

Amherst County
Strategic Plan and 2023/24 Action Work Plan

Vision Statement

Amherst County is the community of choice for people to live, work, play, and learn. It is known for its safety and its neighborly atmosphere, for its business, education, and recreational opportunities, and for its natural beauty.

Mission

The mission of Amherst County's government is to nurture a vibrant and healthy community through transparent and fiscally responsible leadership and quality public services.

Values

The beauty of our natural environment

Safe and secure community, respectful of the Constitution

Agricultural preservation

Neighborly atmosphere

Business, educational, and recreational opportunities

A welcoming community

Transparent, responsive, and participatory government

Fiscal responsibility

Efficient and effective government

Major Strategic Goal Areas

Citizen Satisfaction – *Increase citizen satisfaction with their government through increased outreach, information sharing, open communications, and transparency.*

High Quality Core Services – Promote and support high quality core services in the areas of community safety, high quality education and CTE, recreational opportunities, and solid waste management through the effective use and maintenance of County assets.

Economic Development - Grow and diversify the economy by supporting business development and expansion that enhances the tax base and provides gainful employment while minimizing negative impacts. Tourism is an important component of economic development.

County Staffing & Performance – Recruit, train, equip, and retain appropriate staff to ensure a high quality of service delivery.

Environmental Stewardship – Preserve the natural beauty and agricultural heritage of the County.

2023/24 Work Plan

By Strategic Goal Area

Citizen Satisfaction

- Initiate an in-person Citizens’ Academy in the Spring of 2025. The Public Information Officer will be the lead person for this activity.
- Conduct an internal review of the County’s website and propose changes to enhance its value as a tool of communications and transparency by May 1, 2024. Follow up with an implementation plan.

High Quality Core Services

- Adopt the Madison Heights Master Plan. Incorporate proposed infrastructure improvements into future Capital Improvement Plans maintained by the Amherst County Service Authority.
- Develop an EMS Master Plan for adoption by July 1, 2025.
- Consider the purpose, function, and value of the Emergency Services Council. Review and report back to the Board by December 31, 2023.
- Prepare and adopt an Asset Management Plan, to include fleet management, for initial implementation in FY 2026.
- Develop and adopt a Recreation and Parks Master Plan for the County by July 1, 2025.
- Schedule a presentation to the Board of Supervisors by the consultant selected to lead the Recreation and Parks Master Plan development on or before December 2023.

Economic Development

- Provide periodic updates to the Board of Supervisors on the extension of broadband service throughout the remainder of the County.

- Develop and incentive philosophy, with principles and guidelines, for consideration by the EDA and Board of Supervisors, within 6 months (by April 1, 2024).
- Re-examine the scope, potential costs, financing, phasing, and possible locations for the development of a regional agricultural complex.

County Staffing & Performance

- Create a Technology Master Plan with proposed funding mechanisms either through the operating budget or the CIP. Completion within twelve months (by October 1, 2024).

Environmental Stewardship

- Investigate and identify potential actions to protect the viewshed of the Blue Ridge Rail Trail along the Piney River in northern Amherst County. Provide a report to the Board by July 1, 2024.

Other Actions

- The County Administrator will reach out to the Executive Director of the Monacan Nation, within three months (before the end of the year) to start a conversation on building the relationship between the Monacan Nation and the County.

2023/24 Chronological Work Plan

Ongoing or Immediate

- Adopt the Madison Heights Master Plan. Incorporate proposed infrastructure improvements into future Capital Improvement Plans maintained by the Amherst County Service Authority.
- Provide periodic updates to the Board of Supervisors on the extension of broadband service throughout the remainder of the County.

Within Three Months (by January 1, 2024)

- Consider the purpose, function, and value of the Emergency Services Council. Review and report back to the Board by December 31, 2023.
- Schedule a presentation to the Board of Supervisors by the consultant selected to lead the Recreation and Parks Master Plan development in December 2023.
- The County Administrator will reach out to the Executive Director of the Monacan Nation, to start a conversation on building the relationship between the Monacan Nation and the County.

Within Six Months (by April 1, 2024)

- Develop and incentive philosophy, with principles and guidelines, for consideration by the EDA and Board of Supervisors.

Within A Year (by October 1, 2024)

- Conduct an internal review of the County's website and propose changes to enhance its value as a tool of communications and transparency by May 1, 2024. Follow up with an implementation plan.
- Investigate and identify potential actions to protect the viewshed of the Blue Ridge Rail Trail along the Piney River in northern Amherst County. Provide a report to the Board by July 1, 2024.
- Create a Technology Master Plan with proposed funding mechanisms either through the operating budget or the CIP.

Longer Term or Indefinite

- Initiate an in-person Citizens' Academy in the Spring of 2025. The Public Information Officer will be the lead person for this activity.
- Prepare and adopt an Asset Management Plan, to include fleet management, for initial implementation in FY 2026.
- Develop an EMS Master Plan for adoption by July 1, 2025.
- Develop and adopt a Recreation and Parks Master Plan for the County by July 1, 2025.
- Re-examine the scope, potential costs, financing, phasing, and possible locations for the development of a regional agricultural complex.