# Richard Bland College

**BOARD OF VISITORS**

## Special Board Meeting

**16 November 2026 | AIC Mamie Locke Boardroom | 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

**2:00 p.m.** **Call to Order and Opening Remarks** – Rector Kevin Massengill

**Approval of Minutes from Sept 23rd, 2026, Board of Visitors Meeting**

**2:05** **President's Report** – Dr. Kenneth C. Alexander, Interim President

**Resolution 1 – Endorsement of College's 2027 Legislative Priorities**

**2:15** **Building Conditions & Campus Master Plan**

Ms. Stacy Sokol, Chief Business Officer

Mr. Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operating Officer

RRMM Representatives

**3:30** **Break**

**3:45** **Draft Strategic Plan Framework 2028-2033**

Christie Clarke, Chief of Staff

**5:00** **Adjournment**

Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

# DRAFT SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**September 23, 2026 | 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | Academic Innovation Center Mamie Locke Boardroom**

Members of the Richard Bland College ("RBC" or "College") Board of Visitors met in open and closed sessions at Richard Bland College on Wednesday, September 23, from 11:00a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the Mamie Locke Boardroom of the Academic Innovation Center.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Shawn Avery
- Hon. Peter Blake
- W. Kevin Massengill, Rector
- Dr. Perry Miller, Secretary
- Jennifer Montague
- Penny Parayo
- Dr. Amanda Russell
- Joanne Williams
- Deborah Young, Vice Rector
- Adam Zucconi, Faculty Representative
- Terrell Crawley, Student Representative

**STAFF PRESENT:**

- Hon. Dr. Kenneth Alexander, Interim President
- Dr. Kimberly Boyd, Vice President & Chief Applied Learning and Innovative Workforce Officer
- Dr. Christopher Kukk, Provost and Chief Academic Officer
- Christie Clarke, Chief of Staff
- Stacey Sokol, Chief Financial Officer
- Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operations Officer
- Charita Johnson, Chief Information Officer
- Dianna Banks, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Mary Weaver, Controller
- Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez, Director of Counseling Services
- Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success
- Ashley Fuller, Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Dr. Susan Clair, Information Security Officer
- Layne Peebles, Director of Procurement
- Tim Hurley, Director of Library Services
- Lisa Pond, Associate Director of Administrative Services
- Katelinn Davis, Philanthropy Officer
- Carolyn Day Pruett, Major Gifts Officer
- Jason Pode, Chair, Faculty Assembly, and Associate Professor of Mathematics

- Dr. Eileen Strempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant
- Ryan Jackson, President, New Crescent Strategies and Richard Bland College Consultant
- Nathan Moberley, OAG College Counsel
- Gerrit Smith, Chief of Presidential Operations and Clerk to the Board of Visitors
- Other RBC Staff Members

**GUESTS PRESENT**

- Jeffrey Wilt, Founding Partner, The Monument Group

**WELCOMING REMARKS & APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Rector Kevin Massengill called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m., recognized the presence of a quorum, and welcomed attendees to the meeting. Rector Massengill then asked for a motion to approve the May 7, 2026, meeting minutes. The motion was made by Ms. Penny Parayo, seconded by Secretary Dr. Perry Miller, and approved unanimously by voice vote. Rector Massengill then asked for a motion to approve the August 6, 2026, meeting minutes. The motion was made by Secretary Dr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Shawn Avery, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

**INTERIM PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Interim President Dr. Kenneth Alexander presented a report on his financial discipline framework for the College. He emphasized a shift from reactive budgeting to a proactive financial management approach centered on predictability, early intervention, and protection of the College's mission, resources, and momentum.

Dr. Alexander then reviewed key student success and market indicators, noting that approximately 60% of incoming students are first-generation college students, fall-to-fall retention has increased from 61% to 63%, and the current 150% graduation rate is 37%. He also discussed declining academic preparedness among entering students, citing a decrease in average incoming high school GPA from 3.20 to 2.99, and highlighted a proposed Summer Bridge Initiative designed to improve student readiness, retention, and completion.

Looking ahead, Dr. Alexander highlighted several strategic opportunities to advance the College's mission and long-term sustainability, including academic innovation, workforce development initiatives, expansion of public-private partnerships, residential growth, and the exploration of a three-year bachelor's degree pathway. He also discussed plans to enhance Board oversight through regular financial dashboards.

Ryan Jackson, President of New Crescent Strategies, presented the College's 2027 General Assembly priorities. He outlined legislative and policy objectives intended to support the College's continued transition to independence, including statutory updates to remove remaining references to William & Mary, securing Tier II operating authority for information technology and procurement functions, and obtaining capital planning funds for the phased renovation and expansion of Statesman Hall.

Mr. Jackson also discussed initiatives to advance a three-year bachelor's degree pathway in collaboration with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the statewide Scaling College in 3 initiatives, as well as efforts to support the timely confirmation of gubernatorial appointments to the College's Board of Visitors.

Ms. Ashley Fuller, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Ms. Christie Clarke, Chief of Staff, presented an update on key performance indicators for the College, including enrollment, athletics participation, housing occupancy, retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Ms. Fuller reviewed the shared governance structure at RBC. Ms. Clarke then discussed the Six-Year Plan updates, including mission statement revisions, technology modernization efforts, academic program viability reviews, and capital planning for Statesman Hall, all of which are intended to support institutional effectiveness, student success, and long-term strategic priorities.

After the conclusion of Ms. Fuller's and Ms. Clarke's remarks, the Board members discussed **Resolution 1**, Revisions to Richard Bland College's 2026-2032 Six-Year Plan. It was suggested to include the specific Virginia Code section requiring the vote for the updated plan in the resolution. Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 1**. The motion was made by Mr. Shawn Avery, seconded by Secretary Dr. Miller, and approved unanimously as amended by voice vote.

**FACULTY AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS, AND ADVANCEMENT PRESENTATION**

The Board then had a lunch break starting at 12:50 p.m. After the lunch break at 1:20 p.m., Dr. Adam Zucconi, Associate Professor of History and Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors, provided his faculty report. Professor Zucconi informed the Board about recent faculty-led student experiential learning, including to West Virginia, Utah, and Madagascar, among other destinations. Mr. Terrell Crawley, Student Representative to the Board of Visitors and Vice President of the Student Government Association, shared an update about student activities in his student report, including a kickball game between students and faculty.

Mr. Jeffrey Wilt, Founding Partner of The Monument Group, introduced members of the College's development team, who provided an overview of advancement activities, fundraising priorities, and future opportunities. Ms. Katelinn Davis, Philanthropy Officer, presented a SWOT analysis of the College's development program and discussed key fundraising concepts, including the distinction between restricted and unrestricted gifts and the role each plays in supporting institutional needs. Ms. Carolyn Day Pruett, Major Gifts Officer, provided an update on fundraising efforts, including the College's participation in a $250,000 dollar-for-dollar matching grant opportunity through the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation to support the development of a student basic needs center, as well as progress toward FY2027 fundraising goals.

Mr. Wilt then highlighted the important role the Board plays in advancing philanthropic support. He discussed strategies for identifying prospective donors, cultivating relationships, engaging in fundraising efforts, and demonstrating leadership through personal giving. The presenters noted that successful

philanthropy is built on donor connection, confidence, and opportunity, and emphasized the importance of communicating the impact of charitable contributions. The Board was encouraged to support fundraising efforts through advocacy, relationship-building, and active engagement with potential donors and community partners. Mr. Wilt concluded his remarks by sharing that 85% of gifts across the country are from individuals.

**COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mr. Avery provided a Finance, Audit, and Compliance (FAC) Committee report on behalf of the Committee and Chair Ms. Penny Parayo. The FAC Committee met earlier in the day and received updates regarding external and internal audit activities. Mr. Avery also shared that the FAC Committee reviewed the FY 2027 operating budget and discussed key financial and operational risks facing the College.

Dr. Kim Boyd, Vice President and Chief of Applied Learning & Innovation Workforce Officer, provided an overview of the Office of Research and Innovation, highlighting an outcome-driven approach focused on innovation, workforce development, and student success. She discussed advanced STEAM-H learning opportunities, including virtual reality learning, human-robot interaction, and uncrewed aerial systems, as well as dual-enrollment pathways, experiential learning, mentoring, and flexible instructional delivery models. Dr. Boyd also reviewed the Forge Ahead initiative, a comprehensive workforce development program that integrates non-credit training, industry-recognized credentials, and accredited academic pathways to create seamless transitions from workforce entry to degree attainment. In addition, she highlighted emerging program development opportunities in areas such as aviation, FAA-related training, building construction, and the skilled trades, and expressed appreciation for the increased transparency and collaboration that have supported institutional planning and innovation efforts over the last few months.

Dr. Chris Kukk, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, presented an overview of Academic Affairs, including faculty and staff initiatives, academic pathways, partnerships, and collaborative efforts designed to support the College's mission. He identified strong collaboration between faculty and staff, student support pathways, and campus partnerships as institutional strengths, and highlighted the Scholars Corner initiative, which connects students with faculty and staff mentors and supports student scholarship and publication opportunities. Dr. Kukk noted challenges related to staffing capacity, funding, student access, and faculty recruitment and retention, while also discussing strategic opportunities such as a three-year bachelor's degree pathway, expanded certificate offerings, and internship opportunities. He reported that academic program reviews, resource realignment efforts, and the planned discontinuation of three low-enrollment programs are intended to strengthen student retention and graduation outcomes.

Mr. Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operating Officer, reviewed campus operations, capital assets, auxiliary enterprises, information technology, public safety, and facilities management with Board members. He discussed the organizational structure and staffing supporting these areas and highlighted significant growth in auxiliary revenues driven by enrollment growth, expanded athletic programs, enhanced student experiences, and strategic partnerships. Mr. Kondzielawa also discussed the Business Innovation Park,

campus resource stewardship initiatives, and the College's history of state-supported capital improvements, emphasizing the importance of continued infrastructure investment to support institutional growth and long-term sustainability.

Ms. Charita Johnson, Chief Information Officer, presented the College's technology strategic plan, focusing on data-informed decision-making, artificial intelligence, student support technologies, cybersecurity, online and hybrid learning, and institutional communications. She highlighted recent accomplishments, including network and cybersecurity upgrades, implementation of cloud-based backup and recovery solutions, enhanced identity management and multifactor authentication, and the achievement of zero information technology audit findings. Ms. Johnson also reviewed ongoing initiatives, including the Banner modernization project, compliance with web accessibility standards, and efforts to obtain Tier II operational authority.

Mr. Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success, presented an overview of student success initiatives centered on guided pathways, learner mentoring, data-informed interventions, and strategic technology partnerships designed to improve student engagement, retention, and completion. He discussed the role of professional advisors and faculty mentors in supporting students throughout their academic journeys and highlighted the use of targeted outreach and predictive support strategies. Mr. Thoreson also shared examples of successful student outcomes, including transfer and scholarship achievements of recent graduates, demonstrating the impact of the College's student success model and support services.

**ACTION ITEMS**

After a fifteen-minute break, the Board came back into session at 3:19 p.m., to vote on the remaining action items for the meeting.

Rector Massengill asked for a vote on **Resolution 2**, Amendment to the Bylaws of the Board of Visitors Regarding Periodic Review of the College Mission Statement. A motion was made by Secretary Miller, seconded by Ms. Jennifer Montague, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 3**, Richard Bland College SWaM Business Procurement Plan. The motion was made by Mr. Peter Blake, seconded by Secretary Miller, and approved by majority vote. Vice Rector Deborah Young and Ms. Joanne Williams abstained.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 4**, Governance Compliance Acknowledgment. The motion was made by Dr. Amanda Russel, seconded by Mr. Avery, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 5**, FY 2026 Workforce Planning and Development Report. The motion was made by Mr. Blake, seconded by Secretary Miller, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 6**, Acknowledging Gifts Received Through the RBC Foundation. The motion was made by Ms. Montague, seconded by Ms. Parayo, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 7**, Appointment to Fill Vacancies in the Instructional Faculty. The motion was made by Mr. Avery, seconded by Ms. Montague, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 8**, Appointment to Fill Vacancies in the Professional Faculty. The motion was made by Ms. Parayo, seconded by Secretary Miller, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Massengill then asked for a vote on **Resolution 9**, Academic Faculty Promotion. The motion was made by Dr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Blake, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

**PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Mr. Blake, Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, provided an update on the Committee's activities and engagement efforts. He noted that the Committee was established by the Board at its April 22, 2026, meeting to conduct a search for the College's next permanent president. The Committee held its initial meeting on June 24, during which members reviewed the search committee charter, composition, and governance. Mr. Blake also noted that the search timeline has been extended due, in part, to the lack of funding for a search firm. He reviewed subsequent meetings and outreach efforts, including discussions with Dr. Alexander, Rector Massengill, Virginia Secretary of Education Jeffery Smith, and other stakeholders. Mr. Blake reported that he plans to continue stakeholder engagement by providing updates to faculty, students, and staff as the Committee's work progresses.

**CLOSED SESSION**

At 3:35 p.m., after Mr. Blake's update, Rector Massengill requested a vote to move the Board meeting into closed session for the purpose of discussing contract terms pursuant to the following exemptions under Va Code § 2.2-3711:

Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(29), for discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms of scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Namely, for the purpose of discussing potential contract terms for the permanent presidential search firm.

The motion was made by Vice Rector Young, seconded by Ms. Montague, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

**OPEN SESSION RESUMED**

The Board reconvened in open session at 4:21 p.m. Rector Massengill requested a vote to move the Board out of closed session. The motion was made by Vice Rector Young, seconded by Secretary Miller, and approved unanimously by voice vote. Rector Massengill then asked for a roll call vote that only matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed and only matters identified in the motion to have a closed session were discussed. Mr. Gerrit Smith, Chief of Presidential Operations and Clerk to the Board of Visitors, called the roll, and all Board members present certified "yes."

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Rector Massengill asked for a vote to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Secretary Miller, seconded by Mr. Avery, and approved unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

**Resolution:** **No. 1 – ENDORSEMENT OF COLLEGE'S 2027 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**
**Date:** **November 16, 2026**

**WHEREAS**, Richard Bland College is committed to advancing its mission through effective advocacy before the Virginia General Assembly and other governmental entities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Visitors recognizes the importance of legislative, budgetary, and policy initiatives that promote student success, institutional effectiveness, workforce development, financial sustainability, and the long-term advancement of the College; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board received and reviewed the College's proposed 2027 legislative priorities at the September 23, 2026, Board meeting; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors hereby endorses the College's 2027 legislative priorities, including:

1. Completion of the College's statutory transition to full institutional independence through technical and conforming amendments to the Code of Virginia and related governmental processes;
2. Pursuit of Tier II operational authority, including authority related to information technology and procurement functions, as authorized by law;
3. Securing capital planning and related funding to support the renovation, expansion, and modernization of Statesman Hall and other capital improvement projects;
4. Advancement of innovative academic pathways, including development of accelerated bachelor's degree programs and other workforce-aligned educational opportunities; and
5. Support for actions that promote effective governance of the College, including timely confirmation of appointments to the Board of Visitors.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board authorizes the President, in consultation with the Rector as appropriate, to advocate for and support legislative, budgetary, regulatory, or policy initiatives not expressly identified in the College's current legislative priorities when such initiatives are consistent with the mission, interests, and strategic priorities of Richard Bland College and do not conflict with actions previously taken by the Board of Visitors.

# Pre-Reads for

# 16 November 2026

# Board of Visitors Meeting

- Budget to Actuals (up to Sept. 30, 2026)
- Dashboard
- Academics Update (Provost Chris Kukk)
- Campus Master Plan (presentation from January 2026)
- RBC Strategic Plan 2026-2028
- Draft RBC Strategic Plan Framework for 2028-2033
- Future of Richard Bland College 6.29.2026 Report

# Richard Bland College

## FY27 Budget Summary

Unadjusted Through 9/30/26

| REVENUES | 2026-27 Current Budget | 2026-27 Current Actual | % of Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| State Appropriations | $ 18,144,402 | $ 5,257,270 | 29.0% |
| Tuition and E&G Fees | $ 7,216,440 | $ 3,323,770 | 46.1% |
| Other Revenues | $ 677,904 | $ 307,214 | 45.3% |
| Student Housing | $ 3,831,300 | $ 1,934,667 | 50.5% |
| Food Services | $ 1,277,100 | $ 954,823 | 74.8% |
| Comprehensive Fees | $ 1,406,753 | $ 660,953 | 47.0% |
| Other Auxiliary Services | $ - | $ 2,075 | N/A |
| Grant Revenue | $ 431,061 | $ 456,862 | 106.0% |
| **Total Revenues** | **$ 32,984,960** | **$ 12,897,634** | **39.1%** |

| EXPENDITURES | 2026-27 Current Budget | 2026-27 Current Actual | % of Budget | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Personnel:* | | | | |
| Instruction | $ 4,791,337 | $ 1,736,954 | 36.3% | |
| Research | $ 801,167 | $ 8,069 | 1.0% | |
| Academic Support | $ 939,060 | $ 332,578 | 35.4% | |
| Student Services | $ 2,151,560 | $ 663,609 | 30.8% | |
| Institutional Support | $ 5,186,542 | $ 1,819,209 | 35.1% | |
| Operation & Maintenance | $ 1,417,997 | $ 523,414 | 36.9% | |
| Auxiliary Services | $ 773,466 | $ 244,356 | 31.6% | |
| Athletics | $ 1,219,415 | $ 393,774 | 32.3% | |
| Total Personnel | **$ 17,280,544** | **$ 5,721,964** | **33.1%** | [1] |
| *Operating:* | | | | |
| Education & General | $ 8,849,203 | $ 3,839,291 | 43.4% | |
| Sponsored Programs | $ 214,200 | $ 205,088 | 95.7% | |
| Auxiliary Services | $ 1,938,385 | $ 250,337 | 12.9% | |
| Athletics | $ 2,236,000 | $ 690,234 | 30.9% | |
| Financial Aid | $ 2,466,630 | $ - | 0.0% | |
| Total Operating | **$ 15,704,418** | **$ 4,984,951** | **31.7%** | [2] |
| **Total Expenditures** | **$ 32,984,962** | **$ 10,706,915** | **32.5%** | |

**Surplus/(Deficit) $ 11,007,997**

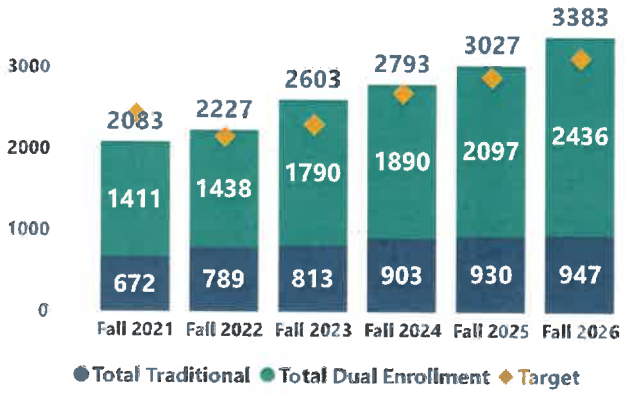
[1] Projected personnel total includes estimated one-time bonus (+taxes) paid out in June & Strategic Workforce Realignments

[2] Projected operating total includes additonal IT cloud services & pre-planning expenses

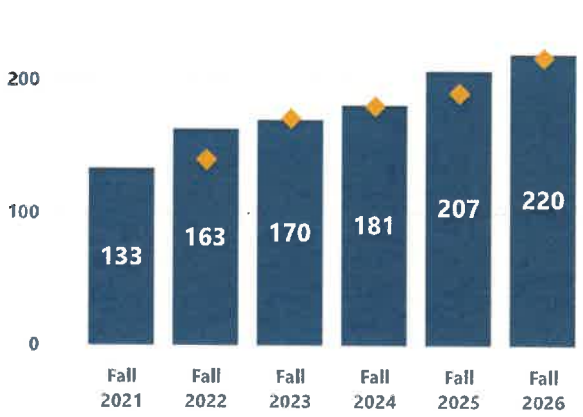
# Richard Bland College

# Dashboard

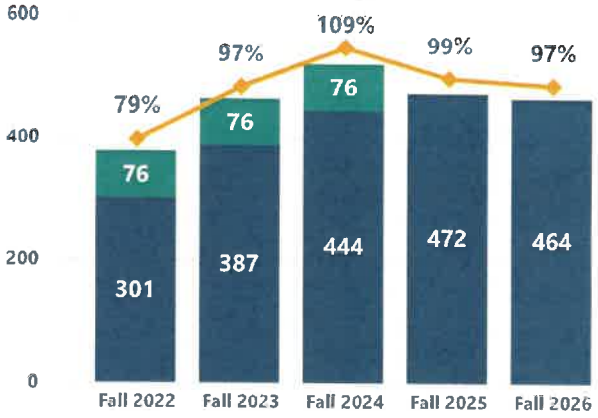
## Enrollment



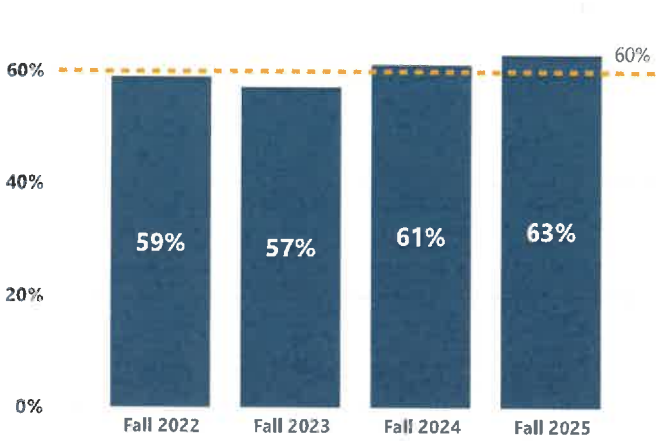

## Athletes Enrolled



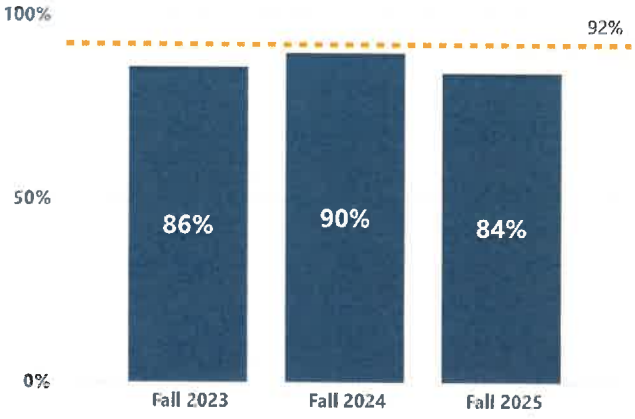

## Housing



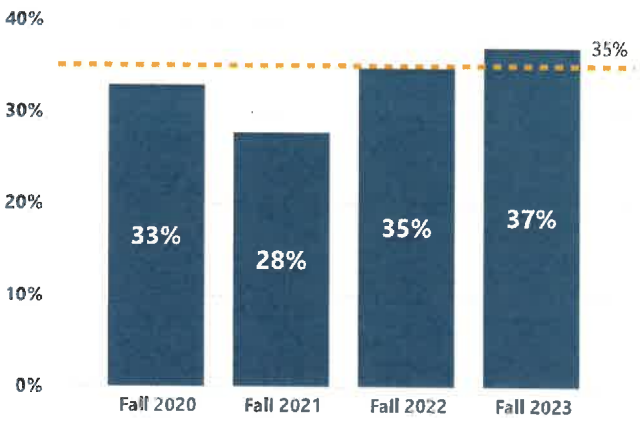

## Fall-to-Fall Retention




## Fall-to-Spring Persistence




## 150% Graduation Rate



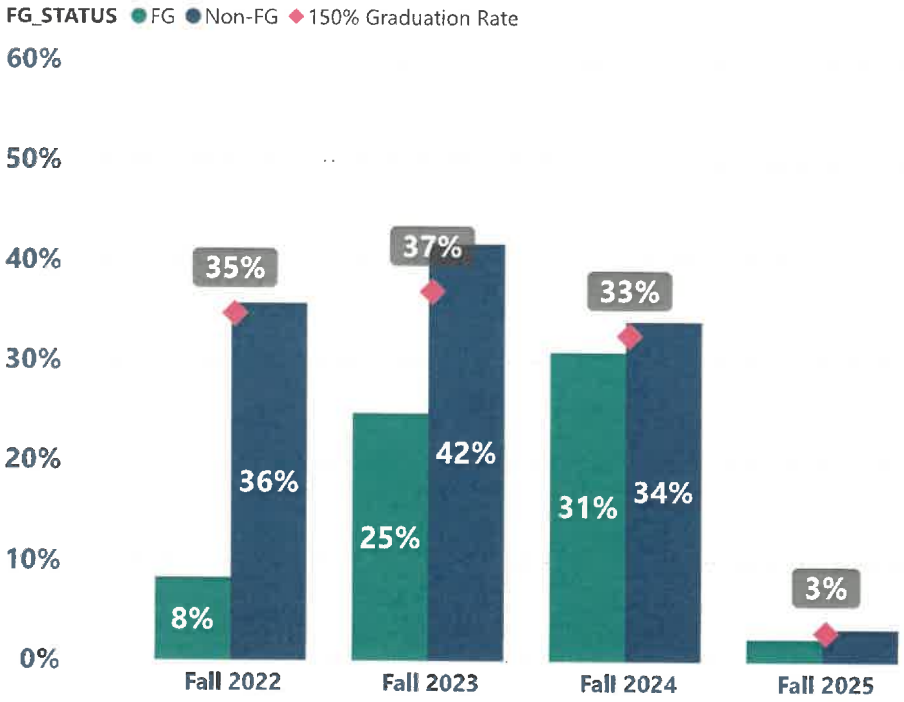
Term

Multiple selections

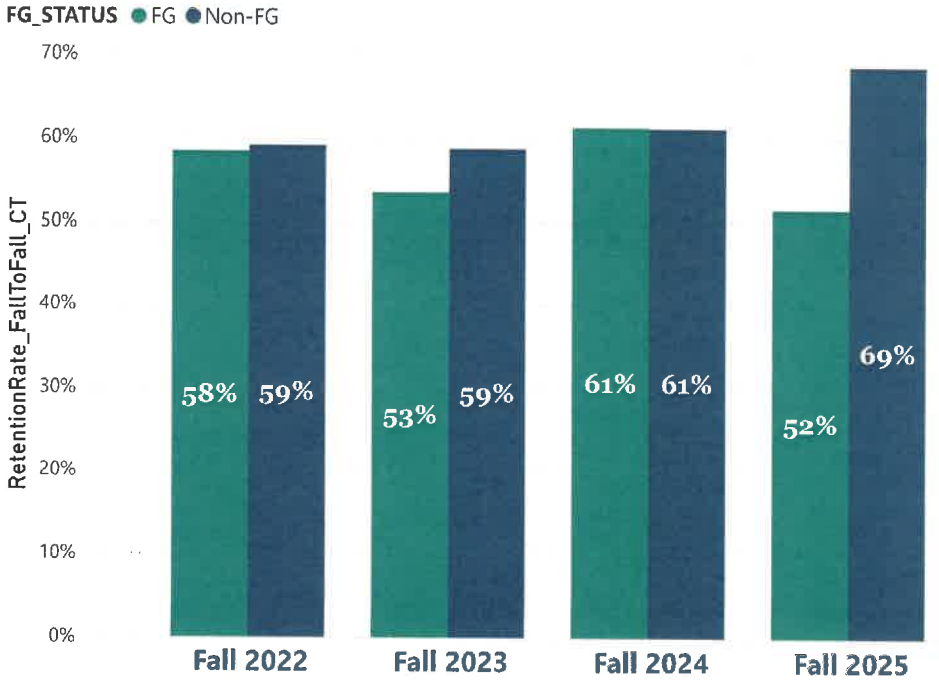
# Richard Bland College

## First Generation
## Graduation and Retention

### 150% Graduation




### Fall-to-Fall Retention

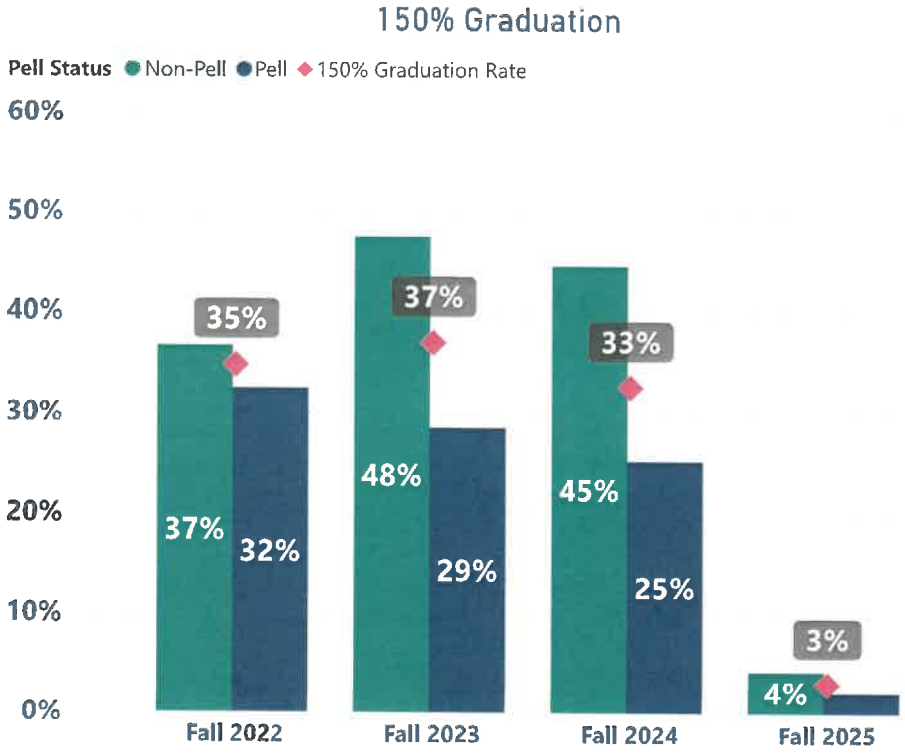


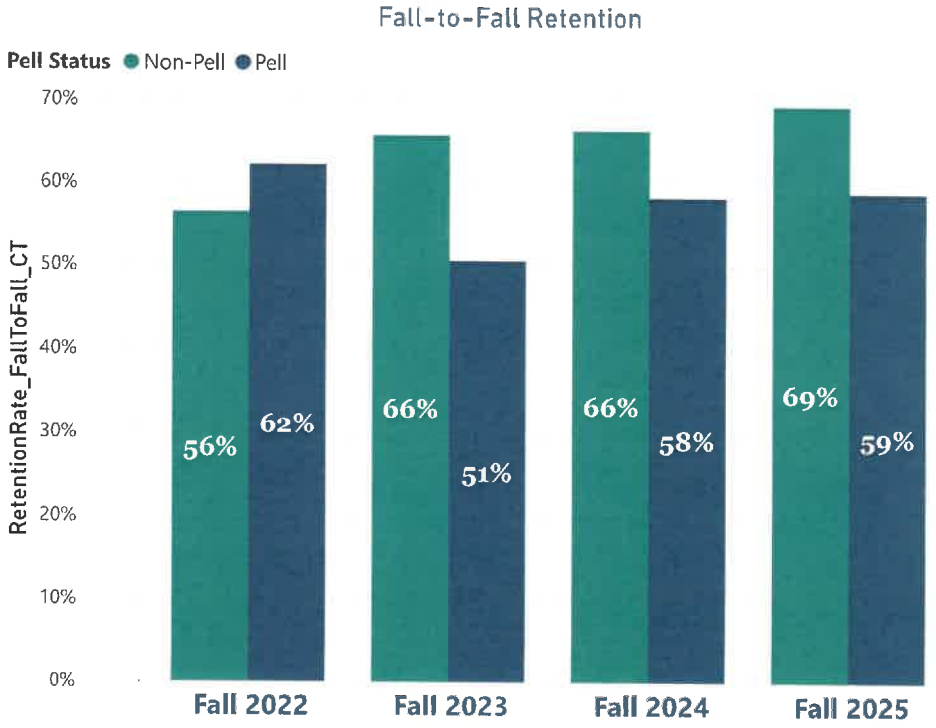
Term

Multiple selections

# Richard Bland College

## Pell Status Graduation and Retention



Term

Multiple selections

ETHNICITY

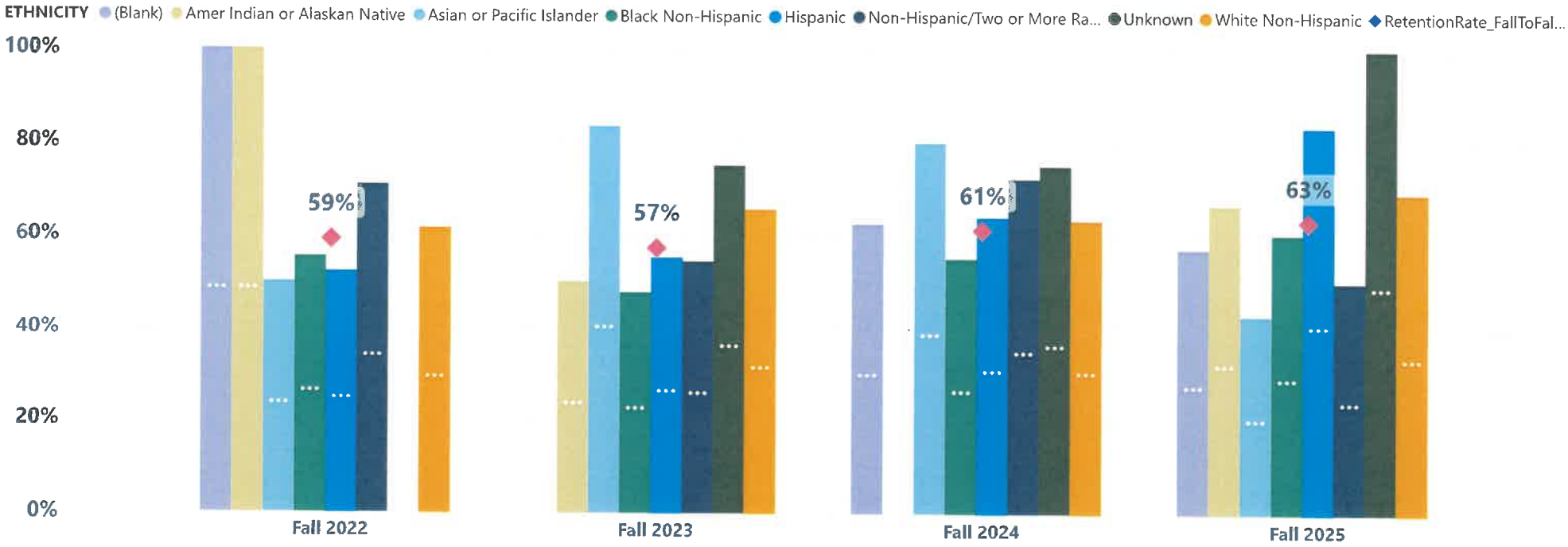
All

# Richard Bland College

## Ethnicity and Fall-to-Fall Retention

| ETHNICITY | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 | Fall 2024 | Fall 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| White Non-Hispanic | 61.49% | 65.63% | 63.28% | 69.23% |
| Unknown | | 75.00% | 75.00% | 100.00% |
| Non-Hispanic/Two or More Races | 70.83% | 54.35% | 72.22% | 50.00% |
| Hispanic | 52.17% | 55.17% | 64.00% | 83.33% |
| Black Non-Hispanic | 55.34% | 47.73% | 55.09% | 60.34% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 50.00% | 83.33% | 80.00% | 42.86% |
| Amer Indian or Alaskan Native | 100.00% | 50.00% | | 66.67% |
| | 100.00% | | 62.50% | 57.14% |
| **Total** | **58.99%** | **57.22%** | **61.20%** | **63.05%** |

### Fall-to-Fall Retention



ETHNICITY

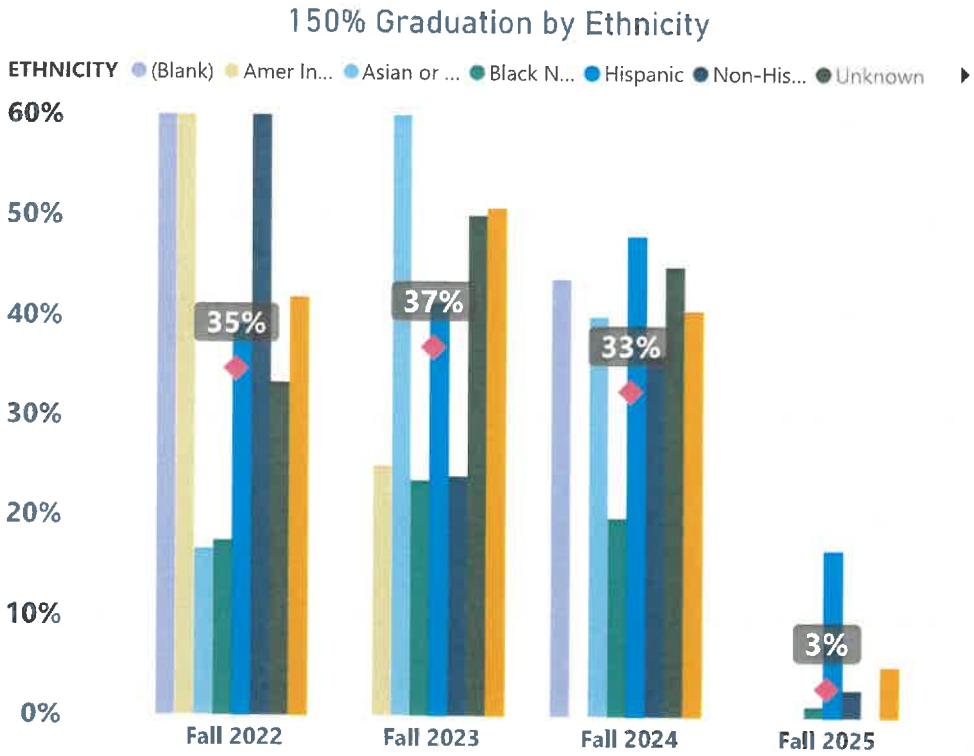
All

Term

Multiple selections

# Richard Bland College

## Ethnicity and Graduation




| ETHNICITY | Fall 2022 | Fall 2023 | Fall 2024 | Fall 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 100% | | 44% | |
| Amer Indian or Alaskan Native | 67% | 25% | | |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 17% | 75% | 40% | |
| Black Non-Hispanic | 17% | 23% | 20% | 1% |
| Hispanic | 39% | 41% | 48% | 17% |
| Non-Hispanic/Two or More Races | 63% | 24% | 36% | 3% |
| Unknown | 33% | 50% | 45% | |
| White Non-Hispanic | 42% | 51% | 41% | 5% |

# Richard Bland College

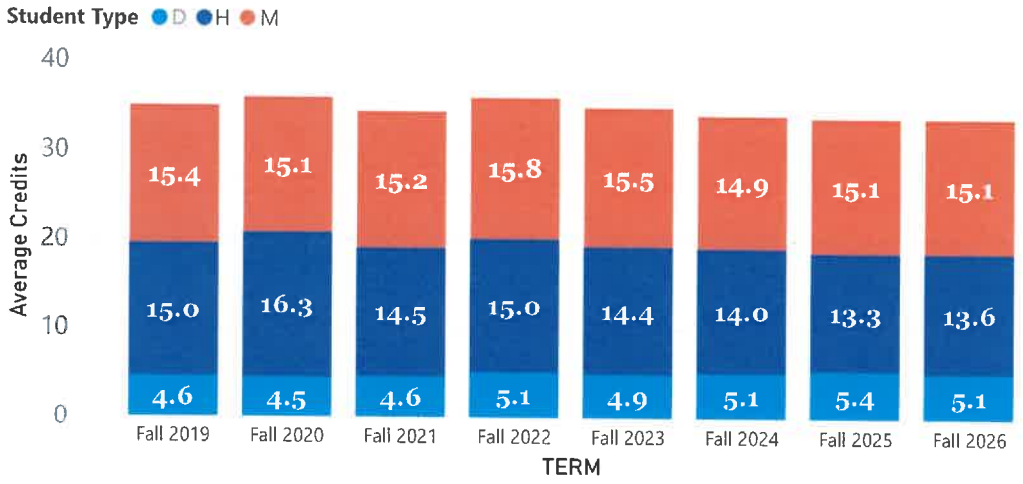
## Dual Enrollment Data

Student Types

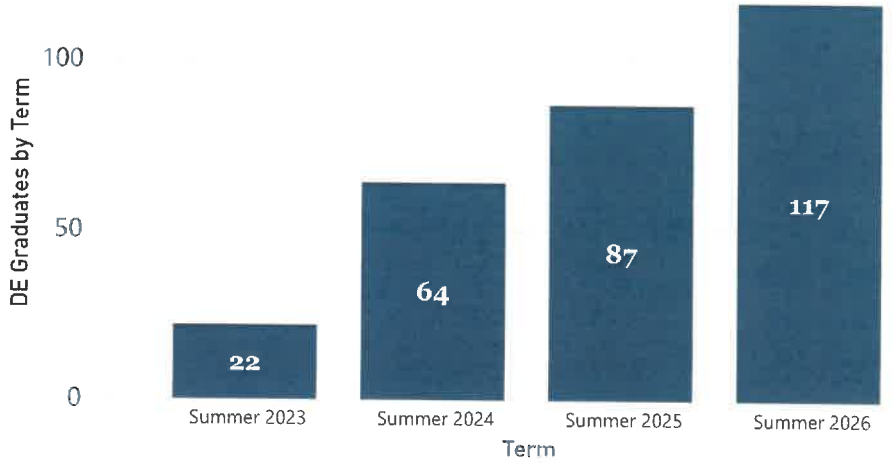
D-Dual Enrollment Off-Campus
H-High School College (On-Campus)--Student Pays
M--Middle College--(On-Campus)--School District Pays

| Term | Number of DE Students Converted |
|---|---|
| Fall 2019 | 66 |
| Fall 2020 | 19 |
| Fall 2021 | 45 |
| Fall 2022 | 24 |
| Fall 2023 | 32 |
| Fall 2024 | 27 |
| **Total** | **221** |

### Average Credits by Semester



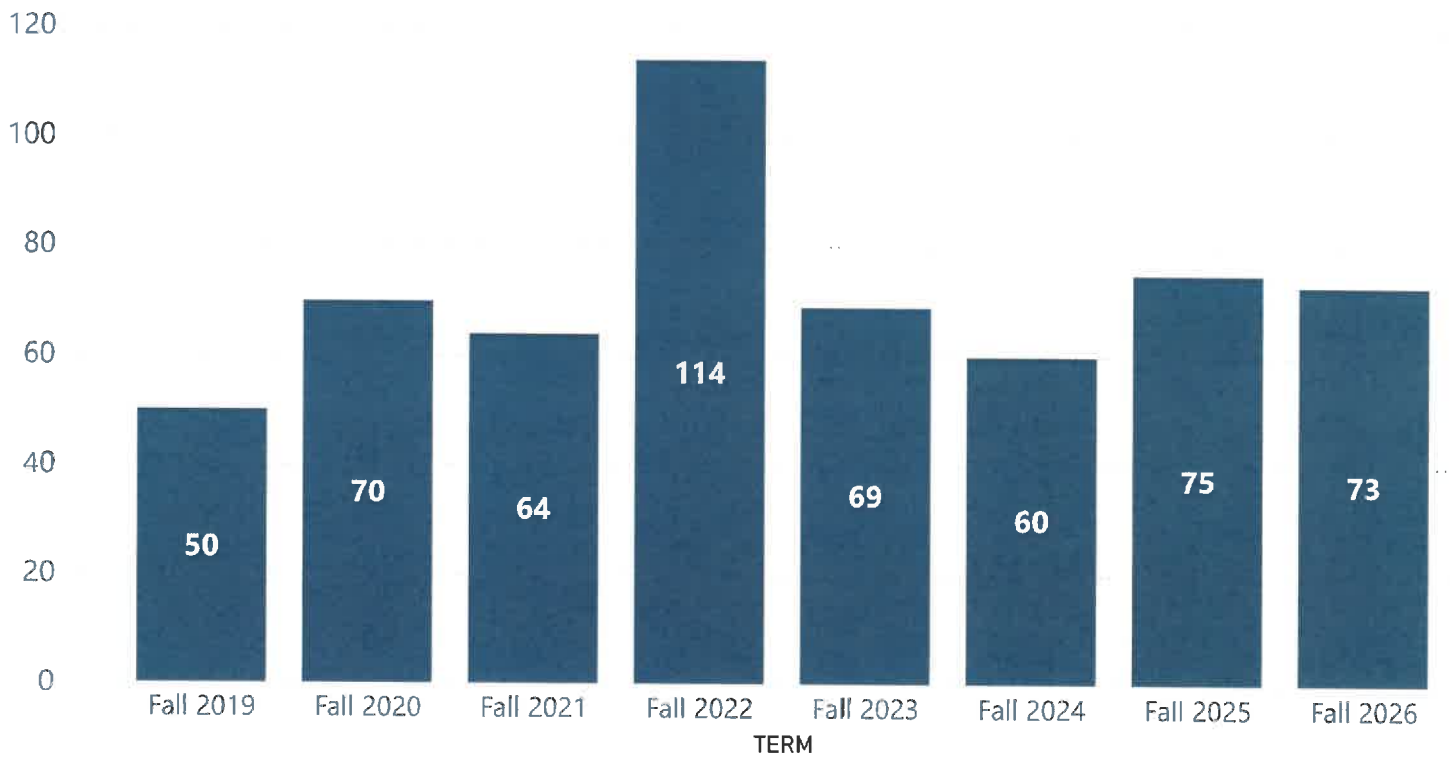

### Dual Enrollment Graduates



# Richard Bland College

## Adult Learners (24+)

Fall 2022 Adult Learners showed a large increase due to the Drone Up Program where Drone Up Employees were enrolled in RBC UAS courses.



# Richard Bland College

## Promise Enrollment and Graduation Rates by Cohort

Pell-eligible high achieving students that are academically driven, leaders, on our campus and the community & connected to university transfer for future academic success.

| Cohort Year | Promise Headcount |
|---|---|
| 2019 | 19 |
| 2020 | 8 |
| 2022 | 5 |
| 2023 | 3 |
| 2024 | 17 |
| 2025 | 16 |

## Promise Graduation Rates by Cohort



# November 2026 Board of Visitors
# "Academics: From SWOT to ExCITE"

Submitted by Dr. Christopher Kukk, Provost and Chief Academic Officer

**E**xperiences:

D.C. Museum Day (the National Gallery and the National Museum of African American History and Culture)

Film festival in Charlottesville (Jessica Lange)

Fly fishing in West Virginia

**C**urriculum:

290s for all majors

299 Independent Study

298 Pilot Course

297 Research Fellowship

296 Internship

**I**nternships:

Co-creating a faculty guide and process with the new Director of Workforce Development & Career Readiness

**T**eaching:

Dr. Bjorkman-Till's math class (brownies and formulas)

Dr. Finney's Spanish class (Day of the Dead)

Dr. Rohrbach's biology class (at Trapezium)

**E**xtra (a little "extra something, something"):

Students have brought back Model United Nations (Railynn Howard)

-competing against other colleges

-recruiting from high schools

The idea is to convey how at RBC we offer a wide "range" of learning experiences and opportunities in and out of the classroom that excite not only our students but our professors: From a range of integrative learning experiences to a range of learning paths to a range of career opportunities to a range of classroom modalities to a range of "awesomeness."







Richard Bland College

# Campus Master Plan Update

Board of Visitors Presentation | 01-28-2026

RRMM ARCHITECTS

TIMMONS GROUP

# Agenda

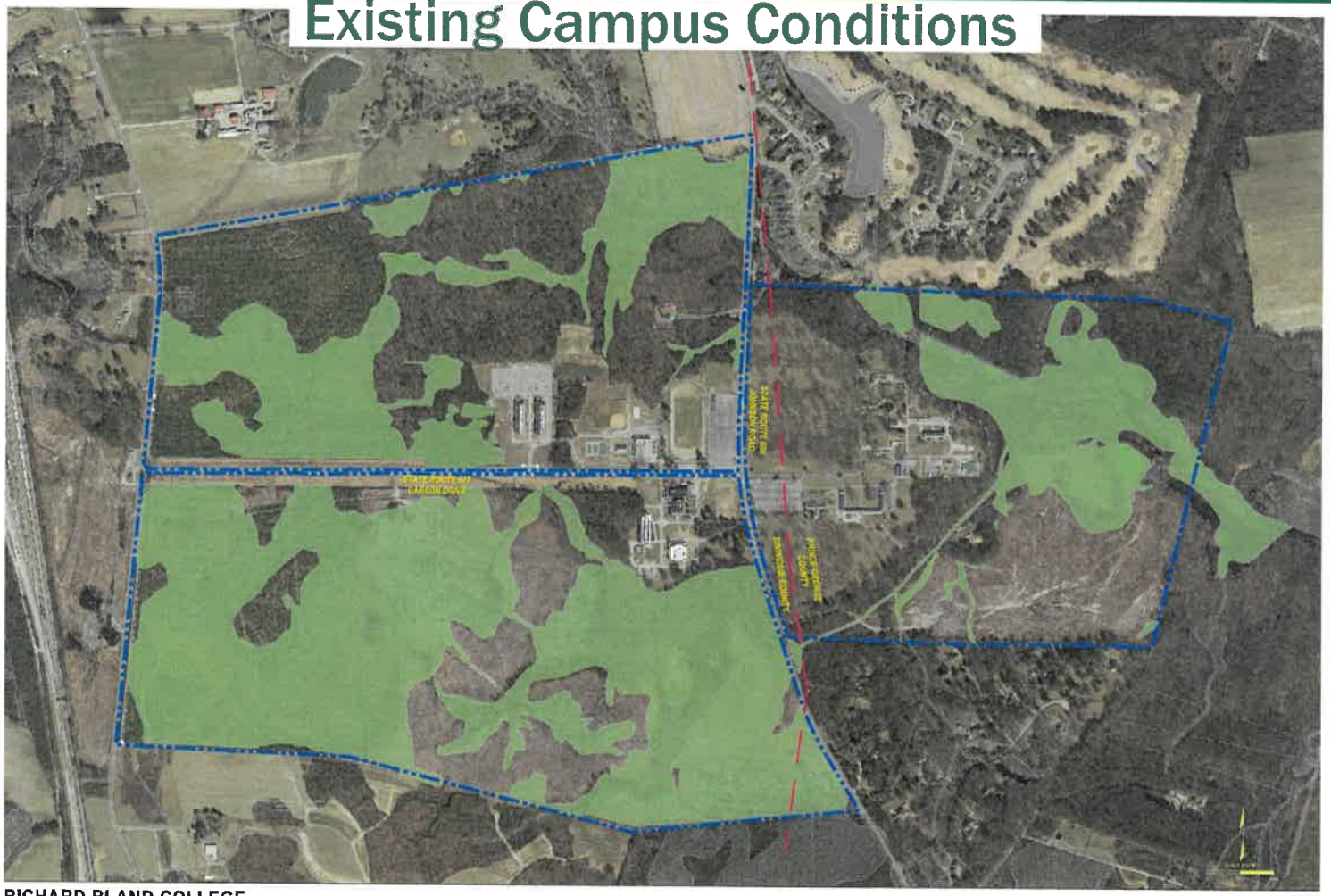
- Existing Campus Conditions
- Review 2014 Campus Master Plan
- Review Innovation Center Master Plan
- Campus Master Plan Update
  - Residential/Student Life
  - Athletics
  - Academics
- Infrastructure Master Planning
- Questions?

Richard Bland College

RRMM ARCHITECTS

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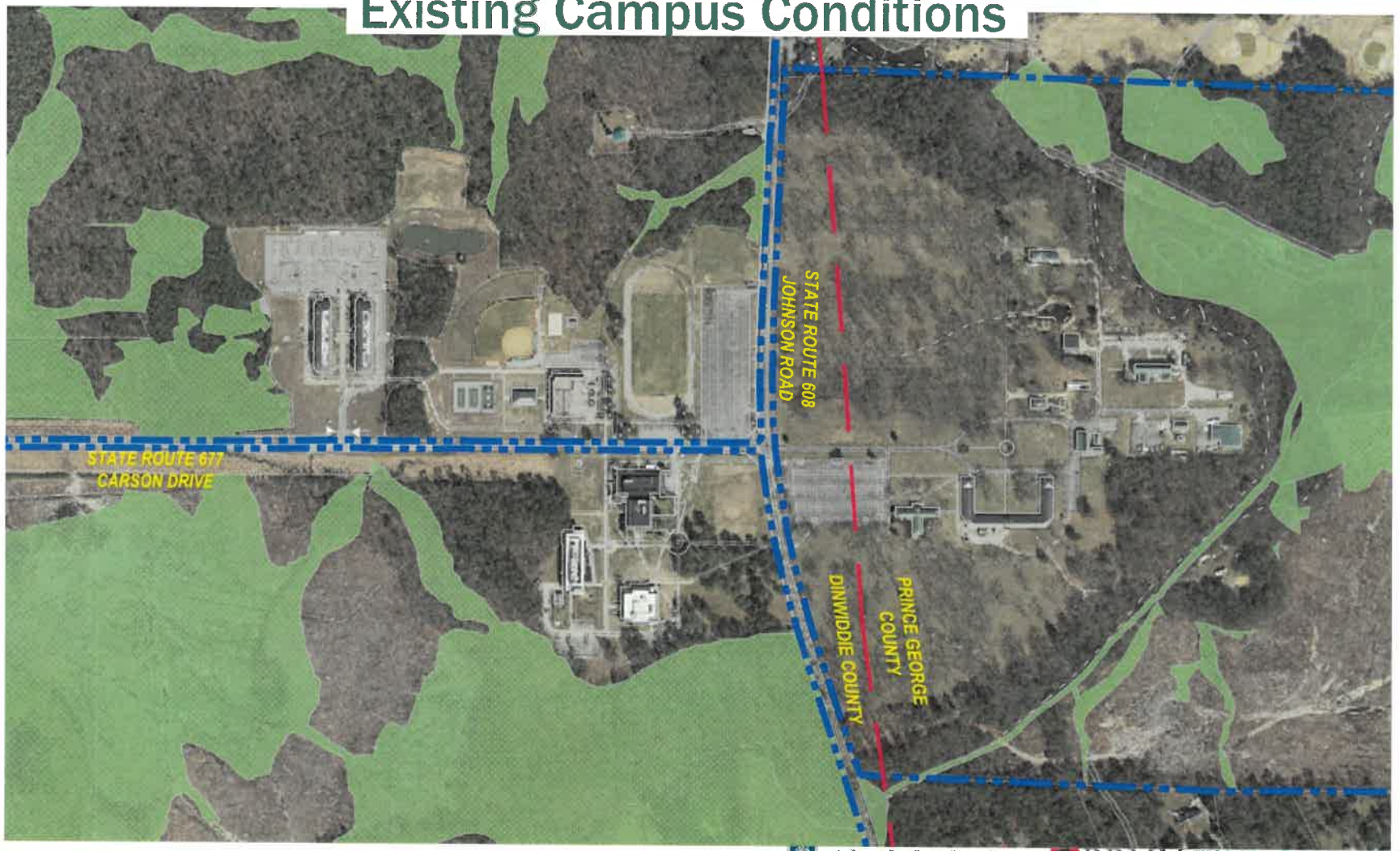
# Existing Campus Conditions




**RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE**
**AERIAL BASE MAP**

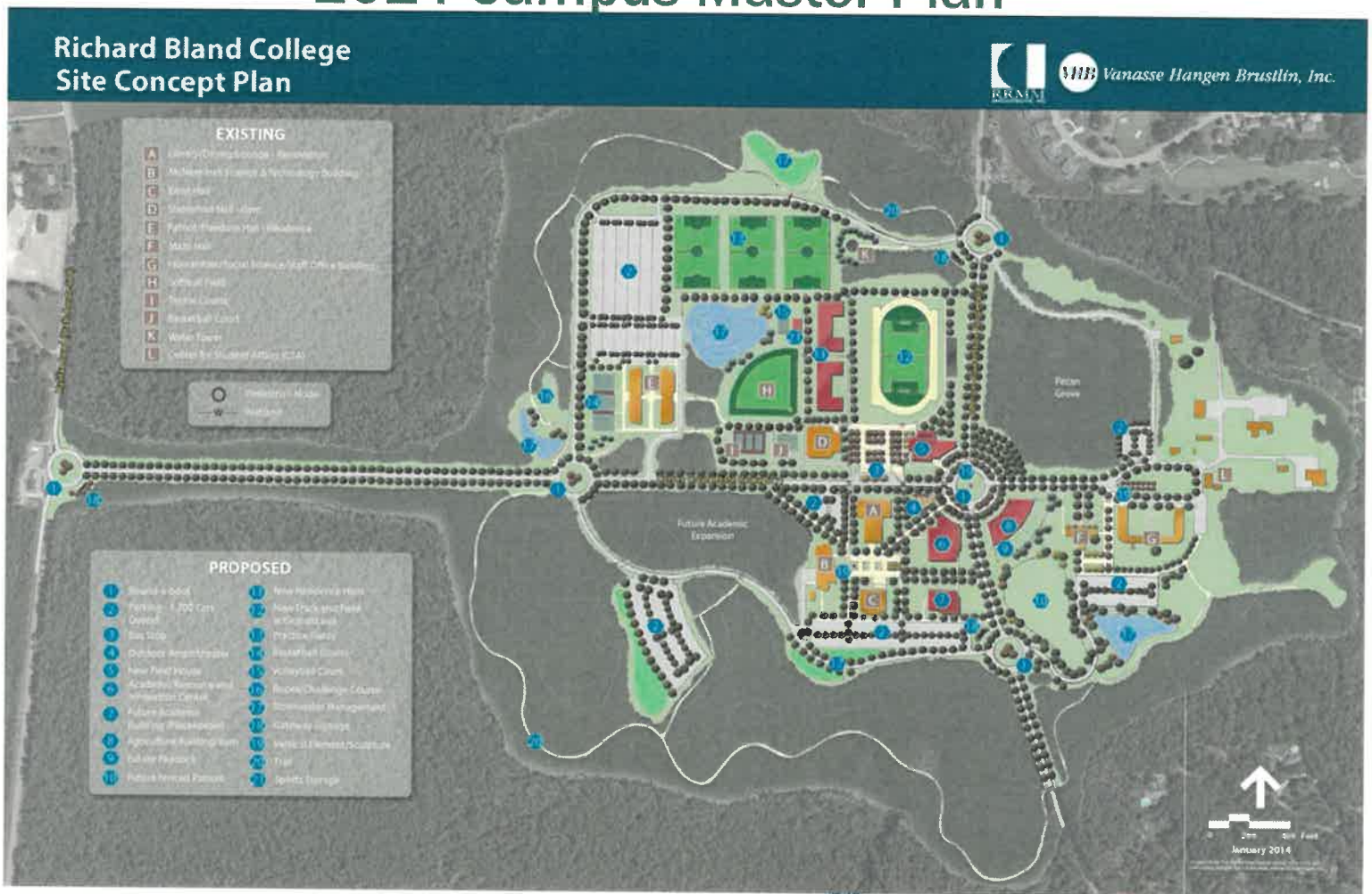
Richard Bland College
RRMM ARCHITECTS
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# Existing Campus Conditions



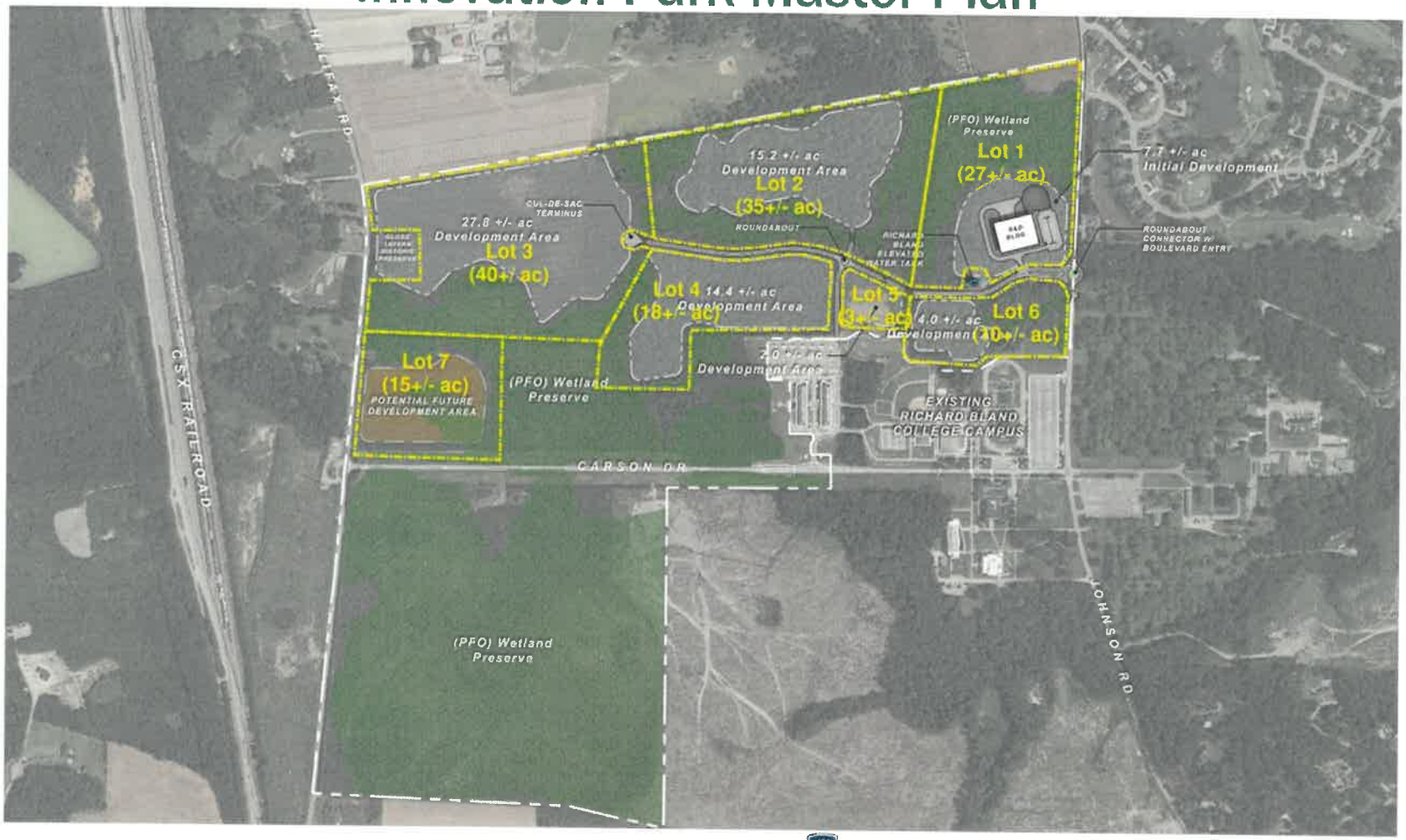

Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# 2014 Campus Master Plan



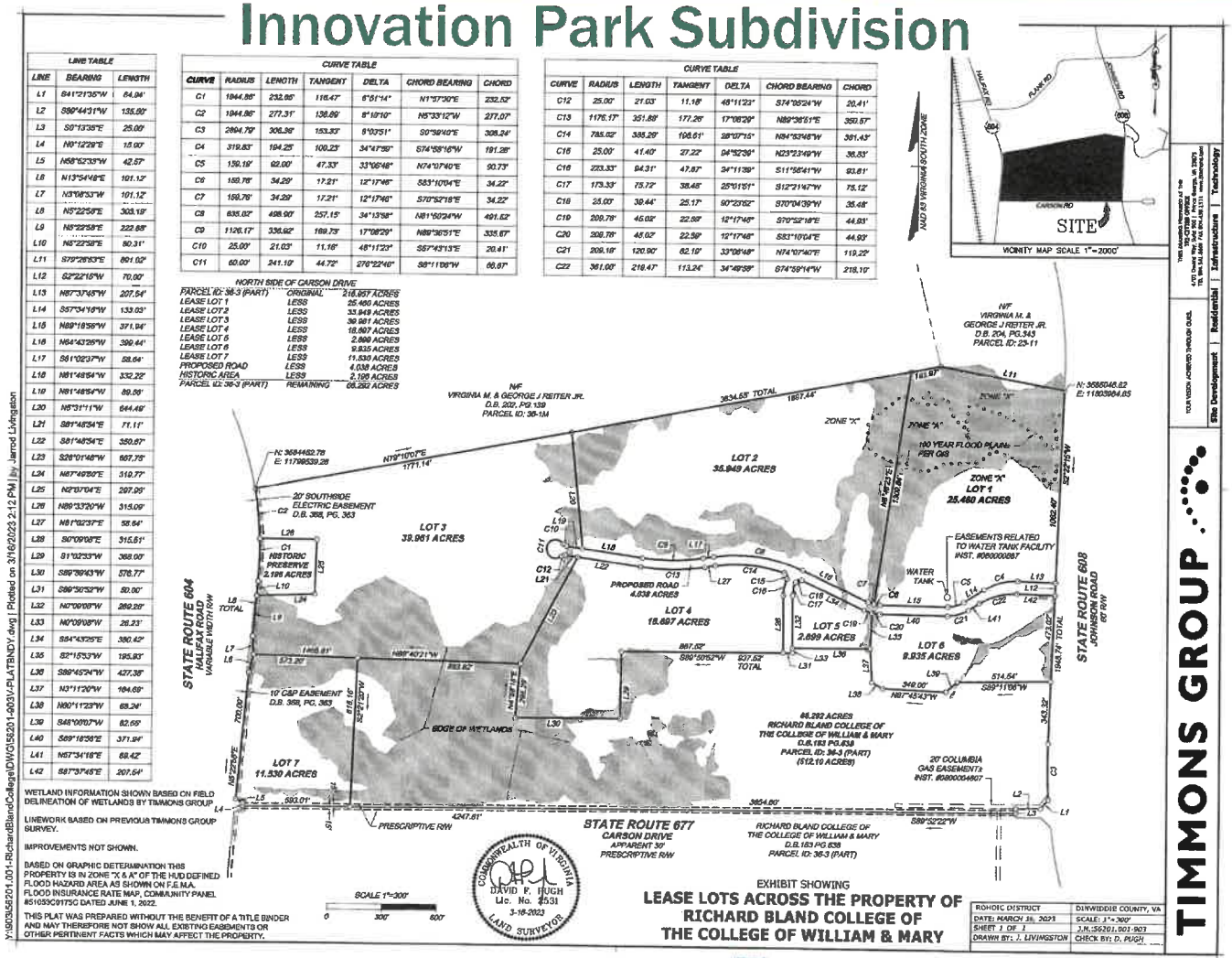

Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Innovation Park Master Plan




Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Innovation Park Subdivision




| LINE TABLE | | |
|---|---|---|
| LINE | BEARING | LENGTH |
| L1 | S41°21'35"W | 64.94' |
| L2 | S86°44'31"W | 135.80' |
| L3 | S0°13'35"E | 25.00' |
| L4 | N0°12'29"E | 15.00' |
| L5 | N58°52'33"W | 42.57' |
| L6 | N13°54'48"E | 101.12' |
| L7 | N3°08'53"W | 101.12' |
| L8 | N5°22'58"E | 303.19' |
| L9 | N5°22'58"E | 222.88' |
| L10 | N5°22'58"E | 80.31' |
| L11 | S79°26'53"E | 861.02' |
| L12 | S2°22'16"W | 70.00' |
| L13 | N87°37'45"W | 207.54' |
| L14 | S57°34'16"W | 133.03' |
| L15 | N89°18'58"W | 371.94' |
| L16 | N54°43'26"W | 399.44' |
| L17 | S61°02'37"W | 58.64' |
| L18 | N81°48'54"W | 332.22' |
| L19 | N81°48'54"W | 89.59' |
| L20 | N5°31'11"W | 644.49' |
| L21 | S81°48'54"E | 71.11' |
| L22 | S81°48'54"E | 350.67' |
| L23 | S26°01'48"W | 667.75' |
| L24 | N67°49'50"E | 310.77' |
| L25 | N2°07'04"E | 297.05' |
| L26 | N89°37'20"W | 315.09' |
| L27 | N81°02'37"E | 58.64' |
| L28 | S0°09'08"E | 315.51' |
| L29 | S1°02'33"W | 368.00' |
| L30 | S89°39'43"W | 576.77' |
| L31 | S89°50'52"W | 50.00' |
| L32 | N0°09'08"W | 262.99' |
| L33 | N0°09'08"W | 26.23' |
| L34 | S84°43'25"E | 380.42' |
| L35 | S2°15'53"W | 195.83' |
| L36 | S89°45'24"W | 427.38' |
| L37 | N3°11'20"W | 164.69' |
| L38 | N90°11'23"W | 69.24' |
| L39 | S46°00'07"W | 82.69' |
| L40 | S89°18'36"E | 371.94' |
| L41 | N57°34'16"E | 68.42' |
| L42 | S87°37'45"E | 207.54' |

| CURVE TABLE | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CURVE | RADIUS | LENGTH | TANGENT | DELTA | CHORD BEARING | CHORD |
| C1 | 1944.86' | 232.85' | 116.47' | 6°51'14" | N1°57'30"E | 232.72' |
| C2 | 1944.86' | 277.31' | 138.89' | 8°10'10" | N5°33'12"W | 277.07' |
| C3 | 2804.79' | 306.36' | 153.33' | 6°15'51" | S0°39'40"E | 306.24' |
| C4 | 319.83' | 194.25' | 100.23' | 34°47'59" | S74°58'16"W | 191.28' |
| C5 | 150.19' | 92.00' | 47.33' | 33°06'48" | N74°07'40"E | 90.73' |
| C6 | 169.78' | 34.29' | 17.21' | 12°17'46" | S83°10'04"E | 34.22' |
| C7 | 169.78' | 34.29' | 17.21' | 12°17'46" | S70°52'18"E | 34.22' |
| C8 | 835.03' | 498.90' | 257.15' | 34°13'58" | N81°50'24"W | 491.52' |
| C9 | 1126.17' | 336.62' | 169.73' | 17°08'29" | N89°36'51"E | 335.67' |
| C10 | 25.00' | 21.03' | 11.16' | 48°11'23" | S57°43'13"E | 20.41' |
| C11 | 60.00' | 241.10' | 44.72' | 276°22'46" | S8°11'06"W | 66.67' |

| CURVE TABLE | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CURVE | RADIUS | LENGTH | TANGENT | DELTA | CHORD BEARING | CHORD |
| C12 | 25.00' | 21.03' | 11.16' | 48°11'23" | S74°05'24"W | 20.41' |
| C13 | 1176.17' | 351.88' | 177.26' | 17°08'29" | N89°36'51"E | 350.67' |
| C14 | 785.02' | 385.29' | 198.61' | 28°07'15" | N84°53'46"W | 381.43' |
| C15 | 25.00' | 41.40' | 27.22' | 94°52'36" | N23°23'49"W | 36.83' |
| C16 | 223.33' | 94.31' | 47.87' | 24°11'39" | S11°56'41"W | 93.61' |
| C17 | 173.33' | 75.72' | 38.46' | 25°01'51" | S12°21'47"W | 75.12' |
| C18 | 25.00' | 39.44' | 25.17' | 90°23'52" | S70°04'39"W | 35.48' |
| C19 | 209.78' | 45.02' | 22.59' | 12°17'46" | S70°52'18"E | 44.93' |
| C20 | 209.78' | 45.02' | 22.59' | 12°17'46" | S83°10'04"E | 44.93' |
| C21 | 209.16' | 120.90' | 62.10' | 33°06'48" | N74°07'40"E | 119.22' |
| C22 | 361.00' | 218.47' | 113.24' | 34°40'58" | S74°59'14"W | 215.10' |

| NORTH SIDE OF CARSON DRIVE | | |
|---|---|---|
| PARCEL ID: 36-3 (PART) | ORIGINAL | 218.857 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 1 | LESS | 25.460 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 2 | LESS | 33.949 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 3 | LESS | 39.961 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 4 | LESS | 18.697 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 5 | LESS | 2.899 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 6 | LESS | 9.935 ACRES |
| LEASE LOT 7 | LESS | 11.530 ACRES |
| PROPOSED ROAD | LESS | 4.038 ACRES |
| HISTORIC AREA | LESS | 2.195 ACRES |
| PARCEL ID: 36-3 (PART) | REMAINING | 66.292 ACRES |




WETLAND INFORMATION SHOWN BASED ON FIELD DELINEATION OF WETLANDS BY TIMMONS GROUP.

LINEWORK BASED ON PREVIOUS TIMMONS GROUP SURVEY.

IMPROVEMENTS NOT SHOWN.

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THIS PLAT WAS PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A TITLE BINDER AND MAY THEREFORE NOT SHOW ALL EXISTING EASEMENTS OR OTHER PERTINENT FACTS WHICH MAY AFFECT THE PROPERTY.

EXHIBIT SHOWING

**LEASE LOTS ACROSS THE PROPERTY OF RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE OF THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY**

| | |
|---|---|
| ROHOIC DISTRICT | DINWIDDIE COUNTY, VA |
| DATE: MARCH 16, 2023 | SCALE: 1"=300' |
| SHEET 1 OF 1 | J.N.:55201.001-003 |
| DRAWN BY: J. LIVINGSTON | CHECK BY: D. PUGH |

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Y:\55201\Survey\55201.001-RichardBlandCollege\DWG\55201-003V-PLATBNDY.dwg | Plotted on 3/16/2023 2:12 PM | by Jarrod Livingston

Richard Bland College

RRMM ARCHITECTS

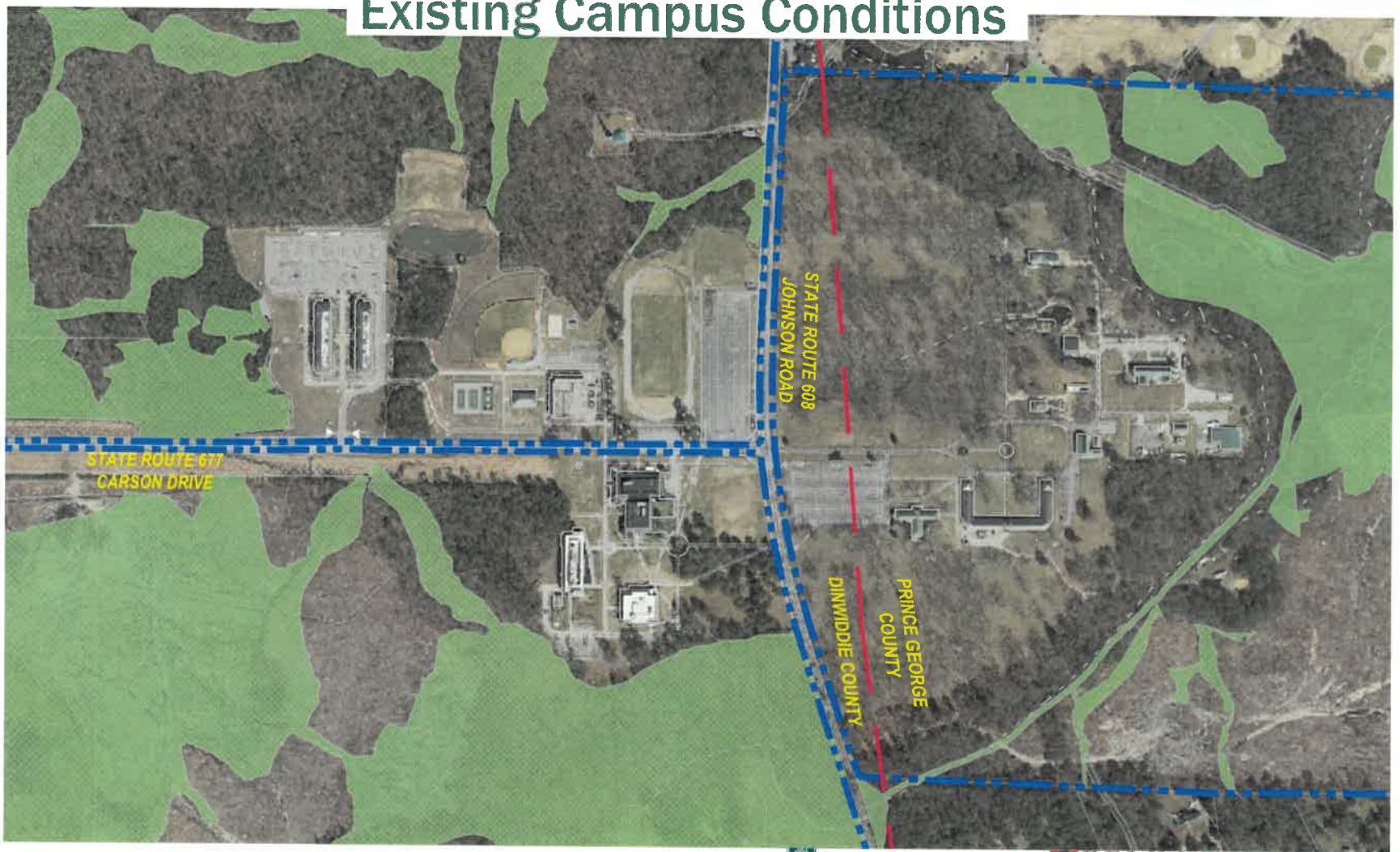
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# Innovation Park



Richard Bland College | RRMM ARCHITECTS | TIMMONS GROUP

# Existing Campus Conditions



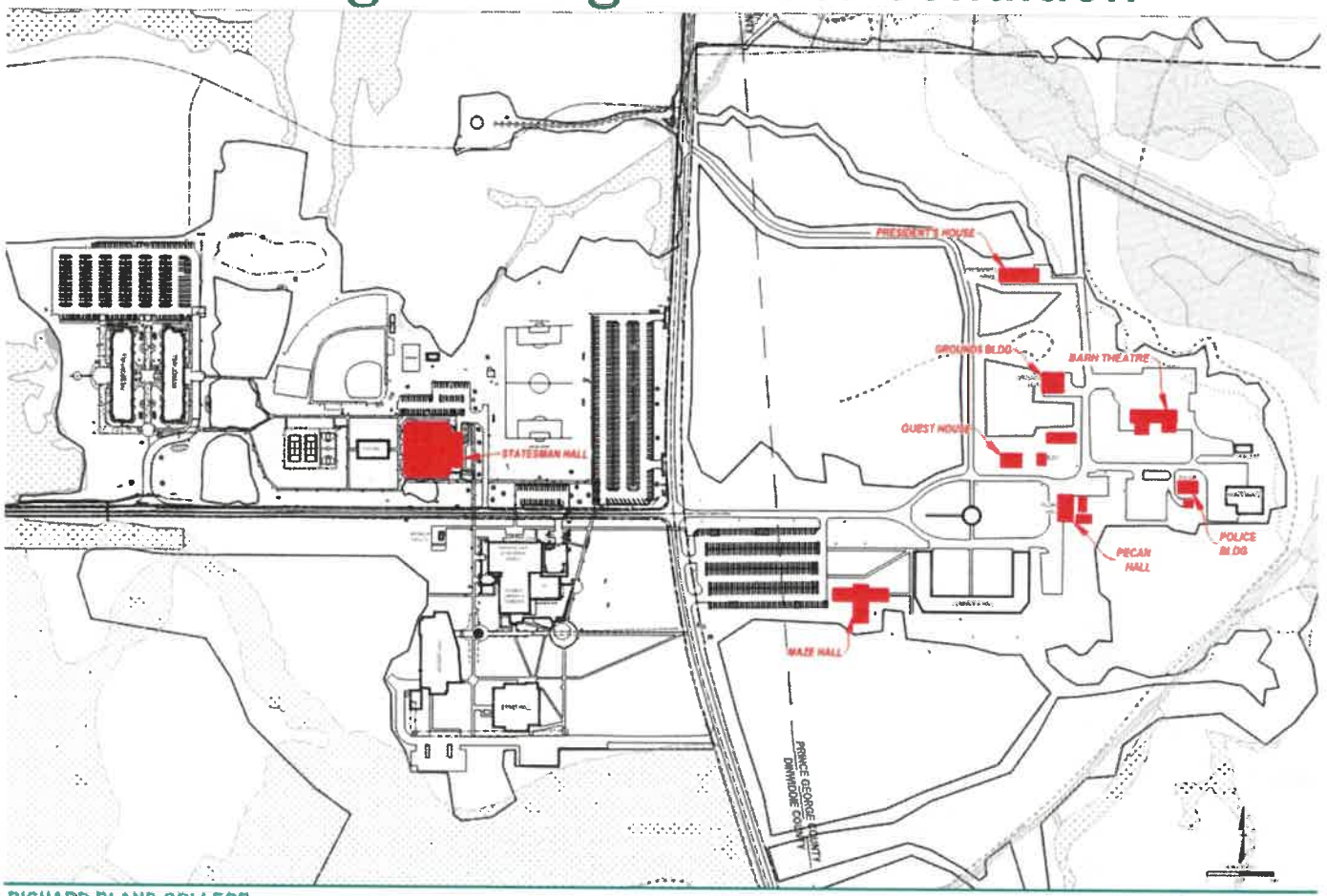

Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Master Plan Update Goals

- Review Usability of Existing Campus Buildings
- Accommodate Need for Public Safety and IT Hub Facilities
- Additional/Improved Sports Facilities
- Improve Parking and Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation & Safety
- Flexibility of Plan for Phasing and/or Changing Requirements

Richard Bland College
RRMM ARCHITECTS
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# Existing Buildings in Poor Condition



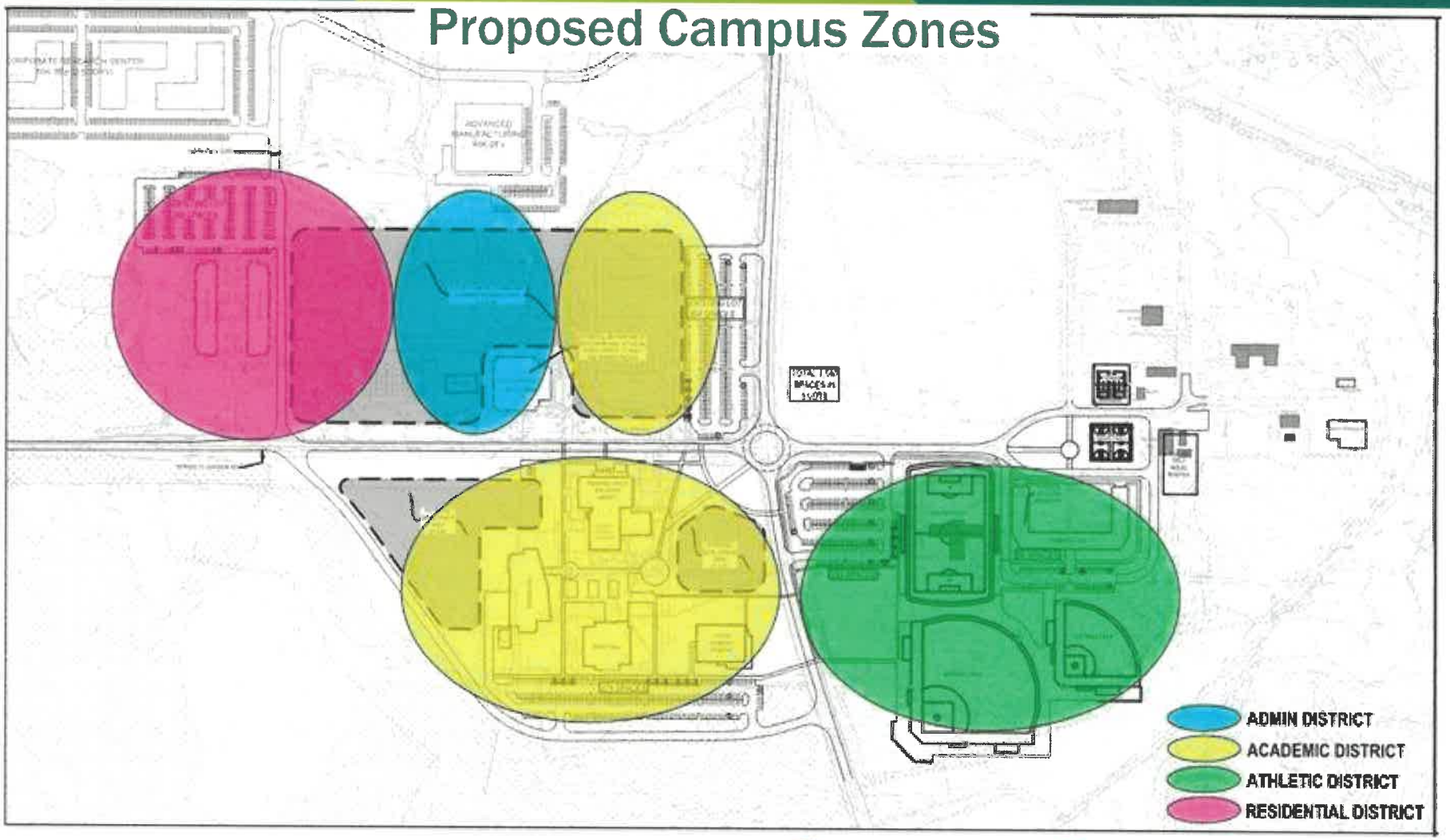

RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE
MASTER PLAN - EXISTING BUILDINGS TO BE DEMOLISHED

RRMM TIMMONS GROUP Richard Bland College



Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

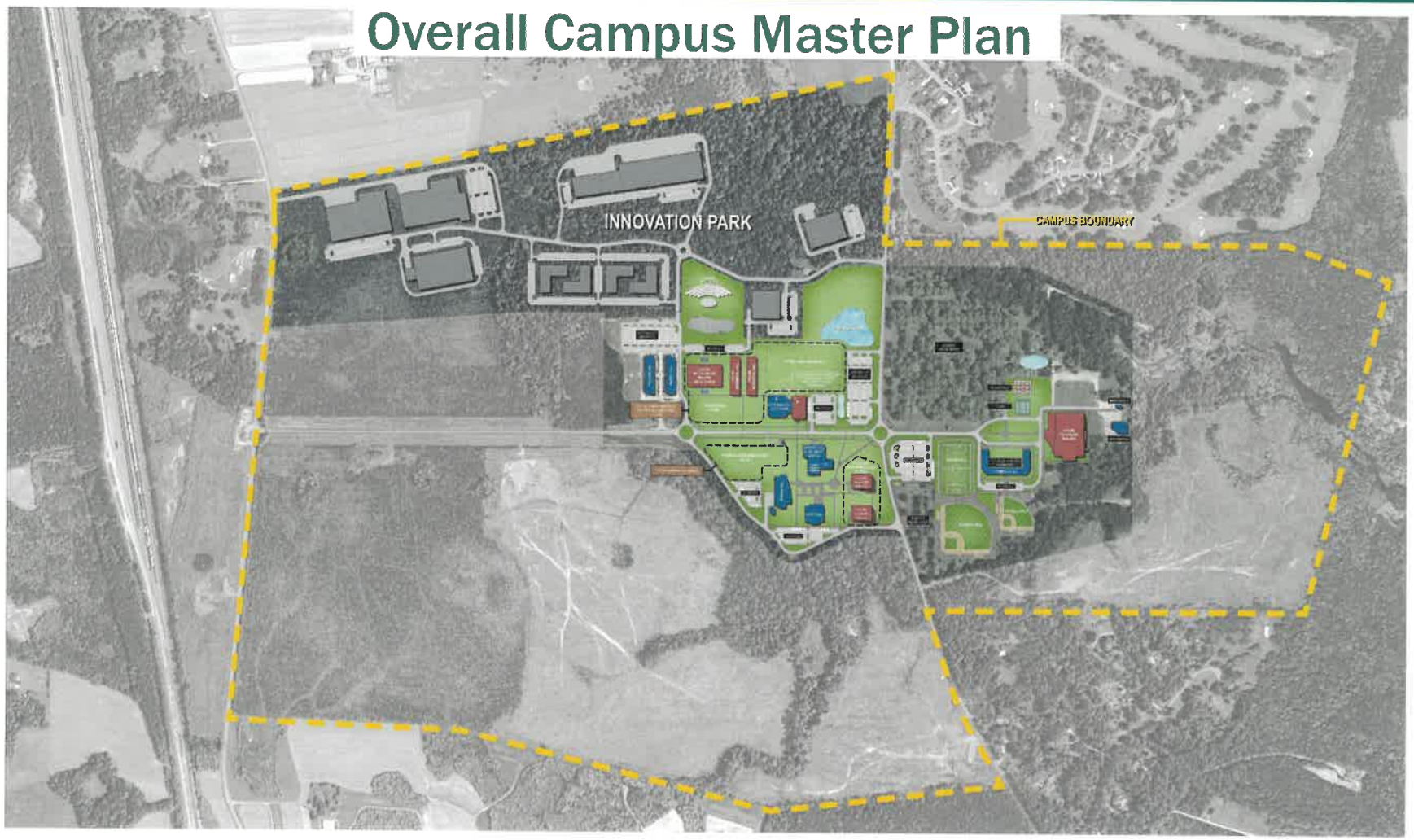
# Proposed Campus Zones





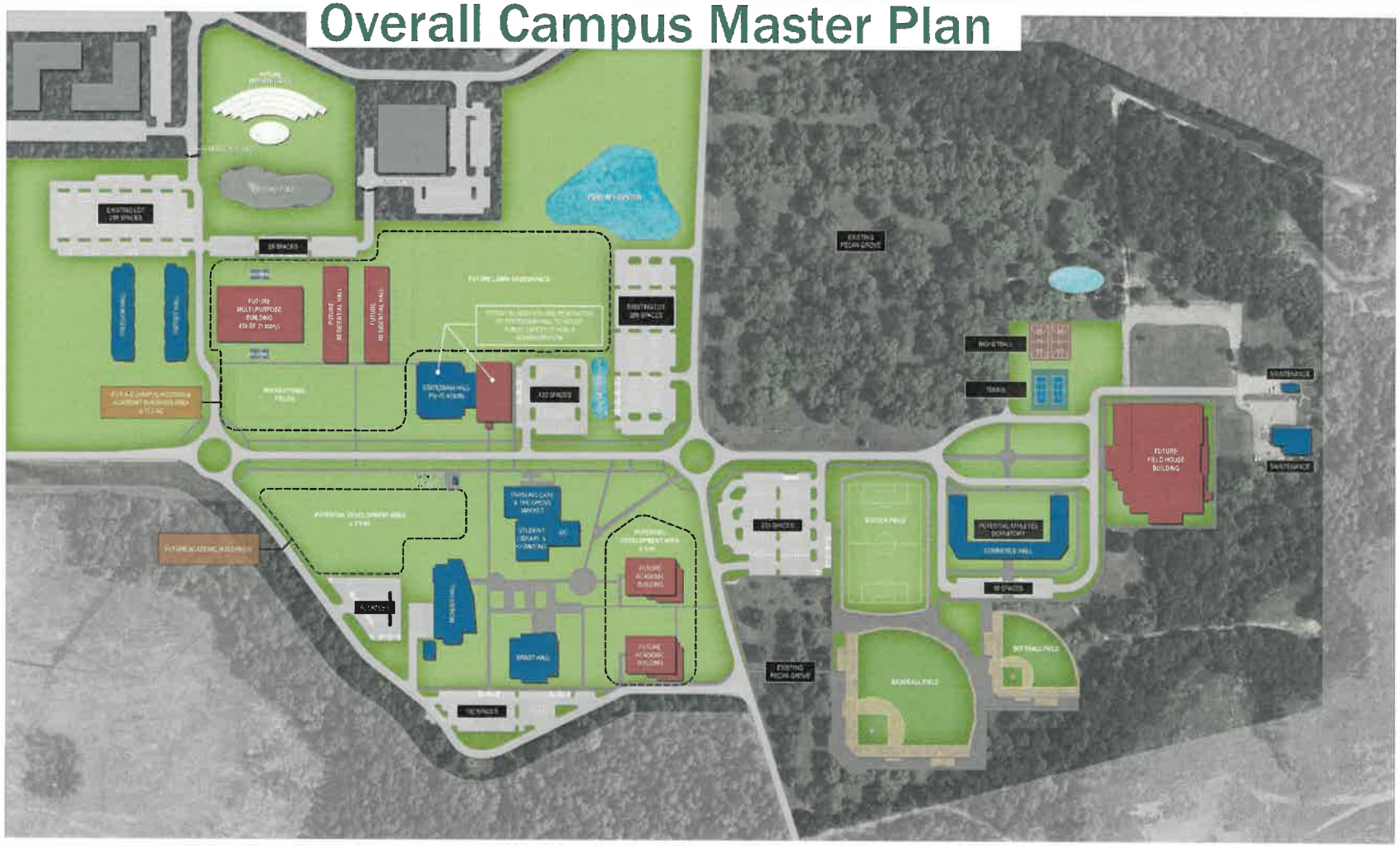

Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Overall Campus Master Plan




Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Overall Campus Master Plan






Richard Bland College

RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

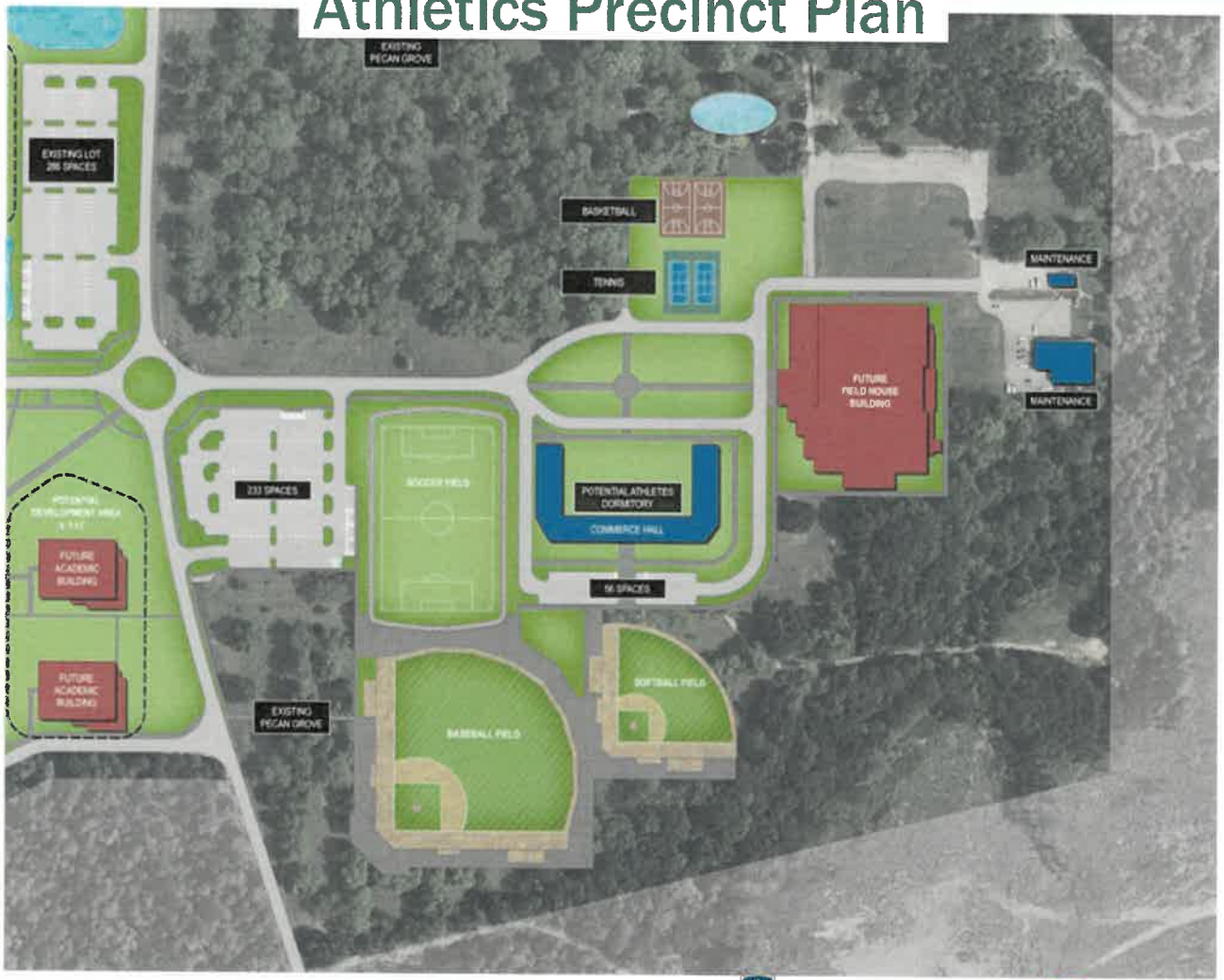
# Residential and Student Life Precinct Plan






Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Athletics Precinct Plan






Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

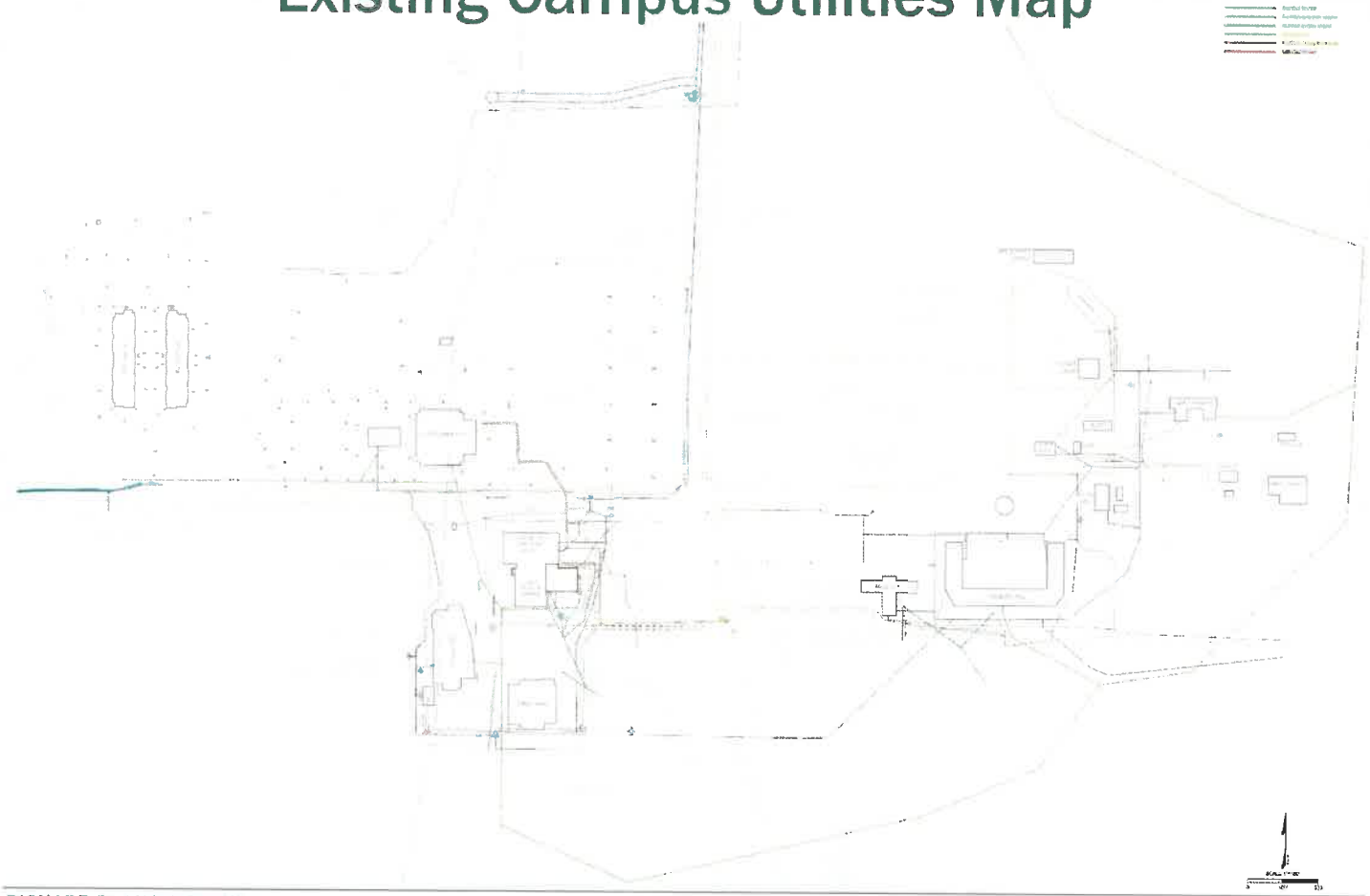
# Academic Precinct Plan






Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Existing Campus Utilities Map

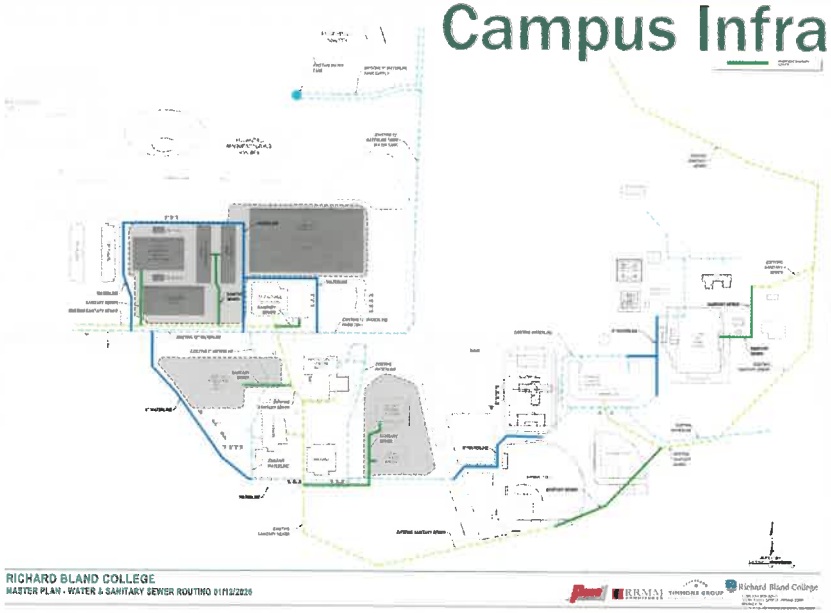


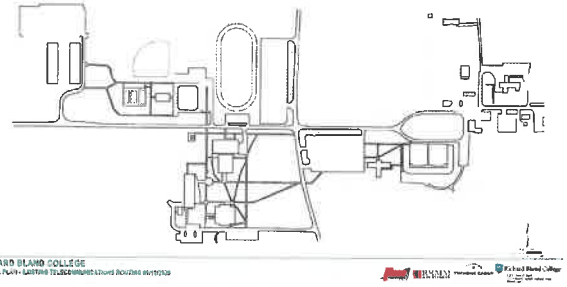
RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE
BASE MAP - EXISTING UTILITIES EXHIBIT 01/12/2026

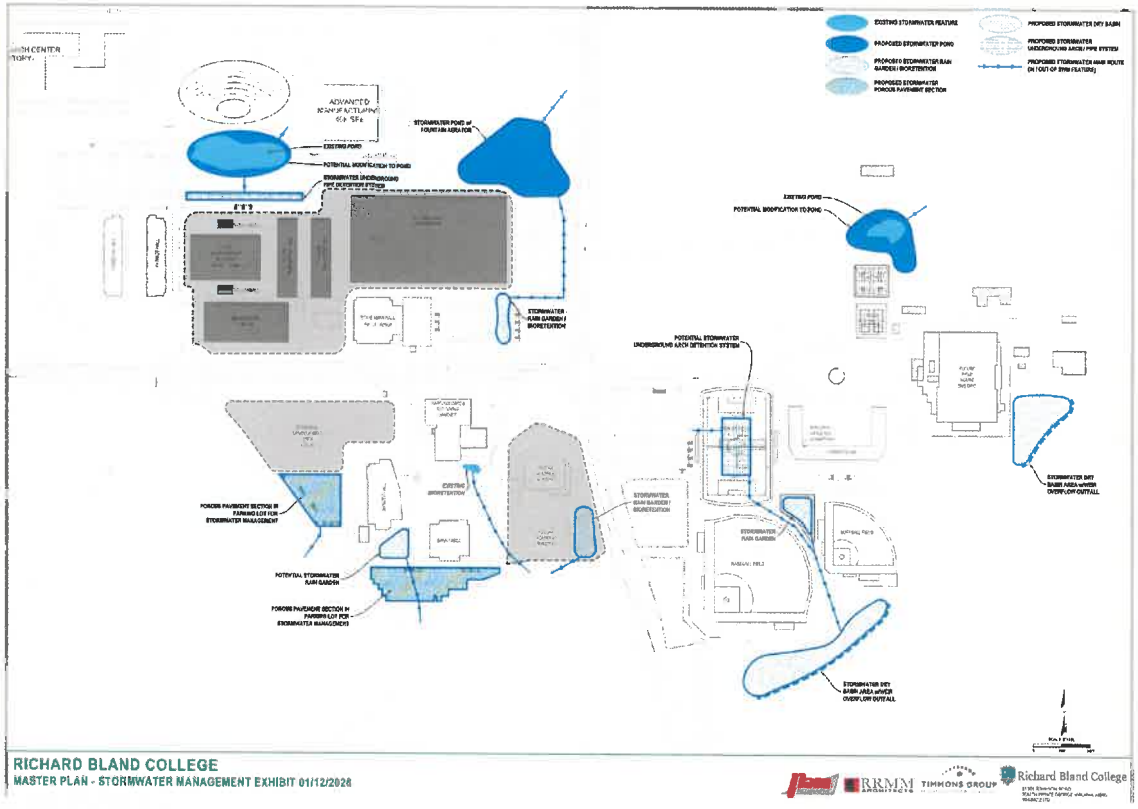


Richard Bland College RRMM ARCHITECTS TIMMONS GROUP

# Campus Infrastructure Master Plans



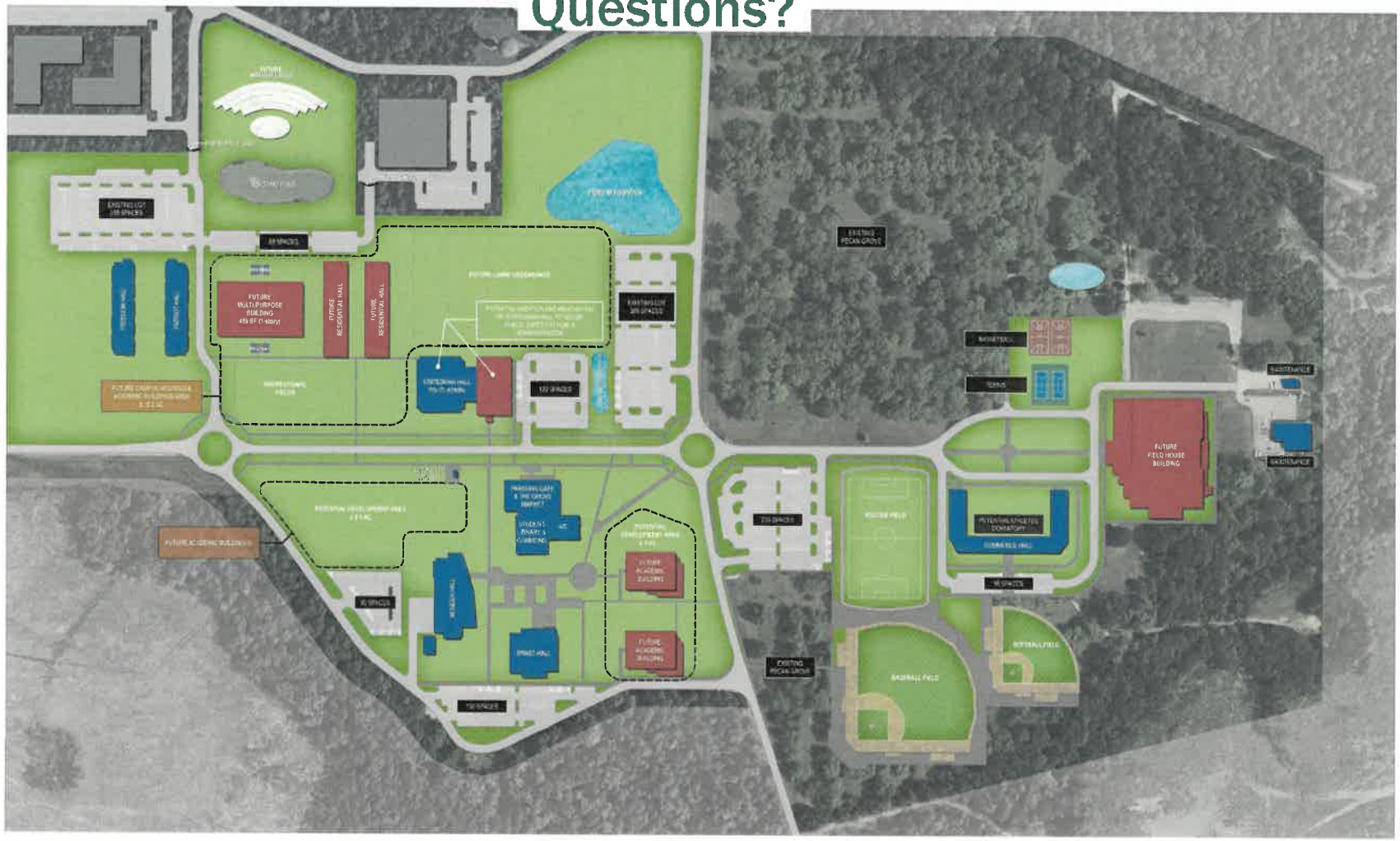






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# Questions?






Richard Bland College | RRMM ARCHITECTS | TIMMONS GROUP

# Richard Bland College




# 2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

# Richard Bland College 2026-28 Strategic Plan

## I. Background and Context

Following an extensive planning process led by President Sydow, in April 2013, the W&M Board of Visitors approved the 2014-19 strategic plan for Richard Bland College. The ***RBC-19*** plan included a revised mission and vision, strategic goals, and key performance indicators focused on elevating the quality, relevance and reputation of Richard Bland College in direct support of Commonwealth goals. The three big goals prioritized:

1. **Students** – Increased enrollment and an enhanced student experience.
2. **Programs and Delivery** – Modified portfolio of academic programs and services to be optimally responsive to documented market demand.
3. **Operations and Resources** – Financial and environmental sustainability, and high-performance operations.

Significant gains were achieved in each area of focus with established goals incrementally tracked and Bland stakeholders, including the W&M Board, receiving regular progress reports. Most significantly, by developing and implementing a carefully constructed Strategic Enrollment Management Plan that prioritized the resurrection of intercollegiate athletics, dual enrollment expansion, and an exceptional student experience (ESE@RBC), student enrollment goals were achieved (2,000 students). Focused investment in high quality and strategic marketing elevated brand awareness and reputation. Strategic partnerships with both public and private universities created new student pathways, and student satisfaction increased. Operating expenses were pared, and auxiliary revenue grew to secure financial stability while, at the same time, maintaining affordable tuition and fees.

In February 2020, the president recommended and the W&M Board of Visitors approved the 2020-25 strategic plan for Richard Bland College entitled ***Seize Your Potential.*** Subsequently, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, goals and objectives derived from 2021 and 2022 General Assembly budget bills were integrated, and the Board approved an updated strategic plan in February 2022. With a new baseline from which to begin, the plan sought to provide students:

1. **An educational product of high value with streamlined pathways** – Each program would be vetted for transferability, academic rigor and relevance to the market.
2. **An unmatched student experience** – Building on ESE@RBC, support and guidance would be present at every stage of the student lifecycle, and barriers to success would be identified and removed.
3. **Sustainability in operation** – Building on RBC-19 advances, auxiliary revenue would continue to grow through operational efficiency, outsourcing/insourcing, and strategic partnerships. There would also be a renewed focus on growing the endowment.

During this period, Richard Bland College gathered extraordinary momentum, significantly growing the endowment, auxiliary, and grant revenue; establishing a Student Success department and Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) program; and driving consecutive enrollment increases.

Now when the higher education industry confronts unprecedented challenges at the onset of a decade-long "enrollment cliff" (decreased numbers of high school graduates and increased competition),

Richard Bland finds itself doubly challenged by leadership transitions, both with a new governing board as of July 1, 2025, and an impending presidential transition (effective 7/01/2026). In addition, the legislative Code establishing the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors requires the Board to explore options for Bland's future that include consolidation with other institutions of higher education (IHEs) and to report their findings and recommendations back to the Administration and General Assembly by June 30 of 2026, 2027, and 2028.

Retaining Bland's nimble, entrepreneurial culture and its student-centric values is the clarion call at this pivotal time. Continuing to advance student success, career-readiness and operational sustainability are paramount to the College's future. At the same time, changing technologies (e.g., GEN AI), changing demographics, and changing leadership provide an exciting opportunity to adjust course and set new goals to ensure that Richard Bland's educational mission remains relevant, robust and attainable.

It is with this intention—during an interval of transition over the coming 18-24 months—to strengthen and advantageously position Richard Bland College for extraordinary success in fulfilling its educational mission, that the President and Council recommend approval of the updated **Richard Bland College 2028** strategic plan.

## II. Mission Statement

Richard Bland College propels student success and community development through a high-value educational core, expertly guided academic and career pathways, and robust strategic partnerships.

## III. Vision Statement

Richard Bland College delivers innovative educational solutions and transformative educational experiences that empower students to dream bigger, achieve more, and help communities to thrive.

## IV. Values

- AGILITY- Agile, resourceful, data-informed problem solving—continuously assess, adjust, and improve outcomes across all academic and administrative programs and operations.
- BELONGING- A community and culture of belonging where every member of the campus community is supported, encouraged and empowered to flourish.
- Student-CENTRIC- Friendly, enthusiastic, student-centric service that nurtures, resilience, builds confidence and agency, and supports each student's journey to success.

## V. Strategic Priorities

### 1. Build Portfolio of High-value Credentials Aligned with Market Demand

a. Execute Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, including the market analysis, internal inventory and financial modeling required to launch pilot programs of micro-credentials aligned with high-demand jobs by 2027-28.

b. Expand STEAM-H competencies for regional students by expanding dual enrollment opportunities leading to two-year degrees, pathways to employment, and transfer to undergraduate and graduate-level STEAM-H degree programs.

c. Identify and execute strategic partnerships that expand academic and career pathways available to students.

d. Analyze and pursue resolution of all barriers that impede delivery of a full range of high-demand programs and credentials.

**2. Improve Student Outcomes**

a. Raise IPEDS graduation rate to at least 35% for the fall 2027 cohort, and continue to increase by 0.5% year over year.

b. Enhance student persistence and retention by achieving at least a 60% fall to fall retention rate by 2027, and continue to increase by 0.5% year over year.

c. In keeping with SEM goals and to reduce cost barriers, increase the dual enrollment conversion rate by 5% annually.

d. Equip faculty, staff and students to utilize advanced technologies, including AI, to improve academic and operational outcomes.

**3. Optimize Resources to Remain Affordable and Accessible**

a. Grow the Foundation's endowment—e.g., *Debt-free RBC Degree* campaign launched in 2026—and sponsored programs/grants year-over-year to increase scholarships and emergency grants, thereby reducing educational costs.

b. Attract tenants and utilize the Business Innovation Park to provide paid internship experiences, applied research opportunities, and career exploration activities.

c. Increase grant funding by a minimum of 2% annually, and increase paid internships -by 5% annually.

d. Secure Tier Two authorization to reduce cost and improve operational and academic outcomes.

Richard Bland College
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

# DRAFT Framework for the

# Richard Bland College Strategic Plan 2028-2033

## Beyond Boundaries: *Building Virginia's Premier Transfer Institution Through Academic Excellence, Student Success, and Workforce Readiness*

**Our Strategic Priorities:**

**Transfer Excellence | Student Success | Academic Rigor | Workforce Readiness**

**About Beyond Boundaries**

*Beyond Boundaries* reflects Richard Bland College's commitment to expanding opportunity and empowering every student to achieve their highest potential. The title embodies the College's belief that education transforms lives by removing barriers, creating new possibilities, and preparing students to excel in higher education, meaningful careers, and lifelong learning.

This strategic plan provides a clear roadmap for advancing Richard Bland College's mission over the next five years. It aligns institutional priorities, resources, and partnerships around one overarching goal: ensuring that every student has the opportunity, support, and preparation to succeed.

Guided by four strategic priorities—**Transfer Excellence, Student Success, Academic Rigor, and Workforce Readiness**—*Beyond Boundaries* establishes a framework for innovation, accountability, and continuous improvement. These priorities are also closely aligned with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's (SCHEV) 2026-2032 Virginia Plan for Higher Education, which emphasizes student readiness, institutional responsiveness, and the enduring relevance of higher education in developing Virginia's

talent pipeline. Through intentional investments in teaching and learning, holistic student support, applied learning, workforce partnerships, and responsible stewardship, Richard Bland College will strengthen its role as Virginia's premier transfer institution while preparing graduates to lead, serve, and thrive in an increasingly dynamic world.

Together, we will move beyond boundaries to expand opportunity, inspire achievement, and transform lives.

## I. Institutional Promise

*Beyond Boundaries* is Richard Bland College's commitment to ensuring that every student—regardless of background, circumstance, or educational pathway—graduates prepared to transfer seamlessly to a four-year institution, launch a meaningful career, and thrive as a lifelong learner and engaged citizen.

Grounded in the College's mission of expanding opportunity through academic excellence, *Beyond Boundaries* aligns teaching, student support, workforce innovation, and institutional stewardship around one central objective:

**Every student succeeds. Every graduate is prepared. Every investment advances student success.**

By integrating rigorous academics, personalized support, experiential learning, and strategic partnerships, Richard Bland College will strengthen its position as Virginia's premier transfer institution and an innovative leader in workforce development.

## II. Vision

To become the Commonwealth's leading model for student access, transfer success, workforce readiness, and lifelong economic mobility by delivering an educational experience that prepares graduates to excel in an increasingly dynamic and competitive world.

## III. Strategic Pillars

### Pillar 1 — Student Success Without Exception

Every student will receive comprehensive academic, personal, and career support from enrollment through graduation.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Deliver personalized advising and success coaching.
- Expand early-alert and intervention systems.

- Increase retention and graduation rates.
- Close achievement gaps among underserved student populations.
- Strengthen financial wellness and student resource programs.

**Executive Owner:** Chief Enrollment Management Officer

### Pillar 2 — Academic Excellence & Innovation

Strengthen academic quality through innovative curriculum design while preserving the liberal arts foundation that distinguishes Richard Bland College.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Modernize curricula to reflect evolving workforce needs.
- Expand honors education and undergraduate research.
- Increase embedded industry certifications and micro-credentials.
- Strengthen transfer pathways with four-year partners.
- Promote faculty innovation and evidence-based teaching.

**Executive Owner:** Provost

### Pillar 3 — Applied Learning & Workforce Leadership

Ensure every graduate gains meaningful real-world experience before completing their degree.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Expand internships, apprenticeships, and cooperative education.
- Integrate experiential learning across academic programs.
- Develop discipline-specific Industry Advisory Councils.
- Increase employer engagement throughout the student experience.
- Align academic programs with regional workforce priorities (see *ForgeAhead* initiative).

**Executive Owner:** Vice President & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation

**Pillar 4 — Institutional Stewardship & Sustainability**

Align institutional resources with measurable student outcomes while ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Implement outcome-driven budgeting.
- Reallocate resources toward high-demand academic programs.
- Expand grant funding and philanthropic support.
- Modernize technology infrastructure.
- Improve operational efficiency through continuous assessment.

**Executive Owner:** Chief Finance Officer & Chief Operating Officer, Vice President & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation

**Pillar 5 — Strategic Partnerships & Regional Impact**

Expand collaborations that strengthen educational opportunity and economic development throughout Virginia.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Increase dual-enrollment partnerships.
- Expand transfer agreements.
- Strengthen employer partnerships.
- Increase community engagement initiatives.
- Support regional workforce development priorities.
- Develop a partnership with Fort Lee to support military personnel and families by developing collaborative opportunities in education and workforce development.

**Executive Owner:** President and Executive Leadership Team

## IV. Institutional Signature Initiatives

### Initiative One — Every Student Has a Plan

Each student will graduate with:

- A personalized academic roadmap
- A transfer pathway or career plan
- A career readiness portfolio
- Experiential learning
- A post-graduation success strategy

### Initiative Two — Honors & Leadership Experience

Expand opportunities for:

- Honors College participation
- Undergraduate research
- Civic engagement
- Competitive scholarships
- Leadership development
- Global learning experiences

### Initiative Three — Career Launch

Every graduate will complete at least one high impact learning experience, including:

- Internship
- Apprenticeship
- Undergraduate research
- Service-learning
- Capstone project

- Industry certification

**Initiative Four — Virginia Talent Pipeline**

Position Richard Bland College as Virginia's premier transfer institution by expanding:

- Dual-enrollment opportunities
- Adult learner pathways
- Employer partnerships
- University collaborations
- Workforce credential programs

## V. Institutional Goals

### Student Success

- Increase first-to-second-year retention.
- Increase three-year graduation rates.
- Eliminate equity gaps in student success.
- Improve transfer success rates.

### Academic Excellence

- Expand Honors College participation.
- Increase undergraduate research opportunities.
- Embed workforce credentials across academic programs.
- Increase faculty participation in innovative teaching initiatives.

### Workforce Readiness

- Ensure 100% participation in high-impact learning experiences.
- Achieve at least a **90–95%** employment or continuing education rate within six months of graduation.
- Expand employer partnerships across Virginia.

**Enrollment Growth**

- Increase dual-enrollment participation.
- Expand adult learner enrollment.
- Improve enrollment yield.
- Diversify recruitment pipelines.

**Institutional Sustainability**

- Increase external grant funding.
- Increase philanthropic support.
- Improve operational efficiency.
- Complete implementation of zero-based budgeting.

## VI. Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will measure institutional progress toward the goals of *Beyond Boundaries*. Institutional Effectiveness & Research will collect, analyze, and report these metrics annually to the President, Executive Leadership Team, and Board of Visitors to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

| Strategic Outcome | Key Performance Indicator | Five-Year Target | Primary Owner |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Success + Enrollment Goals** | | | |
| Student Retention | First-to-second-year retention rate | Increase by X percentage point | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Student Completion | Three-year graduation rate | Increase by X percentage points | Chief Enrollment Officer/Student Services |
| Equity in Student Success | Close first-to-second year retention rate and three-year graduation rates for historically underserved student populations | Decrease by X percentage points | Chief Enrollment Officer/Student Services |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Equity in Student Success | Close achievement gaps for first-generation students | Reduce and ultimately eliminate measurable achievement gaps | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Equity in Student Success | Close achievement gaps for low income, Pell-eligible students | Reduce and ultimately eliminate measurable achievement gaps | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Transfer Success | Reduce transfer stop-out rate | Reduce transfer-seeking student stop out rate from X to X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Dual Enrollment | Increase the number of dual enrollment high school students | Increase by X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Dual Enrollment | Increase the number of dual enrollment high school student graduates | Increase to X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Dual Enrollment | Increase the number of DE credit hours | Increase to X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Expand Adult Learner Enrollment | Increase the number of adult learners enrolled | Increase by X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Increase Enrollment Yield Rate | Increase the percentage of admitted students that enroll at RBC | Increase by X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Increase Student Athlete Enrollment | Increase the number of students athletes that enroll at RBC | Increase by X | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Housing Capacity | Maintain housing capacity | Manage housing capacity to maximize full occupancy | Chief Enrollment Officer |
| Enrollment Growth | Increase total institutional enrollment; including dual enrollment participation, adult learner enrollment, and military-affiliated student enrollment | Sustained annual aggregate enrollment growth | Executive Leadership Team |
| Student Experience | Increase student satisfaction and engagement | Annual survey results continue an upward trajectory | Student Services |
| **Academic Excellence + Workforce Readiness** | | | |
| Career Readiness | Graduates employed or enrolled in continuing education within six months | Increase from X to X | VP & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experiential Learning | Graduates completing at least one high-impact practice (internship, undergraduate research, apprenticeship, service-learning, capstone, or industry certification) | 100% | VP & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation |
| Industry Credentials | Graduates earning at least one embedded industry-recognized credential or micro-credential | 75% | Provost |
| Academic Excellence | Honors College participation, undergraduate research, and competitive scholarship engagement | Increase percentage of students participating from X to X | Provost |
| Academic Excellence | Increase faculty participation in innovative teaching initiatives. | Increase percentage of faculty engaged in teaching innovation initiatives. | Provost |
| Academic Excellence | Increase employment or continuing education rates for RBC graduates | Achieve at least a X% employment or continuing education rate within six months of graduation | Provost |
| **Institutional Sustainability** | | | |
| Employer & College Partnerships | Increase active partnerships supporting transfer, internships, apprenticeships, and workforce development | Double current partnerships | VP & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation |
| Employer & College Partnerships | Secure Innovation Park tenants | Goal of increasing experiential learning and workforce opportunities for our students | VP & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Innovation & Chief Operating Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase external grants | Increase annual external grant funding by X% per year and improve operational efficiency | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer & VP & Chief of Applied Learning & Workforce Integration |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Financial Sustainability | Increase annual philanthropic support | Increase annual philanthropic support by X% per year | Chief Advancement Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase operational efficiency | Increase Composite Financial Index, ideally above 3 to assure sustained institutional | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase operational efficiency | Increase our Current Ratio, assuring that RBC can pay off its short-term debts and operational costs. | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase operational efficiency | Maintain a healthy Cash Ratio between .5 and 1. This ratio measures whether an institution can cover its short-term liabilities using only cash or cash equivalents. | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase operational efficiency | Maintain a healthy debt-to-equity ratio that is lower than 2.0. This ratio measures how much debt the College is using to finance its assets relative to equity. | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer |
| Financial Sustainability | Increase operational efficiency | Increase annual Auxiliary Gross Revenue, which includes housing, meal plans, auxiliary fees, miscellaneous revenue and any partnership revenue. | Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer |

**Institutional Dashboard**

Progress toward these indicators will be monitored through an annual institutional performance dashboard that includes:

- Student enrollment, retention, graduation, and transfer outcomes.
- Workforce placement and career readiness metrics.
- Equity and student success indicators.
- Academic quality and experiential learning participation.

- Financial sustainability and operational performance.
- Employer, university, and community partnership growth.
- Progress toward the strategic priorities and signature initiatives outlined in Beyond Boundaries.

The dashboard will be presented annually to the President and Board of Visitors and used to inform strategic decision-making, budget priorities, and continuous institutional improvement.

**Executive Owner:** Institutional Effectiveness & Research

## VII. Implementation Roadmap

### Phase One — Build the Foundation (Year 1)

**Focus Areas**

- Finalize governance structure.
- Establish Industry Advisory Councils.
- Launch institutional dashboard.
- Complete baseline assessment.
- Begin zero-based budgeting pilots.
- Expand early-alert systems.

### Phase Two — Accelerate Growth (Years 2–3)

**Focus Areas**

- Launch stackable credentials.
- Expand experiential learning.
- Scale proactive advising.
- Grow the Honors College.
- Expand employer partnerships.
- Increase dual-enrollment participation.

### Phase Three — Achieve Institutional Excellence (Years 4–5)

**Focus Areas**

- Institutionalize high-impact learning.
- Reach retention and graduation goals.
- Complete budget transformation.
- Evaluate return on investment.
- Review and refresh strategic priorities.

## VIII. Risks & Strategic Assumptions

The successful implementation of *Beyond Boundaries* depends upon several institutional and external factors.

Key considerations include:

- Banner SaaS modernization remains on schedule to support advising, enrollment management, and institutional analytics.
- Academic program viability reviews appropriately align future investments with student demand and workforce needs.
- Budget transformation receives broad institutional support despite short-term organizational change.
- Employer partnerships expand sufficiently to support experiential learning opportunities for every student.
- Demographic enrollment challenges are mitigated through expanded recruitment of dual-enrollment students, adult learners, military-affiliated students, and transfer populations.

These risks will be monitored annually and incorporated into institutional planning updates.

## IX. Governance & Accountability

The President provides overall leadership for *Beyond Boundaries* and reports progress to the Board of Visitors.

Executive Cabinet members are accountable for strategic initiatives assigned within their respective pillars.

Institutional Effectiveness & Research will publish an annual performance dashboard measuring progress toward institutional goals.

The strategic plan will undergo formal review at the conclusion of Years 1, 3, and 5 to evaluate outcomes, recalibrate priorities, and ensure continued alignment with the College's mission and emerging opportunities.

## X. Presidential Commitment

**Beyond Boundaries** is more than a strategic plan—it is Richard Bland College's commitment to transforming lives through opportunity, innovation, and excellence.

Every decision, every investment, and every partnership will be measured by one standard:

**Does it improve student success?**

Together, we will strengthen academic excellence, expand opportunity, deepen community partnerships, and prepare every Richard Bland College graduate to transfer successfully, lead confidently, and contribute meaningfully to the Commonwealth and beyond.

Last revised October 2026

Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

# THE FUTURE OF RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE
# Phase One Report and Recommendations

TO: Commonwealth of Virginia's Secretary of Education, Secretary of Finance, Chair of House Committee on Appropriations, Chair of Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations

FROM: Kevin Massengill, Rector, Richard Bland College Board of Visitors

DATE: June 29, 2026

## I. Executive Summary

Pursuant to Section 21.1 of the Code of Virginia, and consistent with the charge set forth by the General Assembly in the 2025 Appropriations Act, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors submits this inaugural report documenting the Board's due diligence in investigating options for the future of Richard Bland College (College, RBC or Bland). This report fulfills the first of three required annual submissions and reflects the Board's commitment to independent, data-informed governance; transparency and accountability; and optimization of the Commonwealth's investment in Bland to promote regional and statewide economic development.

**Legislative and Policy Context**

In 2023, the General Assembly directed the Secretary of Education to coordinate with Richard Bland College and its stakeholders to explore options for the institution's future. That effort culminated in a report prepared by the Boston Consulting Group and issued by Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera in August 2024. One recommendation was the creation of an independent Board of Visitors charged with a dual mission:

- To oversee rapid improvement in key student success and financial performance metrics; and
- To substantively explore and evaluate alternative structural, partnership, and consolidation options to ensure long-term viability.

In 2025 the General Assembly established an independent, nine-member Board of Visitors and directed it to explore options for Bland's future and report annually on its due diligence over a three-year horizon, with final recommendations due June 30, 2028. This report documents the Board's Year-One efforts and establishes a rigorous foundation for subsequent phases of exploration, evaluation, and implementation of strategic priorities.

**Governance Transition and Strategic Focus**

The inaugural Richard Bland College Board of Visitors assumed governance responsibility in July 2025 during a period of significant transition, including impending changes in state administration leadership and in the College presidency. Despite these transitions, the inaugural Board and, subsequently, a reconstituted Board appointed in March 2026 have acted with urgency and continuity of purpose.

The Board has affirmed independent governance as an essential prerequisite for fulfilling its statutory mandate and has focused its work on:

- Establishing best-practice policies, bylaws, and executive oversight practices;
- Monitoring RBC's longitudinal performance metrics related to enrollment, retention, graduation, post-transfer outcomes, and cost per degree;
- Hiring and onboarding an interim president and launching the search for a permanent president;
- Advancing a disciplined, phased approach to evaluating the College's future;
- Approving an 18-24 month strategic plan that prioritizes the identification and delivery of industry-recognized credentials and micro-credentials to address exigent workforce gaps.

Within a higher education environment marked by enrollment pressure, fiscal constraints, shifting labor-market demands, and increased scrutiny of public return on investment, the Board's overarching goal is to ensure that Richard Bland College is strategically aligned with market and workforce needs, financially sustainable, and deeply mission-centered in service to students and economic development in Virginia's Gateway region and across the Commonwealth.

**Phase One: Establishing a Baseline for Decision-Making**

During Year One, the Board adopted and executed Phase One of a three-phased framework designed to ensure that all future structural and partnership decisions are grounded in evidence and aligned with General Assembly priorities.

Phase One focused on four interrelated components:

1. **Establishing Baseline Performance Metrics**
   The Board affirmed a set of longitudinal key performance indicators—enrollment, persistence, retention, graduation, post-completion outcomes, and financial

efficiency—that will be used consistently to evaluate institutional health and the relative merits of all future options.

2. **Internal Inventory of Programs and Partnerships**
   The Board reviewed Richard Bland College's academic portfolio and extensive K-12/university/business partnership ecosystem. RBC's primary identity as a two-year, residential, university-parallel institution was reaffirmed, with associate degrees intentionally designed to deliver critical "soft skills" while minimizing credit loss and cost for students transferring to four-year institutions for degrees leading to a wide array of careers. The College maintains more than forty (40) university transfer partnerships, as well as robust collaborations with K–12 systems, healthcare providers, industry, and nonprofit partners. Notably, in April 2026, Bland entered into a joint admission program with its primary transfer partner, Virginia Commonwealth University, to reduce cost and further streamline the transition.

3. **External Review of Workforce Needs**
   Consistent with Virginia workforce priorities and the SCHEV strategic plan, the Board examined state labor market projections and high-growth occupational fields. This review confirmed increasing student demand for flexible delivery models and short-term credentials, alongside continued demand for strong transfer preparation in high-need sectors such as information technology, business, healthcare, education, and the social sciences.

4. **Gap Analysis and Alignment Assessment**
   A crosswalk of existing programs with Virginia's top in-demand fields demonstrates that Richard Bland College's liberal arts transfer focus is well aligned with workforce needs, particularly as preparation for high-demand bachelor's degrees. The analysis also identified clear opportunities for Phase Two exploration, including expansion of dual enrollment conversion, online education, and workforce-aligned short-term credentials.

**Key Findings**

The Board's Year One due diligence led to several core findings:

- Richard Bland College is mission-differentiated within Virginia's higher education ecosystem and continues to deliver strong value through high-quality, affordable transfer pathways, complementing the mission of community colleges.
- Bland's existing academic model aligns with current and projected workforce needs, particularly when viewed as foundational preparation for high-demand four-year degrees.
- Future sustainability will depend on strategic, smart growth—especially through enrollment expansion, program delivery innovation, and carefully selected alliances and/or partnerships.

- Any consideration of consolidation or alternative structural arrangements must be evaluated against clear performance, student success, financial, and regional impact criteria.

**Next Steps**

With Phase One complete, the Board is prepared to move into Phase Two: Exploration and Evaluation. This will include engaging Jade Solutions to conduct a comprehensive market feasibility study, identify and prioritize strategic opportunities, and develop a multi-criteria framework and implementation roadmap for future action. Findings from Phase Two will be presented in the June 30, 2027 report. Phase Three will focus on implementation and outcomes.

**Conclusion**

The Board of Visitors embraces its responsibility to lead Richard Bland College through a disciplined, transparent, and student-centered evaluation of its future. This first-year report demonstrates that the Board has established a strong foundation for decision-making and is proceeding deliberately, consistent with legislative intent. The Board remains committed to ensuring that Richard Bland College continues to provide measurable value to students, supports regional and statewide workforce and economic development, and fulfills its distinctive mission as an affordable gateway to baccalaureate attainment and a provider of high-demand, industry-recognized credentials in the Commonwealth.

## II. Background and Context

As a component of rigorous strategic planning and on the basis of extensive research conducted by Huron Consulting about "future state" opportunities for Richard Bland College, in 2021 President Debbie Sydow escalated conversations with W&M board leadership and General Assembly representatives about the documented need for independent board governance as a missing link for driving educational solutions in the Virginia Gateway Region and statewide. Eventually, in response to a request of the 2022 General Assembly (via the appropriations act), Bland submitted a report in November 2022 entitled *Richard Bland College: A Model for Higher Education Innovation*. Collectively, all of these reports document the need for an independent governing board to guide future development of RBC as a unique provider of industry-recognized credentials in support of regional and statewide economic development.

During the same time period, in response to demographics shifts and other forces impacting higher education and to support data-informed decision making at all levels of Virginia higher education operations, governance and policy, Governor Glenn Youngkin's Secretary of Education (SoE), Aimee Guidera, directed the State Council for Higher Education (SCHEV) to engage the Boston Consulting Group to create "fact packs" for each institution of higher education (IHE) to compel rigor in the 2023 six-year planning process. The so-called fact packs were to be the first step toward an in-depth, rigorous analysis of the performance and financial health of each college and university, accompanied by recommendations for the future that would inform subsequent

six-year plans. This would, it was believed, result in a virtuous cycle whereby higher education outcomes would improve and, simultaneously, state investment would decrease.

Richard Bland College, typically under the radar, attracted the attention of the new Youngkin administration by proposing a bill in the 2023 General Assembly session—consistent with its mission and strategic plan—that would sever control of W&M's governing board and establish a new, dedicated Richard Bland College governing board. That bill fared well but ultimately did not make it to the Governor's desk in 2023.

Subsequently, the 2023 General Assembly (via the appropriations act) directed Governor Glenn Youngkin's Secretary of Education (SoE), Aimee Guidera, to coordinate with Richard Bland College and its key stakeholders to explore options for the future of Richard Bland College and deliver a report by December 30, 2023 that would inform Bland's 2024 legislative strategy. Utilizing the RBC fact pack as a baseline, Secretary Guidera engaged the Boston Consulting Group to interview Bland stakeholders and draft a final report that was submitted to Governor Youngkin and key legislators in August 2024, well after adjournment of the 2024 General Assembly. Affirming Huron's findings, the creation of an independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College was recommended by the Secretary of Education. It was recommended that this governing board be directed to improve key student and financial outcomes and to explore options for consolidation.

The 2025 General Assembly in Section 21.1 of the Code of Virginia established a nine-member Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College and directed the Board to submit annual reports on its due diligence in investigating options for the future of Richard Bland College, with the first report due on June 30, 2026; a second report due on June 30, 2027; and a final report due on June 30, 2028.

To help guide and support the Richard Bland College Board's exploration of strategic opportunities and viable options for the future, in August 2025, Dr. Eileen Strempel[1] was engaged as a consultant to work directly with the rector and board, the president, executive staff (president's cabinet and president's council), Faculty Assembly and national experts in higher education mergers and acquisitions to conduct due diligence and draft a report for submission on or before June 30, 2026.

The inaugural nine-member Richard Bland College Board of Visitors appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin began their service in July 2025. In March 2026, a new Richard Bland College Board of Visitors was appointed by Abigail Spanberger to fill nine vacant board seats (resulting from 2026 General Assembly rejection of Youngkin appointees). The new Richard Bland College Board of

[1] Dr. Strempel's publications include *Beyond Free College: Making Higher Education Work for 21st Century Students*. Co-author with Stephen Handel, Rowman & Littlefield Press, 2021; *Transition and Transformation: New Research Fostering Transfer Student Success*. Co-editor with Stephen Handel, University Press of North Georgia, 2018; and *Transition and Transformation: Fostering Transfer Student Success*, Co-editor with Stephen Handel, University Press of North Georgia, 2016.

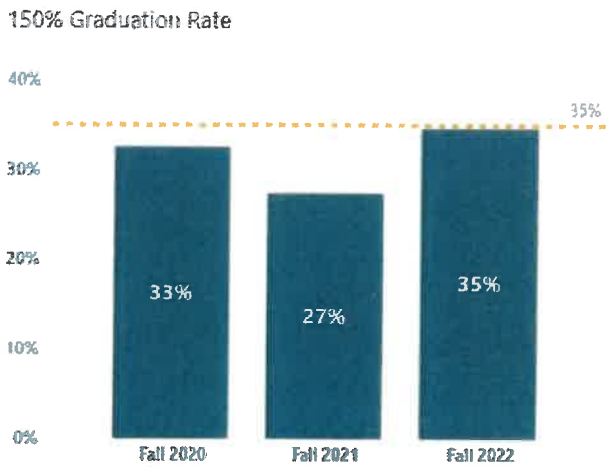
Visitors was sworn in at a campus orientation on March 26, and at the April 22, 2026 meeting, officers were elected to constitute the Executive Committee of the Board.

The reconstituted Richard Bland College Board of Visitors is focused on continuing to improve and monitor executive-level metrics (FTE enrollment, retention and graduation rates; post-completion outcomes; and cost per degree) that have been in place since 2014. This is within the context of the current complex environment facing higher education, ranging from decreased enrollment, increased competition, declining state support, and a continued focus on the American public's perceived value and return on investment of higher education.

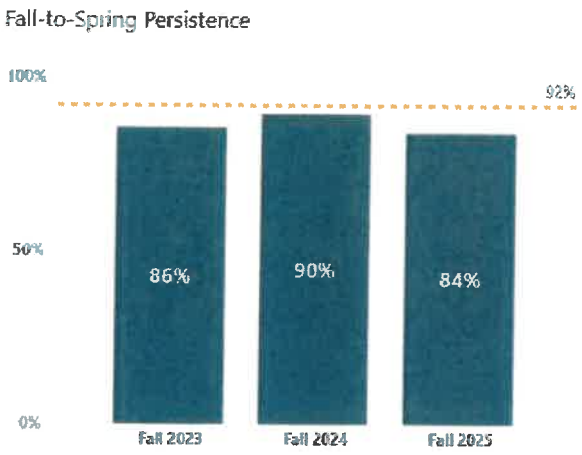
In keeping with General Assembly priorities, the Board's goal is to ensure that the College is strategically aligned to fulfill its mission and provide market-driven, industry-recognized credentials in Virginia's Gateway region and across the Commonwealth. To support its strategic goals, the Board has implemented a three-phased process to explore, evaluate and execute strategic alliances, partnerships and collaborative/alternative options with a clear focus on student enrollment and outcomes. The goal is to continually expand Richard Bland College's contribution to regional and statewide workforce and economic development and to document its impressive ROI for the Commonwealth.

## III. Performance Metrics

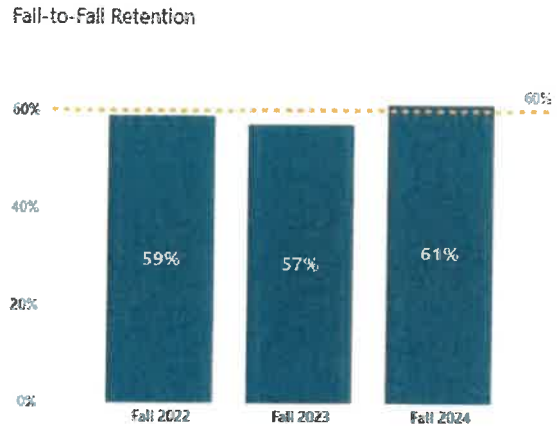
The Richard Bland College Board of Visitors has established key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the College's status and progress within a longitudinal framework. Representative dashboards are included below for reference.



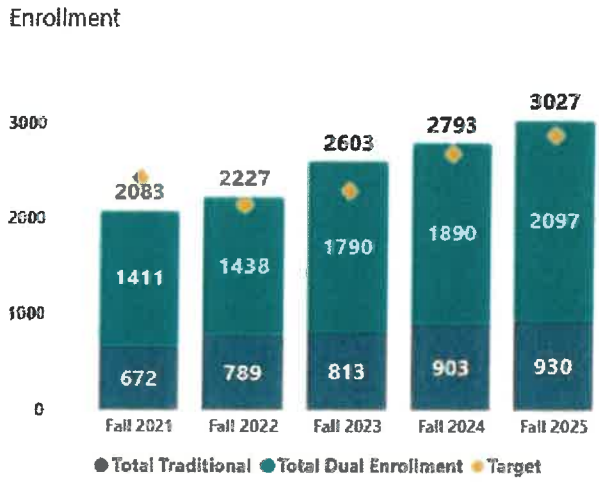

Note that the 150% graduation rate depicted above does NOT include Verto students; however, they are included in IPEDS data.



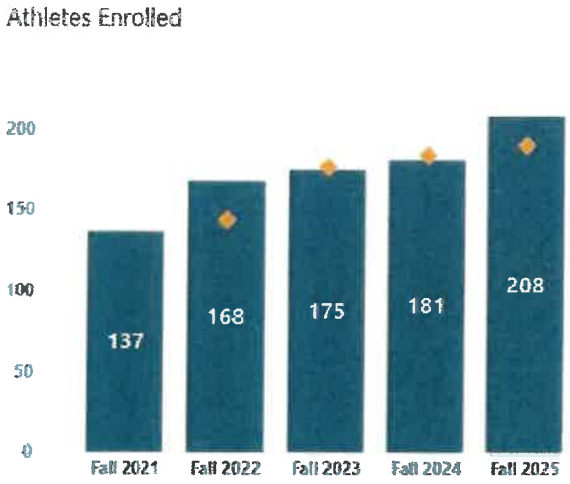

Fall-to-Spring Persistence reflects first-time full-time degree seeking students. These data are as of March 30, 2026.



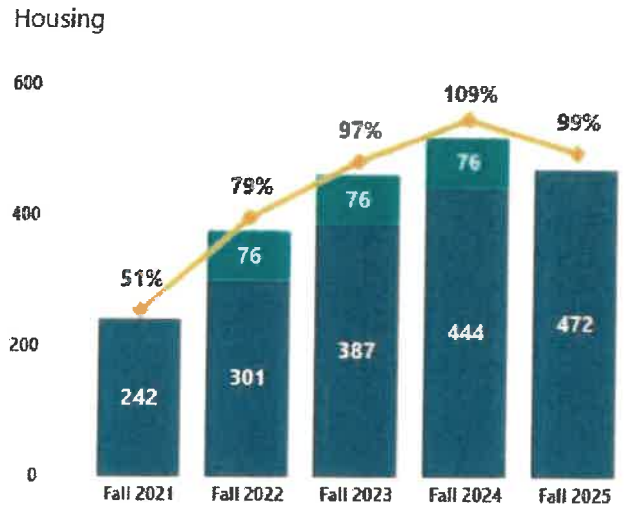

Fall-to-Fall Retention is for first-time full-time degree seeking students.




Enrollment counts reflect all students. The numbers differ from IPEDS in fall 2021 due to VERTO students being included in IPEDS and fall 2022 due to Prior Year Revisons not being posted publically. Note that there are slight differences from IPEDS in other terms; for example, fall 2023-fall 2025, due to a small number of audits that are included here but are not reflected in IPEDS data.




Athlete enrollment by Fall Term for all sports.




Housing numbers based on accounting charges by Fall Term. Fall 2022-Fall 2024 numbers reflect 76 housing slots leased by Virginia State University for those years.

## IV. The Future of Richard Bland College: A Phased Approach – Phase One

Newly established amid an impending gubernatorial transition and a transition in the RBC presidency, the first nine members of the RBC Board of Visitors were appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin. This Board led by Rector John Rathbone put into place an effective governance framework based on standards of best practice; implemented a robust short-term plan to maintain focus and momentum during a period of transition; and clarified the roles, responsibilities and expectations of College boards (Board of Visitors and Foundation Board of Directors) and key leadership. For example, the Board appointed in 2025 established board bylaws, board policies, an 18-24 month strategic plan, and an updated 2026 campus master plan. In addition, they utilized a professional search firm, Academic Career and Executive Search, to conduct the search for an interim president to follow President Debbie Sydow.

Understanding the importance of its charge from the General Assembly, this Board also conducted extensive due diligence and adopted a three-year, phased approach to the review and exploration of options for the future of Richard Bland College. Phase One contains four main components:

1. Establish a baseline. Richard Bland College has developed strategic baseline metrics (section two, above) that will be used to identify, prioritize and evaluate all options and to ensure the decisions will create value for the college and all key stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, alumni, community, Commonwealth, et al).

2. Conduct an internal review and inventory of programs and services. This inventory will include all programs and pathways available at RBC—and via existing partnerships with regional and statewide institutions—that prepare students for university transfer and careers (section four, below).

3. Conduct an external review of workforce needs and educational program options available to students in the region and state. Review the inventory of current workforce needs in the region/state (section five, below) and available options.

4. Crosswalk the external review with an inventory of programs and pathways available at Richard Bland College (and via existing partnerships with regional and statewide institutions) to prepare students for university transfer and careers. This will create a gap analysis (section six, below).

## V. Internal Inventory of Educational Solutions

Richard Bland College's niche and identity is as a two-year, residential, university-parallel experience. Its associate degrees are designed to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions in Virginia and beyond, while minimizing credit loss and reducing overall cost. In the age of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence, the liberal arts education and degrees that Bland offers are now more crucial than ever as employers seek employees with strong communication and computation skills, intellectual curiosity, adaptability, critical reasoning, a disciplined work ethic, and the capacity to collaborate effectively.

Richard Bland College associate degrees—the Associate of Arts Degree (A.A.) and the Associate of Science Degree (A.S.)—align with over forty university transfer partners, including:

- William & Mary
- University of Virginia
- Virginia Tech
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Longwood University
- Christopher Newport University
- George Mason University
- James Madison University
- University of Mary Washington
- Old Dominion University
- Norfolk State University
- Radford University
- UVA Wise
- Virginia State University
- Virginia's Community Colleges
- Purdue University Global
- Averett University
- Bluefield College
- Bridgewater College
- Eastern Mennonite University
- Ferrum College
- Hampden-Sydney College
- Hampton University
- Liberty University
- University of Lynchburg
- Mary Baldwin University
- Pfeiffer University
- Randolph-Macon College
- Regent University
- Roanoke College
- Shenandoah University
- Southern Virginia University
- Southside Regional Medical Center Professional Schools
- Saint Leo University
- Sweet Briar College
- Virginia Union University
- Virginia Wesleyan University

In addition, Richard Bland College currently offers three certificates in Communications, Fine Arts, and Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UaS).

Virginia Code Title 23.1 (6), Chapter 28, requires Richard Bland College to file annually—on or before July 1—a report to the Chairs of the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations regarding the institution's progress in exploring and expanding partnership opportunities for shared services and academic programming with other higher education partners. In accordance with this annual requirement, the College annually submits a progress report outlining its robust array of strategic partnerships. As detailed in the most recent report, in addition to university partnerships, the College partners with K-12, industry, and others to offer:

- Dual Enrollment
- iRBC International Student Program
- Health Careers-Bon Secours Partnership
- RBC Foundation Business Innovation Park
- RBC Health Zone University-Led Telehealth & STEAM-H Expansion
- Research, Innovation, and Grants
- Drone and Aviation Fellowship Program with Richmond Airport
- STEM Summer Camps
- Transfer Scholars Network
- University College

Comprehensive documentation detailing each partnership is hyperlinked.

## VI. Inventory of Current Workforce Needs

RBC monitors the workforce needs of the Commonwealth and identifies the State's high-growth occupations from the Virginia Employment Commission.

Projected to 2026

# VIRGINIA JOB OUTLOOK



### Job opportunities in Virginia are expected to continue to expand.

Overall, employment in Virginia is projected to grow 10.1 percent by 2026 exceeding the national growth rate of 7.4 percent.

### Which jobs are expected to grow or decline in Virginia?

This Job Outlook brochure lists a sampling of high-growth occupations by educational attainment and annual wages projected to 2026 as well as occupations that are projected to decline.

### For more information, visit these websites:

www.careerinfonet.org
www.bls.gov/ooh
www.VirginiaWorks.com

## High-Growth Occupations by Educational Attainment:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Management Analysts | 10,686 | $96,770 |
| Accountants and Auditors | 6,151 | $75,750 |
| Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists | 5,149 | $67,210 |
| Managers, All Other | 4,589 | $127,400 |
| Software Developers, Systems Software | 3,731 | $119,430 |
| Computer Systems Analysts | 3,537 | $96,450 |
| Operations Research Analysts | 2,952 | $105,770 |
| Human Resources Specialists | 2,167 | $70,840 |
| Child, Family, and School Social Workers | 2,037 | $46,490 |
| Training and Development Specialists | 1,891 | $63,890 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Medical Assistants | 4,952 | $32,260 |
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 3,506 | $40,350 |
| Computer User Support Specialists | 2,672 | $53,090 |
| Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists | 1,925 | $33,030 |
| Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers | 1,369 | $40,950 |
| Dental Hygienists | 1,240 | $82,400 |
| Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics | 1,037 | $33,730 |
| Firefighters | 973 | $50,360 |
| Legal Support Workers, All Other | 895 | $37,210 |
| Medical Records and Health Information Technicians | 793 | $37,290 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Home Health Aides | 5,926 | $21,770 |
| Customer Service Representatives | 4,969 | $32,550 |
| Sales Representatives, Services, All Other | 3,420 | $62,520 |
| Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 3,215 | $38,220 |
| First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers | 2,556 | $55,930 |
| Nonfarm Animal Caretakers | 2,223 | $22,380 |
| Billing and Posting Clerks | 1,964 | $37,120 |
| First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers | 1,731 | $62,970 |
| Childcare Workers | 1,637 | $20,430 |
| Self-Enrichment Education Teachers | 1,455 | $39,430 |

Virginia Employment Commission. *2026 Jobs Outlook*. Virginia Labor Market Information. Published 2026. PDF file. https://prod-valmi.mt.gov/_docs/Publications/LMI-Publications/VA-Jobs-Outlook/PDF/2026-Jobs-Outlook.pdf.

College leadership monitors these high-growth job opportunities to assure the relevance of degree pathways. The continuous pursuit of these prospects is referenced in the 2026-28 Strategic Plan: "Analyze and pursue resolution of all barriers that impede delivery of a full range of high-demand programs and credentials." The Board particularly notes the increasing interest and enrollment in short-term programs, with the National Clearinghouse finding that short-term credentials are currently experiencing the greatest enrollment growth at 6.6 percent.[2]

[2] Johanna Alonso, "Enrollment Growth Continues, Bolstered by Short-Term Credentials," *Inside Higher Ed*, 11 Nov. 2025, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2025/11/11/short-term-credentials-bolster-enrollment-boom

## VII. Gap Analysis

At the January 28th, 2026, meeting, the Board of Visitors adopted an updated Richard Bland College strategic plan that established priority goals for the next 18-24 months. The plan assures alignment with the SCHEV strategic plan and the Commonwealth's current workforce needs. A crosswalk of the College's existing educational offerings with the Virginia's top in-demand fields confirms that the current liberal arts transfer focus aligns with Commonwealth workforce needs. In addition to the crosswalk programs listed below, the College offers more generalized transfer pathways for students geared toward various 4-year degrees, including the General A.S., A.S in Physical Science, and A.S in Life Science.

| VIRGINIA'S TOP IN DEMAND FIELDS | RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE ALIGNMENT |
|---|---|
| **Information Technology & Computer Science Fields** | |
| Software Developers (Applications & Systems)<br>Information Security Analysts<br>Computer Systems Analysts<br>Network & Computer Systems Administrators<br>Computer & Information Systems Managers<br>Operations Research Analysts | **A.S. in Math/Computer Science** – foundational STEM courses required for CS/IT majors at 4-year institutions |
| **Business, Management & Accounting Fields** | |
| Management Analysts | **A.A.** with social sciences coursework supporting economics/management transfer pathways |
| General & Operations Managers<br>Accountants & Auditors<br>Market Research Analysts<br>Financial Managers<br>Business Operations Specialists | **A.S. in Business Administration** (listed within RBC's Business, Management & Marketing fields) |
| **Education Fields** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Elementary School Teachers | **A.S. in Behavioral Sciences** → prepares students for Social Work, Counseling, Education |
| Secondary School Teachers | **A.A.** → standard transfer preparation for B.A. in Education at 4-year institutions |
| **Healthcare** | |
| Registered Nurses | **A.S. in Clinical Lab Sciences** → strong foundation for transfer into BSN programs |
| **Social Sciences & Human Services** | |
| Human Resources Specialists | **A.S. in Behavioral Sciences** → prepares students for Social Work, Counseling, Psychology |
| Child, Family, & School Social Workers | **A.A.** → suitable for transfer into Social Work, HR, Psychology, or Sociology bachelor's programs |

This work built upon the Learner Success Laboratory's Comprehensive Self-Assessment conducted in 2021-22, when RBC created academic pathways (or meta-majors) that linked academic coursework to student academic goals. Meta majors are designed to ensure that students enroll only in credits that apply to their degree pathway, thereby reducing surplus credits (and expense) while enabling quicker degree completion. Accordingly, RBC created Six Meta-Majors:

- Advanced Manufacturing & Logistics
- Liberal Arts & Humanities
- Science & Technology
- Health & Biosciences
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Education, Counseling, & Public Service

The gap analysis utilizes existing Meta-Majors and links them to career opportunities. This examination reveals that responding to previously identified opportunities, e.g., expanding the dual enrollment conversion rate, online education, and the potential growth of short-term credentials highly sought by today's students, will be central to ongoing exploration in Phase Two.

## VIII. Subsequent Phases | Next Steps

**Year One/Phase One** has provided a robust framework for subsequent workplans and the additional reports mandated by code on June 30th, 2027, and June 30th, 2028.




**Phase Two – Program Inventory and Gap Analysis.** Richard Bland College is partnering with Jade Solutions to inform this second phase work, with a special emphasis on the short-term credentials most frequently sought by today's students. Jade Solutions will conduct a comprehensive market feasibility study to guide the development of short-term credentials, certificates and workforce-aligned programs under the Richard Bland College Online Initiative. The scope of this work will involve a deep market landscape foundation and competitive mapping, dual-geography market sizing (under 75-90 miles from campus and Virginia statewide), an analysis of industry-specific opportunities (healthcare, business, IT, skilled trades, emerging fields), and an analysis of partnership provider opportunities. This work will also include in-depth employer interviews across target industries, provide market-driven enrollment and revenue projections, program investment analysis and cost structure, and a partnership vs build cost-benefit analysis. In summary, the engagement with Jade Solutions will result in a strategic prioritization framework and implementation roadmap that will set the stage for Phase Two.

Informed by market analysis data generated during Phase One, Richard Bland College will next inventory both its own offerings, as well as all regional higher education offerings (both public and private) that align with the market analysis conducted in Phase One to identify the gaps with the greatest market needs. This gap analysis will frame the internal examination of RBC's capacity to offer these high demand programs/credentials/micro-credentials. This internal analysis will include a robust financial modeling in order to prioritize the potential offerings. The second

report, due summer 2027, will include a multi-criteria opportunity ranking framework and program portfolio recommendations.

**Phase Three: Implementation of Recommendations.** Richard Bland College leadership will conduct comprehensive due diligence as it seeks potential partners (higher education, industry and commercial). The college will evaluate potential strategic alliances, partnerships and collaborative/alternative options. This broad framework will inform the identification of potential partners, prioritize initial outreach, and guide due diligence to determine best option(s) for achieving strategic objectives. The Board of Visitors will review the framework, approve recommendations, and work with the president to develop a project plan that prioritizes pilot program development and partnerships in accordance with regional and statewide needs while simultaneously assessing alternative approaches/partners/third parties for achieving goals. The Year-Three report (June 30, 2027) will present the results of exploration and evaluation efforts and set forth a plan for ongoing exploration of strategic partnerships that advance the Richard Bland College mission and priority goals.

The Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College embraces the independent governance model and its responsibility to guide future direction with a focus on delivering educational solutions that align with workforce needs. Furthermore, the Board understands and appreciates that setting future direction for Richard Bland College requires vigilance in performing each of its governance duties. For example, with President Debbie Sydow's impending departure after 14 years of service, in January 2026, the Board named an interim president of Richard Bland College, Dr. Kenneth Alexander, effective July 1, 2026.

In summary, the Board's next steps will include the engagement of Jade Solutions to help identify potential strategic alliances, create a prioritization framework, and develop an implementation roadmap. The Board will continue to assure that Richard Bland College provides value to its students and aligns credentials with regional and state workforce needs, with the goal of continually deepening the College's contribution to economic development in the Gateway region and the Commonwealth.