

New Kent County's Role in Historic Horse Racing



1980s – An Idea Develops

New Kent is On Board

- ▶ Advocates push for a horse racing track in Virginia.
 - ▶ Concept is a single horse track with 100+ racing days.
- ▶ New Kent expresses interest in serving as the location.
- ▶ 1988 – VA voters approve horse racing in a statewide referendum.
- ▶ 1989 – New Kent approves horse racing with a county referendum.

New Kent optimistic about horse track

RICHMOND (AP)—New Kent officials were upbeat about news that plans are under way to make the county the home of Virginia's first parimutuel thoroughbred track.

Virginia's first commercial betting track "would mean an economic gold mine for New Kent," said David Ringley, one of the county's supervisors.



1990s – A Decade of Delay

New Kent is Patient

- ▶ 1989-1992 - Developers demand off-track betting (OTB) locations before they will agree to build a track.
- ▶ 1992- General Assembly approves 6 OTBs.
 - ▶ Legislation included a revenue split.
 - ▶ 0.25% → OTB locality
 - ▶ 0.25% → Horse track locality
- ▶ 1993 - General Assembly requires “not less than 150 live racing days” (with flexibility for the first five years).
- ▶ 1994 – Developer selected to build track in New Kent.
- ▶ 1994-1996 – Litigation prevents construction on racetrack.
- ▶ 1999 – Colonial Downs finally opens for 30 racing days.



2000s – Steady Progress

New Kent is Encouraged

- ▶ 2000 – 2010 - Live horse racing continues at Colonial Downs with 27-45 live racing days.
- ▶ 2004 – General Assembly expands number of satellite facilities from 7 to 10.



2010s – The Track Shuts Down... Then Re-Opens

New Kent is Caught in the Middle

- ▶ 2014-2019 - Because of fights between the track owner and equine groups, Colonial Downs is closed.
 - ▶ New Kent's major economic driver is shuttered for years.
- ▶ 2018 – General Assembly approves historic horse racing.
 - ▶ Keeps the pre-existing revenue split that was set in 1992.
 - ▶ 0.25% → OTB locality
 - ▶ 0.25% → Horse track locality
 - ▶ **Ratio of 100 machines : 1 live racing day**
- ▶ 2019 – Colonial Downs re-opens

Region

Track's fate at backstretch

Owner: Demise of Colonial Downs may be in sight



2020s – Steady Regrowth

New Kent has New Hope

- ▶ Live Racing is happening once again in New Kent

Year	Live Racing Days
2020	18
2021	21
2022	27
2023	27
2024	27



Racetrack and Community Safety

New Kent is Impacted

- ▶ New Kent County fire/EMS personnel and units are assigned to the track and cannot leave or training/racing cannot continue
 - ▶ 15 fire/EMS personnel per shift, county-wide
 - ▶ Training Days -- 2 personnel, 1 ambulance assigned to the track
 - ▶ Race Day – 4 personnel, 2 ambulances and a UTV
 - ▶ Premier Race Days & Major Events – 6 personnel, 3 ambulances and a UTV



Racetrack and Community Safety

New Kent is Impacted

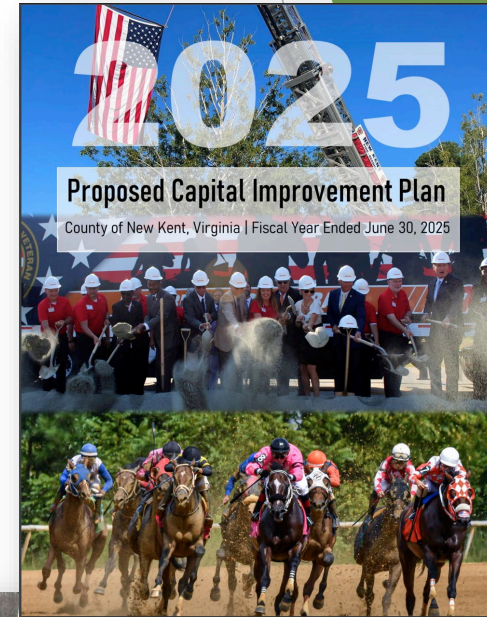
- ▶ New Kent law enforcement personnel and units are assigned to the track on racing days
 - ▶ 4-6 deputies per 12-hour shift, county-wide
 - ▶ Race Days - 2-3 deputies assigned to the track
 - ▶ Premier Race Days & Major Events - 10-15 deputies assigned to the track
 - ▶ 30-60, including deputies from other agencies, on some event days



Historic Horse Racing Revenue

New Kent is Investing in Critical Needs

- ▶ **Transportation**
 - ▶ Projects to enhance safety near the entrance to Colonial Downs
- ▶ **Water Infrastructure**
 - ▶ Including projects to ensure water access at racetrack site
- ▶ **Public Safety**
 - ▶ Fire stations
- ▶ **Other Major Capital Projects**
 - ▶ Broadband access
 - ▶ Economic development & diversification



The Path Forward

New Kent is Engaged

- ▶ A safe, healthy, and vibrant New Kent County forms the bedrock of successful live racing at Colonial Downs.
- ▶ A thriving New Kent County enhances the overall racing experience and ensures the success of live racing at Colonial Downs.
- ▶ Live racing events are the foundation for Historic Horse Racing machines.
- ▶ Appropriate levels of historic horse racing revenue enable the County to invest in public safety, infrastructure, and community development.
- ▶ Revenue allocated to New Kent County supports the broader horse racing ecosystem, preserving the cultural and historical significance of horse racing in the Commonwealth.



New Kent County

“Our pride in the past gives us our faith in the future.”

Rodney A. Hathaway

County Administrator

New Kent County, Virginia

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