



TOWN OF HURT, VIRGINIA

Office of the Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council Members, Town Staff, and Citizens of Hurt

FROM: Gary Hodnett, Mayor

DATE: February 2026

SUBJECT: 2026 State of the Town Update

Overview

This memorandum serves as a summary of the 2026 State of the Town Address and outlines the Town of Hurt's current financial position, infrastructure initiatives, economic development progress, and strategic priorities moving forward.

The Town is currently in its strongest financial position in more than 40 years. Over the past seven years, General and Enterprise reserves have doubled, and economic development activity has exceeded that of the previous three decades combined.

These results are the outcome of deliberate long-term planning and disciplined financial management.

Financial Position

- General and Enterprise reserves have doubled since 2019.
- Audit performance improved significantly in recent years, though minor setbacks occurred due to staff turnover.
- Continued focus will be placed on strengthening financial reporting and maintaining audit quality.

The Town remains committed to fiscal responsibility, accountability, and strategic reserve growth.

Staunton Plaza Redevelopment

Council has approved façade redesign plans and selected a lead developer for the Staunton Plaza remodel. Construction is expected to begin in the near term.

Objectives include:

- Increasing long-term revenue generation
- Reducing reliance on tax increases
- Establishing a central business and community hub
- Enhancing visitor engagement

Additional concepts under consideration include a Heritage Pavilion and seasonal attractions to further stimulate economic activity.

Klopman Water Treatment Plant Acquisition

The Town has executed a purchase agreement for the former Klopman water treatment plant and approximately 11 acres of surrounding property.

The agreement provides:

- Operational control of water intakes on the Staunton River and Sycamore Creek
- Access to 17.7 million gallons per day capacity
- Expansion of wholesale water sales

This acquisition positions the Town to strengthen regional partnerships and work toward long-term reduction of in-town water rates.

Infrastructure & Capital Improvement Planning

The Town is actively developing its first comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in decades.

This initiative will:

- Provide structured planning for infrastructure replacement
- Transition from reactive repairs to proactive maintenance
- Allow cost distribution over longer budget cycles
- Protect long-term financial stability

Phase II of the State Mandated Water Project will begin this spring and is projected for completion in Fall 2026.

School Safety

The implementation of school zone speed cameras has resulted in a measurable reduction in speeding violations. The safety of our students remains a top priority.

Ordinance Modernization

All Town ordinances have been fully reviewed, modernized, codified, and published online. This multi-year effort enhances transparency, accessibility, and administrative efficiency.

Community Engagement

The Mayor's Forum continues to provide residents with a structured platform for open dialogue. A private community Facebook forum has also been established to improve communication and public access to information.

Residents are encouraged to remain engaged, verify information directly, and participate in Town governance.

Strategic Direction

The Town's leadership philosophy remains grounded in:

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Strategic planning
- Long-term infrastructure investment
- Responsible financial stewardship

The Town of Hurt is positioned for sustained growth and increased regional visibility.

Conclusion

The Town is no longer operating without direction. Through careful planning and disciplined execution, Hurt is positioned to move from stability to growth and from growth to long-term sustainability.

Additional development announcements are anticipated in the coming year.

The Town of Hurt is open for business.

You are why we serve and who we serve.

Gary Hodnett
Mayor Town of Hurt
gary.hodnett@townofhurtva.gov
434-259-1735