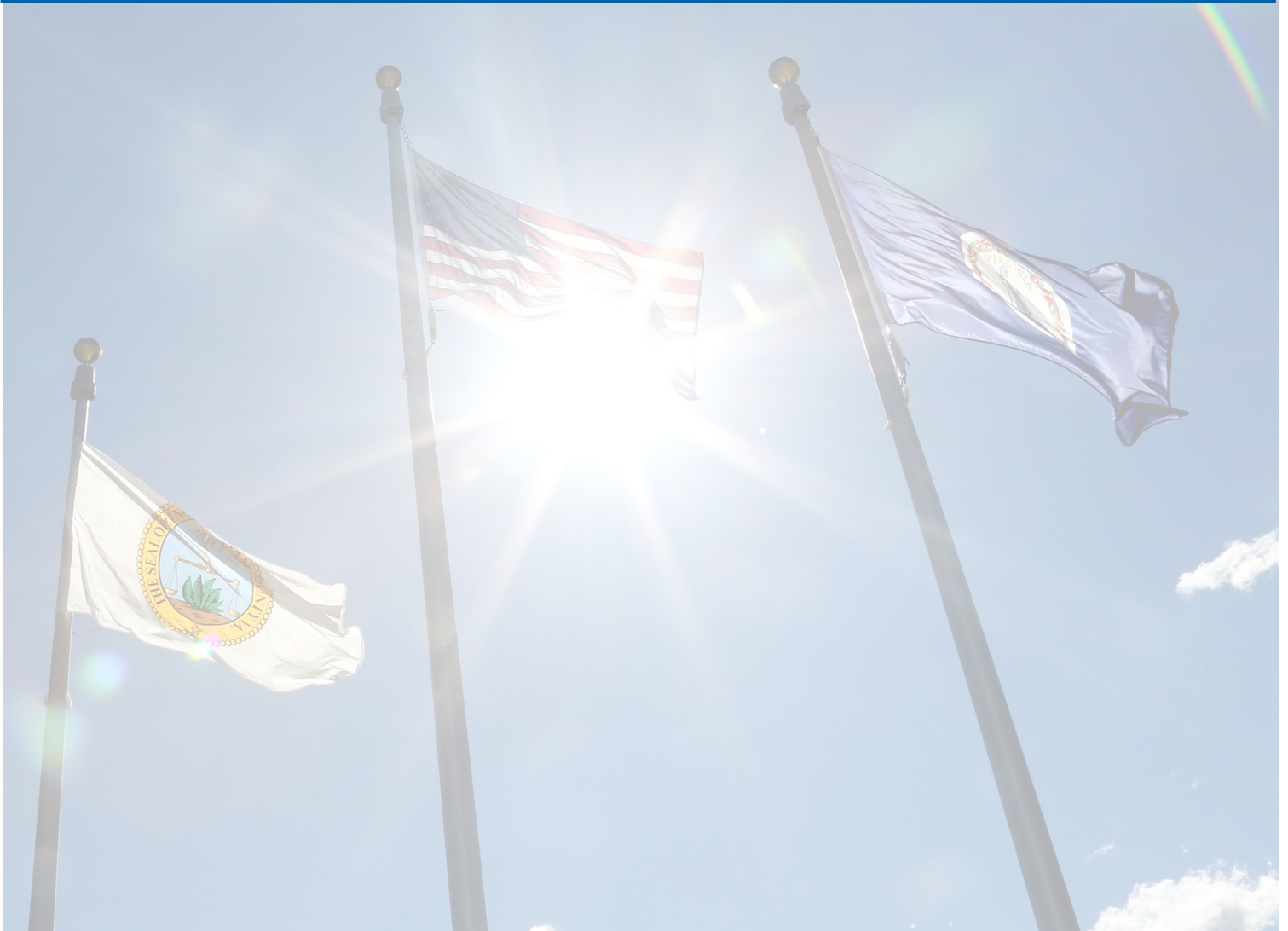


**2024**

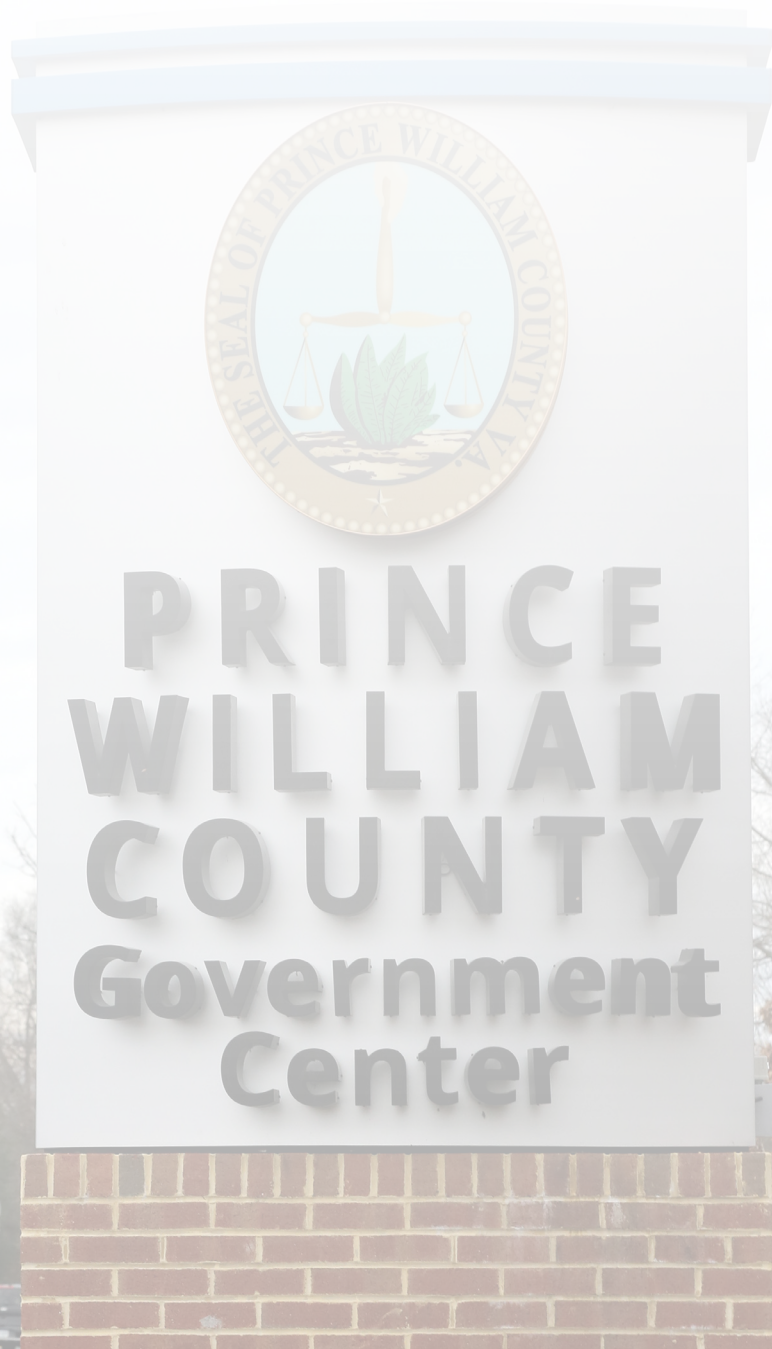
# Legislative Agenda





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# 2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VA

## **Prince William County will support legislation, policies and appropriations measures that:**

- Mitigate the burden of unfunded mandates on Prince William County.
- Provide resources that impact the most vulnerable in the community.
- Allow for opportunities to leverage resources in partnership with the Commonwealth to best meet the needs of the county.
- Enable Prince William County to attract targeted employers.
- Promote environmental stewardship that enhances the quality of life for the residents of Prince William County.
- Promote efficiency and transparency in government.
- Fully fund the standards for education and cost to compete.

## **Prince William County will oppose legislation, policies and appropriations measures that:**

- Reduce funding or shift the costs of shared services to the county from the Commonwealth for essential services.
- Attempt to preempt, restrict or limit local revenue raising authority or adversely impacts existing taxing authority (e.g. removing a funding source, such as TOT).
- Impose additional fees on the county for measures that are clearly the responsibility of the Commonwealth.
- Infringe on the local authority and flexibility to control policies and procedures governing local land use matters, as land use decisions are local in character and should be determined and solved at the local level.
- Negatively impact the current applicable legal standard(s) in any local tax matter.
- Compromise the presumption of correctness for real and tangible property assessments.

# TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

**Prince William County's Strategic Goal:** Provide an accessible, comprehensive, multi-modal network of transportation infrastructure that improves local and regional mobility. Prince William County residents and business owners place a high value on mobility and transportation in the County by desiring an accessible, safe, multi-modal transportation network. In response, Prince William County government will seek to prioritize providing equitable access to multimodal transportation options in the community. Enhancing local, state, regional, and federal partnerships must continue to allow the County to leverage and identify project funding. Congestion will be further reduced by prioritizing critical infrastructure projects that expand capacity that support both local and regional mobility and sustainable growth.

## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

### **Remove Ambiguous Language in Eminent Domain Legislation and Clarify Definition of Lost Access and Lost Profits**

Prior changes to Virginia Code § 25.1-230.1 related to lost access and profits better enable businesses to claim lost profits, but the new language in the code provides no clear parameters for determining access and profit impacts and introduces significant uncertainty to the right-of-way process for both localities and property owners. The county has a well-established history of successfully working with private parties to resolve property acquisitions. Without clear standards for demonstrating lost profits, the county will have less information from private parties to consider in negotiations, which will likely hinder those negotiations and may increase the number of cases that require time-consuming and expensive litigation. Prince William County will continue to monitor and would support changes to remove ambiguous language in the code and include specific language that provides clear definitions of lost access and lost profits.

### **Transportation/Mobility Projects Safety Improvements**

Prince William County requests that the General Assembly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Virginia Department of Transportation to review traffic calming and safety standards to enable localities to implement safety improvements more broadly on facilities that currently do not qualify and increase dedicated funding for traffic safety improvements.

Prince William County has numerous examples of projects that are local priorities for traffic safety improvements but do not qualify under current standards. These include, but are not limited to:

- Roadways with high accident data but no documented speeding issues
- Rural roads with documented speeding issues but geometry limitations and/or high traffic volumes

Current policies and standards also present obstacles to implementing safety improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, in high traffic volume corridors such as:

- Interstate interchange/bridge crossings
- Primary roadways
- Comp Plan roadways

Prince William County supports increased dedicated funding through various programs to fund improvements mentioned above:

- Additional funding for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- New funding program for traffic calming and small safety improvements
- New program for high-cost pedestrian and bicycle crossings (such as pedestrian bridges and multiuse trails)

### **Restore NVTA Funding**

Prince William County supports legislation that continues to restore NVTA's funding that was lost as part of House Bill 1539 and Senate Bill 856, passed in 2018. Restoration of the \$38.5 million in NVTA funding will ensure that Northern Virginia jurisdictions will have adequate funding to solve the region's transportation issues. Any restoration of NVTA funding should include state funding and revenue sources. In addition, Prince William County supports the protection of all revenues provided to NVTA through legislation dating back to 2013.

## NEW REQUESTS FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### LEGISLATIVE

#### **Add Language Regarding Property Owner Waiver of Repurchase of Property**

The Virginia Code allows property acquired for a public project to be sold when the project is completed, but the current legislation requires that under certain circumstances the original property owner have “first right of refusal” for purchase of the property. Contacting the original owner to determine if they wish to repurchase can be challenging, as it is often up to a decade between when the property is acquired for a project and when the project is fully complete, and property deemed viable for resale. During this time, the original property owner may relocate or transfer their assets to heirs, which creates complex, expensive legal challenges for the county in transferring property back to the market. The county requests property owners have the option to waive their right to receive an offer to repurchase the property from the county through contractual agreement in the case of total takes by adding appropriate language to § 25.1-108(A). This option is currently denied to property owners and can create a more streamlined process.

### LEGISLATIVE

#### **Abandonment of State Maintained Roadway Sections**

Currently, under Virginia Code § 33.2-909, a government body on its own or upon the request of property owners, may abandon any section of roadway part of the state highway system. One of the conditions that allows the abandonment of a roadway is that it must be located in a residence district, that is also located within a county having a density of population exceeding 1,000 per square mile. The county in the past has abandoned older sections of roadway that were no longer in use because of a new roadway built or realignment of a roadway as part of an adjacent development or project in residential areas. Flexibility is being requested to allow the same capability for roadways to be abandoned in commercial or industrial areas when requested by the adjacent property owner. The abandoned roadway property would then be owned by the adjacent parcel(s). As commercial and industrial areas in the county continue to grow and develop, certain segments of roadway are required to be abandoned because of new access points or consolidation of certain parcels. The county is requesting removing the limitations of abandoning roadways to those only located in residence districts or to add language allowing the same process to apply to commercial or industrial zoned areas or districts. This change will ultimately allow flexibility of the local roadway network to adapt to the growing areas of the county.

### SUPPORT

#### **Restore Funding Supplanted by Federal Pandemic Relief Funds**

Federal pandemic relief funds have provided tremendous support to transportation in the county since 2020. However, this funding has supplanted existing sources and once expended can result in significant long-term funding short fall. This includes the 2022 elimination of the state sales and use tax, which resulted in a \$190 million loss in dedicated transportation revenue for the 2022-2024 biennial budget and \$741.4 million over the Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP), reducing funding to public transportation by \$83 million over the SYIP and \$27 million for Virginia’s passenger and freight rail programs. This loss was covered by federal pandemic relief funds and not offset with state general fund revenue or any alternative funding source. If not addressed, this funding loss will have a long-term negative impact on transportation in the Commonwealth. Therefore, Prince William County supports efforts to restore funding levels impacted by post-COVID policy measures and opposes appropriations or legislative steps which can adversely affect future transportation funding levels.

### SUPPORT

#### **Advancing the Enhancement and Expansion of Multimodal Public Transit**

As the second largest and fourth fastest growing jurisdiction in the Commonwealth, enhancing and expanding multimodal transit options for the public is imperative to supporting population and land use growth and economic development, and meeting the county’s adopted strategic goals for a sustainable, equitable and accessible multimodal transportation system. In 2020, the General Assembly approved budget language directing the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to conduct a feasibility study that analyzed and recommended a range of multimodal transit investments that would provide clear benefits to the county and the Commonwealth. Prince William County supports additional legislative action that will facilitate infrastructure improvements to support the study recommendations, as well as further enhance and expand public transit options for Prince William residents.

## HEALTH, WELLBEING & HUMAN SERVICES

**Prince William County's Strategic Goal:** Promote physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing through timely and equitable access to services and resources to enhance the quality of life for residents. Individuals' health and wellbeing can be determined by their opportunities and their environment. Access to services for all residents using a holistic model that connects residents searching for services that meet their needs when they are at their most vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability is essential for health and wellbeing. Behavioral, mental, and physical health are interrelated and require person-centered responses due to the uniqueness of each individual's situation. Living in the community versus institutional living, reducing stigma around seeking services, supports and treatment, increasing access to insurance and public benefits due to low income, having food security, and navigating toward stable housing are all keys to community wellbeing.

### APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

#### Ongoing Operational Support for a Prince William Regional Crisis Receiving Center (CRC) for Adults and Youth

In FY 22 and FY 23, 438 and 297 residents under a Temporary Detention Order (TDO) were placed outside of Prince William County because there were no inpatient beds. Prince William has significantly more individuals placed out of area than any other Community Services Board in the region. The Board of County Supervisors approved \$2.7 million in ongoing funding needed for the first phase of the Crisis Receiving Center ("CRC"), which will result in 16 adult crisis stabilization beds and 16 23-hour observation units/recliners. DBHDS has provided \$2.1 million toward funding to bring on some of the youth units and beds, but an additional \$2.4 million ongoing funding is needed to bring on full 16 crisis stabilization beds and 16 23-hour observation units/recliners for youth.

The CRC for adults and youth in Prince William County is a key component to a robust behavioral health crisis system that will provide a place to go for those most vulnerable and in need of behavioral health crisis services. Further, the CRC will reduce dependency on state hospital beds, reduce the number of residents placed outside of the NOVA region for inpatient services, reduce the impact on public safety staff who spend significant hours waiting for individuals under emergency custody and temporary detention orders and reduce the impact on local hospital emergency rooms.

### PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

#### Prince William County Juvenile Services Facility

Based upon a 2020 study, a plan was developed to address a community-based continuum of programs and services for youth (and their families) involved with or at risk of being involved with the juvenile justice system. This group developed the Juvenile Justice Improvement Project (JJIP) Report. The JJIP report included five recommendations: 1) develop a community-based continuum of programs and services that foster restorative justice policies and practices; 2) create community-based, less secure placement options, 3) establish youth and family reception centers; 4) develop and improve cross-system collaboration among juvenile justice stakeholders; and 5) update and improve information technology capabilities.

To address these needs, Prince William County is currently in the planning stages for the development of a new juvenile justice services facility. The county supports the development of such a facility to serve the needs of juveniles in the community and will monitor the legislative recommendations on juvenile justice services by the Virginia Commission on Youth, and any related evaluation by the General Assembly or Administration on consolidation of such facilities.



## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

### **Address the Behavioral Health Workforce Crisis**

A national workforce shortage has left behavioral health and developmental disability treatment providers struggling to meet the increased demand for services. While demand for services is growing, the ability to recruit and retain qualified employees has become increasingly difficult. The pandemic exacerbated the already significant workforce shortage. In January 2022, the Virginia Health Care Foundation completed an Assessment of the Capacity of Virginia's Licensed Behavioral Health (BH) Workforce. This assessment revealed that a significant number of BH professionals are at or near retirement age, and that despite Virginia's 40 graduate-level BH programs graduating nearly 800 individuals annually, the number who go on to licensure in Virginia is insufficient and does not even maintain the already inadequate supply of BH professionals.

We support the Northern Virginia CSBs request for sufficient funding for an increase in salaries that is comparative to the market rate and demonstrates the value of the work being done and funding to assist in the repayment of student loans in exchange for a commitment to work in the public sector. We further support the Northern Virginia CSBs request for a legislative approach to decreasing the regulatory/administrative burdens through expediting credentialing and decreasing regulatory requirements.

### **Increase Community Capacity for Services**

There does not exist within Prince William County a residential facility for youth substance-use disorders offering withdrawal management and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). MAT for youth is very limited within the county and region. Community Services supports the Northern Virginia CSBs request to increase funding in order to build community capacity within Region 2 for 24/7 specialized residential programs, particularly for youth with a substance use disorder.

### **Replace the Virginia Case Management System**

Prince William County supports the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and the Virginia League of Social Service (VLSS) to request funding to replace the Virginia Case Management System (VaCMS), which is the state system used for determining eligibility for public assistance. It does not work well and is often "down." Prince William County supports the VDSS and VLSS language to require a thorough market check in accordance with Virginia Information Technology Agency requirements before starting development of the system. Due to the multiple and extenuating problems with VaCMS, Prince William County spent \$884,234 in operational needs pay (overtime) and temp staff costs to help with the benefits process since everything has to be scanned and inputted twice.

### **Solutions Addressing Lack of Available State Hospital Beds**

Prince William County supports solutions that address the lack of available state hospital beds for people in a mental health crisis that will enable all state hospitals to receive admissions of individuals subject to temporary detention orders without delays.

## NEW REQUESTS FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### SUPPORT

#### **Request to Change Virginia Code for Operation of Crisis Response and Stabilization Facilities**

Changes are needed in two Virginia Code sections for crisis stabilization facilities licensed by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to maintain and stock medications for safe, rapid administration and utilize automatic drug dispensing systems:

- Section 54.1-3434.02 - proposed changes allow crisis stabilization facilities licensed by DBHDS to maintain a stock of Schedule II through VI medications.
- Section 54.1-3223 - proposed changes add crisis stabilization facilities licensed by DBHDS to locations authorized to use automated drug dispensing machine.

### SUPPORT

#### **Continued Funding for the Child Advocacy Centers**

Prince William County supports continued funding at the state and federal levels for Child Advocacy Centers, and opposes any decrease in funding that threatens the performance and services of the centers.

## SAFE & SECURE COMMUNITY

**Prince William County's Strategic Goal:** Provide a safe and secure community through prevention, readiness, and service excellence. Prince William County residents desire to live in a safe community where they feel secure in knowing they will be protected from harm, treated equitably, and provided resources that will assist them in continuing to thrive. Prince William County considers the safety and security of its residents a top priority and is forward thinking in meeting the challenges of this goal. Building a positive rapport, establishing an environment where everyone feels heard, strengthening relationships and collaboration between public safety agencies, county stakeholders and county residents are the building blocks to a safer community.

### APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

#### **Adequate Funding for Pretrial Services and Local Probation Services**

Alternatives to incarceration such as local probation and pretrial services should be funded equitably in Virginia. Additionally, an updated funding formula and process should be established per the Crime Commission's recommendation in 2016 to ensure alternatives to incarceration are available locally and appropriately funded consistently throughout the state. This is necessary to assure a fair and equitable criminal justice system. Recent sessions of the General Assembly have recognized the value of these services and provided modest and needed increases in state funding.

#### **Preserve State Assistance to Local Police Departments (599 Funding)**

The state created a program of financial assistance to local police departments (HB599). The Code of Virginia provides that "599" funding is to increase at the same rate as growth in state General Fund revenue collections. Recent appropriations for this priority, should be preserved by the General Assembly.

### PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

#### **Alternative Transportation for Temporary Detention Orders**

Prince William County law enforcement spend an inordinate amount of time transporting persons in crisis to a mental health hospital on a temporary detention order (TDO). Transporting to a hospital outside of the county requires two officers, which hence removes them from their primary responsibilities. Transports (roundtrip) can take between two and 14 hours. The contracted provider for the Commonwealth has staffing limitations and are unable to handle all transports for persons deemed appropriate. Prince William County supports the General Assembly allocating the needed resources to implement the statewide Alternative Transportation Plan, without any added local funding burden.

### NEW REQUESTS FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### **LEGISLATIVE**

#### **Traffic Safety Around Commercial Daycare Facilities**

Prince William County will evaluate legislative and/or regulatory options to address traffic safety in proximity of commercial daycare center locations, including, but not limited to, consideration of automated speed enforcement, additional or enhanced traffic control(s) and/or enhanced discretionary authority to local governments to regulate and/or provide such traffic safety measures.

## RESILIENT ECONOMY

**Prince William County's Strategic Goal:** Diversify, support, and expand the local economy to ensure equitable economic growth through innovative business/talent attraction, promotion, and investment. A resilient economy for Prince William County improves the economic well-being of the community, creates and maintains jobs, expands the commercial tax base, and enhances the quality of life for residents. The County encourages business development, redevelopment, business retention, expansion, investment, and workforce development. Further, the County attracts business investment by focusing on its targeted industries while aligning with its Comprehensive Plan.

### PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

#### **George Mason University Science and Technology Campus**

Prince William County supports the funding for George Mason University in-state undergraduates at the average per student level of doctoral institutions in Virginia which will help the SciTech campus, and GMU as a whole, further its goal to be an economic engine for Northern Virginia.

### PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY WILL MONITOR

#### **Cannabis Legislation**

Whereas there are significant community factors associated with the legalization of cannabis, Prince William County will closely monitor and report on all legislation associated with this policy measure. Given the financial implications with forthcoming retail developments, land use, regulatory, permitting, public safety, agricultural and human resources issues, all legislation pertaining to cannabis legalization will be reviewed for county impact. .

#### **Gaming Legislation**

With the release of a report by JLARC on gaming in Virginia, and given the existing and prospective projects in the gaming space with anticipated significant economic impact for the community and county, Prince William County will actively monitor gaming legislation initiated during the 2024 session.

#### **Housing and Land Use Policies**

Prince William County will closely monitor and report on from the Governor and General Assembly addressing affordable housing. In addition, the county will track all legislation pertaining to local authority, land use planning and housing matters, correlating all bills to the county's current land use, planning policies and regulations.

# QUALITY EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Prince William County's Strategic Goal:** Provide quality and equitable education for all learners and develop and attract a well-trained talented workforce. Prince William County values a world class education for all, from our youngest students in the PWC schools on through to all ages. While learning and education enrich the individuals, they also enrich the community attracting families seeking to provide their children with world class education, by creating skilled workers, and informed citizens that form a talent pool that can draw businesses to our area. The Board of County Supervisors, through collaboration with the school system, institutions of higher education, and local businesses can enhance the educational and training experiences throughout the county for all residents. This is achieved by expanding information about and access to existing programming, identifying, and removing barriers to participation, and developing new opportunities for job training

## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

### Educational Funding Priorities

1. Support full funding for K-12 education, to include increased state funding for operational and capital needs of Prince William County Schools, including resources for school safety measures.
2. Support full state funding for the actual cost of meeting the Standards of Quality (SOQ) requirements, not just the minimum assumed to be necessary by the state
3. Support fully funding the Cost of Competing Adjustment (COCA) for PWCS support staff, which will ensure that local funding will go toward meeting the needs of the schools, rather than backfilling state reductions or requirements..
4. Prince William County will evaluate the recently issued JLARC report on funding of the Standards of Quality, to determine any local fiscal impact. In addition, Prince William County will monitor the new legislative joint study committee charged with developing recommendations to the JLARC SOQ report.

### Higher Education

Prince William County recognizes the role of higher education and continuing education needs within the community. To that end, the county supports advancement of programs and facilities needed by Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University to address the higher education needs of county residents.

Specifically, Prince William County will support efforts by George Mason University to improve their ability to compete for national and internationally acclaimed faculty and staff, by the Commonwealth providing the resources needed to attract and retain staff at all levels.

Further, Prince William County will support efforts by Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) in seeking increased investment in workforce funding with a focus on the unprecedented needs for credentialed workers in healthcare, manufacturing, technology and skilled trades.

# ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT

**Prince William County's Strategic Vision:** Prince William County is a diverse community striving to be healthy, safe and caring with a thriving economy and a protected natural environment.

The county supports efficiency and transparency in government, and pledges to monitor and review all legislation that impacts county administrative functions, impacts county fiscal standing, and has implications for county employees and management.

## PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUPPORTS

### **Public Notice of Advertisements and Procurement**

The county should be able to publish notices of meetings, county activities, land use changes, procurement and other items important to the citizens by means other than hard copy/print newspaper publication to ensure the most visibility to the community. The General Assembly should comprehensively update the publication provisions of state law for local governments to allow the county to communicate with the citizens it serves in efficient means, designed to reach the greatest number of recipients. This could include electronic notices on newspaper websites, instead of only hard copy, and should include prominent placement of such notices on the county's website, social media dissemination and emails to citizens who register for such notification.

### **Due Diligence of FOIA Legislation**

Prince William County supports the position that any changes to the Freedom of Information Act should be forwarded to the FOIA Advisory Council for review and recommendations prior to General Assembly consideration or enactment. The county also supports efforts to recover its actual, reasonable costs incurred in responding to a FOIA request pursuant to its adopted FOIA policy.

### **Opioid Abatement Authority Composition and Framework**

Prince William County supports the current Opioid Abatement Authority composition and framework, which was established after a lengthy, thoughtful, and deliberative process, including input from numerous state and local government stakeholders. The Authority and its staff are beginning their critically important work and the county and other localities are confident that the Authority and staff will do so efficiently, effectively and in the best interest of Virginia and county residents, and therefore, believe no changes are necessary at this time.

## NEW REQUESTS FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **LEGISLATIVE**

#### **Request to Increase Limit Per Project on Job Order Contracts**

To improve county procurement and contracting efficiency, Prince William County is recommending that the maximum dollar limit per project (with limitations) be raised to \$1,500,000 from \$500,000 on Job Order Contracts (JOC). It is believed that this adjustment will bring greater efficiency to county contracting and make it more responsive to current economic circumstances. In addition, the term of the contracts should be increased. Currently, per § 2.2-4303.2. job order contracting; limitations, JOC contracts can only be one year with two one-year renewal options (three years total). Such contracts are time consuming to get in place, the vendors onboarded and the programs operating. Therefore, it is recommended that applicable contracts be increased to allow for four, one-year renewal options (five years total).

*Note: The 2024 Legislative Agenda was adopted November 2023*

## **Board of County Supervisors 2020-2023**

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Kenny A. Boddye, Vice Chair, Occoquan District Supervisor  
Jeanine Lawson, Brentsville District Supervisor  
Yesli Vega, Coles District Supervisor  
Bob Weir, Gainesville District Supervisor  
Victor S. Angry, Neabsco District Supervisor  
Andrea O. Bailey, Potomac District Supervisor  
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## **Board of County Supervisors 2024-2027**

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Margaret Angela Franklin, Woodbridge District Supervisor

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This agenda is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of all issues, but to serve as a guide to matters of concern to the Board of County Supervisors and the community at-large.

Prince William County looks forward to working with the county delegation to the Virginia General Assembly during the course of the 2024 session.

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