



## Wrap Up 2022 General Assembly City's 2022 Legislative Program

### Environment

- **WWTP** – Request to be included on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan's Enhanced Nutrient Removal Certainty Program (ENRC Program) and pursue resources and aid from Commonwealth and Federal programs for upgrades and improvements to the City WWTP and sanitary sewer conveyance system.

**Disposition:** State Budget SB30 The City of Fredericksburg is to receive \$27,000,000 in FY 23

- **Tree Canopy:** Support legislation that provides Virginia local governments with greater authority regarding the reforestation, conservation, and management of urban forests, as they capture and store carbon, help reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, reduce energy use, and mitigate urban heat islands and ill health effects. Amend § 15.2-961 to clarify the application of the statute for preserving or increasing the tree canopy.

**Disposition:** SB 537 (Marsden, D-Fairfax) **passed.** The bill expands to all localities provisions that currently only allow certain localities to adopt an ordinance providing for the planting and replacement of trees during the development process. The bill adds more flexibility for implementation and management of tree canopy banks, tree canopy credits, and tree canopy requirements. The provisions of the bill providing for the conservation of trees during the land development process will not become effective unless reenacted by the General Assembly in 2023. Additionally, there is funding of \$ 4 million to the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to be used for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program, Dept. of Forestry Virginia Trees for Clean Water Program.

### Education

- **CTE Educational Offerings:** Funding for the City of Fredericksburg and Fredericksburg City Schools for Career and Technical Educational offerings. Requested \$10 million grant in support of the CTE program, workforce development center, FredCat Center, and the UMW SBDC.

**Disposition:** 1) The **FY 22** budget included \$ 500,000 of ARPA dollars to the City of Fredericksburg through Direct Aid to Public Education to support Fredericksburg City Schools expansion of career and technical education programs; 2) The FY 23 Higher Education/University of Mary Washington budget provides language expressly allowing UMW to enter into an agreement with the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance, a nonprofit organization

dedicated to cooperative economic development efforts in the Fredericksburg region, for the purpose of expanding regional efforts in the field of economic development and research.

- **K-12 Education/Funding Teacher Pay/SOQs/Construction and Modernization**

**Disposition Teacher Pay Raises:** Provides \$729.6 million GF for the state's share of pay increases for SOQ-recognized instructional & support staff. Increases effective August 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023 and school divisions must provide at least 2.5% salary increases to access prorated portion of funds; also includes funding for a \$1,000 bonus for funded SOQ positions, effective December 1, 2022 .... no local match required; Also includes \$10 million ARPA in FY 23 for teacher recruitment incentives of \$2,500 for individuals filling vacant positions in fall 2023 and \$5,000 if the individual fills a hard-to-staff position or is hired in a hard-to-staff school. Additionally, there was adjustment for the equivalent portion of the Cost of Competing Adjustment (COCA) rates that are paid to the City of Fredericksburg. The SOQ payments for instructional and support positions have been increased by 25 percent each year.

**Disposition At-Risk Add-On:** Historic high level of funding for the At-Risk Add – On, increasing the maximum add-on from 26% to 36%;

**Disposition Construction and Modernization:** 1) **Targeted School Construction Assistance Grants** --- \$450.0 million to establish new competitive construction assistance program (\$400.0 million GF/\$50.0 million Literary Fund). Grants equivalent to 10% to 30% of project cost, based on LCI and fiscal stress. Projects selected based on demonstrated need, financial commitment and school building conditions; 2) **Formula-based School Construction & Modernization Grants** includes \$400 million GF in FY 23; divisions permitted to carry over funds. Each school division receives a base payment of \$1 million, remaining funds to be distributed based on ADM and LCI; 3) **Literary Fund Loans for School Construction** - Authorizes \$200 million in loans each year and implements several loan program enhancements including: Lower interest rates: Ensures maximum 2% rate for low-LCI divisions; Higher maximum loan amount: Increased from \$7.5 million to \$25.0 million; Incentives for projects resulting in school consolidation

**Disposition:** Funded a compromise SOQ bill that 1) provides \$271.7 million to increase the number of state-funded support positions from 17.75 support positions per 1,000 students, to 20 support positions per 1,000 students the first year and 21 support positions per 1,000 students the second year. This partially eliminates the funding cap placed on support positions that began in FY 10; \$62.6 million to provide one reading specialist for every 550 students in kindergarten through third grade as part of The Virginia Literacy Act; \$20.3 million to provide a full-time principal in every elementary school; 3) \$46.9 million to implement several early childhood initiatives, including expanded services for three-year-olds, expanded mixed delivery and early childhood workforce recruitment and retention grants.

**Disposition: Virginia Pre School Initiative Payments** – For the City of Fredericksburg, grants shall be distributed based on an allocation formula providing the state share of a \$8,516 per pupil grant in the first year and a \$8,516 per pupil grant in the second year for 100 percent of the unserved at-risk four-year-olds in each locality for a full-day program; grants to half-day programs for these localities shall be funded based on the state share of \$4,258 in the first year and \$4,258 in the second year per unserved at-risk four-year-old in each locality. The number of

unserved at-risk four-year-olds in each locality shall be based on the projected number of kindergarten students, updated once each biennium for the Governor's introduced biennial budget. The Department of Education shall biennially rebenchmark the Virginia Preschool Initiative per pupil amounts using a formula similar to the current formula supporting public K-12 education in Virginia.

- **Children's Services Act (CSA).** The state should provide funding and other resources to support our local program.

**Disposition:** SB 356 Children's Services Act; special education programs. Senator Stuart's bill was carried over to the 2023 General Assembly. The bill would expand eligibility for services under the Children's Services Act to students who transfer from an approved private school special education program to a public school special education program established and funded jointly by a local governing body and school division located within Planning District 16 (George Washington Regional Commission) for the purpose of providing special education and related services when (i) the public school special education program is able to provide services comparable to those of an approved private school special education program and (ii) the student would require placement in an approved private school special education program but for the availability of the public school special education program.

### **Public Health and Public Safety**

- **HB 599.** The budget includes \$47 million GF over the biennium to the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for additional aid to localities with police departments "HB 599" funding; Includes \$13 million GF over the biennium for community violence- focused grant programs at DCJS: \$8 million over the biennium for the Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Grant Fund; and \$5 million over the biennium for the Operation Ceasefire Grant Fund. **Other funding:** \$75 million NGF in ARPA funds in FY 2023 for one-time grants to local law enforcement agencies to support equipment purchases and training.
- **State Funding for Local and Regional Jails** - The state budget provides \$17.1 million GF to address behavioral health care needs in local and regional jails. Also includes \$11.6 million GF to increase the state responsible inmate per diem from \$12 to \$15.
- **Support for Financial Assistance for STEP-VA Requirements and Marcus Alert Protocols** - The budget includes \$22.2 million in ARPA funds in FY 2023 and \$28.3 million GF in FY 2024 to fully implement and fund STEP-VA in the Community Services Boards. Also includes \$37.5 million GF to continue to support crisis system transformation, primarily mobile crisis teams and crisis receiving centers and Marcus Alert implementation in five additional localities.

### **Other Items/Bills of Interest**

**Land Use:** Local land use approvals to address the COVID 19 pandemic – Extends to July 1, 2023 the sunset on local govt approvals that were valid and outstanding as of 7/1/20. This DOES NOT extend to the housing crisis brought about by CV19

**Human Resources:** – Bill dealing with local government hiring of people with disabilities – The statute requires the locality to take into consideration and give preference to the status of a person with a disability.

Work Groups: General Assembly work groups that came about through legislation or budget language will soon be meeting, or in some instances, already have met at least once. These include the work group for:

- Local chief information officers and reporting protocols for cybersecurity incidences
- Local transient occupancy tax collection for short-term rentals (streamlining of form and timing)
- Tax policy work group
- Tree canopy work group