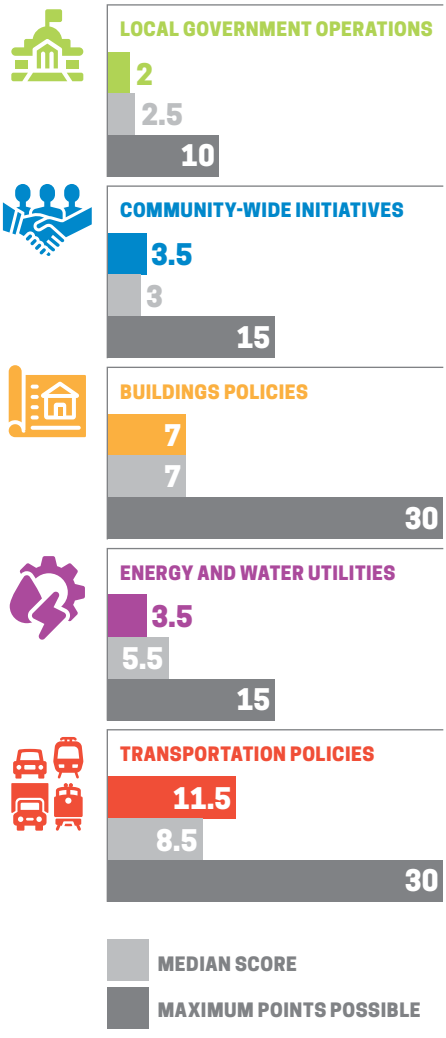
RANK

43 /100

OVERALL SCORE

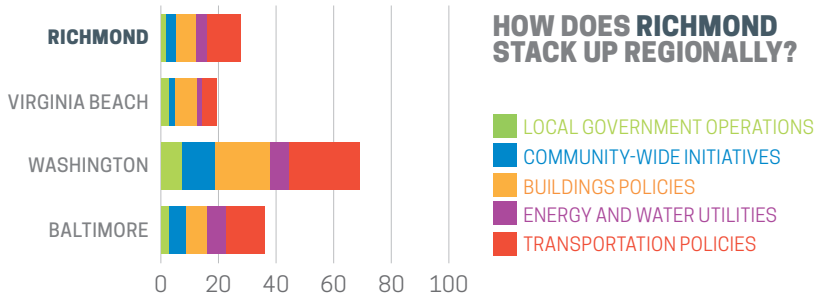
27.5 /100



2020 CITY CLEAN ENERGY SCORECARD

Richmond

Richmond had its best achievements in the transportation policies category; the city's score was due in part to its establishment of a transit-oriented development zoning district in 2017, its comprehensive complete streets policy, and its RVA Bike Share program. To advance its rank in the next edition of the *Scorecard*, Richmond can improve across all policy areas, most notably by focusing on local government operations, community-wide initiatives, and buildings policies.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (2 OF 10 POINTS)

Richmond has an energy reduction goal for local government operations. The city benchmarks the energy use of all municipal buildings, identifies energy efficiency opportunities through audits, and conducts renovations. It is in the process of upgrading streetlights to LEDs and allows telework and alternative work schedules for employees. Richmond can establish a renewable energy goal for local government operations, and the city can set fleet efficiency requirements.

COMMUNITY-WIDE INITIATIVES (3.5 OF 15 POINTS)

Richmond's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and renewable energy goals set the vision for a clean energy future. ACEEE was unable to project if the city will achieve its near-term climate mitigation goal of 40% below 2008 levels by 2030 because insufficient GHG emissions data were available for our analysis. To mitigate the urban heat island effect, Richmond provides incentives for green infrastructure installation. To inspire future clean energy efforts, the city can take an equity-driven approach to clean energy planning and adopt a formal policy, rule, or agreement that supports the creation of clean, distributed energy systems within the community.

BUILDINGS POLICIES (7 OF 30 POINTS)

Virginia requires all jurisdictions to enforce the 2015 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, which references the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code. Richmond advocates for more stringent state energy codes through the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council. To achieve energy reductions in existing buildings, Richmond offers incentives to spur clean energy investment. The state prohibits Richmond from adopting policies requiring energy saving action, but the city can do more to reduce GHG emissions in its building sector by creating voluntary energy reduction challenges and developing an equitable clean energy workforce.

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES (3.5 OF 15 POINTS)

Compared to other utilities, Dominion Energy shows low savings as a percentage of sales for electric efficiency programs. The Richmond Department of Public Utilities (DPU) does not report spending or savings on natural gas efficiency programs. While Dominion Energy offers a low-income energy efficiency program, neither utility provides energy efficiency programs for multifamily properties. As a member of the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council, Richmond advocates in favor of policy improvements for the provision of utility data. The city has started conversations with Dominion regarding renewable energy strategies but can pursue more activities to encourage utility-scale renewable energy development.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (11.5 OF 30 POINTS)

The city adopted a comprehensive complete streets policy through Resolution No. 2014-R172-170. Richmond created a new zoning district in 2017 for transit-oriented development. The district also encourages the creation of affordable housing units. While the Richmond Strategic Multimodal Transportation Plan sets a multimodal vision for the city's transportation system, the city has not yet adopted quantitative goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled/GHG emissions from transportation. Adopting and tracking progress toward these goals would help lay the groundwork for transportation action. Relative to other city systems, Richmond's transit system is moderately accessible but underfunded; ensuring continued financial support for service and operations will be crucial in a post-COVID world.

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