

## 2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES & POSITIONS

### PRIORITIES

#### Support for Public Schools

York County supports full state funding for all aspects of public education including:

- **Special education**
- Support staff and operations
- Capital projects and maintenance
- **Standards of Quality (SOQ) achievement**
- Teacher salary increases

York County, like most other local school divisions, funds K-12 education significantly in excess of the SOQ requirements to meet citizen expectations. Also, like localities throughout Virginia, York County has proportionally increased local funding for school operations in recent years due, in part, to inadequate state funding for education as compared to inflation adjusted historical norms. Our expectation is that all students will become lifelong learners prepared to compete in a global economy. This level of expectation extends to all students regardless of their socio-economic status, disability or, language. To meet this expectation we specifically request that special education and SOQ funding be fully funded.

#### VDOT

York County continues to support and collaborate on the mission of VDOT.

##### **Maintenance**

Secondary road paving, drainage repairs and maintenance, litter control and mowing operations are a priority for our community, enhancing quality of life and our vital tourism trade. And as such, York County requests additional funding for VDOT and these specific activities.

##### **Local Assistance Program (LAP)**

Incorporate sea level rise and subsidence into award parameters of the existing funding programs. The Coastal Virginia localities and counties recognize the importance of building for long-term goals. York's request is to include this feature into current award processes.

#### Interstate 64 Widening – Richmond to Williamsburg

York recognizes the positive impact on the region created by widening I-64, Phases I through III. And having realized this benefit, York County urges the General Assembly to complete the widening of Interstate 64 to six (6) lanes between Williamsburg and Richmond, from east to west. Linking the major metropolitan areas of Richmond and Hampton Roads with a continuous 6-lane interstate facility would help alleviate the congested conditions that threaten the viability of the corridor, which is so vitally important to the state economy, the military, the ports, private industry, tourists, and local citizens. The County urges the General Assembly to consider ways to enhance the state revenue made available to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for allocation to vital transportation infrastructure projects, but not at the expense of taking funding from other local government priorities such as education and public safety.

#### Tobacco Tax Parity

York County requests that the General Assembly pass legislation allowing counties the option to tax cigarettes as cities and towns. Section 58.1-3830 of the Code of Virginia allows cities and towns to levy the tax under their charters and "general taxing powers". Only Fairfax and Arlington Counties have been allowed to levy such a tax under special authority from the General Assembly. In counties such as York, where population densities and service demands are similar to those of many cities, having the authority to enhance revenue by means other than through real estate or personal property taxation would be a beneficial option.

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### POSITIONS

#### **Unfunded Local Mandates**

York County urges the General Assembly to oppose and reject legislation that would impose new unfunded mandates and fiscal responsibilities on local governments or reinstate any “local aid to the Commonwealth” measures. Moreover, the County supports a “First Day of Session Filing” requirement for any General Assembly Bills having a fiscal impact on localities.

#### **Single Use Plastics**

Single use plastics such as bags, straws and utensils are burdening our communities’ infrastructure. York County encourages the General Assembly to delegate authority to localities for bans, recycling programs and other means to deal with the environmental impacts of single use plastics.

#### **Library Funding**

Similar to funding for schools, public libraries have not received funding as called for in the Code of Virginia. Presently, York County Libraries only receive approximately 60% of what is called for in the Code. Our request, and the request of the Virginia Library Association, is to fully fund State Aid for Public Libraries.

#### **Transportation Safety Initiatives**

York County supports the following: legislation to strengthen the ability of law enforcement officers to discern whether violations of the provisions relating to use of handheld personal communication devices in moving vehicles are occurring; amend the Code of Virginia to make seat belt enforcement a primary offense; and amend the Code to prohibit the possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle.

#### **Inclement Weather Procedures**

York County supports legislation to provide authority for any local government board or commission to follow the same procedures as set forth for Boards of Supervisors and Planning Commissions regarding the continuation of meetings and rescheduling of advertised public hearings when the chairman determines that weather or other conditions would make travel hazardous. The provisions applicable to Boards of Supervisors and Planning Commissions are set forth in Section Nos. 15.2-1416 and 15.2-2214 of the Code of Virginia.

#### **Legislators:**

At the conclusion of the General Assembly session, please share with us the progress on these items. If you need additional information, please contact any member of the York County Board of Supervisors or County Administration.