

INTRODUCED: July 27, 2026

AN ORDINANCE No. 2026-193

To amend Ord. No. 2026-063, adopted May 11, 2026, which adopted the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 General Fund Budget and made appropriations pursuant thereto, by (i) transferring \$150,000.00 from the Office of Sustainability, (ii) creating certain new line items in the Outside Agencies and Central Appropriations agency, and (iii) appropriating such \$150,000.00 of transferred funds to such new line items in the Outside Agencies and Central Appropriations agency, all for the purpose of providing grants to certain entities to facilitate the implementation of neighborhood climate resilience projects.

Patron – Mayor Avula

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: SEP 28 2026 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That Article I, Section 1 of Ordinance No. 2026-063 adopted May 11, 2026, which adopted a General Fund Budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, and made appropriations pursuant thereto, is hereby amended by:

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: _____ REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

(a) Transferring \$150,000.00 from the Office of Sustainability, for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027;

(b) Creating new line items in the Outside Agencies and Central Appropriations agency entitled:

- (1) “GiSTEM, Inc. – Workforce Development Program,”
- (2) “Keep Virginia Beautiful, Incorporated – Community Pride Initiative,”
- (3) “James River Association – Community Tree Planting Initiative,”
- (4) “Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, Inc. – Safe Routes to School Program,”
- (5) “Reading and Education for Adult Development, Inc. – Energy Literacy Programming,”
- (6) “Virginia Community Voice – Community Gardens and Green Infrastructure,”
- (7) “Bel Walter LLC – Regenerative Agriculture and Sustainability Workshops;” and
- (8) “Richmond Community ToolBank – Electric Tool Transition Program,”

(c) Appropriating the funds in the amount of \$150,000.00 transferred by subsection (a) of this section to the new line items in the Outside Agencies and Central Appropriations agency created by subsection (b) of this section in the following amounts:

- (1) “GiSTEM, Inc. – Workforce Development Program”.....\$32,000.00;
- (2) “Keep Virginia Beautiful, Incorporated – Community Pride Initiative”.....\$20,000.00;
- (3) “James River Association – Community Tree Planting Initiative”.....\$13,000.00;

- (4) “Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, Inc. – Safe Routes to School Program”.....\$17,000.00;
- (5) “Reading and Education for Adult Development, Inc. – Energy Literacy Programming”.....\$15,000.00;
- (6) “Virginia Community Voice – Community Gardens and Green Infrastructure”.....\$15,000.00;
- (7) “Bel Walter LLC – Regenerative Agriculture and Sustainability Workshops”.....\$25,000.00; and
- (8) “Richmond Community ToolBank – Electric Tool Transition Program”.....\$13,000.00,

all for the purpose of providing grants to certain entities to facilitate the implementation of neighborhood climate resilience projects.

§ 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

CITY OF RICHMOND

O&R REQUEST

DATE: July 27, 2026

EDITION:1

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

THROUGH: The Honorable Dr. Danny Avula, Mayor

THROUGH: Odie Donald, Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Tanikia Jackson, DCAO of Finance and Administration

THROUGH: Letita Shelton, Director of Finance

THROUGH: Meghan K. Brown , Director of Budget and Strategic Planning

THROUGH: Sharon L. Ebert, DCAO of Planning and Economic Development

FROM: Laura Thomas, Director of the Office of Sustainability

RE: Office of Sustainability Neighborhood Climate Resilience Grant Program
(\$150,000.00) | Supporting Climate Resiliency Projects in the City of Richmond

ORD. OR RES. No. _____

PURPOSE: To authorize the transfer of \$150,000 from the Office of Sustainability for the purpose of providing grants through the Neighborhood Climate Resilience Grant Program

BACKGROUND: The Office of Sustainability has managed the Neighborhood Climate Resilience Grant Program since 2023, with the third cohort of funding being included in the FY 2026 Budget (adopted on May 12, 2025 with ordinance 2025-057) with an allocation of \$150,000. This initiative supports projects that enhance climate resilience in frontline communities across Richmond. Since its launch, the program has garnered significant interest. For the current award cycle, we received 35 applications, with 32 completed submissions requesting a combined amount of \$1,230,300, far exceeding the funding available. To be eligible for funding, applicants were required to meet the following criteria:

- Serve the Richmond community in areas of equitable climate change, climate action, and climate resilience.
- Demonstrate alignment with the RVAgreen 2050 Climate Equity Action Plan.
- Submit a completed application with all required documents, including a detailed scope of work and project budget

The application window was open from December 1, 2025 to January 23, 2026, and the review process included an independent evaluation panel of city staff members. This collaborative effort highlights the city's ongoing commitment to fostering climate resilience and addressing climate equity challenges in our most vulnerable communities.

Project Summaries

The projects listed below represent all of the organizations recommended for support through the Neighborhood Climate Resilience Grant Program, Cohort 3, totaling \$150,000.

1. GiSTEM

Funding Award: \$32,000

Overview: GiSTEM operates a mobile STEM lab and workforce development programming that connects Richmond youth to sustainability careers across the city.

Project Details: This grant will support expansion of GiSTEM's mobile STEM programming, bringing hands-on sustainability education to students citywide and creating pathways into green workforce careers.

District Impact: Citywide

2. Keep Virginia Beautiful

Funding Award: \$20,000

Overview: Keep Virginia Beautiful is a statewide nonprofit focused on litter prevention, waste reduction, and community pride initiatives.

Project Details: This funding will support a Community Pride initiative in partnership with RRHA, including cleanup kits, youth engagement, and neighborhood-based litter reduction systems in RRHA communities across multiple districts.

District Impact: Multiple districts (RRHA communities)

3. James River Association

Funding Award: \$13,000

Overview: The James River Association is a leading conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the James River watershed.

Project Details: This grant will fund a community tree planting initiative to increase canopy coverage and improve stormwater management in heat-vulnerable areas of the 7th District.

District Impact: 7th District

4. Greater Richmond Fit4Kids

Funding Award: \$17,000

Overview: Greater Richmond Fit4Kids promotes physical activity and healthy living for youth across the Richmond region.

Project Details: Funding will expand Safe Routes to School programming, including pedestrian safety improvements, youth bike education, and community engagement across multiple districts.

District Impact: Citywide

5. Reading and Education for Adult Development

Funding Award: \$15,000

Overview: READ RVA is a nonprofit focused on adult literacy and accessible education programming throughout the Richmond region.

Project Details: This grant will support the development of accessible energy efficiency materials for adult learners and deliver programming to improve energy literacy across multiple districts.

District Impact: Citywide

6. Virginia Community Voice

Funding Award: \$15,000

Overview: Virginia Community Voice is a South Richmond-based organization focused on food access, community health, and neighborhood resilience.

Project Details: Funding will support the expansion of community gardens and green infrastructure in South Richmond, improving food access and climate resilience in the 8th District.

District Impact: 8th District

7. Bel Walter LLC

Funding Award: \$25,000

Overview: Bel Walter LLC is an East End-based organization committed to community resilience through regenerative agriculture, culinary arts, and sustainable practices.

Project Details: This grant will fund workshops on regenerative agriculture, cooking, and sustainability practices to support community resilience and food sovereignty in the 7th District.

District Impact: 7th District

8. Richmond Community ToolBank

Funding Award: \$13,000

Overview: Since 2015, the Richmond Community ToolBank has provided affordable tool access for community improvement projects across Richmond.

Project Details: This funding will transition equipment from gas-powered to electric tools, reducing emissions and expanding access to sustainable resources for community projects citywide.

District Impact: Citywide

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Our office conducted two virtual informational sessions to address questions about the grant program and engaged directly with 30 organizations to provide additional guidance. We promoted the program through our monthly newsletter and social media platforms, ensuring broad outreach. Additionally, we collaborated with City Council members and their liaisons, requesting their assistance in sharing information about the program with their constituents and community networks.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES ALIGNMENT: The program's primary alignment is with *A Thriving and Sustainable Built Environment* and its goals to advance RVAgreen 2050 and partner with residents in environmental justice work. Grantees directly support MAP metrics including: increasing the percentage of residents living within a ten-minute walk of quality green space (James River Association, Virginia Community Voice); expanding tree canopy and reducing stormwater-related flooding incidents (James River Association); increasing residents completing climate action training and education programs (GiSTEM, READ RVA, Bel Walter LLC); and decreasing single-family residential waste going to landfills (Richmond Community ToolBank). The program also supports projects that reduce carbon emissions through electrification of equipment and promotion of sustainable practices.

FISCAL IMPACT: A \$150,000 transfer from the Office of Sustainability to create a new line item in the Outside Agencies and Central Appropriations agency. This transfer, sourced from the FY 2026 budget, will have no fiscal impact to the city's budget for this or future fiscal years, as no budgetary implications are from the grant program.

CITY OF RICHMOND

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon adoption

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: July 27, 2026

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: September 14, 2026

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Finance & Economic Development

AFFECTED AGENCIES: N/A

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: Ordinance 2026-063 FY27 Budget

ATTACHMENTS:

STAFF: Thomas, Laura C., Smart, Michael, A.