

## Commerce and Trade

The adopted budget for Commerce and Trade agencies contains a net increase in general funds of \$17.1 million over the adjusted appropriation for current operations. Nongeneral fund increases total \$92.8 million over current operations.

Most of the general fund spending increase is targeted to four agencies - Virginia Tourism Authority, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Department of Housing and Community Development and Department of Forestry as follows:

- \$3.0 million to enhance tourism marketing and promotion of historic attractions and sites;
- \$2.8 million and 20 positions to enhance forestry operations;
- \$1.1 million to develop a statewide geographic information network and to support the operations of Planning District Commissions; and
- \$700,000 to promote a certified community cooperative advertising program.

Most of the nongeneral fund spending increase is for the Virginia Employment Commission to implement the federal Workforce Investment Act; and the Department of Housing and Community Development to support emergency shelters for the homeless.

Other economic development initiatives are funded in the Central Accounts section of the budget. These include \$1.5 million in technology grants to boost tourism, \$1.0 million in incentives to develop a partnership for the filming of two Civil War movies, and \$30.0 million for the Governor's "Deal Closing Fund".

- **Department of Business Assistance**

- ***Small Business Development Centers.*** Contains \$360,000 GF in the first year and \$300,000 GF in the second year in additional operating support for the Small Business Development Centers, including the establishment of a new center in the Danville/Pittsylvania area, and a satellite office in Alleghany County.

- **Department of Forestry**
  - **Forestry Operations.** Adds \$1.6 million GF the first year and \$1.2 million GF the second year and 20 positions to enhance forestry operations throughout the state.
- **Department of Housing and Community Development**
  - **TANF for Homeless Services.** Provides \$5.5 million NGF each year and one position for emergency and transitional shelter support. In addition to rental assistance, funds will be used for supportive services such as life skills, education, and job training.
  - **Regional Competitiveness Fund.** Provides \$259,000 GF the first year and \$618,000 GF the second year to increase the minimum allocation for each Partnership from \$200,000 to \$250,000 the first year and to \$300,000 the second year.
  - **Planning District Commissions.** Provides \$924,000 GF the first year and \$210,000 GF the second year for Planning District Commissions. Funding in the first year includes a one-time grant payment of \$34,000 per PDC for the development of a statewide Geographic Information System network.
- **Virginia Economic Development Partnership**
  - **Certified Community Cooperative Advertising Program.** Provides \$500,000 GF the second year to establish a cooperative advertising grant program as an incentive for communities to work cooperatively on economic development efforts.
  - **Southeast U.S. – Japan International Conference.** Provides \$500,000 GF the first year to host the 25<sup>th</sup> joint meeting between the Southeast U.S.-Japan and Japan-Southeast U.S. Association in Norfolk in the fall of 2000.
- **Virginia Employment Commission**
  - **Federal Workforce Investment Act.** Implements changes in federal law that consolidate and replace the old Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), previously administered by the Governor's Employment and Training Department, with new worker training programs to be administered by the VEC.
- **Virginia Tourism Authority**
  - **Expand Tourism Marketing.** Provides \$1.5 million GF each year to enhance the state's tourism promotions program. Additional funds

will be used for marketing of Revolutionary War and Civil War sites and attractions and promotion of African-American heritage sites in Virginia.

- ***African-American Heritage Sites.*** Includes \$450,000 GF each year to continue the research and development of a database of African-American sites, as well as to market and promote the sites.
- ***Blue Ridge Parkway Marketing Initiative.*** Contains \$300,000 GF each year for “challenge” grants to be matched by North Carolina, Tennessee, or the Blue Ridge Parkway Association to promote and market attractions along the parkway.
- ***Civil War Museum.*** Contains \$250,000 GF the first year to assist in the establishment of a comprehensive museum and educational center in Richmond focused on the Civil War period.