



# Town of Bowling Green Legislative Agenda 2025

## **Bowling Green Town Council**

*The Honorable Mark Gaines, Mayor*

*The Honorable Valarie Coyle, Vice Mayor*

*The Honorable David Storke*

*The Honorable Randy Hageman*

*The Honorable Jean Davis*

*The Honorable Jeff Voit*

*The Honorable Daniel Webb*

*The Honorable Dr. John Chinault*

## **Town Manager**

*Ms. India Adams-Jacobs, Town Manager*

## **Town Attorney**

*Mr. Jeff Gore, Town Attorney*

***TOWN OF BOWLING GREEN  
FEDERAL & STATE  
REPRESENTATIVES***

**U.S. Senator Tim Kaine (D)**  
919 East Main Street Suite 970  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Phone: (804) 771-2221

**U.S. Senator Mark Warner (D)**  
919 East Main Street Suite 630  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Phone: (804) 775-2314

**U.S. Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger (D), 7<sup>th</sup> District**  
562 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-4607  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Phone: (202) 225-2815

**State Senator Richard Stuart (R), 25<sup>th</sup> Senate District**  
General Assembly Building  
Room No: 510  
Senate of Virginia  
P. O. Box 396  
Richmond, VA 23218  
Phone: (804) 698-7525  
Fax: (804) 698-7651

**State Delegate Hillary Pugh Kent(R), 67<sup>th</sup> House District**  
General Assembly Building  
201 North 9th Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Room: 1018  
Office: 804-698-1067

# Preface

The Town Council of Bowling Green respectfully submits this 2025 State Legislative Package for your review, consideration, and support of the items contained within.

These initiatives were thoroughly vetted by the town's Council and administrative leadership. The town's adopted mission statement is:

Our mission is to serve the citizens of Bowling Green and the Town's visioning principles are as follows:

- Vibrant, lively, thriving community
- Sustainable/resilient
- Connected regionally
- Walkable/connected neighborhoods
- A destination for visitors
- Small town vibe; a village with historic charm
- A cultural & business center of Caroline County
- Beautiful public spaces and streetscapes

The enclosed legislative requests are addressed within aligning with the Town Council's Strategic Work Plan. The Bowling Green Action Plan goals that align with our legislative requests are as follows:

- Utilities – Improve and maintain the Town's water and sewer system infrastructure, including water supply, treatment facilities and distribution/collection systems.
- Economic Development – Support business development and expansion that enhances the tax base and provided gainful employment.
- Smart Growth – Support development that improves community vitality.
- Vibrant Downtown – Act to ensure that the Town remains an attractive, historic, and convenient center for commerce, culture, and services as the County seat.
- Government Performance – Improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery through the adoption of appropriate policies, procedures, and practices; adapt and implement best practice.
- Financial Management – Provide fiscally responsible, sustainable, and resilient financial management that addresses both current and future needs.

In closing, please know that the Bowling Green Council members are ever grateful for the coordinated and collaborative partnership we share with you on matters of importance to the historic town of Bowling Green, the County seat of Caroline County. We seek your support for our legislative initiatives and any other legislative and budgetary matters impacting the Town of Bowling Green, which may arise during the 2025 legislative session. Lastly, we thank you for your service to our town and the Commonwealth, and we look forward to working with you again in the upcoming legislative sessions.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF BOWLING GREEN  
COUNCIL ADOPTING THE 2025 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

**WHEREAS,** The Town of Bowling Green is impacted by action taken by the U.S. Congress; Virginia Legislature; and others;

**WHEREAS,** The Town Council wishes to adopt a legislative agenda that includes legislative priorities, positions, sponsors, and action for each item on the agenda; and

**WHEREAS,** Adoption of the agenda provides direction to Town Staff and Legislative Advocates, as well as requests for action and support from legislative representatives; and

**WHEREAS,** once adopted, Council wishes for the agenda to be submitted to each of the Town's legislative representatives and legislative advocates.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Town Council of Town of Bowling Green, Virginia, that the Town of Bowling Green, hereby approves and adopts the 2025 Legislative Agenda.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** by the Town Council of the Town of Bowling Green, Virginia, that the Town Council directs the Town Manager to take all necessary actions to support the Town's legislative priorities, positions, sponsors, and action items and to provide a copy of the agenda to each of the Town's legislative representatives and legislative advocates.



Mark Gaines, Mayor

ATTEST: 

India Adams-Jacobs, Clerk of Council

Adopted by the Town of Bowling Green, Virginia, this 7 day of November, 2024

## Town of Bowling Green 2025 Legislative Requests

<u>Item</u>	<u>Goal Area Alignment</u>	<u>Requested by</u>	<u>Position</u>
<b>1. Request funding for water system improvements (State)</b>	Utilities	Town Council/Town Manager	Request sponsor
<b>2. Request funding assistance with sewer system improvements (Federal &amp; State)</b>	Utilities	Town Council/Town Manager	Request sponsor
<b>3. Support &amp; Advocacy for Ft. Walker (Federal &amp; State)</b>	Economic Development/Smart Growth	Town Council/Town Manager	Support

## **Town of Bowling Green Policy Positions**

The Town of Bowling Green hereby supports the Virginia Municipal League's policy position. In addition, the Town specifically holds the following policy positions as adopted by the Town Council as part of this legislative agenda.

The general legislative policy stance of the Town of Bowling Green is that local governments need broad authority from the General Assembly to address specific local problems and issues. While counties, cities, and towns across the Commonwealth experience similar challenges, the appropriate response may vary from locality to locality. Therefore, the General Assembly should empower local governments without dictating one statewide solution to complex issues.

*Listed in alphabetical order.*

**Land Use:** The Town of Bowling Green supports maintaining and expanding local authorities to plan and regulate land use and **opposes** any legislation that weakens these key local responsibilities.

Specifically, the Town asks the General Assembly to:

- Oppose the mandated expansion of by-right uses.
- Oppose the modification of procedures guaranteeing public participation in the review and approval process for land use applications; and
- Oppose the classification of land within localities by state agencies that limits the development of properties or that requires changes to uses identified in a localities comprehensive plan.

The Town supports local government authority to promote affordable and mixed income housing as well as local government decision making on designing and building infrastructure as needed to facilitate in-fill development, redevelopment and/or mixing of uses. Any mandate from the state should include full funding for the locality, but no mandate should negate local government autonomy.

**Local Control (Tax Policy Changes):** Local governments must retain control of their existing revenue sources to have a reliable revenue base to meet citizen needs. To ensure the stability and long-term viability of Virginia local governments, the General Assembly must broaden, not restrict, the revenue sources available to local governments. Any changes to Virginia's system of local taxation authority should provide flexibility for local governments to provide tax relief, not arbitrary caps on rates or assessment increases or blanket moratoriums. It is the town's position that local governing bodies are better positioned to make these types of policy decisions with input from the communities they serve.

**Local Excise Taxes:** The Town of Bowling Green supports statewide authority for local governments to establish an excise tax on the sale of vaping products. We also support the statewide authority for local governments to establish and excise tax on the sale of cannabis products.

**Relationship of Towns to Counties:** Towns and Counties have a unique, often mutually beneficial relationship, built on trust and respect for processes and plans. Historically, towns are essential units of local government, providing enhanced services to incorporated, urbanized areas of counties. The General Assembly must carefully review all legislation dealing with local governments to enact only such laws that support collegial partnership between towns and their surrounding counties.

**Sovereign Immunity:** Expanding liability and eroding immunities at state levels across the nation have had a chilling effect on the actions of local government officials contributing to local government insurance problems, creating immense financial risks (particularly for legal cost), and posing a substantial obstacle to the provision of needed public service. The Virginia General Assembly should strengthen and must maintain the principles of sovereign immunity for local governments and their officials.

**Support Law Enforcement:** The Town of Bowling Green asks the General Assembly to support Law Enforcement in Bowling Green and throughout the Commonwealth:

- Support ongoing funding to ensure that law enforcement personnel are appropriately compensated.
- The General Assembly should honor its commitment to local governments and public safety by funding the HB599 program as stipulated in the Code of Virginia.

**Taxation:** The General Assembly should authorize additional alternative and equivalent revenue sources for local governments prior to any repeal of the current authority for machinery and tools taxes and business professional occupation license taxes. Actions should be careful not to provide a tax preference or tax policy advantage for any sector of the market at the expense of another sector in the competitive field, but instead should seek to preserve state and local revenue; should ensure safety, reliability, and access for consumers, providers, and the public and should protect local government's ability to regulate businesses whether they are traditional, electronic, Internet-based, virtual or otherwise. The General Assembly should set the Virginia Communications Sales and Use Tax rate at the same level as the state sales tax rate and broaden the coverage of the tax to include audio and video streaming services, prepaid calling cards, and internet-based applications that are not internet service providers.

**Transportation:** The Town of Bowling Green supports an increase in state allocation for transportation needs throughout the Commonwealth in a manner that results in a fair distribution among transportation needs and geographic areas in such a manner that does not prioritize interstate highway funding over local roadway needs or limit consideration of alternative modes of transportation like pedestrian and bicycle project.