



Mayoral Action Plan

Preliminary Working Draft

February 2025

Mayor Avula believes that Richmond has an incredibly exciting future — a future predicated on a willingness to address its toughest challenges head-on in a spirit of collaboration and community. He’s committed to working with stakeholders across the city and the region and to build constructive partnerships across sectors and political boundaries.

This document seeks to provide more specificity about the Mayor’s seven priorities. These topics are intended to offer guidance. They are a roadmap that is still in development and can be fleshed out with additional collaboration and input. Our aim is to share these priority items with City Council in order to work through them at the retreat and beyond. As we find alignment on these principles among the elected leaders of the City, these concepts will evolve into measurable goals that can be shared with the public for the purpose of providing regular progress updates. This is envisioned as a living document and will continue to evolve.

Over the next four years, in collaboration with Richmond City Council, Mayor Avula’s administration will work to build...

1. A thriving City Hall (that gets things done)

Goal: To transform Richmond’s local government into a model public-sector organization that stewards resources effectively, meets community needs, and builds trust with residents and partners.

Objectives:

1. Hire a chief administrative officer
2. Assess senior leadership and organizational structure
3. Complete organizational climate survey
4. Establish a robust culture of accountability by investing in training and development, particularly for supervisors and managers
5. Refresh mission, vision, and values
6. Conduct infrastructure/preparedness vulnerability review
7. Create new norms around inter-agency communication/coordination/collective impact



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8. Prioritize coordination/communication with City Council
9. Improve customer/user experience of City Hall processes
10. Develop more effective and efficient internal services and operations
11. Foster a culture of transparency by enhancing public access to information and increasing community engagement



2. Thriving neighborhoods (that meet our housing needs)

Goal: Meet the housing needs of a growing city, so that Richmonders across income levels can access affordable housing in safe neighborhoods with strong public amenities.

Background: *Richmond's acknowledged housing crisis is widely seen as the City's most serious challenge. Local government should focus on areas of planning/zoning/permitting, financial incentives, and protections for low-income and long-term residents.*

Objectives:

1. Expand capacity in Department of Housing and Community Development by filling existing vacancies
2. Convene inter-agency working group focused on housing (internal to city hall)
3. Enhance coordination/communication with housing community including non-profit and for-profit developers
4. Establish regular meeting cadence with RRHA to build strategic alignment
5. Inventory city-owned land that is developable
6. Convene cross-agency and partner discussion on Southside holistic development (housing, schools, economic)
7. Develop long-term finance plan that provides predictability of resources for developer community from a dedicated revenue source
8. Continue and strengthen strategic, coordinated regional approach to addressing homelessness using a "housing first" model, bolstered by inclement weather temporary sheltering to protect life when necessary
9. Continue eviction protection, in particular protecting long-term residents from involuntary displacement as the city grows
10. Public housing revitalization/redevelopment with 1:1 replacement
11. Develop housing-related policy agenda (local, regional and state)
12. Strengthen violence reduction collective impact work
13. Focus specific attention to areas with high risk of gun violence



3. Thriving families (where every child succeeds)

Goal: Support the education, health, and development of children and families — in and out of the classroom — so that students graduate from Richmond Public Schools well-prepared for success and connected to opportunities for further learning and career development.

Objectives:

1. Prioritize RPS in annual budgets and develop funding formula for predictability and planning
2. Establish regular meeting cadence for administration, RPS leadership, City Council leadership and School Board leadership
3. Work with RPS leadership, City Council, and School Board to determine agreed upon outcome measures
4. Convene ready region leadership, RPS leadership, and City leadership to optimize resource allocation for preschool slots across the City
5. Out-of-school time: sustain investments in effective programs & strategies
6. Support RPS leadership in the development of new RPS Career Connected Learning Center



4. A thriving economy (that leaves no one behind)

Goal: Support small and minority-owned businesses and employers providing quality, living-wage job opportunities. Create pathways for disadvantaged residents to move from poverty to stability to wealth building, and direct investments to historically neglected neighborhoods.

Objectives:

1. Build economic development capacity in DED/EDA, conduct a national search for director.
2. Strengthen interagency collaboration by incorporating MBD and OCWB into economic development meetings.
3. Strengthen economic mobility (wealth building) agenda and linkage to regional efforts (e.g. RVA rising).
4. Expand efforts to engage immigrant communities into existing programs/services by addressing language accessibility and working through trusted partners.
5. Strengthen workforce development efforts by aligning training programs to the greatest needs stated by Richmond employers.
6. Create small business advisory council to strengthen supports and improve processes for small businesses.
7. Accelerate implementation of the SPEED plan; update/revise plan as needed.
8. Convene strategic working group on Southside community needs.
9. Continue forward progress on City Center development.
10. Recommit to Broad Street revitalization.
11. Complete Diamond District project.



5. Thriving and inclusive communities (where everyone's rights are protected)

Goal: Protect everyone's rights — specifically the rights of immigrants and refugees, LGBTQIA+ residents, other politically targeted groups, and the reproductive rights of women.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that immigrant communities are aware of their rights, have accurate information, and have access to resources and information provided by the City of Richmond.
2. Finalize City's language access plan, including structure and resources for implementation.
3. Sustain and expand access to health services of particular importance to women and LGBTQ+ community.
4. Work with sheriff to expand medication-assisted treatment program at Richmond City Justice Center, including initiation of services to those who haven't received previous treatment.
5. Develop behavioral health task force to coordinate care and address gaps.



6. A thriving and sustainable built environment (planned for future generations)

Goal: Support continued progress on execution of RVA Green 2050 comprehensive plan. Shift toward a net zero greenhouse emission local economy through improved public and multimodal transportation, strong stewardship of our natural resources, greening neglected neighborhoods, and a strong commitment to sustainability across all departments. Richmond should become a national leader as a city working at the intersection of sustainability, racial and economic equity.

Objectives:

1. Mitigate impacts of federal funding cuts on Office of Sustainability
2. Maintain city investment in fare-free GRTC transit
3. Focus Mayo Bridge development on narrower plan options to enhance human scale, bike/pedestrian transit safety, and linkage to neighborhoods on both sides
4. Invest in the city segment of the Fall Line Trail
5. Support conservation projects for the James River Park System and African American cemeteries
6. Achieve RVAgreen 2050's tree canopy goals
7. Support GRTC and RVA Rapid Transit's efforts to establish dignified places to wait
8. Explore efforts to divert waste away from local landfills; implement waste reduction programs
9. Launch a comprehensive "get on the bus" campaign to promote public transit, dispel myths, and boost ridership



7. A city that tells its stories (and tells the truth about its past)

Goal: Make Richmond a national model for telling the truth about its own history — including slavery, racism, and struggles for Black empowerment since the City’s founding. Use the arts as a vehicle for telling these stories and for strengthening connections across the different cultures found in our city.

Make clear (to residents and to national and global audiences) that the City of Richmond stands for inclusive multiracial democracy based on the sharing of power and shared commitments to building a better city.

Objectives:

1. Elevate the historical memory of Shockoe as an international site of conscience
2. Accelerate development of Shockoe Institute and Shockoe Project efforts
3. Maintain and elevate historical memory of other cultural heritage sites across the city (e.g. Hickory Hill)
4. Begin planning for 2026 semi-quincentennial events to highlight Richmond's history — establish a working group
5. Establish an arts & culture advisory group that meets regularly with the Mayor
6. Expand access to arts/culture experiences, especially for youth