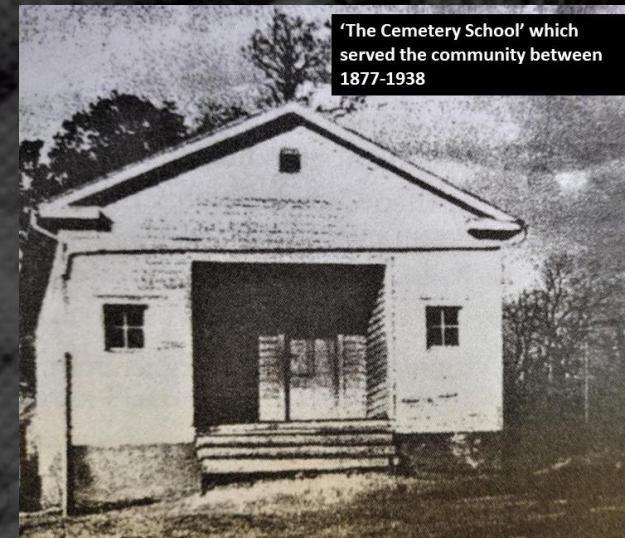
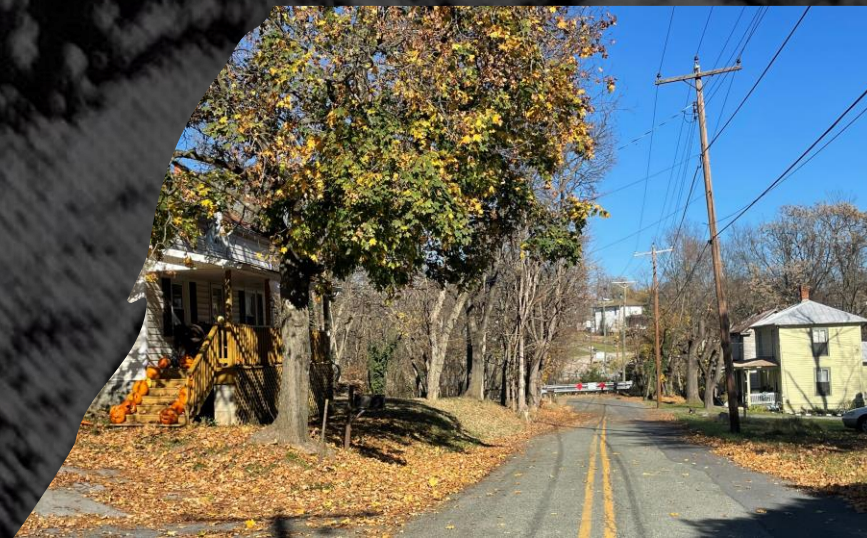


Uniontown Neighborhood Action Plan

Staunton City Council

August 24, 2023



Today's Overview

- Background
- The Neighborhood Planning Process
- The Neighborhood Action Plan Overview
- Recommendations





Background

- Uniontown's story spans over 150 years and is an essential part of the Shenandoah Valley's African American history.
- African Americans settled here beside the Union Cemetery after the Civil War.
- At its height, there were over 60 homes in this dynamic self-sustaining community.

Background

- The City annexed this area in 1948 and 1986.
- Industrial zoning in the 1960s prohibited residential development, also limiting home renovations.
- The National Avenue Bridge removal in 2001 divided the north and south sides of the community.
 - This also severed an important waterline.
- The neighborhood still lacks centralized sewer service and has limited water service.





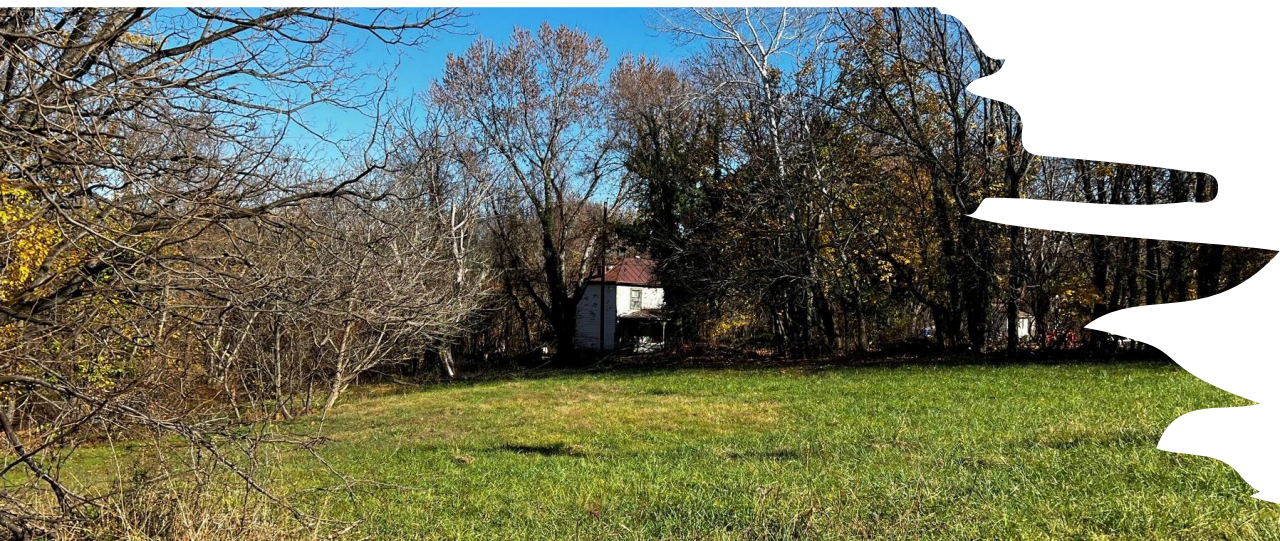
Neighborhood Planning Process

- Conducted a kick-off meeting in March 2023
- Reviewed past efforts:
 - 2021: Uniontown Water and Sewer Extension Study
 - 2015: Uniontown Cultural Landscape Report
 - 2005: The Dr. Julius W. Gaines, Jr. Publication
- Conducted a community survey (86 responses)
- Building Bridges Event on April 29



Uniontown Steering Committee

- A Uniontown Steering Committee held six meetings, from March to July 2023.
- Attendees include:
 - Residents
 - Property Owners
 - Interested Stakeholders
 - Possible Partners
 - Staff
- Their role was to:
 - Define goals for Uniontown,
 - Oversee the development of community
 - Help draft actions and recommendations,
 - Assist the consultant team identify and reach important stakeholders, and
 - Review and edit the Uniontown Neighborhood Action Plan.



Neighborhood Action Plan



UNIONTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN



Plan Outline

Introduction

Background

General Site
Conditions

Land Use

Existing Structures
and Development
Potential

Existing
Infrastructure

Strengths,
Weaknesses,
Opportunities, and
Threats

Community Vision
and Goals

Recommendations
and Actions

Part 1. Introduction

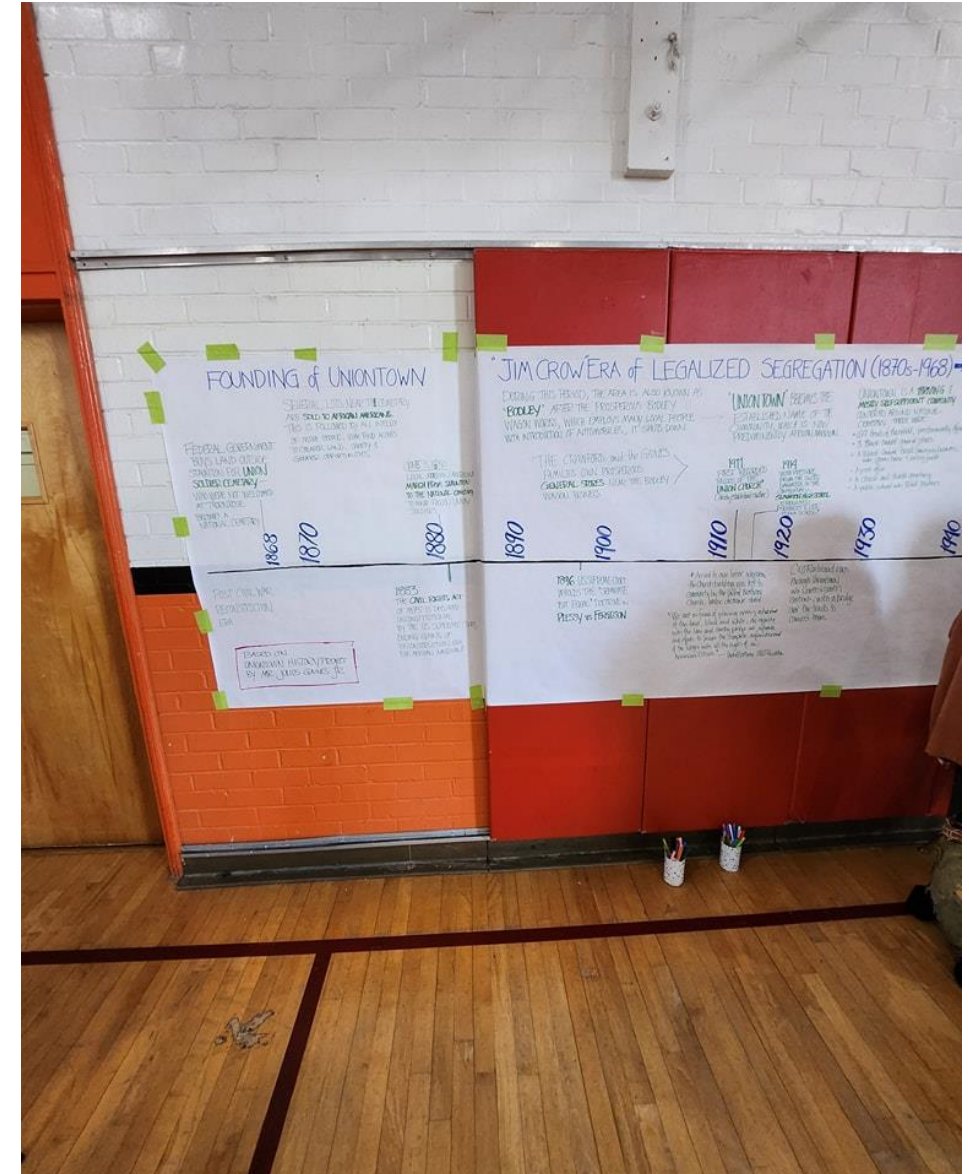
- Purpose of the planning effort
- Location and Context
- Uniontown Study Boundaries
- Planning Process
 - Uniontown Steering Committee
 - April 29th Building Bridges Event
 - Uniontown Survey

Uniontown Study Area



Part 2. Background

- Uniontown Timeline
- National Avenue Bridge
- Past Efforts



Part 3. General Site Conditions

- Topography
- Buckingham Branch Railroad
- Cemeteries
- Historic Resources (from the 2015 Cultural Landscape Report)

Elevation in Uniontown



Part 4. Land Use

- Neighborhood Context
- Existing Land Uses
- Future Land Use
- Zoning
- Proposed Zoning

Proposed Residential Rezoning Boundaries



Part 5. Existing Structures and Development Potential

- Existing Structures
- Land Assessment
- Percent Slope and Buildable Land
- Parcels Layout and Size
- Concepts for Redevelopment



Part 6. Existing Infrastructure

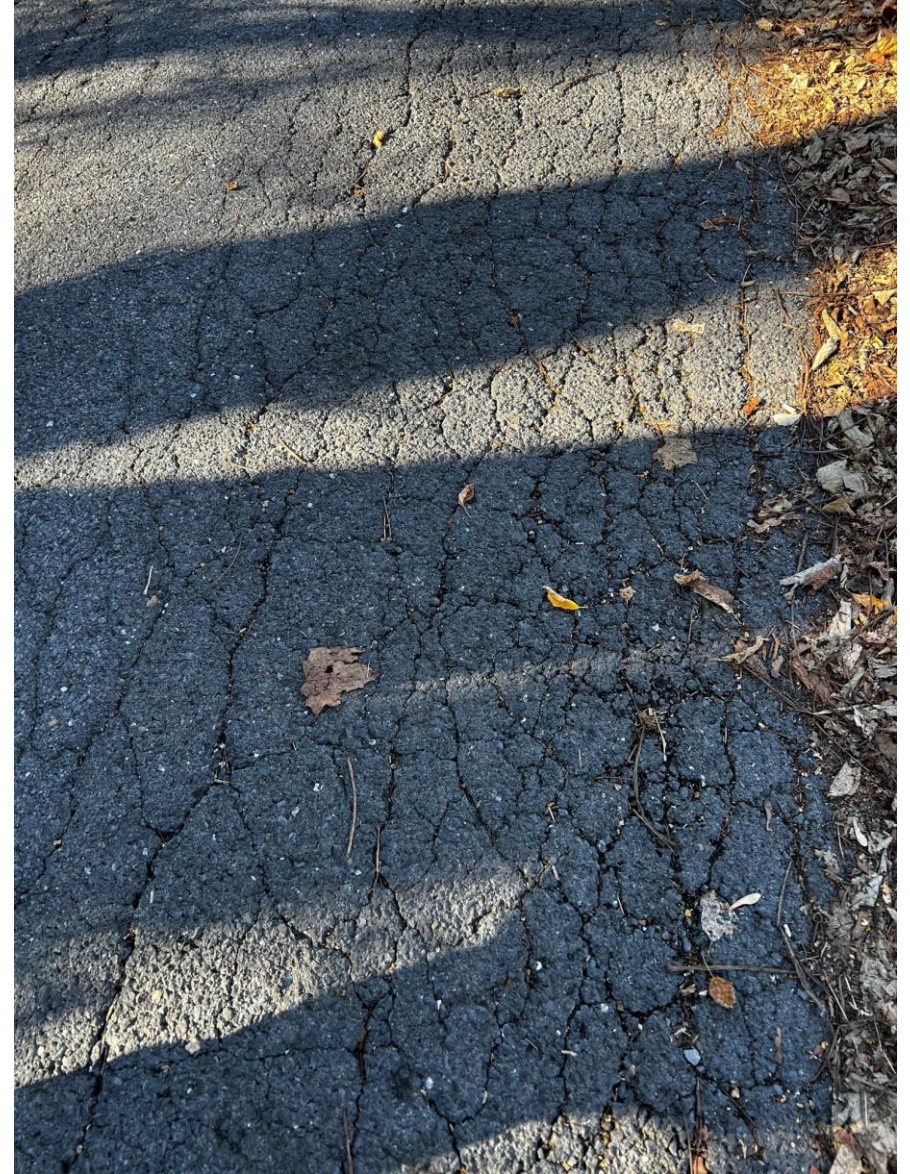
- Transportation
- Streetlights and Signs
- Water and Sewer

Utilities in Uniontown



Part 7. SWOT Analysis

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats



Part 8.

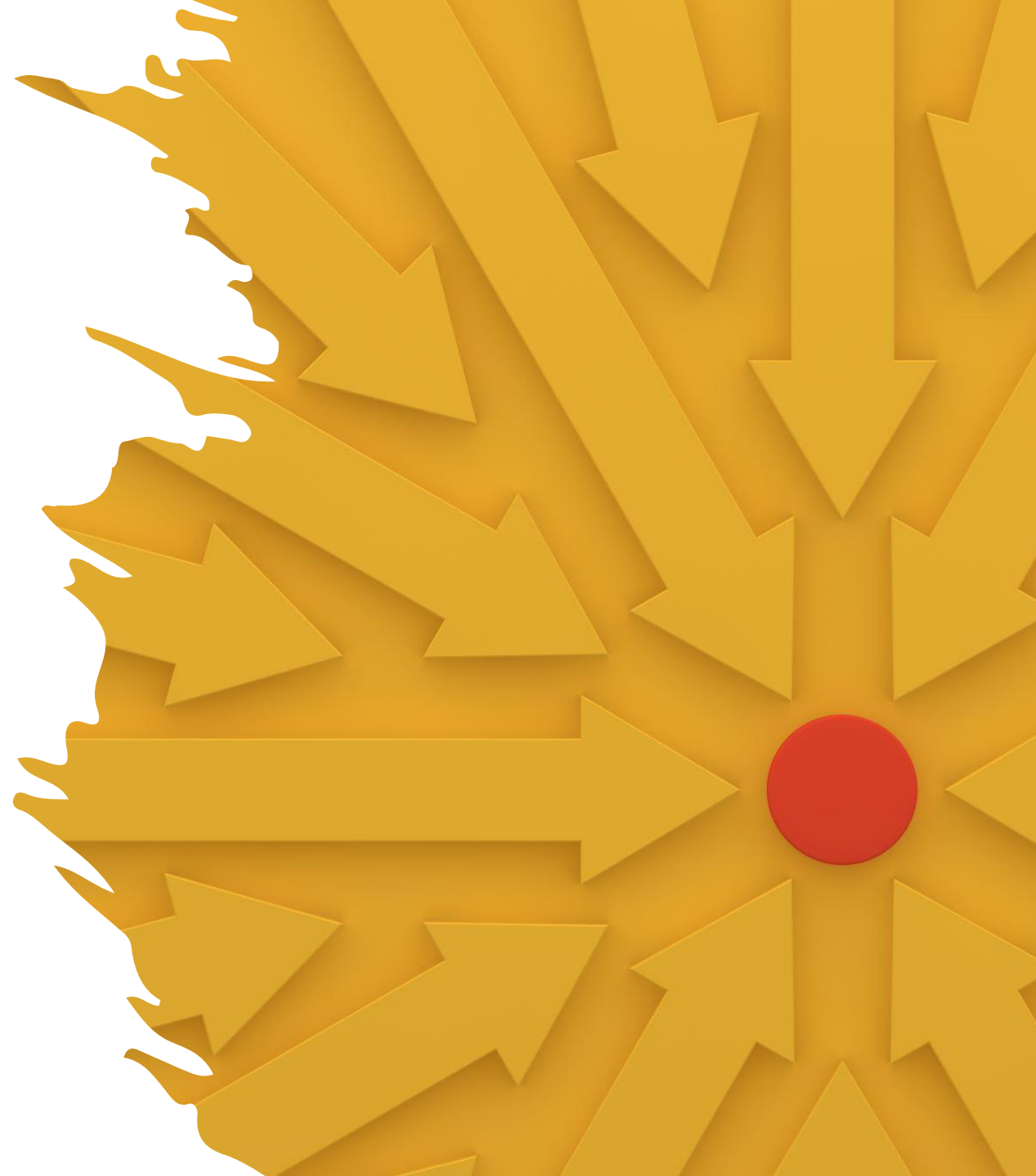
Community Vision and Goals

- **Vision Statement:** Create a thriving and resilient Uniontown that embodies its historic sense of community, provides families with a healthy place to call home, and honors its proud past.



Part 8. Community Vision and Goals

- **Reinvestment:** Pursue efforts to spur public and private reinvestments that help Uniontown thrive and grow while preserving its past.
- **Sense of Community:** Reintroduce Uniontown's sense of community, where residents can raise a family and be part of a meaningful place.
- **Preservation:** Document, promote, and effectively communicate Uniontown's history to foster community pride and preserve the neighborhood's remaining historic resources.
- **Reestablished Connections:** Reestablish Uniontown's physical connections within the neighborhood and the Richmond Avenue Corridor, connecting to reinvestment in the larger area.



Part 9.

Recommendations and Actions

- Details on 18 recommended actions
- Listing:
 - Title
 - Description
 - Background Information
 - Action Detailing
 - Additional Comments

Action B1: Update the Zoning Map to Reflect Uniontown's Vision for single-family residential.	
Uniontown has been a primarily residential community since its early settlement. However, the current industrial zoning has prevented homeowners from improving their property. In response, the City should develop a new residential zoning district, tailored to Uniontown's specific and unique needs. The City would then apply that zoning to the properties identified in the proposed zoning map.	
Background Information:	
Sources:	• The City of Staunton – attempted rezoning in 2021 • Uniontown Steering Committee
Community Feedback	The Uniontown Steering Committee and community survey supported this recommendation. The Steering Committee listed this as a high-priority action.
Action Detailing:	
Estimated Cost:	Low - Staff Time
Resources:	Staff Time
Primary Point of Contact:	Community Development Department, City of Staunton
Support:	Uniontown Steering Committee
Anticipated Benefits:	• A rezoning to residential would allow property owners to make home improvements and build residential uses. • Foster home improvements and new home construction.
Steps/Phases:	• Develop a new zoning district • Notify owners and adjacent properties of proposed zoning change • Hold public hearing
Timeline:	Immediate (within 6 months)
Additional Comments:	
The Community Survey indicated that approximately 35% of respondents with Uniontown affiliations needed more information on proposed rezonings. Some property owners may decide to retain their existing zoning.	



Recommendations

Goal A. Reinvestment

- **Action A.1:** Extend water and sewer infrastructure into Uniontown.
- **Action A.2:** Improve the internal roadway network conditions and provide streetlights.
- **Action A.3:** Develop a property owner education program to inform Uniontown's owners of their rights and opportunities.
- **Action A.4:** Survey lots to improve property boundaries and records.



Goal B. Sense of Community:

- **Action B.1:** Update the Zoning Map to Reflect Uniontown's Vision for single-family residential.
- **Action B.2:** Partner with Housing Groups to construct new, quality, affordable homes on existing lots that are comparable in size and scale to what existed previously.
- **Action B.3:** Evaluate the condition of remaining vacant structures to determine what can be repaired and what might need to be removed.
- **Action B.4:** Organize Regular Community Clean-Up Events and Beautification Efforts.
- **Action B.5:** Preserve natural habitats to maintain the rural feel.



Goal C. Preservation

- **Action C.1:** Re-establish access to the Uniontown Chapel Cemetery.
- **Action C.2:** Develop a Pamphlet (or similar promotional material) to Communicate Uniontown's History.
- **Action C.3:** Create an Online Presence that Documents Uniontown's History.
- **Action C.4:** Install Historical Markers and Plaques that Communicate Uniontown's History and the Stories of its People.
- **Action C.5:** Ensure every school library has a copy of "Old Uniontown Glances Backwards" and other books/references that document local history.



Goal D. Reestablished Connections

- **Action D.1:** Examine Options at the former National Avenue Bridge Site.
- **Action D.2:** Examine Gateway Treatments on National Avenue that Makes Uniontown Visible from Richmond Road.
- **Action D.3:** Update the City of Staunton's Comprehensive Plan to Show Uniontown as an Essential part of the Richmond Road Corridor.
- **Action D.4:** Redesign Uniontown's Commercial Properties on Richmond Road to Reflect the Neighborhood.





Questions