They articulate the community’s ideas and aspirations for the future; provide direction for the formulation of specific objectives and implementation strategies; and set policies for development, redevelopment and conservation. The Vision for the City’s future presented below.

The Vision

This Plan was developed by asking the public the following questions: What kind of community do we want Lynchburg to be in the year 2030? What qualities will it have? What will it be like to live and work, grow up and grow old here? This Plan reflects common themes that have been echoed in a variety of workshops in 2002, 2007, 2008, 2012, and 2013, such as the importance of:

- Building strong neighborhoods;
- Conserving the City’s unique places and resources;
- Promoting business vitality ;
- Enhancing the attractiveness of gateways and travel corridors; and
- Protecting the natural environment while also promoting sensitive development and redevelopment.

The combination of past community planning efforts and the City’s strategic administrative initiatives is the basis for the following description of our community’s desired future:

A Vision for Lynchburg in the Year 2030: A great place to live, work & play

Lynchburg residents (long-time residents and newcomers alike) appreciate the community as a great place to live, raise a family, learn, work and prosper. People will talk about Lynchburg in many ways – as a city of trees and a city of hills, as a community rich in history and diverse in culture. As the dynamic center of a growing region, Lynchburg is well known for its quality of life and economic vitality. Residents enjoy the community’s rare combination of small town charm and big city offerings. Since its founding on the banks of the James River through its development as a regional center of business and culture, Lynchburg continues to inspire in its residents a thoughtful concern for the future and a practice of civic activism. Lynchburg takes pride in being a sustainable community; one that protects and manages its abundant natural, historical and cultural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Plan’s Vision is a description of Lynchburg’s desired future.



A City with Balance

Maintaining a careful balance between economic development and conservation objectives will be critical to the City's long-term success. City policies, programs, and investments will be aligned to attract investment and to promote the growth and development of existing businesses, as well as to improve the character and quality of commercial areas, strengthen neighborhoods, improve Downtown's competitive position, and protect the City's air, water, and land resources. City policies and regulations will promote and encourage, rather than impede, sensitive, high quality development.

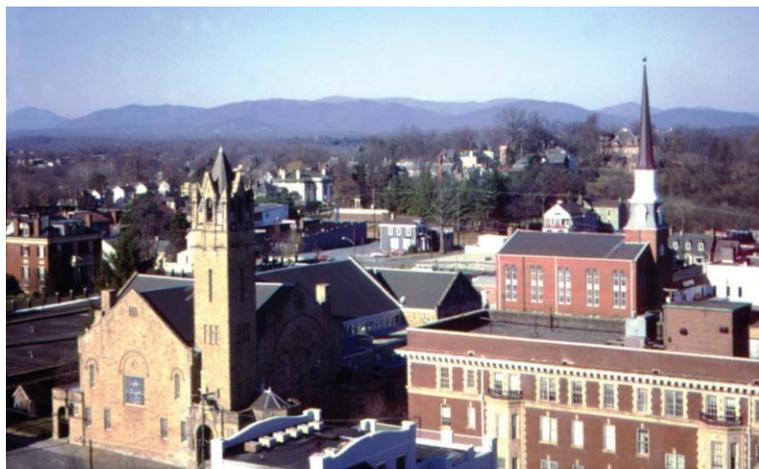
Growth and Land Use

The City's boundaries are unlikely to expand in the foreseeable future, which means that new residential, commercial and industrial growth must occur through infill development of vacant land or redevelopment. To accommodate long-term growth, efficiently provide utilities and other facilities, provide for the diverse housing needs of families, students and older residents, and achieve the other goals of this Plan, the City will provide opportunities for greater densities in areas where they can be compatibly integrated with existing neighborhoods.

A City of Strong Neighborhoods

The City's reputation as a good place to live and work will grow from the quality of its many neighborhoods. With their distinctive characters, histories, and natural settings, Lynchburg's neighborhoods will provide residents safe, healthy environments and strong senses of identity and ownership. Through new development, rehabilitation, and preservation, the City will offer a wide range of options to meet the demands of an increasingly diverse regional housing market. City investments in transportation improvements, parks, schools, and public facilities will strengthen and reinforce neighborhood character.

**Downtown and
surrounding
neighborhoods**



Downtown as the Heart of the Region

Downtown will continue to strengthen its position as the heart of the region's public, cultural, and social life. Scenic natural resources and great architecture will entice investment in new attractions, improved public spaces, and renovated buildings – with shops and restaurants on the ground floors and offices and housing on upper floors – will create an atmosphere of busy interaction during the workday; vibrant entertainment during the evening. Downtown's role as an important destination will be reinforced through strategic public and private investment. Downtown will be recognized as a fun, safe, attractive, accessible, pedestrian-friendly, and tourist-ready destination that is also a good place to live. The City's capital improvements along the riverfront, key streets, public spaces, and gateways, as well as in the surrounding neighborhoods, will greatly improve the climate for private investment.

Downtown Lynchburg

(Sasaki
Associates)



Accessible & Attractive Commercial Corridors & Districts

The accessibility and design quality of the City's commercial corridors and districts will continually improve through a combination of public and private action. Quality of design, connectivity and accessibility—for vehicles, as well as pedestrians and cyclists—will become the central focus in planning for the City's commercial areas. The City's older commercial strips will be revitalized. Newer commercial areas will be attractive and will complement surrounding development. Opportunities for revitalization and traditional forms of development—corner stores, mixed use centers, live-work spaces—will be encouraged through City policy, regulations, and incentives. Conflicts between different land uses will be resolved through careful planning and sensitive design. Landscaping and attractive welcome signs will define gateways and commercial districts.

Pedestrian-friendly mix of uses along Rivermont Ave.



Celebrating History & Heritage

The City will facilitate the use of historic tax credits and other tools to enhance and celebrate its unique history and heritage. Concern for the conservation of the City's unique heritage and historic resources will guide public and private development decisions. This conservation ethic will result in healthy and vibrant historic neighborhoods and landmarks, attract investment and activity to the City's traditional commercial corridors, and promote new development that is sensitive to local design character. Heritage tourism will continue to grow into an important economic engine for the City and region.

Point of Honor - one of Lynchburg's outstanding historic buildings and part of the City's Museum system.



Designing with Nature

The City will encourage environmentally responsible design and management of public and private facilities and lands. Lynchburg's natural setting— its place along the James River, its proximity to the Blue Ridge Mountains, and its forested stream valleys and rolling hills— contribute to its special sense of place. The Blackwater Creek Trail will serve as a model for similar projects throughout the City, connecting neighborhoods, natural areas, stream valleys, and the riverfront. Natural watershed boundaries will guide regional initiatives aimed at appropriate use, preservation and protection of environmentally sensitive areas, including stream valleys, floodplains,

forested areas, and hillsides. Where development is appropriate or infrastructure improvements are necessary, environmentally responsible designs will be encouraged through a variety of tools (e.g., facilitated permitting process, stormwater fee credits, etc.).

**Blackwater Creek
Trail is a natural
asset**



A Diverse & Vital Economy

The health of the region's economy is tied directly to the vitality and quality of life in its urban core. City businesses, services and cultural amenities are important to regional identity and attractiveness. Lynchburg recognizes that business growth outside of its boundaries is beneficial to a diverse regional economy. The City's role as the economic engine of the region will evolve and strengthen, keeping pace with changes in technology and telecommunications, attracting national and international businesses and fusing the local and regional market with the nation and the world. The City's efforts to attract investment and encourage reinvestment will support a vital economy. Beyond Downtown, Lynchburg's business districts and industrial areas will provide a diverse base of employment, as well as a stable tax base. While manufacturing and distribution will remain important activities, new and expanded businesses will offer high paying jobs to the region's skilled workforce. Lynchburg will become known for the quality of its work force, low cost of living, and excellent medical facilities, as well as its commitment to quality education and neighborhood livability. As our reputation spreads, business investment will increase, and new residents will be drawn to the area, which will enhance the City's fiscal health.



Opportunities for a Quality Education

The City will be known for the high quality of its educational institutions. Excellence in education will be promoted for all in the public schools, as well as in the area’s colleges, private primary and secondary schools, work force training centers, its community centers and libraries. These educational institutions will serve as important anchors in the community as hubs for community engagement and life-long learning opportunities. Together these resources will provide opportunities unsurpassed in similarly sized cities.

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation.



Citizen Engagement and Awareness

Lynchburg will continue to engage its citizens in planning for the future, the development of programs to achieve the community’s goals, setting priorities for public action and implementing programs to ensure that actions best fit the needs of the City as a whole and the affected neighborhoods. Through transparent government and an investment in public awareness, the City will capitalize on the expertise, insight and values of its citizens.



Effective Support Systems

Public support systems—parks and recreation facilities, public transit, streets and highways, public facilities, utilities, police, fire protection and emergency management —will play a central role in nurturing the livability and economic vitality of the City and region. As the City and region grow, it will meet the increasingly diverse needs of residents and businesses for the movement of people, goods and services by improving connectivity between neighborhoods, facilitating safe and convenient access to employment and commercial areas and by developing Better Streets and transportation options to serve the needs of all residents and businesses. Ensuring that actions at all levels of government are coordinated, market-responsive and supportive of community goals will be of fundamental importance to the City and region. Public improvements will reinforce the City’s distinctive character and set a high standard of design quality.



Riverside Park

Better Streets serve all modes of transportation and are designed to support the delivery of all services while enhancing neighborhood character, providing sustainable infrastructure, creating energy efficiency, improving stormwater quality and protecting natural resources.



Source: Complete Streets flickr photostream

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