
Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce

2025 Public Policy Positions

Adopted by the Board of Directors

September 9, 2025

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**DRAFTED BY THE
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Alan Frank
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Robert D. Hull
John Misleh

Anders Sleight
Mosi Shah
Dokmai Webster
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Staff

Elise Neil Bengtson, *Executive Director*
Leila Bitar, *Membership Navigator*

About the Chamber



The Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce is an independent, 501(c)6 non-profit membership organization founded in 1947. The Chamber is governed by a Board of Directors pursuant to the Chamber's Bylaws. The Board meets the first Thursday of each month.

The Chamber's mission is to promote local business interests in order to foster economic prosperity and civic well-being in the greater Falls Church community. It advances its mission by supporting business and community growth and development, providing members with educational, marketing, and networking opportunities, advocating Chamber positions on critical business issues, and encouraging quality business ethics and community respect.

Whether by engaging with the local business community, providing better customer service by local government, or connecting business owners to capital, the Chamber helps provide a foundation for a stronger local economy.

As part of its advocacy on behalf of local businesses, the Chamber's Legislative Committee monitors and advises the Chamber on legislative and regulatory issues on the local, state, and federal levels, and promotes the interests of its members.

Elise Neil Bengston

Executive Director, Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce

Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce
417 W. Broad Street, Suite 205
Falls Church, Virginia 22046
(703) 532-1050
www.fallschurchchamber.org

Introduction

The Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”) represents the interests of approximately 300 businesses in the City of Falls Church, Fairfax County, and Arlington County (referred to herein as “greater Falls Church”). The Chamber’s mission is to promote local business interests in order to foster economic prosperity, quality of life, and civic well-being in the greater Falls Church community by supporting, assisting, and promoting both new and existing businesses.

Greater Falls Church has garnered local and national recognition as a premier location for quality of life, education, and commercial enterprises. The contributions of a strong and vibrant business community are essential to providing the resources necessary to sustain high levels of service and public infrastructure.

At the same time, the local economy faces continually evolving challenges and increasing competition within the region for business attraction and retention. A vibrant business community is imperative for the continued success of the local economy, as well as for the fiscal health and sustainability of the greater Falls Church community; all efforts must be made to ensure a positive and welcoming business climate.

The Chamber believes that its governmental policy environment should foster—rather than stifle or discourage—private-sector investment and growth. The Chamber also believes that the business community should be a stakeholder in any discussion and development of proposed, new or amended law, policy, regulation, or other type of local, state, or federal government-imposed rule that would impact the cost, operations, or growth of business in greater Falls Church.

To that end, this document reflects the Chamber’s public policy perspective and is meant to inform its members and public officials; stimulate civic thought and debate; and aid in the development of sound public policy. The policies contained herein are intended to provide a unified voice on issues that are most important to Chamber members. The policies were developed and approved by the Chamber’s Legislative Committee and were recommended to the Board of Directors. Both bodies, upon additional discussion, approved the policies.

Development of public policy is an ongoing process, and the Chamber welcomes and encourages well-informed discussions on the issues facing business. The Chamber encourages the expression of various opinions from its membership, as well as active participation with its Legislative Committee. This document is to be updated, as needed, pursuant to Chamber Board of Directors’ action. It does not represent the individual views of any Chamber member business or civic organization, Chamber employees, affiliated organizations, or partners.

Economic Development

The greater Falls Church jurisdictions of the City of Falls Church, Arlington County, and Fairfax County have emerged strong from the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chamber supports continued focus on maintaining and improving the region's quality of life and overall economic climate through strategic economic development efforts. The Chamber supports efforts by local governments to prioritize economic development and make greater Falls Church highly competitive in the regional marketplace. The Chamber supports increased investment in the expansion of the commercial revenue base through local government marketing and business attraction efforts, which help reduce the tax burden on residential taxpayers. The Chamber also supports a focus on competitive incentives to both attract and retain businesses. Specific economic development policies include:

- [Business-Friendly Regulations](#): The Chamber urges elected officials to be mindful that excessive and inconsistent restrictions placed on business development or expansion that do not contribute materially to improving quality and effectiveness of business relations sends a negative signal to prospective and existing businesses that are considering or may consider greater Falls Church as a place to locate or expand. The Chamber opposes existing and proposed regulations that have or will have a demonstrably adverse impact on net business and job growth.
- [Existing and Small Businesses](#): Small and local businesses are an essential component of greater Falls Church's economy and the Chamber's membership. They not only create well-paying jobs, but they also deliver vital services, generate sales tax revenue, and contribute to the unique character and livability of Falls Church's neighborhoods. Small and local businesses are also particularly active in community service and volunteerism, and they provide goods that are not generally available from larger competitors. For these reasons and, as noted in the Chamber's 2017 *Resource Guide For Small Businesses*, efforts to support and retain greater Falls Church's unique local businesses are a Chamber priority. The Chamber strongly supports increased governmental funding to support small business infrastructure and the continued development of existing programs and initiatives that support small businesses. The Chamber also supports policies to help existing tenants navigate disruptions which occur due to the renovation, redevelopment, and repositioning of existing commercial properties.
- [Mid- and Large-Size Firms](#): The Chamber supports policies encouraging entrepreneurship and the growth, attraction, and retention of new businesses to Falls Church, including mid- and large-size firms. The Chamber advocates policies supporting innovative, high-demand clusters, including high-tech, high-growth knowledge-based industry sectors, including medical services.
- [Strategic Economic Development Marketing Plan](#): The Chamber supports creation of a strategic economic development marketing plan to attract desired businesses to the City and highlight why greater Falls Church is a great place to live, work, and do business. Marketing greater Falls Church as an authentic and attractive place for companies can help generate leads, which can create jobs and employment, which produce income tax revenue, and which ultimately supports local revenue funds. Such a plan should include goals, marketing tactics, execution priorities, a timeline, and metrics.

- [Economic Development Authority Funding](#): The Chamber supports efforts to fully leverage the capabilities and strategic value that local economic and industrial development authorities offer greater Falls Church. This includes each organization's role in: community education programs; conducting research, purchasing, leasing, and selling property; tax exempt financing; and supporting projects and programs that promote business and investment in greater Falls Church.
- [State Economic Incentives](#): The Chamber encourages the General Assembly to continue to invest in business incentive programs and infrastructure improvements that recognize the unique needs and challenges faced in Northern Virginia, thus encouraging dynamic and growing businesses to invest in greater Falls Church. The Chamber supports the strategic use of economic incentives by state and local government—including tax incentives, disbursement of funds from the Commonwealth Opportunity Fund, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's programs—to attract and retain commercial investment. The Chamber supports continued and increased funding for these programs but recommends that the full economic impact of a business' and/or industry's presence in greater Falls Church be evaluated prior to creating or removing any business tax exemption. To foster an environment in which greater Falls Church can attract and retain top-quality companies, priority should be given to reviewing the qualification criteria for Virginia's business incentive programs to ensure that greater Falls Church can qualify for, and benefit from, these programs.

Land Use and Zoning

The Chamber believes that properly managed growth and development is good for greater Falls Church and its business community. Local governments must continuously stimulate business growth as a means to maintain its economic and fiscal viability, especially amidst the ever-escalating competition among business centers in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

The Chamber believes that land use policy and regulations should be flexible so as to attract the investment of commercial and residential developers. Such policies and regulations should incorporate incentives and avoid any undue or unnecessary restrictions, allowing the community process to foster innovative designs and solutions.

The Chamber strongly recommends that businesses in greater Falls Church not be overburdened with excessive or unnecessary land use or zoning regulations. The Chamber supports land use and zoning regulations that: (1) provide maximum flexibility to allow landowners and other businesses to adapt to changing market and economic conditions; (2) take into account market trends and demands; and (3) support the highest and best business growth, utilizing best practices to drive such growth. Specific policies include:

- [Efficient Permitting Processes](#): A necessary component to the attraction of commercial investment is streamlining and maximizing the efficiency of planning and permitting processes. The Chamber supports an ongoing examination of local government regulatory processes to minimize the regulatory and administrative burden placed upon businesses seeking to invest in greater Falls Church. The Chamber believes priority should be given to improving the processes for approving development plans, building permit applications, and handling other related administrative approvals that have an impact on businesses. Existing codes and procedural requirements that do not contribute to meaningful improvement of a particular proposal under consideration must be streamlined or eliminated, and fees assessed should be consistent with the actual cost to local government to facilitate the process.
- [Mixed-Use Redevelopment: As a part of evolving repurposing of underutilized properties](#) The Chamber encourages the evolution, repurposing, and greater utilization of existing, underdeveloped commercial and industrial properties into projects such as mixed-use development projects that improve walkability, incorporate safe pedestrian and bicycle options, accommodate emerging transportation technologies (e.g., electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, scooters, etc.), and increase the area's commercial tax base. The Chamber believes such development will be a primary source of new class A retail and office space within greater Falls Church. The Chamber encourages planning policies that will allow construction of varied housing types that are sufficient to meet the demand created by expected job creation, which will keep housing prices within reach for more working families. The Chamber believes new mixed-use redevelopment should adhere to the following standards:
 - Projects should add significant value to commercial real estate assessments, thus spreading the cost of public services over a larger group of property owners;

- Projects should generate additional employees and residents (in mixed-use developments) who will add substantially to the customer base for existing, new, and future businesses;
 - Projects should serve as an anchor or as an attraction, drawing people to greater Falls Church, thus increasing spin-off economic benefits for the business community;
 - Projects should provide for significant amenities and aesthetic considerations, including public art, thus serving as an inducement to promote increased business activities;
 - Projects should provide “right-sized” parking;
 - The design and orientation of projects should provide for attractive pedestrian access and circulation while mitigating any congestion or safety concerns generated by increased motor vehicle traffic;
 - Projects should not place undue burden on existing municipal services such that it would have an adverse impact on existing businesses and future growth; and
 - The design, massing of building elements, scale, use of materials, colors and textures, height and density, and overall architectural character of a project should contribute to the image of greater Falls Church as a prosperous commercial business center that will appeal to a growing number of office and retail enterprises, customers, clients, and visitors.
- [Fiscal Impact Modeling](#): The Chamber supports fiscal impact modeling to measure the impact of proposed development projects on local governments’ annual operating budgets. Of increasing importance, the Chamber supports the periodic updating of such modeling systems to ensure that they reflect market trends, accurate pupil generation counts and growth projections, and assessed values.
 - [Comprehensive Planning](#): The Chamber strongly recommends that local comprehensive plans reflect a shared inter-jurisdictional vision for future growth and economic prosperity. To ensure that outcome, the Chamber supports a strong and effective business stakeholder input and review process for the continued improvement of each locality’s comprehensive plan and small area plans, in part to ensure that land use policies and land use designations reflect the current and future needs of businesses.
 - [Incentive-Based Zoning](#): The Chamber supports an incentive-based approach, as opposed to mandates, to encourage the type of development that is desired in greater Falls Church, including programs that incentivize green or sustainable development, affordable housing, local business preservation, and other laudable development goals without adding additional time and expense to the development process.

Housing

A sustainable greater Fall Church requires a range of housing options that are affordable to a broad spectrum of citizens. Moreover, the strength and viability of the local economy relies on the availability of a mix of housing options as it directly impacts workforce recruitment and retention. Diversity in housing types also serves as a key factor in business location decisions.

To that end, the Chamber supports the availability of a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of greater Falls Church's population and workforce. The Chamber believes that residential growth adds vitality to the area's economy, as the dollars spent on architecture, engineering, and construction can be an important source of income and employment for many residents. Additionally, new residents drive demand for retail and office which has a very positive fiscal impact on the community. Additionally, the approval of higher density housing in appropriate locations provides greater housing choices for all Falls Church area citizens. Specific policies include the following:

- [Housing Plan](#): The Chamber encourages planning for a wide range of housing choices to support future economic development and job growth. The Chamber supports the development of comprehensive and effective housing plans that address the need for market rate, workforce, and affordable housing, and that include establishing goals for workforce housing based on a credible demographic study of needs.
- [Housing Affordability](#): The Chamber supports affordable housing programs as a way to support greater Falls Church's workforce, drive economic development, and draw a link between affordable housing and business. The Chamber believes the best way to ensure that a sufficient number of housing units are affordable to a broad percentage of the greater Falls Church community is to provide developers and property owners with incentives including, but not limited to, increased density, real estate tax credits, application fee waivers, and tax abatements, in return for the creation or preservation of housing units that are affordable across a broad portion of the local population. The Chamber also supports initiatives to partner with affordable housing developers to build parking or other improvements that would bring down the per-unit cost of affordable housing. The Chamber encourages community-wide discussion regarding alternative housing forms, such as duplexes, basement apartments, and accessory dwelling units. The Chamber encourages working with developers and the business community to provide clear policy guidance for affordable housing expectations in new mixed-use developments.
- [Review of Affordable Housing Regulations](#): The Chamber supports thorough and continuous reviews of regulations that affect affordable housing to ensure they achieve the stated goal of delivering an adequate inventory of affordable housing to existing and future greater Falls Church residents. The Chamber supports creating, and continually updating, a housing inventory which tracks supply, demand, pricing, and affordability.
- [Preservation and Improvement of Market Rate Affordable Housing](#): The Chamber supports preserving the affordability of existing market-rate affordable housing units in the greater Falls Church area through creative financing mechanisms, leveraging proffers or voluntary concession monies, purchase by public entities, and other incentives. The Chamber supports efforts to encourage private property owners to adequately maintain such units and, in those instances in which such units are beyond repair/reached the end of their useful life, the Chamber encourages incentives to encourage private property owners to thoughtfully redevelop such units at a rate equal to, or greater than, the number of existing market-rate affordable units being redeveloped.

- [Missing Middle Housing and Accessory Dwelling Units](#): To address the mismatch between the available housing stock and shifting demographics, combined with the growing demand for walkability, the Chamber supports so-called “Missing Middle” housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, stacked townhomes, townhomes, cottage housing, and other low- to moderate-intensity multifamily housing types that are compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes. The Chamber also supports loosening of restrictions on accessory dwelling units and carriage houses – including in single family neighborhoods with small or substandard lots – which can increase housing access and affordability without changing the community’s physical character.
- [Affordability Programs](#): The Chamber supports the use of property tax credits, down payment programs, low interest loans, expedited approval processes, and other programs to increase home ownership for low- to moderate-income households.

[Elder Care/Age-Restricted Housing](#): Regional trends indicate a rising demand for senior housing to accommodate the growing number of greater Falls Church residents entering their late 50s and 60s. These trends have implications for the types of housing that will be needed to support residents who are interested in aging in place. Many greater Falls Church residents have signaled a preference to remain in the Falls Church area and stay connected to their community in a safe, independent, affordable, and comfortable manner.

Housing for individuals over 55 years of age generates tax benefits without placing a burden on local school systems. Such housing also helps retain existing residents 55 and older who might otherwise leave greater Falls Church for senior housing options elsewhere. The Chamber supports the broadening of greater Falls Church’s age-restricted housing options and the development of independent living, assisted living, and memory care facilities as a way to increase the potential that such residents will remain in their homes of choice in an equitable, dignified, and safe manner. The Chamber believes such residents will spend money at local commercial establishments. This, in turn, will support additional retail and non-residential space such as office and medical uses, as well as supply additional tax revenues to local governments.

Education

The Chamber believes that top performing public and private Pre-K through 12th grade education systems that equip students with skills, training, and knowledge are vital to the future economic prosperity and quality of life in greater Falls Church. The Chamber supports quality education, from the earliest stages of childhood learning and, as appropriate, through higher education. The Chamber recognizes that a strong Pre-K through 12th grade school system serves as both a base of qualified employees and as a focal point for businesses looking at Falls Church as a potential site location. Education is an important economic development tool.

The private sector must play a critical role in ensuring that schools and workforce development programs are of the highest quality. Businesses support the foundation of a strong educational system, which is needed to allow people to make the most of their jobs and life opportunities. The Chamber embraces the

critical leadership role that businesses and industry leaders play in ensuring the quality of instruction, programs, and results from workforce training programs. It is critical that the business and education community be active partners to ensure there is a connection between what students are taught, how they are assessed, and what the workforce needs.

The Chamber supports initiatives and programs to maintain excellence of instruction in local schools to prepare students to either attend college/university or participate in vocational training programs. The Chamber encourages its members to support academic and vocational programs through volunteer activities and financial contributions and to support students through the provision of internships, externships, and job opportunities.

Child Care

Child care is a key component of a thriving, diverse community and an essential element in attracting and retaining a vibrant professional workforce.. For Falls Church to remain competitive as the preeminent place to live, work, and play in the region, it must increase the availability, affordability, and accessibility, of quality child care options. Access to a quality preschool program can have a ripple effect throughout a child's lifetime, and there is a significant gap between supply and demand. The Chamber recommends the following:

- [Child Care Report](#): The Chamber supports surveying current and potential child care programs, as well as other stakeholders such as parents, businesses, commercial property owners, landlords, and civic groups and develop a report that analyzes Falls Church's existing child care regulatory framework, its benefits and shortcomings, and the relationship between child care and land use, and best practices for child care policies.
- [Centralized Clearinghouse](#): The Chamber encourages the creation of a centralized access point for consumers and programs, or coordination of waitlists and available slots for Falls Church-area child care providers.
- [Child Care For Those With Disabilities](#): The Chamber supports identifying unmet child care needs for children with disabilities and/or behavioral health needs, as well as the strategies to increase availability and quality of child care programs serving children with special needs.
- [Encourage New Child Care Uses In new Projects and adaptive reuse of existing properties](#): The Chamber supports the removal of local regulatory barriers to facilitate the establishment of child care programs and facilities.. To achieve this, the Chamber advocates conducting a comprehensive review of existing zoning requirements, permitting processes, and inspection fees related to child care facilities. The Chamber advocates consideration of revising application fee schedules to reduce barriers for new providers. The Chamber supports developing meaningful incentives to encourage the inclusion of child care facilities, such as offering bonus density for developers who dedicate commercial spaces to child care uses. The Chamber also supports creating incentives and streamlined processes to utilize and repurpose existing commercial

properties for child care uses, making it easier and more economically feasible for providers to establish or expand their services.

Employment and Labor Issues

The Chamber supports legislative and regulatory policies that allow businesses to fairly manage their personnel resources without undue intervention. The Chamber supports employers meeting their legal and ethical obligations to their employees and to the government.

- [Equal Opportunity](#): The Chamber is committed to equal employment opportunities in all employment practices—including hiring, training, compensation, benefits, promotion, transfer, termination, and reduction in force—for all individuals without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual preference, or disability. The Chamber encourages employers to take positive steps to ensure that their workforces make full utilization of the human resources available to them.
- [Sourcing Locally and Insourcing](#): The Chamber supports use of both public- and private-sector resources to meet key government needs. When possible, and through an open competitive process, all levels of government should look to the local private sector as providers of products and services, especially in those areas where the local private sector can demonstrate an ongoing and clear advantage in costs and expertise.

Environment

The Chamber supports collaboration between local governments and businesses to protect and preserve the natural environment, recognizing that clean air, water, and land resources are essential to both public health and economic prosperity. The Chamber advocates for a balanced and holistic environmental strategy encouraging businesses and developers to adopt conscientious practices in land use, water and air quality management, and waste reduction.

Local environmental policies and regulations should be clear, achievable, and flexible, while respecting private property rights and business objectives. Regulations deemed "unnecessarily burdensome or costly" should be avoided and include those that impose compliance requirements or expenses significantly disproportionate to the environmental benefit achieved. Specifically, such burdensome regulations may include those with overly complex permitting processes, excessive administrative delays, disproportionately high compliance costs, or those lacking clear evidence of substantial environmental improvement.

Instead, the Chamber supports:

- Educational initiatives that encourage voluntary environmental stewardship among citizens and businesses.
- Incentive-based programs that promote economically viable practices in sustainability, conservation, and efficiency.
- Regular review and benchmarking of environmental regulations against proven best practices to ensure they achieve their intended outcomes efficiently, without undue economic hardship.
- Gradual implementation (phased-in compliance periods) for new environmental regulations when they significantly impact business operations, enabling adequate time for businesses to adjust and plan effectively.
- Public-private financing initiatives, such as Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE), to enable small businesses and developers to affordably implement energy-saving improvements.
- Encouraging local governments to provide clear guidance and streamlined approval processes for environmentally sustainable projects.

The Chamber acknowledges the inevitable impacts of climate change and emphasizes the importance of adaptive strategies for critical infrastructure resilience, including transportation systems and energy grids. It will advocate for proactive policies that prepare businesses to effectively manage climate-related disruptions while maintaining a thriving local economy.

Sound Fiscal Practice and Taxation

The greater Falls Church jurisdictions of the City of Falls Church, Arlington County, and Fairfax County have all maintained high bond/financial ratings, and the Chamber applauds this stewardship in public finance during good and difficult financial times. The Chamber strongly encourages continued commitment by public servants in maintaining, and improving upon, this high standard. The Chamber urges elected government officials to engage the Chamber in every stage of development of any new fiscal policies that impact greater Falls Church's business climate. Doing so will enhance a business-like approach to any policy changes and protect against consequences that might have a negative effect upon the area's economic and business success.

The Chamber believes that a guiding principle of sound governmental fiscal practice is to structure governmental services to available resources. To that end, the Chamber supports a rational balance of the tax burden among businesses, residents, and users of services. The Chamber further supports fiscally responsible policies that maintain a robust, business friendly environment and opposes tax policies that demonstrably hinder business and job growth or place greater Falls Church at a competitive disadvantage.

when compared to surrounding jurisdictions. The Chamber supports the creation of a finance system for local and state government that properly aligns revenue sources with expenditure requirements.

The Chamber strongly urges that additional savings and economies of scale be sought and adopted before local government considers any increase in the real estate tax burden. To achieve this objective, the Chamber supports the following:

- [Tax Policy](#): The Chamber supports tax policies that:
 - Carefully consider all available revenue options and then implement the appropriate options, at the appropriate levels, to meet local government’s resource needs;
 - Implement a stringent, business-like analysis of local government programs and service levels, to effectively align the investment of limited business and residential taxpayer resources with those government operations that serve the most vital interests of the area;
 - Assess all proposed tax policies against the potential impact on greater Falls Church’s economic competitiveness and quality of life—not just on the revenues that are anticipated;
 - Ensure that business and residential taxes are equitable so that no one group pays a disproportionate share of local taxes; and
 - Use unbudgeted and nonrecurring surplus tax revenues to fund nonrecurring capital expenditures in the areas of transportation and education or to supplement any “rainy day funds” established at the local or state levels rather than for new or recurring programmatic expenses.
- [Adjacent Jurisdiction Tax Competitiveness](#): To reduce the potential that local tax rates might discourage business expansion within greater Falls Church, the Chamber encourages ongoing monitoring of comparative local tax rates amongst Northern Virginia’s jurisdictions to discover specific tax rates and impact fees that put greater Falls Church at a competitive disadvantage in attracting and retaining certain segments of the business community.
- [Assessments](#): The Chamber supports establishing and maintaining a fair, transparent, and balanced process for both determining real estate tax assessments as well as addressing appeals for taxpayers aggrieved by locally assessed real estate valuations. The Chamber supports the use of standard, accepted appraisal practices in accordance with state law in the generation of real estate tax assessments. The Chamber strongly supports increased business representation on Northern Virginia’s Boards of Equalization.
- [State Tax Reform](#): The Chamber supports a statewide tax structure that is equitable and broad-based, fosters a favorable business climate, encourages economic development, and addresses local governmental abilities and resources to meet their obligations. Beyond exemptions already authorized under the Commonwealth’s Constitution, the Chamber opposes further expansion of governmental authority to create differential or multi-tiered local property tax classifications or assessment ratios. Effective tax reform should strive for simplicity, clarity, and reduced cost of compliance to individual and business taxpayers. Tax reform, by definition, also must strive for “revenue neutrality”—neither raising nor reducing the level of revenues. Once “revenue neutral

reform" is achieved, the Commonwealth can then best determine whether the level of revenues can be adjusted higher or lower and by what equitable mechanisms such adjustments should be made.

- [Federal Government Shutdowns/Budget Sequestration](#): The Chamber opposes government shutdowns and budget sequestration because of the negative impacts on its members, particularly government contractors, commercial business owners, and government employees.
- [Tax Abatement Incentives](#): The Chamber encourages greater Falls Church to study and, where appropriate, take advantage of and promote all local business tax incentive programs permissible under Virginia law, including commercial redevelopment and technology zone abatement programs.
- [Special Tax Districts](#): The Chamber believes special tax districts should be considered on their merit and used for specific purposes in situations in which they do not disadvantage existing businesses.

Government and Laws

The Chamber strongly supports the rule of law as a condition for thriving business and economic health. Greater Falls Church's citizens, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to participate in all levels of government and in public policy discussions. To effectively meet the needs and concerns of greater Falls Church's businesses and residents, government must operate with a business-minded focus on efficiency, responsiveness, and strategic vision that enables it to adjust to rapidly changing economic and political landscapes.

A stable and transparent government is a critical component of creating an environment that encourages economic development. To this end, the Chamber supports a regulatory regime at the federal, state, and local levels that emphasizes the importance of strong economic growth while ensuring rules are cost-effective and based on valid scientific and technical data. The Chamber believes the following policies will help enable a more stable, consistent, business-friendly, and business-focused environment:

- [Legislation](#): Laws and regulations must support a strong, business friendly environment that ensures economic competitiveness and protects the ability of businesses to create jobs and economic opportunity. The Chamber believes that governmental regulation serves citizens best when the regulation is clearly essential; limited in purpose; reasonable in application and compliance; flexible enough to respond to changing conditions; and subject to regular review, modification, and elimination. Excessive legislation and regulations are wasteful both in the public sector and private enterprise, and legislators at both the state and local levels should address this concern by reviewing and simplifying laws and regulations to minimize their effect on private enterprise, and by requiring an economic and fiscal analysis of the impact of the costs and benefits of proposed legislation and regulations where appropriate.

Falls Church Chamber of Commerce: 2025 Public Policy Positions

- **Chamber Participation**: The Chamber strongly advocates for the business community's voice and input into the discussion and development of any proposed new or amended law, policy, or regulation that would impact the cost, operations, or growth of businesses in greater Falls Church. The Chamber also supports the appointment of business community representatives to relevant boards and commissions to ensure that a business perspective is proactively sought during policy formulation.
- **Legislation Review**: The Chamber believes that all levels of government should conduct regular periodic cost impact reviews of all regulations and ordinances to assess the continued relevancy and efficacy of these regulations, with a particular emphasis on eliminating those that unnecessarily hinder job and economic growth.
- **Over-Regulation and Unfunded Mandates**: The Chamber calls on its elected officials to mitigate unnecessary regulations, streamline those slowing the growth of the private sector, and only impose new regulations that achieve a specific need or goal for the community without imposing an undue burden on business. The Chamber opposes the imposition of unfunded mandates or policy positions, particularly those that would require greater Falls Church businesses and other taxpayers to fund the long-term costs of these mandates. To this end, the Chamber supports transparency and the disclosure in the governmental budgeting process of the cost of all unfunded mandates to businesses and taxpayers.
- **Ethics**: Business benefits from a legal and regulatory framework that requires the highest standards of ethical behavior and accountability for elected and appointed public officials and employees. The Chamber supports continuing statutory ethics reform for all levels of government; banning the use of campaign funds for personal expenses; and banning the use of public funds by any officer, agent, or employee of any government entity for purposes unrelated to the duties of his or her office without lawful authorization.
- **Public-Private Partnerships**: The Chamber supports efforts to examine the role of government in providing goods and services to determine those which might be provided more efficiently, effectively, and economically by private-sector and non-profit organizations, particularly in the areas where services beyond the core functions of government are being provided by government. These public-private partnerships are beneficial collaborations that give public agencies access to the expertise and resources in the private sector, and that allow private-sector entities to make contributions of money and manpower to the communities in which they prosper. Where used effectively, such public-private partnerships improve service delivery and cost effectiveness, increase investment in public infrastructure, reduce public sector risk, deliver capital projects faster, improve budget certainty, and make better use of assets.
- **Open Government**: The Chamber believes that matters of public policy and finance, with appropriate protections for individual, proprietary, and confidential information, should be discussed in forums that encourage wide public participation, with action taken only after such a public process.
- **Procurement**: The Chamber supports a fair and open procurement system and encourages government at all levels to rely more on the local private sector for the goods and services it needs.

- [Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation](#): The Chamber supports increased inter-jurisdictional cooperation between local governments, as well as with regional government entities including, but not limited to, the Council of Governments, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.
- [Infrastructure Investment](#): It is a core responsibility of government to provide the public infrastructure essential to sustain a good quality of life and economic vitality. The Chamber calls on officials at the local and state levels to recognize the importance of world-class infrastructure to the growth of Northern Virginia's economy as a whole. The Chamber supports bond and general fund initiatives that finance critically needed capital infrastructure by taking advantage of historically low borrowing costs. The Chamber also supports use of public-private partnerships and other creative initiatives that will increase the availability of resources to invest in critical infrastructure—including schools, transportation, technology, parks and recreational facilities, water, and public safety—in order to meet the needs of greater Falls Church's businesses and residents.

Transportation

The Chamber supports the development and maintenance of a safe, convenient, cost-effective multimodal transportation network. This includes all modes of transportation including, but not limited to, pedestrian mobility, automobiles, mass transit, bikesharing, taxi services, and ridesharing. The Chamber supports the use of performance-based statewide and regional transportation plans focused on existing and new corridors of significance to direct revenues to multi-modal transportation solutions that will minimize congestion, increase safety, and support economic development. The Chamber supports the following policies:

- [Funding](#): The Chamber believes a long-term, equitable, sustainable funding source for transportation is critical for the continued economic vitality of greater Falls Church and for an enhanced quality of life for its citizens. The Chamber opposes using revenue from the state Transportation Trust Fund and the Northern Virginia Transportation District Trust Fund for non-transportation purposes.
- [Transit](#): The Chamber supports local transit and local transit infrastructure to serve the major businesses and job centers in the area and the use of advanced technology and integrated communications to improve transit accessibility and help alleviate traffic congestion. Where applicable, the Chamber supports the enhancement of bus services to provide low cost, intra-city public transportation. This is particularly important for facilitating safe and convenient transportation options for employees (and, in particular, hourly employees) and connecting areas around Falls Church's employment centers to areas where employees reside. The Chamber supports enhancements to the regional bus transit system serving the region's most congested corridors, recognizing the increased frequency of remote work.
- [Traffic Calming](#): The Chamber supports improvements to make new and existing streets safer for pedestrians, families, business owners, and customers by minimizing the risks of potential

increased traffic and concerns of excessive speed. The Chamber supports education of the public, including motorists and residents, enforcement of the existing traffic regulations and laws, and the use of traffic engineering to modify or physically change the roadway system in order to change the behaviors of motorists.

- [Airports](#): The Chamber recognizes the significant positive economic impact that both Washington-Dulles International Airport and Ronald Reagan National Airport have on greater Falls Church, including job creation, increased tourism, and regional connectivity. The Chamber fully supports continued strategic infrastructure investment at both airports to maintain and enhance their regional and national competitive positions. Additionally, the Chamber supports continued efforts by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and others to remain transparent and accountable to Northern Virginia’s residents and jurisdictions.
- [Bicycle Infrastructure](#): The Chamber supports expansion of bicycle infrastructure throughout greater Falls Church, including bicycle racks, wayfinding signage, on-road bicycle lanes where appropriate, bikeshare facilities, and more. Bicycle infrastructure offers a wide range of benefits relating to air quality and congestion, public health, transit access, transportation system efficiency, and neighborhood accessibility. Cycling infrastructure will also encourage more local dining and shopping trips.
- [Safe Micromobility](#): The Chamber supports the adoption of uniform policies which ensure the safe and equitable operation and storage of micromobility devices (e.g., dockless bicycle and electric scooter devices) in greater Falls Church. Such policies should be adopted in conjunction within the context of broader master transportation policies and should increase mobility, ensure everyone benefits from new mobility options, and create a level playing field for vendors.
- [Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority](#): The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) manages one of the region’s critical transportation systems. The rail and bus system operated and maintained by WMATA provides a necessary transportation option and is a key part of the future economic growth and success of greater Falls Church. The Chamber supports a close working relationship between WMATA and local governments to ensure the proper functioning of the system, as well as necessary reforms in the areas of governance, funding, and operations, as well as the proper capitalization of the system.
- [Streetscapes](#): The Chamber supports efforts to maintain clean, inviting, and safe streets and sidewalks as a way to attract customers to local businesses, in a manner that does not have a negative impact upon commerce. The Chamber supports making streets more walkable and standardizing the appearance, safety, and usefulness of the sidewalks, bus shelters, and other aspects of pedestrian-friendly passageways. The Chamber supports the undergrounding of utilities along area streets, either through public-sector infrastructure projects or in conjunction with private-sector redevelopment projects.
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- [Parking](#): The Chamber recognizes that parking is essential to local businesses. In a community such as greater Falls Church where parking spaces are at a premium, responsible parking management is a vital component of private property rights. The Chamber supports:

- Efforts by local businesses to find creative solutions to parking challenges and, where appropriate, identify ways to share parking to more efficiently utilize parking resources while still meeting market demand;
- Installation of uniform wayfinding signage for public parking;
- Efforts by private developers to include public parking areas in their parking management plans, and the implementation of Transportation Demand Management plans to reduce the need for parking;
- Improved efficiency in the utilization of on-street parking spaces;
- Improved availability of public parking spaces in the downtown area;
- The rigorous review of parking ratios established by Zoning Ordinances, and, where appropriate, reductions to such ratios to “right size” parking amounts; and
- Discouraging extreme predatory towing, as such practices are harmful to a positive commercial, retail, and dining experiences.

Tourism

The Chamber recognizes the quality of life and economic benefits that local and regional tourism contributes to greater Falls Church. The Chamber also recognizes that positioning Falls Church as a desired, thriving tourist destination requires marketing, promotion, tourism coordination, and development.

The Chamber supports an integrated, well-funded approach to marketing greater Falls Church and, by extension, Northern Virginia as a visitor destination and supports ongoing tourist outreach and marketing efforts by the local governments. The Chamber believes that Falls Church’s destination marketing strategy must place high priority on those activities that generate the most tax revenue while creating economic opportunities for local businesses with the domestic and international leisure visitor, sports and events, and conference/meetings industry.

In addition, the Chamber supports inclusion of high-value business sectors beyond those traditionally associated with tourism in any Falls Church destination marketing strategy. These would include, but not be limited to, educational facilities like universities or training centers that attract large meetings and groups and arts and cultural attractions. In addition, the Chamber recommends that Falls Church’s strategy target corporate travel decision makers in order to generate more overnight stays from the area’s high-value business sectors. The Chamber also supports the development of state partnerships in regional marketing efforts and infrastructure that supports an expanded visitor economy.

- [Tourism Taxation](#): The Chamber supports efforts to ensure that all regulations, taxes, and zoning ordinances are structured to enable tourism to prosper and will help to distinguish greater Falls

Church as a preferred destination. The Chamber supports the tourism industry's position that favors the continued use of transit occupancy taxes to promote tourism.

- [Short-Term Online Rental Markets](#): As the lodging industry evolves to include a wide range of entities—from individuals renting out space in their homes, to traditional hotels and bed and breakfasts—the Chamber supports a level playing field for all entities that provide lodging options to visitors, including short-term online rental market companies. The legal and regulatory environment for this sector should provide for equal tax treatment, transparency and data sharing, adherence to local zoning and safety regulations, and compliance with business licensing.

Anti-Discrimination and Respect

The Chamber is committed to fostering an inclusive business climate that better promotes economic inclusion and equal opportunity, as well as empowering the region's diverse community of business owners, residents, workers, and visitors.

The Chamber supports policies which prohibit discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, religion, national origin, gender, pregnancy, childbirth, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, marital status, and veteran status.

The Chamber supports the following:

- Creating a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every employer and employee;
- Making concerted efforts to recruit and retain qualified companies, employers, and employees from traditionally underrepresented groups;
- Providing, to the greatest extent possible, universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible physical space that ensures everyone is able to participate and work to his or her full potential; and
- Regularly reviewing the policies so that fairness is maintained and so that the policies can continue to evolve and remain relevant.

The Chamber condemns acts of injustice and discrimination as it harms our economic competitiveness and can impose tremendous burdens upon the victims of injustice and discrimination. The Chamber supports efforts to bring new businesses and jobs to underserved communities, as well as professional development and networking opportunities to all classes of minority business leaders.

Healthcare and Wellness

Falls Church has been recognized as the “Healthiest City in America” by *US News & World Report* and is home to some of the nation’s leading primary and specialty-care practices, wellness businesses, medical facilities, emergency and urgent care centers, outpatient services, and destination institutes.

- [Improved Access and Infrastructure](#): The Chamber recognizes the importance of the healthcare industry to greater Falls Church’s economy and supports individuals having access to quality and affordable healthcare. The Chamber also supports expansion of healthcare infrastructure in the region to meet community needs, including planning for emergency and pandemic preparedness.
- [Incentivizing Healthcare Professionals](#): The Chamber supports tax incentives to encourage the location of healthcare facilities and physicians’ offices in greater Falls Church, supports an increase in the pipeline of qualified healthcare professionals, and supports incentivizing top performers.
- [Workplace Wellness](#): The Chamber supports raising awareness of the positive effects of workplace wellness and chronic disease prevention programs to improve health and productivity.
- [Reduced Insurance Costs](#): The Chamber supports initiatives to improve quality and lower costs, ensure fair regulation of the insurance market, and expand the adoption of healthcare information technology.
- [Behavioral/Mental Health](#): Mental health conditions in the workplace are being diagnosed with greater frequency. Financial stress, job-related stress, depression and anxiety, stigma, grief, other concerns underscore the importance of access to behavioral health services.

The Chamber recognizes the important role of behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services in creating and maintaining a healthy workforce. The Chamber supports innovation and improvements to the mental health delivery system that enables individuals and families to access preventive, community-based, non-emergency services, while also assuring the care, safety, and support of persons experiencing a mental health crisis. The Chamber also supports efforts to greater leverage private-sector providers in addressing behavioral health needs in the community.

Healthy workplaces can increase employee retention and help companies become employers of choice. The Chamber encourages employers to develop strategies to ensure the physical safety and mental wellbeing of employees in their workplace, including through preventative measures (e.g., early identification of problems and early action to reduce stress or intercede).

Energy

The Chamber supports reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy resources to meet the growing needs of Northern Virginia's population and economy. It encourages a balanced approach to energy policy, emphasizing infrastructure development and modernization, energy efficiency, conservation, and diversification of energy sources, including renewable energy options. Recognizing the economic importance of energy reliability and affordability, the Chamber advocates for practical energy solutions that help local businesses maintain competitiveness while responsibly addressing environmental goals.

The Chamber supports market-driven initiatives and innovative programs that enable businesses to reduce energy usage and costs effectively. This includes incentives that promote alternative energy sources, energy efficiency improvements, and environmentally conscious practices in building design, construction, and operations. Additionally, the Chamber supports infrastructure development to expand electric vehicle charging capabilities and facilitate the transition to cleaner transportation alternatives.

The Chamber believes policies should provide flexibility, enabling businesses to adopt sustainable practices without imposing disproportionate financial burdens. Policies should focus on providing clear benefits, offering measurable outcomes, and including reasonable implementation timelines to minimize disruption to business operations. The Chamber will continue to advocate for an energy framework that aligns economic growth with responsible stewardship of natural resources.

The Chamber supports efforts to conserve and make more efficient use of fuel, as well as efforts that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These include incentives to increase vehicle mileage and the use of alternative fuels, as well as providing more mode choices for commuting and non-commuting trips.

Recommended rewrite:

Arts and Culture

With a high concentration of artists and home to a state-designated “Arts and Cultural District,” greater Falls Church’s arts and culture sector plays a key role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy and placemaking. Falls Church’s arts and business sectors contribute to the area’s quality of life, drive economic development, stimulate creativity and innovation, and strengthen the ability of businesses to recruit and retain a diverse group of individuals.

Investing in the arts means investing in an industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue, and is a cornerstone of tourism. The Chamber is committed to advancing support for arts and culture and believes that arts and cultural activities are important elements in business attraction and retention. The Chamber supports coordinated efforts by local and regional arts organizations to expand and enhance cultural assets across greater Falls Church. The Chamber also supports efforts to integrate, expand, connect and engage through public art installations around greater Falls Church.

The Chamber supports the recommendations contained in the fine arts policies for local jurisdictions including, but not limited to, the City of Falls Church's *Public Arts Master Plan*, Fairfax County's *Arts Master Plan*, and Arlington County's *Public Art Master Plan*.

The Chamber also supports arts education, as such focus encourages discovery, connectedness, and challenges students to become sustained, self-directed learners. The study of the fine arts positively impacts the learning of students of all socioeconomic levels and promotes social skills that enhance the awareness and respect of others.