

In an effort to enhance students' knowledge of local government and born out of a long-time successful program in Frederick County, the City of Harrisonburg developed a Service Learning Program with Harrisonburg High School (HHS).

With a condensed schedule, HHS honors students completed their academic and SOL related work in four of the five units leaving the final grading period for a field experience with city staff. The initial project possibilities were created and vetted by department directors and school staff. The project scopes were then pitched to the students by a department representative and the student teams picked which project they would complete.

The final projects included consideration of the location for a new fire station, residential guide, update and report on sustainability efforts, a downtown business survey and a public education piece on the city's public transportation network. These projects were completed in collaboration with city staff and culminated in presentations to city council on May 26 of this year. The video of those presentations can be seen on the city's website at ([harrisonburgva.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=4&clip\\_id=262](http://harrisonburgva.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=4&clip_id=262))

Everyone involved counted the pilot program as a complete success and are in the planning phases for year two of the Service Learning Program. If you have questions or would like more information please contact me at ([ande.banks@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:ande.banks@harrisonburgva.gov)). Both Jay Tibbs, Deputy County Administrator for Frederick County, and Tara Woolever, Social Sciences Coordinator for Frederick County Schools, were instrumental in assisting city staff in creating the new program. It is also worth noting that much of the work of implementation of the program fell to Harrisonburg Social Studies Coordinator, Kirk Moyers, and HHS Government teacher, Jay Hook.