

## **Government Affairs Reports-in-Brief on Municipalities' Activity**

February 2018

### ***Chesapeake***

- ✓ Officials recommended that Chesapeake follow the Durham model of a combination of improved enforcement action and a robust housing market. (Durham reduced its boarded housing from 502 in 2011 to 24 as of last November, a 95% reduction.)
- ✓ Solicitation ordinance has been approved to prohibit panhandling and encouragement of such activity i.e stopping traffic to give to a panhandler. Fines for violators up to \$200.00 and \$350.00 for drivers.

### ***Norfolk***

Thelma Drake, Asst. Director of Transportation reported on five items added to legislative agenda:

- ✓ Support an easier process to expunge a record
- ✓ Support fully expanding Medicaid
- ✓ Support requiring all lost or stolen guns be report to local law enforcement
- ✓ Support initiative funded by Commonwealth to reduce carbon footprint & promote alternative energy source.

### ***Virginia Beach***

Approved an ordinance to REPEAL the City Code Section 23-15 re: Begging on Streets or Beaches.  
Significance: It is no longer illegal to beg on streets or at the beach

### ***Portsmouth***

Portsmouth Economic Development Authority, Jan. 16, 2018 meeting: Concern was raised that it has a good portfolio but is low on cash. Numerous grants are available to business owners for facades, interior build-out, safety and security.

### ***Suffolk***

A developer is proposing office, retail, hotel and residential development in North Suffolk on land owned by the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Department. An application for the rezoning has been made to the City of Suffolk and the Planning Commission and City Council public hearings could take place in early 2018.

### ***Smithfield***

- ✓ The Solar Energy industry is claiming a good deal of farmland in Isle of Wight and Surry Counties. The solar panels themselves would cover 110 acres, large enough to send 20 megawatts of electricity straight into the power grid each year .
- ✓ Route 460 (major highway project) cancelled in 2017 after more than 10 years of planning. The funds that were designated to this highway went to the "multi path" construction from Nike Park to Windsor Castle.