



**2026 Virginia General Assembly
Session**

City of Hampton Legislative Agenda



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2026 Legislative and Budget Requests

1. Steam Plant Operations (Legislative)
2. Vacant Commercial Building Taxation (Legislative)
3. Safer Communities Grant Program (Budget)
4. Restore the Hampton Health District (Budget)
5. Support Funding Request for Fort Wool Restoration Efforts (Budget)

2026 Legislative Priority Positions

1. Resiliency and Environment
2. Community Development
3. Education
4. Fiscal Responsibility and Revenue Generation
5. Public Safety
6. Economic Development
7. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
8. Transportation and Transit



Legislative & Budget Requests

Steam Plant Operations (Legislative)

- Request legislative amendments that would enable localities to receive State recycling credits for disposal of residential household trash delivered from Hampton customers to the NASA / Hampton Waste to Energy Steam Plant. The incineration process supplies steam energy to NASA Langley Research Center, reduces environmental impacts to our community, and extends the overall life expectancy of Hampton's landfill located on Big Bethel Road.

Vacant Commercial Building Taxation (Legislative)

- Request the City of Hampton be added to the list of localities that may have more flexibility on levying a tax on certain real property at a different rate than the tax imposed upon the land on which it is located due to a vacant status.

Safer Communities Grant Program (Budget)

- Request funding in the amount of **\$2.5 million** for Hampton through the Safer Communities Program. The Safer Communities Program supports holistic, community-based strategies that address the root causes and conditions of community violence.

Restore the Hampton Health District (Budget)

- Request the General Assembly to appropriate state funding estimated at **\$770,000** for the reestablishment of the Hampton Health District as a standalone district separate from the Peninsula Health District. Currently, the local department of health is operated as a joint partnership between the state and local governments (Hampton, Newport News, James City, Williamsburg, York and Poquoson).

Support Funding Request for Fort Wool Restoration Efforts (Budget)

- Support efforts seeking the repair/replacement of the Fort's boat dock and tower in the amount of **\$4.4 million**. Additionally, the City is eager to partner with the relevant state entities to capitalize on the preservation of Fort Wool.



Priority Positions

Resiliency and Environment

Support the efforts of the Commonwealth of Virginia and Hampton Roads Planning District Commission to promote coastal resiliency and adaptation to climate change impacts.

Support increased funding for the Community Flood Preparedness Fund along with improved guidelines for the program that increases the project cap, extends the loan period, and delays interest accrual until project completion.

Support additional investments to the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) in Fiscal Year 2026 to meet documented needs.

Request that the General Assembly help support continuity in state-level planning by continuing to advance the recommendations for state-level leadership identified in the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan. Additionally, the City believes that it will be critical to provide state-level staff resources with the responsibility to provide this crucial coordination, including naming a Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection or similar dedicated, state-level position to be a critical point of contact and resource for localities like Hampton.

Continue to support legislation to provide local governments with greater authority in the reforestation, preservation, and management of urban forests in recognition of their ability to capture and store carbon, reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, reduce energy use, and mitigate urban heat islands and their health effects.

Continue to fund efforts to restore and maintain historic African American cemeteries across the City of Hampton. In 2017, the Commonwealth created a Historical African American Cemeteries and Graves Fund (the "Fund"), which is administered by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR). Hampton is home to several abandoned or neglected African American cemeteries and this



Fund is instrumental in the preservation and maintenance of these historic cemeteries.

Community Development

Support maintaining and expanding local authority over land use/zoning issues and decisions. These issues are best made by those locally impacted. The City of Hampton further requests the continued ability to regulate short-term rentals and accessory dwelling units locally in line with local zoning standards and ordinances.

Support increased state funding for the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC).

Request the General Assembly adopt legislation that would allow for the creation of local ordinances to eliminate or deter the continuation of nuisance and safety related offenses and violations including increased parking restrictions of commercial vehicles in city neighborhoods.

Support legislation that provides localities with additional tools to address blighted properties.

Public Education

Continue to support pay equity for teachers and support staff. The City of Hampton also supports continued state funding for At-Risk Add On, Transformational High Schools, and the Virginia Preschool Initiative. In order to continue the positive forward momentum in our public schools, the state must be a reliable funding partner in accordance with the Virginia Constitution and state statutes.

Oppose any changes in methodology or changes in the division of financial responsibility that would result in a shift of funding responsibility from the state to localities. Further, the City opposes policies that lower state contributions but



do nothing to address the cost of meeting the requirements of the Standards of Accreditation, Standards of Quality, and Standards of Learning. Any approach to improving low-performing schools must include adequate state financial support.

Support the General Assembly maintaining funding of the Virginia Air and Space Science Center's STEM 360 program as appropriated in the current budget. The City of Hampton recognizes the importance of increasing student achievement in STEM education. The Virginia Air & Space Science Center's education programs and experiences have been proven to increase student engagement, interest, and knowledge of STEM, particularly among underserved children. Located in a city-provided 100,000 square foot building in downtown Hampton, the Center has gained national and international recognition for being a leader in STEM education programs and research. While the Virginia Air & Space Science Center already receives support from the region's corporations, foundations, private donors, and the City of Hampton, continued dedicated state funding is needed to expand the reach of its programs.

Support regional efforts to further expand the inclusion of conflict resolution in Virginia's educational curriculum standards.

Support solutions to address school construction and renovation needs.

Fiscal Responsibility & Revenue Generation

Request that the Governor and the General Assembly refrain from using local governments as a fiscal balance wheel in order to overcome revenue challenges.

Recommend that state constitutional amendments with local government fiscal impacts require the cost burden to be allocated among all citizens of the Commonwealth so that the citizens of one or only a few localities are not unduly and inequitably burdened.



Support efforts to request that the Commonwealth offset local real estate and personal property tax revenue losses due to the tax exemptions for the disabled veterans program. Also support legislative proposals that would study the impacts of the tax exemptions on local governments. Real property tax revenues are the mainstay of local government budgets, and state mandates that reduce these revenues place pressure on other local government budget priorities, such as property tax relief for the elderly and disabled, funding for K-12 education, and the appropriate level of taxation for each locality.

Support amending the Communications Sales and Use Tax ("CSUT") to modernize that tax base to capture new technology that is being used to deliver traditional services subject to the tax.

Oppose any attempt to mandate exemptions to the local option sales tax unless the General Assembly and/or Governor can establish a viable revenue-replacement for localities like Hampton.

Support the statewide authority for local governments to establish an excise tax on the sale of vaping products.

Oppose any further local mandate of collective bargaining by the State and retain the current local option authority.

Support efforts that provide localities with the same discretion given to the Commonwealth regarding compensation in wrongful incarceration cases in which the person has been declared innocent or received an absolute pardon for a crime the person did not commit. Additionally, requesting the removal of language regarding the withholding of state funding to a locality in such cases.

Public Safety

Request that the Code of Virginia be amended to require that jail per diem rates for all offenders held in a local or regional jail be regularly adjusted to reflect changes in cost.



Support efforts that provide authority for a locality to create a “Pop-Up Zone” as a method to maintain public safety in certain areas of a locality when a large-scale gathering is planned or taking place. These “Pop-Up Zones” would have increased enforcement powers and increased penalties for violations.

Honor commitments to local governments specific to the local aid to police departments or “599” program. The Code of Virginia provides for financial assistance to localities with police departments through the “599” program. This legislation was enacted by the General Assembly when it imposed an annexation moratorium on cities more than 30 years ago. Currently, almost 70% of Virginians live in communities that have police departments. The General Assembly has increasingly de-emphasized this funding obligation as a priority.

Support ongoing work to review Virginia’s barrier crimes laws and the impacts of the ability of local governments to engage credible messengers or violence interrupters. Virginia’s barrier crime laws prevent local governments or nonprofits working with local governments from using credible messenger programs to effectively combat youth violence.

Support efforts at the state level to provide local relief to the temporary detention order (TDO) and emergency custody order (ECO) processes including providing additional resources to alternative transport services.

Support continued efforts to regulate illicit liquid nicotine, vape, cannabis, cannabis-derivatives, synthetic THC, Kratom, and similar products being sold at local retail stores which put the health and safety of its residents, including juveniles, at risk.

Support legislation that deters the reckless use of motorcycles, dirt bikes, and other motorized bikes in public spaces.

Support the continued appropriate use of modern technology like license plate readers to promote public safety.



Continue working with the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) to reduce the local responsibilities related to ABC store larcenies.

Support efforts to add municipal park rangers, 911 operators and animal control officers to the list of individuals that are eligible to receive enhanced hazardous duty retirement benefits.

Economic Development

Support legislation that would provide additional financing and bonding authority/opportunity for the maintenance and construction of entertainment related venues and public facilities.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Support transparent government operations but oppose any legislation that proposes to increase the financial or administrative burden on localities when responding to records requests.

Transportation and Transit

Request that the General Assembly appropriate additional funds toward sunken boat removals. The issue of abandoned, sunken, and/or derelict boats is a growing problem in Virginia waterways.

Support policies to create predictable, adequate, and equitable funding across varying transit modes and regions throughout the Commonwealth. Sustainable funding is critical for reliable transit services that reduce customer exposure to service cuts and fare increases.

Support expanded legalization of speed cameras and traffic control devices when the area in which they are placed has been documented as an area of concern through speed studies, crash data, or engineering studies. Additionally,



advocating for fee revenues to remain locally due to the increased cost of installation and maintenance of such devices.

Support the creation of a regional aviation authority to consolidate Hampton Roads' airports.

Support regional efforts spearheaded by the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) to create a regional secondary road fund that also provides protection of federal facilities including military installations, and long-term resilience.

Coalition and Community Partners' Legislative Programs

The City of Hampton has a long-standing commitment to support and encourage our partnerships with local commissions, boards, organizations, coalitions, and institutes of higher learning. As such, unless specifically stated, we generally support the legislative agendas of the following:

- Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board
- Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
- Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization
- Transportation District of Hampton Roads (Hampton Roads Transit)
- Fort Monroe Authority
- Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission
- Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
- Virginia Municipal League
- Virginia First Cities
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Hampton University
- Virginia Tech Seafood Agriculture Research and Extension Center