



Colonial Heights Republican Committee

2026 SURVEY FOR COLONIAL HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL

Candidate: John T. Wood

1. Please tell us a bit about your background and involvement in the community.

I am a Council leader with concrete accomplishments. I persuaded all six jurisdictions of the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization to dedicate 100% of two years' federal transportation allocations to one Colonial Heights project – the construction of the I-95 Northbound ramp from Temple Avenue. My leadership led to the acquisition of the former Colonial Heights Baptist Church property upon which the City's courthouse now rests. Prescient leadership demonstrated by my proposal and final passage of a city ordinance preventing the construction of apartments on Lakeview Lake and the site of Flora Hill Park both of which would have had negative impacts.

I worked diligently to assure city funds were provided to upgrade the Roslyn/Ivey Avenue interchange on I-95 which was required by the original Mall developer resulting in the city's retail development.

As a former mayor, I was active in efforts to protect the "military mission" of Fort Lee during the Federal Base Re-Alignment and Closure Process. Fort Lee and its "mission" was actually expanded rather than reduced avoiding a negative economic impact on our community.

I initiated the last two successful real estate tax rate reductions.

Although I do not always prevail, I always attempt to lead towards the improvement and protection of our citizens' lives.

2. Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? If Republican, are you in accord with [The Republican Creed](#)?

Although, I am running as an unaligned, non-partisan candidate, I consider myself to be a Republican. I chaired the Colonial Heights Republican Committee for sixteen (16) years and have participated in multiple Republican statewide and congressional conventions.

3. *Please tell us why you are running for City Council.*

Every local governing body needs at least one objective member who evaluates policies and programs independently without undue allegiance or deference to “city hall.” City councils often rely on the bureaucratic and administrative “experts” who purportedly are “in the know.” Many councils in small cities are frequently composed of members who are or have been or have family who are or have been employed by some agency of their jurisdiction.

I nor any member of my family has ever been employed by the City of Colonial Heights, any Colonial Heights constitutional offices or the Colonial Heights School Board. Consequently, my perspective is one of looking in from the outside rather than inside looking outward. I am running to ensure that perspective is not lost.

4. *What are two or three things that the City of Colonial Heights is doing well?*

The City of Colonial Heights during my tenure has always achieved three very important goals:

- a) The city’s budget has always been balanced, reserving a substantial contingency fund. That reserved fund balance contributes to the city’s excellent bond fund rating. Our excellent bond fund rating permits the city to borrow at lower interest rates thereby saving tax payer’s money.
- b) Promoting broad retail development has enabled the city to expand services in good years and reduce expenditures during bad years.
- c) The city has developed and maintained very efficient and professional fire and police departments delivering essential protection services to all neighborhoods.

5. *What are two or three things that the City of Colonial Heights needs to improve on?*

The areas for improvement in Colonial Heights are as follows:

- a) The city must explore more innovative non-retail economic development to create a broader tax base across a wider spectrum of businesses.
- b) Inflation and the consequent erosion of wages has led to the departure of some city personnel to higher-paying jurisdictions. The costs of training and “turn-over” in personnel has become both worrisome and costly.
- c) Federal and state unfunded mandates create obligations without funding sources. Better communication with General Assembly legislators should always emphasize these negative economic consequences.

6. *How will you seek to be responsive to city residents if elected to City Council?*

I respond either verbally or in writing to every citizen inquiry. I cannot always satisfy everyone. However, I do explain the circumstances and the limitations of my authority when I am unable to help. I am ways attentive, respectful and courteous. I frequently invite those aggrieved to attend city council meetings and present their complaints.

On the agenda of every regular city council meeting there is an open opportunity reserved for citizens' problems, comments and complaints on non-agenda items. This procedure is utilized to facilitate public engagement.

7. In your opinion, what is the number one issue facing the City over the next four years?

The greatest challenge before Colonial Heights, an almost completely developed small city, is the ever rising costs of operations and the relatively static tax revenues. While our revenues have increased with the rising real estate values, the requirements of state and federal mandates and the costs of personnel, healthcare and infrastructure are increasing more rapidly each year. If the city cannot create a new revenue stream, ultimately we must reduce services or raise taxes.

The city owns a 38-acre tract of land behind Walmart on the Appomattox River which can be developed with minimal negative impact on surrounding properties. If one or more non-retail developments can be located there, it would increase tax revenues we do not now have. I do not believe the City's current project for this property is the best. Nor do I believe the current plan will achieve the desired results. I do believe this property is key to our secure economic future. The location of our 38-acre site has logistical advantages for storage of pharmaceuticals, data and all manner of merchandise now being transported for daily delivery. A prudent plan of economic development with proper safeguards and oversight could add significantly to our tax revenues without increasing taxes on our citizens.