

City of Charlottesville

2026 Legislative Agenda



VISION for Charlottesville:
To be a place where everyone thrives

PRIORITIES

FUNDING REQUESTS

Sustainability

- To provide funding in the amount of \$600,000 to support the Energy Resource Hub (ERH) for 3 years. The ERH helps residents and businesses in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County navigate resource programs, rebates, and incentives for energy efficiency, weatherization services, and electrification. Local nonprofits Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) and the Community Climate Collaborative (C3) provide technical expertise and resources, ensuring that the Hub delivers high-quality and impactful services. The ERH model, which delivers a personalized approach to navigating incentive options, is a replicable approach for local communities who seek to support their community members address the rising cost of energy and their interest in improving the performance of their own buildings

Homeless Services

- To provide funding in the amount of \$2.5 million to support the City of Charlottesville in the establishment of its first low barrier shelter with expansive wraparound services to include detox beds, mental health beds, and medical service rooms to support the needs of the 200+ unhoused individuals in the city.

Transportation

- To provide funding in the amount of \$3.5 million per year for three years to support operations of more frequent and enhanced transit service in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. This funding would serve as a bridge allowing the region to improve transit service in advance of establishing a new revenue source through the new Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority (CARTA). This will include ADA funding for JAUNT to provide paratransit services.

POLICIES

Human Rights

- Support the expansion of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for people with disabilities and others with complex needs.
- Amend the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to allow tenants to raise unsafe or unsanitary conditions as an affirmative defense to non-payment of rent in eviction cases.
- Reinstate fourteen-day pay or quit notices. Under current law, after a tenant is five days late in paying rent, a landlord can issue a five day "pay or quit" notice requiring the tenant to pay full rent or face eviction proceedings. By extending the five day "pay or quit" window to fourteen days, tenants have a better chance of accessing funds and avoiding housing instability and homelessness.
- Increase funding for the Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot Program (VERP). Established in 2020 to support the creation of local/regional coordinated systems to prevent evictions, this program provides local organizations with resources to help families access emergency financial assistance, case management, and court navigation.

Sustainability

- Support the Commonwealth's re-entry in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).
- Maintain the intent of the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA) and the Clean Cars Standard; support adequate state resources for localities to invest in EVs and EV infrastructure.
- Support legislation that creates a robust distributed energy resources (DER) environment to achieve both grid reliability and climate goals (e.g., shared solar, DER interconnection requirements, virtual power plants, power storage, state-level financing mechanisms).
- Support legislation that expands opportunities for net metering programs (e.g., eliminate the cap, standby charges, and fees).
- Support data center reform legislation to minimize environmental impacts and reduce financial burden on rate payers (e.g., building data disclosure, cost-share reform, transmission cost allocation).
- Support legislation related to utility Integrated Resource Planning reform (e.g., improving accessibility for nontraditional stakeholders, load growth data transparency, prioritizing energy efficiency and energy storage).
- Support legislation authorizing localities to require greater building energy efficiency (stretch codes) and establish commercial building benchmarking within their jurisdictions.

POSITIONS

Education

- Support for the passage of a bill to authorize the levying of sales tax for a 10-year period to support school facility construction

Human Rights

- Limit fees for rental applications and/or allow groups of tenants to submit a single application.
- Require that critical lease information be made available in languages other than English.
- Amend the Virginia Residential landlord and Tenant Act to increase transparency during the tenant screening process by requiring landlords to list minimum criteria before accepting applications and provide reasons for a tenant's application denial.
- Require landlords to disclose to prospective rental applicants a complete list of additional fees involved in renting as a separate document prior to tenant application.
- Establish statewide pilot program funded at \$60 million annually for two years to provide rental assistance for 5,000 very low-income families across Virginia.
- Support the expansion of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for people with disabilities and others with complex needs.
- Support comprehensive probation reform bills that offer increased housing support and services to aid in successful reentry of those exiting incarceration.

Affordable Housing

- Increase annual funding for Virginia Housing Trust Fund (VHTF) from \$87.5 million to \$150 million. The VHTF provides loans to create, preserve, and support affordable housing, and provides grants targeted at reducing homelessness.

Emergency Management

- Transitioning the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's (VDEM) core programmatic functions, as required by the Code of Virginia, to the general fund to enable the agency to increase the pass-through of federal emergency management funding to localities.
- Supporting the Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Fund and conducting a study on long-term funding sources for Emergency Management ([HB 1992](#) / [SB 1246](#)).

SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION

Planning and Zoning

- Amend Virginia Code §55.1-1308.2 to make it easier for residents of mobile home parks that have been offered for sale to a developer to make an intelligent counteroffer:
 - The owner of a mobile home park that is being offered for sale should be required to furnish to the residents the terms of the offer from the developer.
 - The timeline for submitting a counteroffer should be lengthened, and supporting purchase documentation should be required to be shared with tenants as it becomes available.
 - The compensation to mobile home residents facing displacement should be increased, and the amount should be indexed to inflation.
 - Mobile home park residents should be given a right of first refusal if they can make a qualifying counteroffer of at least the same value.
- Give localities a right of first refusal to purchase publicly supported housing that is being offered for sale or that is coming out of its mandatory affordability period.
- Support recommendations to amend the building code to allow single-stair apartment buildings.
- Recommend amending §58.1-3221.1 to add Charlottesville to the list of localities permitted to tax improvements to real property at a different rate than the tax imposed upon the land on which the improvement is located, provided that the tax rate is not zero and does not exceed the tax rate imposed on the land.
- Recommend that in order to expedite development review, 15.2-2286.3 be amended to give the governing body the power to delegate the power to approve special exceptions to the Planning Commission.
- Recommend that in order to expedite development review, 15.2-2286.4 be amended to allow the given "hardship standard" to be replaced by guidelines approved by the local governing body to set parameters for modifications of the zoning ordinance as required.
- Recommend that in order to clarify legal authority, Virginia code section 15.2-2285 part F offer clear guidance on what "harm" is to establish legal standing for appeal. Increased property values is not harm. Residential use is not harm.
- Recommend that House Bill number 2012 offered January 11, 2023 by Delegate Sally Hudson amending "58.1-3221.1. Classification of land and improvements for tax purposes." be considered again and add all other localities participating in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. This speaks to current housing and transportation plans.
<https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+ful+HB2112>
- Recommend expanding tree requirement powers granted in "15.2-961.3. Replacement of trees during development process in localities." to permit the requirement of twenty

percent tree canopy for all uses and a greater percent in flood plains and riparian areas.
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title15.2/chapter9/section15.2-961.3/>

- Support statewide permitting of Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Support expanded state resources for land holding nonprofit organizations to provide affordable housing.
- Support an expanded timeline and resources to purchase mobile home parks.
- Support implementing a requirement that purchase documentation should be required to be shared with tenants as they become available.
- Recommend increasing compensation for tenants at purchase and linking that rate to inflation.
- Support the creation of a state School Streets program and funding for design and implementation similar to Canadian and European examples.
- Recommend the creation of a committee to study deed restrictions and covenants to ensure compliance with law, equity and affordable housing goals. We recommend studying regularization of terms for consistency.
- Recommend studying the adjustment of the state building code to treat six units and below as residential code, the same as single family and duplex and continue to treat buildings with seven units and above as commercial, similar to the Memphis, Tennessee example.
- Recommend creation of a study committee to review issues of safe and efficient street design as they may conflict with fire apparatus access.
- Recommend revision of § 55.1-319 to expand its applicability for primary residences and update figures and process to meet current timeframes.

Human & Social Services

- Create and fund the 5,000 Families pilot program to provide monthly rental assistance to low-income families.
- Increase funding for the Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot Program (VERP). Established in 2020 to support the creation of local/regional coordinated systems to prevent evictions, this program provides local organizations with resources to help families access emergency financial assistance, case management, and court navigation.