



## **Department of Planning & Community Development Report to Town Council**

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Good evening, Members of Town Council,

Here are some updates on key long-term initiatives we are actively working towards, as of May 2025.

### **Downtown Revitalization**

- We are working with RVARC to scope a strategic planning project specifically focused on economic development. We expect this scope to be completed in the next month.
- We plan to pursue funding, once available in the fall, to do a downtown master plan.

### **Housing Development & Revitalization**

- I have applied for a \$20,000 housing needs assessment grant from Virginia Housing to do a town-wide housing study.
- Following a successful housing needs assessment, we will then apply for another grant to explore strategies to expand housing opportunities in the upper-level of downtown buildings.

### **Building & Site Redevelopment**

- Today (May 13<sup>th</sup>) we began the 'BAD Building Inventory' in collaboration with DEQ. This effort is likely to continue throughout the summer.
- The Planning Commission voted to support the rezoning of the Jefferson School from Public to General Business. In addition, the conveyance of the Jefferson School to the Town was approved on May 6<sup>th</sup> at the BOS meeting. We are currently assisting the developers with a BIPOC grant due May 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- I have submitted a \$50,000 grant to the Rural Collaborative program through the Federal Reserve of Richmond to assist with a roof replacement for 608 Main Street. Since this amount will not cover the entire roof replacement, we are also planning to submit a grant by the end of May to Virginia Housing for \$150,000.

### **Community Identity & Branding**

- I have submitted a \$15,000 Community Vitality grant to DHCD to provide funding for a branding project.

### **Other Grants**

- I have submitted a grant application to DCR for \$148,400.00 for a restroom facility at the Smith Creek Trailhead near the community gardens.
- Chuck and I have been invited to participate in a regional grant coalition to pursue funding for regional projects.

### **Needs Assessments**

- I have met with SERCAP (Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project) to discuss needs assessments for the Town. Since we learned that RVARC can conduct a business needs assessment as part of the Strategic Planning effort, we will be working on scoping a Lodging Needs Assessment in collaboration with SERCAP.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Saxton  
Director of Planning & Community Development  
Town of Clifton Forge