INTRODUCED: July 6, 2026

A RESOLUTION No. 2026-R028

To order the submission to the qualified voters of the City of Richmond of the question of whether the City should be authorized to levy a local sales tax at a rate not to exceed one percent, the revenues from which shall be used solely for capital projects for the construction or renovation of public school facilities, for a referendum thereon.

Patrons – Vice President Jordan , President Newbille, Mr. Breton, Ms. Lynch and Mayor Avula

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Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: JUL 27 2026 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, effective July 1, 2026, the Virginia General Assembly enacted its biennial budget and appropriation legislation ("Budget Bill") for the biennium commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028; and

WHEREAS, the Budget Bill enacts amendments to section 58.1-605.1 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, authorizing all Virginia cities and counties to levy a general retail sales tax at a rate not to exceed 1% to provide revenue solely for construction and major renovation of schools; and

WHEREAS, said tax may only be levied if it is approved in a referendum within the City,

AYES:	8	NOES:	0	ABSTAIN:	
ADOPTED:	JUL 27 2026	REJECTED:		STRICKEN:	

said referendum to be initiated by this Resolution; ands

WHEREAS, any such tax approved by referendum and imposed by the City shall expire on the later of (i) if the capital projects for the construction or renovation of schools are to be financed by bonds or loans, on the date by which said bonds or loans shall be repaid or (ii) if the capital projects for the construction or renovation of schools are not to be financed by bonds or loans, on or before June 30, 2046; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with section 3.06.1 of the Charter of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, the Council is authorized to request the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond to order the submission of a question to the qualified voters of the City of Richmond for a referendum thereon; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 2025-R051, adopted December 15, 2025, the Council endorsed such authority to levy a sales tax of up to one percent, first approved by referendum, for the purpose of funding public school construction, modernization, and improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Richmond desires to initiate a referendum for the purposes herein set forth;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

1. That the Council hereby initiates a referendum pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 24.2-684 and 58.1-605.1, as amended by the Budget Bill, on the issue of whether the City may levy a general retail sales tax at a rate not to exceed 1% to provide revenue solely for capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools in the City.

2. For any such capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools in the City financed by bonds or loans, the tax levied pursuant to this Resolution, if approved by referendum, shall expire on the date by which such bonds or loans shall be repaid.

3. For any such capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools in the City not financed by bonds or loans, the tax levied pursuant to this Resolution, if approved by referendum, shall expire on June 30, 2046.

4. An attested copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded by the City Clerk to the Clerk of the Circuit Court for consideration and approval by the Court, if deemed to be in order, and for processing and publication in accordance with state code requirements.

5. The language to appear on the ballot on the referendum is proposed by the Council to be as follows:

Shall the City of Richmond be authorized to levy a general retail sales tax at a rate not to exceed 1% to provide revenue solely for capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools in the City? Should this referendum be approved authorizing the levy of such tax, the tax would expire no later than June 30, 2046.

6. An attested copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded by the City Clerk to the Registrar and the Electoral Board of the City.

A TRUE COPY:
TESTE:

Candice D. Reid

City Clerk

DATE: June 23, 2026

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

THROUGH: The Honorable Katherine Jordan, Councilmember 2nd District

THROUGH: The Honorable Cynthia Newbille, Councilmember 7th District

THROUGH: RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff

THROUGH: Will Perkins, Senior Legislative Services Manager

FROM: Whitney Brown, Policy Analyst

RE:

CNL-2026-0070

PURPOSE: During the 2026 Special Session I of the Virginia General Assembly, the General Assembly amended § 58.1-605.1 of the Code of Virginia to authorize all Virginia cities and counties to seek voter approval to levy a local sales tax at a rate not to exceed one percent for the sole purpose of funding capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools. The 2027 Budget Bill requires any such tax must be approved by the qualified voters of the locality through a referendum.

The authority to seek voter approval for this additional local sales tax was a major component of the City of Richmond's 2026 General Assembly Legislative Program, as adopted by the Council on December 15, 2025.

This resolution requests that the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond order the submission of the referendum question to the qualified voters of the City of Richmond at the November 3, 2026, General Election. If approved by the voters, the City of Richmond would be authorized to levy a local sales tax at a rate not to exceed one percent to provide a dedicated local revenue source for capital projects for the construction or major renovation of schools.

The purpose of this legislation is to allow Richmond voters the opportunity to determine whether the City of Richmond should be authorized to levy the additional local sales tax for school capital projects.

STRATEGIC INITATIVES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL: N/A

FISCAL IMPACT: None

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon adoption.

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: July 6, 2026

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: July 27, 2026

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: None

AFFECTED AGENCIES: City Council

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: None

ATTACHMENTS: None

STAFF: Whitney Brown, Policy Analyst, (804-646-3765)