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## **Richmond Region Tourism Proposes Tourism Improvement District**

**RICHMOND, Va. (January 11, 2022)** – A new program organized by local tourism leaders is aiming to provide supplemental and protected funds for tourism promotion activities in the region.

Richmond Region Tourism, along with local hotel operators, is proposing a Tourism Improvement District to grow visitation and hotel occupancy via dedicated funds for marketing and sales activities.

Through the TID, hotels will collect a 2% assessment per room night from visitors that will go directly to tourism promotion. All hotels with more than 41 rooms within the district, which includes Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico counties, the cities of Richmond and Colonial Heights and the town of Ashland, would charge the lodging fee.

“This is a smart and proven solution for increasing tourism in our region,” said Katherine O’Donnell, Executive Vice President at Richmond Region Tourism. “For years, Richmond Region Tourism has created award-winning marketing strategies that have helped to fill up tournament fields, meeting spaces and hotel rooms. The TID is an opportunity to expand and build on our efforts to help secure large-scale and high-profile sports events and conventions, while helping to boost leisure marketing efforts.”

The creation of the TID requires a thorough approval process, beginning with the development of a service plan defining the TID parameters. Hotel partners throughout our region have helped prepare and provided input for the service plan.

In addition, a majority of hotel owners or their representatives must sign petitions in favor of the TID. Separate petitions are required for each jurisdiction with hotels within the TID.

Localities must approve the proposed TID as well. Once authorized, the TID will be in effect for a 10-year term.

“The Richmond Region TID has been developed and will be governed by our local hotel partners to help grow tourism in the region,” said Neil Amin, Shamin Hotels CEO and a member of the TID Steering Committee. “The TID is focused on generating additional overnight visitors to our region, which will also support our local restaurants, small businesses, and cultural attractions. Implementing the TID is an investment in our community that will generate additional tax revenue and improves the quality of life of our residents.”

TIDs are a growing trend in the hospitality industry. Today, there are more than 190 TIDs in 19 states, with 11 other states considering TIDs.

“This is an investment in our community’s future as well as an exciting opportunity at a critical time for our region,” said Dan Schmitt, Richmond Region Tourism Board Chair and member of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors. “This TID will help the Richmond Region remain competitive as we continue to work to position ourselves against our peer destinations. Not only will it deliver more visitors and events to our region, it will pay dividends to our residents through job creation and career pathways.”

During the 2021 General Assembly, lawmakers passed Senate Bill 1298 to allow any Virginia locality a pathway to establish a local TID. Since that time, Richmond Region Tourism has been working with hotel operators within our region to create the TID.

Richmond Region Tourism estimates the first year of assessment collections will reach \$8.2 million to support local tourism efforts.

Tourism is a significant driver of the region’s economy. In 2021, the region hosted 16.9 million visitors who spent \$2.9 billion locally. Tourism supports nearly 24,000 jobs in the community.

For more information about Richmond Region Tourism and its partner localities, go to [www.visitrichmondva.com](http://www.visitrichmondva.com).

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### **About Richmond Region Tourism**

Richmond Region Tourism is a private, not-for-profit dedicated to promoting the Region to meeting, convention and sports event planners, tour operators and leisure travelers. The organization represents the cities of Richmond and Colonial Heights, the town of Ashland and four counties: Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico and New Kent. Richmond Region Tourism operates Visitor Centers at the Robinson House at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Richmond International Airport.

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