



2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

INTENT STATEMENT

Annually the City of Williamsburg adopts, via resolution, a legislative agenda. The purpose of the agenda is to provide our state and federal legislators a quick reference that outlines the City's position on particular issues facing the nation and state that may impact our locality.

The proposed agenda is intended to be a short listing of specific positions held by the City of Williamsburg that will be the basis of advocacy during the 2022 legislative session. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of issues that the City considers important. During the session, items will be debated that are not included in this agenda, and their exclusion does not preclude the City from taking a position.

PRIORITY ISSUES

Regional Sports Facility Funding

- **Regional Tourism Product Development:** The City supports an amendment to §58.1-603.2 of the Code of Virginia to provide the Historic Triangle Recreational Facilities Authority (HTRFA) with the future maintenance of effort funding, less amounts committed to the Tourism Council and the Greater Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce, to be used as a match for the City of Williamsburg's annual debt service payment for the construction of a regional sports facility. Excess funds shall be held by HTRFA and expended at its sole discretion. Annual funding distribution will equal: \$126,000 to the Tourism Council, \$402,000 to the Business Council, and \$1,450,000 to the HTRFA.

Interstate-64 Widening Funds

- **Close the Gap:** The widening of I-64 from Richmond to Norfolk includes multiple segments, all of which are funded and complete or underway with the exception of approximately 28 miles. This gap section is located predominately in New Kent County (MM203-233) and is not located in a Transportation Planning Organization area making it difficult to access funding. The City requests state and/or federal funds to complete the widening project and that the project proceed from east to west. 

Communication Sales and Use Tax

- **Expanding and Equalizing:** The Virginia Communications Sales and Use Tax was enacted to establish a statewide tax rate and to pre-empt local taxes on communications sales and services. The City supports setting the tax rate at the same level as the state sales tax rate and broadening the coverage of the tax to include audio and video streaming services and prepaid calling cards. 

Local Government Revenues

- **Financial Impact on City Government:** Williamsburg advises the General Assembly that the following areas of state spending are of greatest financial importance to the City of Williamsburg. 
 - Education: Williamsburg James City County Schools and Williamsburg Regional Library, adequate and appropriate state K-12 funding that reflects the true costs of providing high quality public education
 - Transportation: Annual street maintenance allocation
 - Public Safety: Police support through 599 funds, new funding sources for state-initiated services and programs like Line of Duty Disability benefits
 - Regional Jail: Support for correction officer compensation through the Compensation Board
 - Human Services: State Health Department and Behavioral Health programs, and Williamsburg Human Services Department
 - Mandated Officials: State support for mandated City and joint City/County Constitutional Officers
 - BPOL: Local government revenue neutral tax reform of the Business, Professional and Occupational License taxes (BPOL)
 - State Budget: Local government revenues should not be the source for state budget correction, adjustment, or balancing

OTHER ISSUES OF FOCUS

Good Governance

- **FOIA Exemptions:** Williamsburg supports expanding electronic meetings outside of declared emergency periods with flexibility for localities to determine how to include public participation and public comment. The City also supports clear guidelines on fees for FOIA requests but does not support shifting the burden of FOIA costs to localities. 
- **Housing:** The City of Williamsburg supports the continuation of efforts to appropriate funding for housing programs and projects and an alignment of enabling legislation at the State level to ensure that all localities have consistent authority to implement tools such as inclusionary zoning and impact fees. 

Transportation Priorities

- **Passenger Rail on the Virginia Peninsula:** The City supports efforts and projects that promote higher speed and more reliable passenger rail service to Richmond and the Northeast Corridor, including the completion of the Newport News Multimodal Center in Spring 2023, with the third train to Williamsburg and Newport News arriving in 2026. 

Strategic Partnerships

- **William & Mary:** The City endorses the legislative priorities of William & Mary, including (1) Secure funding to restore, relocate, and research the Williamsburg Bray School, believed to be America's oldest extant schoolhouse for African-Americans, (2) Strengthen the Commonwealth's investment in need-based financial aid, (3) Supplemental funding for the Integrated Science Center IV capital project - a key component of W&M's Tech Talent Initiative agreement with the Commonwealth.



PARTNER AGENCY SUPPORT

The City of Williamsburg is a member of the Virginia Municipal League, Virginia First Cities, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization. Each of these partner agencies adopt legislative agendas annually. Through the participation in board meetings, annual conferences and committees the City Council and executive management of the City of Williamsburg endorse and support the legislative priorities included in these respective legislative agendas for the 2022 session. When these partner agency agendas advocate for statewide application, the City maintains local autonomy for implementation in a manner consistent with local regulation.

Items above marked with partner logos indicate issue overlap and mutual support.

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