



# Community Facilities

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## INTRODUCTION

As the population grows, so does the demand for public services and the facilities where they are provided. In planning for public facilities, it is important to consider not just the size of the County's future population but also its age and geographic distribution. Seniors and school-age children, for example, have very different service and facility needs. Additionally, the increased concentration of people in the lower County must be considered in facility planning, since facilities should be convenient to the citizens who use them. Community facilities planning is especially challenging in York County because of its geography: York is a linear county, with the upper County separated from the lower County by a vast expanse of Federally-owned land. Consequently, without a central location that is readily convenient to a majority of County residents, it is sometimes necessary to have separate facilities for upper and lower County residents in order to meet the citizens' demands for conveniently located facilities.

Since many of the County's public facility needs are shared by neighboring jurisdictions, regionalism is often the most efficient way to meet these needs. Because it adjoins all other localities on the Peninsula, York County is uniquely suited to engage in a variety of regional efforts that allow communities to recognize facility *service area* boundaries, which are often more realistic than jurisdictional boundaries in providing community facilities. Regionalism often increases efficiency not only because it prevents needless duplication of effort but also because economies of scale can be realized.

Because "Community Facilities" is such a wide-ranging topic, this element of the *Comprehensive Plan* is divided into five sub-elements: Detention and Law Enforcement, Fire and Life Safety, Government Offices, Libraries, and Schools. Each sub-element contains a summary description of existing conditions. Following these sub-elements is a discussion of citizen input and future planning issues summary. Like the other elements, this element concludes with a section detailing the Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies for community facilities.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AND DETENTION

The York County Sheriff is the County's chief law enforcement officer, serves as court bailiff for York County and Poquoson, and, until 1997, was responsible for operation of the York County Jail, which was demolished in 1998. York County's prisoners are now housed in the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail with prisoners from James City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson. The Merrimac Center, a regional juvenile detention center, also was constructed next to the Peninsula Regional Jail site in 1997.

The Sheriff's Office is funded by the state, and the number of deputies is based on each locality's population (one law enforcement deputy for every 1,500 residents, or 41 deputies as of 2004). However, the Board of Supervisors has created and funds additional deputy positions beyond the state's allotment. Currently, as shown in **Table 1**, York County has the lowest ratio of officers to residents on the Peninsula, with one law enforcement officer for every 862 residents. James City County has the closest ratio to York's with one officer for every 672 citizens. The City of Williamsburg has the highest ratio on the Peninsula with one officer for every 376 citizens.

Ratio of Law Enforcement Officers to Population by locality, 2003			
Locality	Officers	Population	Ratio
James City Co.	72	53,100	1/672
Hampton	266	144,400	1/543
Newport News	384	180,900	1/471
Poquoson	20	11,600	1/580
Williamsburg	34	12,800	1/376
<b>York</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60,400</b>	<b>1/862</b>

Source: Virginia Department of State Police

**Table 1**

With the demolition of the jail in Yorktown, the Sheriff's Office headquarters has moved several times and is now located in the Public Safety building within the County Operations Center on Goodwin Neck Road. Additionally, the Sheriff's office has separate office space for the D.A.R.E. program in the Washington Square shopping center and a satellite station in Tabb at the Village Square Shopping Center, located near Super K-mart. At the Public Safety Building the Sheriff's Office shares the first floor with the Department of Fire and Life Safety, while the second floor is occupied by the Department of Social Services. Although space is limited, the Sheriff's Office utilizes the space for administration, seven criminal investigators, the Sheriff and captain's offices, evidence room, squad room, computer support, interview room, evidence processing laboratory, and equipment/weapons storage. Space is also used at a local storage facility for additional property and evidence storage.

Because of the large geographical area York County law enforcement must cover, effective law enforcement is dependent more on manpower, equipment, and programs than on physical facilities. The regional detention facilities built in the late 1990s eliminated overcrowding problems within York County facilities; however, these facilities do nothing to prevent crime from occurring or to make people (other than the jailers and perhaps the inmates) feel safer. Nevertheless, with 4,078 reported crimes in the County per 100,000 residents in 2003, York County has

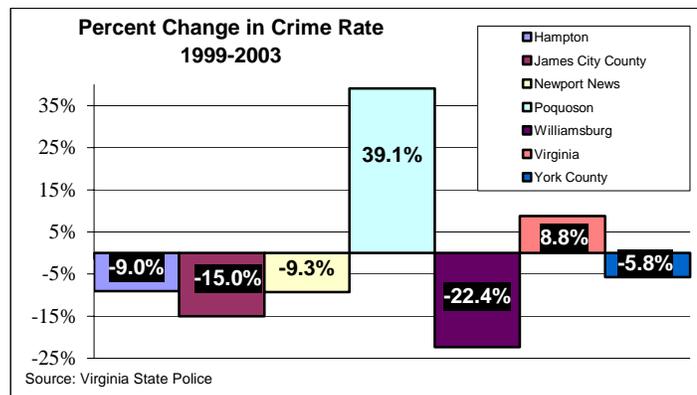


Figure 1

one of the lowest crime rates on the Peninsula (Figure 1). In comparison, the Newport News and Virginia crime rates were 10,005 and 6,632 per 100,000, respectively. In addition, the crime rate in the County has declined in recent years - between 1999 and 2003 crime rates per 100,000 residents declined by 6%. While this same trend is evident in some surrounding localities, Virginia and Poquoson saw increases, with 9% and 40% respectively. The City of Williamsburg had the largest reduction in crime during that time with a decline of 22%.

The Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail is a collaborative effort between York County, James City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson to house prisoners from all four localities. Located on Merrimac Trail (Route 143), the 166,000 square foot detention facility sits on a 15-acre site within James City County. The facility began operation in 1997 and can house approximately 600 prisoners; it is designed to accommodate future expansion should the need arise. Currently, there are six housing pods, each a self-contained unit with 48-cells for the confinement of prisoners. Other spaces include classrooms, a library, food services, medical services, indoor recreation, and administration offices.

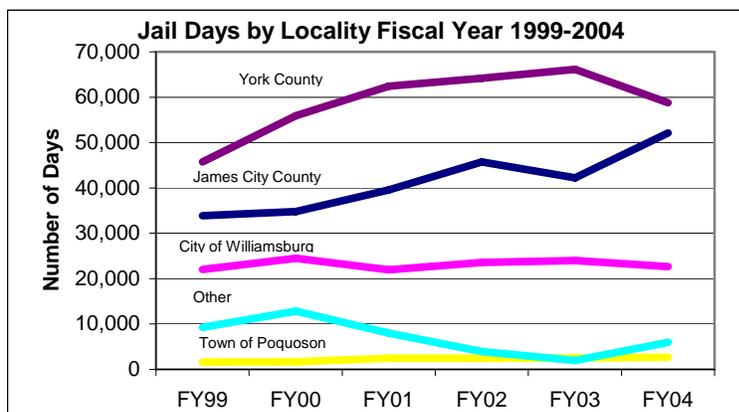
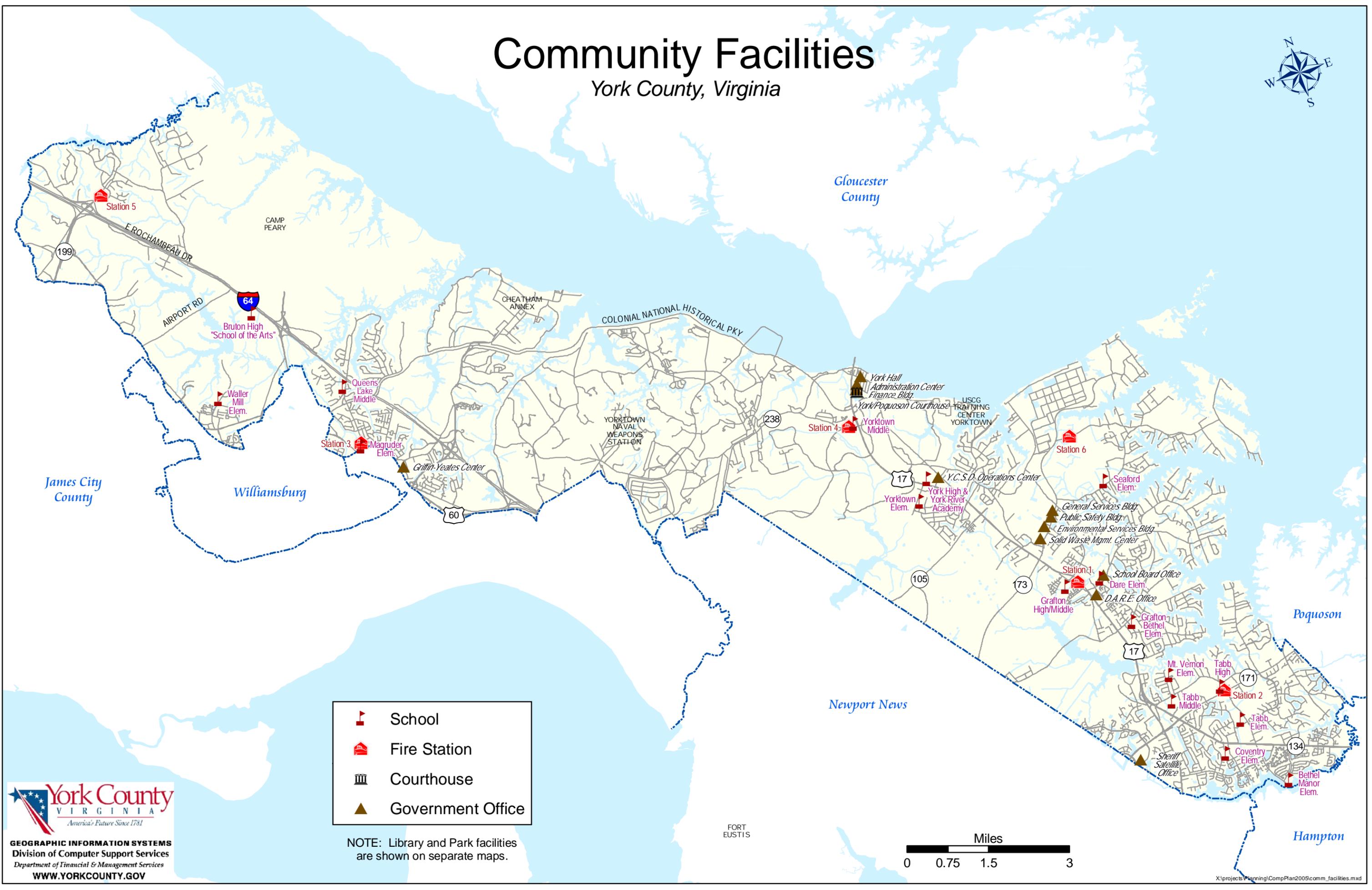


Figure 2

Prisoners are offered several opportunities for education, mental growth, and physical activity through a variety of community programs. As of 2004, there were 122 volunteers serving

# Community Facilities

## York County, Virginia



-  School
-  Fire Station
-  Courthouse
-  Government Office

NOTE: Library and Park facilities are shown on separate maps.



at the facility, providing G.E.D., creative writing, art, and religious study classes, as well as several recovery and mental health groups.

Since the update of the *Comprehensive Plan* in 1999, the Regional Jail has experienced a 27% increase in prisoner incarceration time. It should be noted that the increase does not necessarily mean an increase in crime has occurred, but rather reflects the overall increase in population for all four localities. **Figure 2** shows that York County currently has the most prisoner days in the system (58,754), representing 41% of the prisoner incarceration time in 2004. However, since 1999 Poquoson and James City County have had the highest percentage increase in prisoner days with 66% and 54%, respectively, while Williamsburg has only had a 3% growth.

In response to juvenile service needs, York County participates in the regional Middle Peninsula Juvenile Detention Commission, consisting of the eleven counties and cities from the 9th Judicial District and seven counties from the 15th Judicial District. The Commission owns and operates the Merrimac Center – a secure juvenile detention facility located next to the Regional Jail on Merrimac Trail in James City County. The Merrimac Center opened in December 1997 with 32 beds, and 16 beds were added in July 1998. The Merrimac Center is a self-contained facility with 24 hour per day supervision of up to forty-eight juvenile offenders ages seven to seventeen under detention orders from a court. The Center serves both male and female youth who are awaiting hearings in the courts, as well as those who may be sentenced to detention. There are spaces for classrooms, food services, medical services, a gymnasium, and offices.

Residents are ordered into the Center by the Juvenile Courts and have committed property crimes or offenses against the person that range up to and can include murder. Residents are fed, receive medical care and counseling and are schooled throughout their confinement. The length of residence can range from a few days to several months depending upon the nature of the offense and the complexity of the adjudication by the courts. Juveniles are released by the Courts either back into the community to a lesser level of oversight, such as a group home or probation, or are transferred to correctional centers operated by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. The Commonwealth pays a portion of the operating costs and the member localities pay a per diem charge for each juvenile housed. Between 1999 and 2004 York County utilized an average of 13% of the juvenile admissions to the Merrimac Center, with the highest usage being 16% in 2004.

## **FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY**

The York County Department of Fire and Life Safety is responsible for the provision of Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, 9-1-1/Emergency Communications, Emergency Management, and Animal Control. The department's administrative offices and Emergency Operations Center are located in the Public Safety Building at the County Operations Complex on Goodwin Neck Road. An adjacent structure was completed in 2005 to house the 9-1-1/Emergency Communications Center. Fire and rescue field operations are conducted from six fire stations located strategically throughout the County. A future fire station site is located on Kiln Creek Parkway in the Tabb area. The department also maintains mutual aid, in-kind service agreements with surrounding localities and federal facilities that provide for the sharing of resources during emergency incidents. The Department is organized into four divisions, Fire and Rescue Operations, Technical Services and Special Operations, Prevention, Emergency Communications, the Office of Emergency Management, and the Animal Control Bureau.

The largest division, Fire and Rescue Operations, is responsible for the provision of fire, rescue and emergency medical services from the County's six fire stations. The locations of the three newest fire stations (Yorktown, Seaford, and Skimino) were chosen in the late 1980s and early 1990s to complement the Grafton, Tabb, and Bruton stations so as to ensure that emergency units leaving the fire station would arrive at an emergency scene in most areas of the County within five minutes or less. At each of the fire stations, fire and rescue resources include a fire engine company and medic unit which provide fire suppression, rescue, and advanced life

support emergency medical services. In addition Fire Station 1 in Grafton and Fire Station 3 in Bruton are designated as District Stations and provide additional resources in the upper and lower areas of the County for vehicle rescue, aerial ladder response, as well as brush truck response capabilities. The District Stations also provide additional EMS resources as needed.

Fire and rescue personnel are required to respond to many different types of emergencies besides fires and car crashes. In order to ensure response to most potential emergencies within the County, the Department of Fire and Life Safety has developed contingencies for special incident responses, either locally or regionally. Teams use personnel normally assigned to fire and EMS vehicles, however, on top of their regular duties, personnel obtain and continue training in specific specialties and are not necessarily dedicated to a specific activity. Special incident response teams include technical rescue, hazardous material response, marine fire and rescue, and a Metropolitan Medical Strike Team.

The technical rescue team has evolved from what was initially a dive team to include water and rope rescue and limited confined space, trench, and heavy vehicle rescue. This team is also a part of the larger Peninsula Regional Technical Rescue Team and team members also take part in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue – Team/Virginia Task Force - Two.

The County is vulnerable to a variety of hazardous materials emergencies considering the roadways, railroads, waterways and proximity to the Newport News/Williamsburg Airport that exist. All County fire and rescue personnel are trained to provide defensive tactics should a spill, leak, or fire occur with limited types of hazardous materials. A more specialized group of County fire and rescue personnel are trained as Hazardous Materials Technicians and operate as a Level II Enhanced Hazardous Materials response team. If the capabilities of the County are exceeded, then the regional hazardous materials response team is requested through the Virginia Department of Emergency Services. The primary team assigned to York County is in Newport News and would respond, if available. If unavailable, the back-up team would have to respond from the South Hampton Roads or Richmond areas.

York County maintains a marine fire and rescue capability for both water rescue and waterborne firefighting because of the large amount of water area and many miles of shoreline/waterfront properties including residential, commercial, and federal establishments. The personnel assigned to this capability have specialized training in maritime fire and rescue operations and boat operations. Some of these members are also part of the regional Hampton Roads Maritime Incident Response Team.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety has been involved in a variety of planning efforts to improve medical response to terrorist incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives weapons. To address these needs the Hampton Roads region established a Hampton Roads Metropolitan Medical Response System, including an associated response team known as the Metropolitan Medical Strike Team. As a partner, Fire and Life Safety staff members have been key components of the command leadership, logistics, and communications functions. Currently, York County manages and maintains the Strike Team's communications equipment and logistics equipment caches for the peninsula component. Members of the Department are also a part of FEMA's Virginia – One Disaster Medical Assistance Team.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety coordinates and/or conducts most of the training required for its responders. This training, which often requires recertification at the State level, is critical to the County's continued readiness for response and service. The department participates on a regional basis for its dispatcher, firefighter recruitment, and officer development training and routinely conducts in-house continuing education and refresher training. Through the Department's cooperation with state agencies and other localities in Hampton Roads, they are a partner in the Peninsula Regional Live Fire Training Facility and

Training Tower located in the Lee Hall area of Newport News. Additionally, Fire and Life Safety persistently pursues further expansion of training resources with such things as dispatcher training props, hazardous materials, and technical rescue training capabilities. The Department is continuously seeking ways to conduct in-service training for on-duty crews, utilizing strategic training locations, so fire companies can remain available for emergency calls.

The Prevention Division enforces state and local laws, codes, and ordinances pertaining to fire and life safety. The Division conducts plan reviews and inspections as well as tests of fire suppression and alarm systems for commercial and public buildings. Members of the Division determine cause and origin of fires and investigate arson and fires of suspicious origin. In addition, the Prevention Division provides a variety of prevention education programs.

The provision of 9-1-1 for the public and emergency communications for responders is critical to being able to provide quick and efficient law enforcement, fire, rescue, emergency medical services, etc. Since its establishment in 1986, the 9-1-1/Emergency Communications Center has been affected considerably by County population growth and service demands. The Center moved to a new location adjacent to the Public Safety Building in 2005. The County, in 2005 completed an upgrade to the emergency communications system with the installation of an 800 MHz radio system and a new 9-1-1 Emergency Communications System. The upgrade provides significant improvements for users of the County radio system and enhanced radio interoperability between County agencies, other outside agencies, and 9-1-1 services to the public.

Disasters or major emergencies, unlike structure fires, medical emergencies and/or vehicle accidents that are often isolated to one or two buildings or individuals, affect many more people with significant damage to structures and infrastructure over larger geographic areas. The County's Office of Emergency Management develops and maintains emergency operation plans to guide response and recovery actions for major emergencies and disasters. These vulnerabilities include hurricanes, winter storms, tornadoes, various types of flooding and storm surge, brush/wood fires, and manmade hazards, such as transportation and industrial accidents, potential acts of terrorism, and being within the 10-mile emergency planning zone for the Surry Nuclear Power Plant.

York County, through the Office of Emergency Management, continues to improve emergency disaster sheltering. By coordinating with the School Division, the Grafton High/Middle School complex was established as an all-hazards emergency shelter and is equipped with back-up generator power. Other County schools serve as supplemental shelters and open according to need and circumstances. At the regional level, Emergency Management has coordinated planning efforts for special needs, debris management, and a regional hazard mitigation plan.

In addition to the Fire and Life Safety response to disasters or major emergencies, public preparedness programs were created and expanded to promote public response during these events. A Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training program was created to provide basic response training to people who live and/or work in York County. Furthermore, neighborhoods that have 10 or more adults can participate in the CERT training and prepare a neighborhood disaster plan to become a CERT neighborhood and receive a sign to post in their community.

Getting information out to the citizens is one of the biggest obstacles in responding to a disaster or major emergency. The Neighborhood Emergency Information Distribution System establishes a communication network through the County's homeowner's associations, creating a list of emergency contacts within the neighborhood. Then, in an emergency, these contacts can be used to distribute flyers detailing information on shelters, getting supplies, and County response and service provisions. The Department has also created a Fire Station Community Assistance Liaison program, which assigns a Fire and Life Safety member to remain at the fire station as a community focal point for getting information. Lastly, in 2004, the County established an

agreement with a local radio station, WXGM 99.1 FM, to be the official media outlet for citizens, businesses, and visitors to receive specific York County information during a major emergency or disaster.

While response capabilities are important, the Department has created several programs designed to avert emergencies or reduce an emergency's severity. Some examples are:

- Fall Prevention Program: offers free safety inspection to identify potential trip/fall hazards in the home and strategies to reduce them, which lowers personal injuries in the home.
- Child seat Awareness and Restraint Education: provides inspection and instruction free of charge for the proper installation of child safety seats.
- Risk Watch: teaches second grade school children about fire and life safety practices and educates them on ways to prevent fires and injuries.
- "Heads Up" program: provides 9-1-1 dispatchers with lifesaving information about pre-existing medical conditions or unusual situations that are then relayed to emergency responders as they respond to identified locations.
- Emergency Medical Dispatching program: supplies callers to the 9-1-1 Center with emergency medical telephone instructions, allowing them to provide medical care to victims until emergency responders arrive on scene.

The Department's Animal Control Bureau is responsible for the enforcement of laws and regulations pertaining to animal control and protection. Animal Control Officers respond to threats posed by domestic animals running at-large, diseased animals and dangerous/vicious animals. At the same time, they also promote the humane treatment and prevention of cruelty to animals. Members of the Bureau also conduct educational programs and participate in wildlife management programs.

## **GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

York County has two major government office complexes – one in Yorktown and one on Goodwin Neck Road – with a total of twelve buildings. The Solid Waste Management Building is also located on Goodwin Neck Road, while the Griffin-Yeates Center is located on Government Road in the upper County. The County also operates six fire stations, two Sheriff's Office satellite offices, two libraries, and several Parks and Recreation facilities that are discussed in other sections of this plan.

Governmental offices located in Yorktown include the Administration Center, Finance Building, York Hall, and Post Office Building. The Administration Center, originally constructed in 1929 as a school building, underwent major renovations in 2000 and includes offices for County Administration, Community Services, the County Attorney's Office, the Registrar, and the County's interoffice mail service. The Finance Building was constructed in 1980 as the Courts and Office Center (which later became the District Court Building) and was renovated in 2001. The facility is occupied by the Financial and Management Services Department, and the Treasurer and Commissioner of Revenue offices. Part of the Computer Support Services division is housed in the Post Office Building, which serves as a secure site for the County's computer network. This building was constructed in 1958 and was renovated in 2000. The most historically significant structure, York Hall, has had many reincarnations since first being built in 1955. In 2000, the structure underwent extensive renovations, with the Circuit Court having moved to a new building in 1997. Currently, York Hall serves as a meeting space for the Board of Supervisors, School Board, Planning Commission and other County Boards and Commissions. The building is also utilized by civic groups and an arts center/gallery. Most recently, in 2005, improvements were made to the basement, where the Yorktown Historical Museum has established exhibits.

In addition to being one of the County's major governmental centers, Yorktown is home to the County's court system. The circuit court, general district court, juvenile and domestic relations

court, Commonwealth Attorney's office, and Judicial Court Services Unit for York County and Poquoson operate out of the York-Poquoson Courthouse in Yorktown, which opened in 1997. This 59,680-square foot courthouse was built to accommodate the rapidly growing caseloads of the courts and to address numerous deficiencies in the former Circuit Courthouse and the former District Court Building that compromised the security, safety, and efficiency of court operations. The new courthouse was designed to meet the County's court space needs at least through the year 2014. However, offices are already beginning to feel the pressure of increased storage requirements and increased caseloads that may necessitate additional personnel, and with that, more office space.

The second major government office complex, the 52-acre County Operations Center, is located on Goodwin Neck Road. The General Services Administration, Vehicle Maintenance, Buildings and Grounds Maintenance, and the Public Safety buildings were all constructed in 1992-93. Followed by the construction of the Environmental Services Annex in 1993-94 (Building Regulation Division), Environmental Service Administration in 1995 (Department of Environmental Development and Services), the Parks and Recreation Building in 1997-98, and the most recent Emergency Communication Center in 2004-05. The Public Safety Building houses multiple departments/agencies for the County and serves the Sheriff's Office, Fire and Life Safety, and Department of Social Services. The Virginia Cooperative Extension office shares space in the Park and Recreation Building.

The Griffin-Yeates Center, located at 1490 Government Road in the upper County, was built in 1953 as a public school. The building has undergone several renovations and was conveyed to the County in 1978. Currently, the Center houses York County's Head Start program and the First Steps program operated by Child Development Resources, along with storage for other Community Services divisions.

## **LIBRARIES**

Library services have long been considered integral to supporting literacy, providing opportunities for life-long learning, and contributing to a high quality of life for York County residents. The libraries help foster a sense of community and serve as a focal point for citizen interaction. The library system is open to anyone who wishes to use its facilities and services, and the libraries welcome patrons from both inside and outside the County.

The County currently operates two library facilities and makes contributions to surrounding library systems. The older facility, which opened in 1984, is an 11,900 square-foot building located on George Washington Memorial Highway (Route 17) at Battle Road. The more recent addition to the York County system was opened in October 1999 and is a 32,000 square-foot facility located on Hampton Highway (Route 134) and Long Green Boulevard in the Tabb area. These two locations primarily serve citizens residing in the lower County (i.e., south of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station). The County also contributes to the Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library System, in addition to the Newport News library system, which serves the needs of the County's disabled and special-needs citizens.

Upper County residents are served by the Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library System. The Regional Library operates two facilities – one in the City of Williamsburg (40,000 square feet) and one in upper James City County (35,000 square feet). Both library locations are geographically convenient for upper York County residents. Additionally, the Regional Library has operated a bookmobile for over twenty years, which serves six locations in upper York County. Although not a member of the regional system, York County makes a voluntary annual contribution to help offset user costs to the Regional Library system. In Fiscal Year 2004-05, York County citizens constituted about 12% of its registrants. James City County represents 70% of the registered borrowers, while 14% live in the City of Williamsburg.

average for Profile IV; however, the 0.82 per capita ratio is in the top 35%. The library system also operates in the top 15% of Profile III for reference transactions (59,120 per year), with its per capita ratio of 1.01 falling in the median for Profile IV.

The York County Library's service levels represent a performance at a planning Profile IV, the profile for Cities & Suburban Counties with medium to high populations and medium to large system size. However, the County's library system falls below Profile IV when the number of materials available to patrons and the number of outlets within the County are reviewed. In materials, the library operates in the top 35% of Profile III with 156,933 materials available, yet because of population growth the 2.67 per capita ratio falls within the median for Profile II. Furthermore, the County has two library facilities, which places the library at the median for

**Comparison with Similar Virginia Public Libraries FY2003**

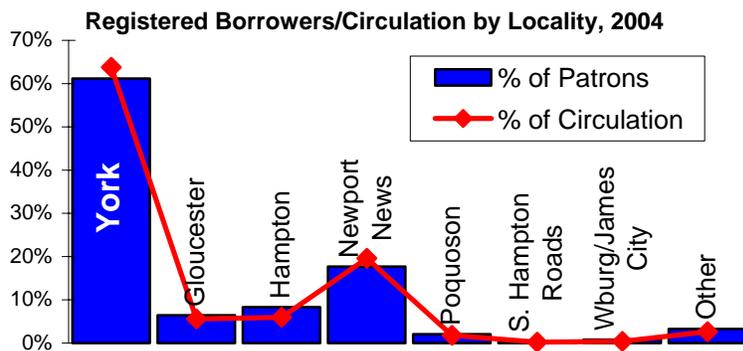
	York County	Williamsburg Regional	Hampton	Newport News	Portsmouth	Lynchburg	Fauquier County	Bedford County
Legal Service Population	58,800	64,400	145,200	179,300	98,400	65,600	58,900	67,800
Library Outlets	2	3 <sup>C</sup>	6	6	4	2	3	7
Librarians with MLS <sup>A</sup> Degree	4.00	19.00	10.00	12.00	9.00	8.50	5.00	5.00
Total FTEs <sup>B</sup>	28.00	81.00	65.99	82.98	34.00	32.65	38.64	34.00
Reference Transactions	53,055	112,787	121,157	124,929	25,094	41,762	46,430	26,500
Total Circulation	679,983	1,282,189	718,088	635,812	326,862	466,092	437,834	459,391
Children's Circulation	282,383	491,792	258,012	152,386	N/A	218,432	219,494	N/A
Circulation per Week	13,076.60	24,657.48	13,890.38	12,227.15	6,285.81	8,963.31	8,419.88	8,834.44

Based on figures from Library of Virginia Public Library Statistics 2003  
A - Master Library Science      B - Full Time Employee      C - Includes Bookmobile

**Table 3**

Profile II. While the York County Library System is providing expansive service to the public, the system is working within a minimum of facilities and materials needed to serve the public. It is important to note, however, that these figures do not reflect the services being provided to a portion of the County's total population (the upper County residents) by the Williamsburg-James City County Regional system.

A comparison of York County's Public Library System with other libraries demonstrates the excellent performance demonstrated by the library staff and the systems they created to handle the multitude of materials that pass in and out of the libraries. **Table 3** above shows that despite having fewer outlets and less staff than larger jurisdictions, York County has surpassed the other systems in reference transactions, excluding the surrounding libraries, and outpaced or come very close to equaling all the other systems in circulation, excluding Williamsburg. These numbers confirm the County's superior initiatives and the limited staff's continued efforts to provide excellent service to its patrons.



**Figure 3**

Another important aspect is who is utilizing the York County Library System and how much are they borrowing. In 2004, York County residents represented 61% of the patrons registered for a York County Library card (**Figure 3**). Residents of other localities made up the other 39% of borrowers. The percentage of circulation for these localities generally mirrors the percentage

of borrowers. York County borrowers accounted for 64% of the circulated materials, while the circulation to borrowers from other localities equaled 36%. Out of all the localities, Newport News had the largest percentages, with 18% of the registered borrowers and 20% of the circulation. Hampton with 8% and Gloucester with 6% of registered borrowers are next and each have 6% of the circulation.

Since the update of the *Comprehensive Plan* in 1999, the York County Public Library has expanded its collection to the extent of its facilities' capacities. The collection has grown by 63,577 items, a 61.5% increase since 2000 (**Table 4**). These items include books, periodicals, and audio/visual materials (recorded books, CDs, DVDs, etc.) materials. However, this does not account for the older materials that have been discarded from the collection to allow room for new items. Circulation has increased 97.8% when these items are included.

In 2003 the County library began tracking the attendance for adult and children programs. Children's programming increased dramatically in the space of a year. These programs include story times for all ages, the annual Summer reading program, and the Dial-A-Story program, through which children can listen to story time by telephone. Adult programs were cutback since 2003 by -31.7%, because of staff limitations and increases in youth program attendance. Programs offered to adults have included senior citizen tax assistance, the Socrates' Café discussion group, the Operation Opera series of lectures, and several computer classes and craft tutorials available throughout the year.

**York County Library Workload Indicators**

	FY2000*	FY2004	Percent Change FY'00-FY'04
Materials	103,306	166,883	61.5%
Circulation	342,262	676,857	97.8%
Meeting Room Reservations	797	2,512	215.2%
Adult Programs	63 <sup>1</sup>	43	-31.7%
Adult Programs Attendance	1,924 <sup>1</sup>	704	-63.4%
Children's Programs	408 <sup>1</sup>	567	39%
Children's Program Attendance	4,470	13,877	210.4%
Public Use Computers	26	55	111.5%
Public Use Printers	10	18	80.0%

Source - Virginia Public Library Survey - Library of Virginia  
\*The Tabb Library opened in October 1999, during FY2000. <sup>1</sup> - not tracked until 2003

**Table 4**

The County library system has also expanded the technology offerings to the public. The use of public computer terminals has increased by 111.5%, and seven new printers have been added since 2000. In 2005 the Library installed a new Print/Internet Management system called Pharos. This system enables the Library to better manage the public computers, assuring equal access for all by fairly allocating computer time to meet the high demand for this service. It also allows the Library to collect computer usage statistics and better manage print costs.

The increase in computer usage has led the Library to devote more floor space to the computers that otherwise would have been used for the materials collection. The *Planning for Excellence* document gives guidelines for determining space needs and recommends 40 square feet for each computer terminal, while material storage varies from seven adult books per linear foot of shelf space to 12 video cassettes per linear foot. Both facilities will eventually install a wireless network to allow patrons more flexible access to the Internet throughout the library building on their own wireless-enabled computers. Also, the meeting rooms in each facility have been upgraded to include the latest multimedia presentation equipment, which has contributed to the doubling of room reservations by patrons. Bookings for these meeting rooms are being made months in advance for use of the rooms and their equipment.

The Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library has also made changes, since the adoption of the 1999 *Comprehensive Plan*. The library has installed book drops in the Monticello Marketplace Ukrops (James City County) and the recently renovated Farm Fresh on Merrimac Trail (Route 143) in York County. The bookmobile was refurbished to allow computer users to access a wireless network and the Internet. The meeting rooms and theatre facilities have been

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Public Use Printers	10	18	80.0%

Source - Virginia Public Library Survey - Library of Virginia  
\*The Tabb Library opened in October 1999, during FY2000. <sup>1</sup> - not tracked until 2003

**Table 4**

The County library system has also expanded the technology offerings to the public. The use of public computer terminals has increased by 111.5%, and seven new printers have been added since 2000. In 2005 the Library installed a new Print/Internet Management system called Pharos. This system enables the Library to better manage the public computers, assuring equal access for all by fairly allocating computer time to meet the high demand for this service. It also allows the Library to collect computer usage statistics and better manage print costs.

The increase in computer usage has led the Library to devote more floor space to the computers that otherwise would have been used for the materials collection. The *Planning for Excellence* document gives guidelines for determining space needs and recommends 40 square feet for each computer terminal, while material storage varies from seven adult books per linear foot of shelf space to 12 video cassettes per linear foot. Both facilities will eventually install a wireless network to allow patrons more flexible access to the Internet throughout the library building on their own wireless-enabled computers. Also, the meeting rooms in each facility have been upgraded to include the latest multimedia presentation equipment, which has contributed to the doubling of room reservations by patrons. Bookings for these meeting rooms are being made months in advance for use of the rooms and their equipment.

The Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library has also made changes, since the adoption of the 1999 *Comprehensive Plan*. The library has installed book drops in the Monticello Marketplace Ukrops (James City County) and the recently renovated Farm Fresh on Merrimac Trail (Route 143) in York County. The bookmobile was refurbished to allow computer users to access a wireless network and the Internet. The meeting rooms and theatre facilities have been

# York County Library Patron Use by ZipCode



Data Source:  
 ZipCode Boundaries - US Census Bureau  
 Patron Use Data - York County Libraries

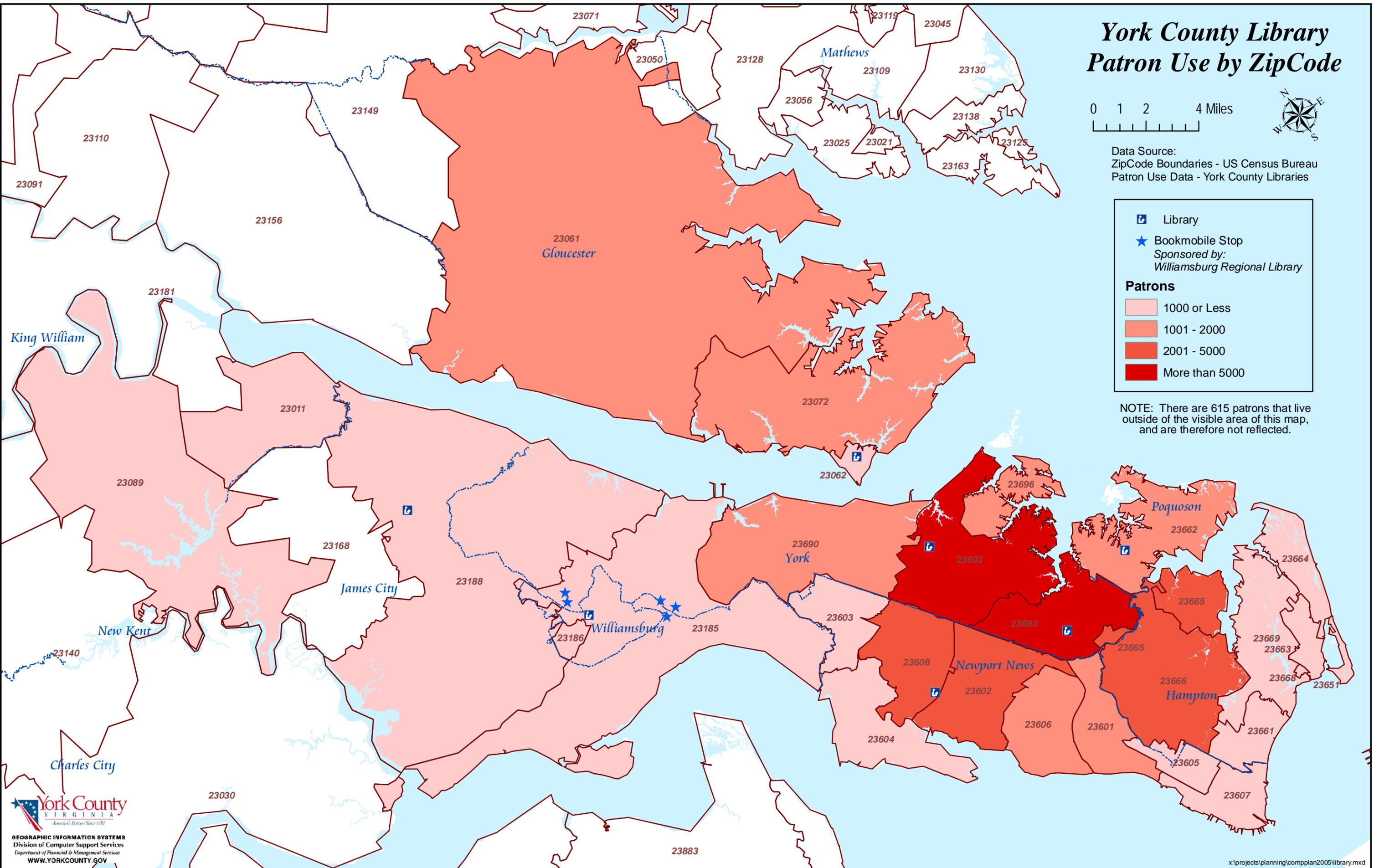
**Legend**

- Library
- Bookmobile Stop  
Sponsored by:  
Williamsburg Regional Library

**Patrons**

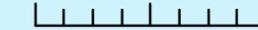
- 1000 or Less
- 1001 - 2000
- 2001 - 5000
- More than 5000

NOTE: There are 615 patrons that live outside of the visible area of this map, and are therefore not reflected.



# York County Library Items Borrowed by ZipCode

0 1 2 4 Miles



Data Source:  
ZipCode Boundaries - US Census Bureau  
Patron Use Data - York County Libraries

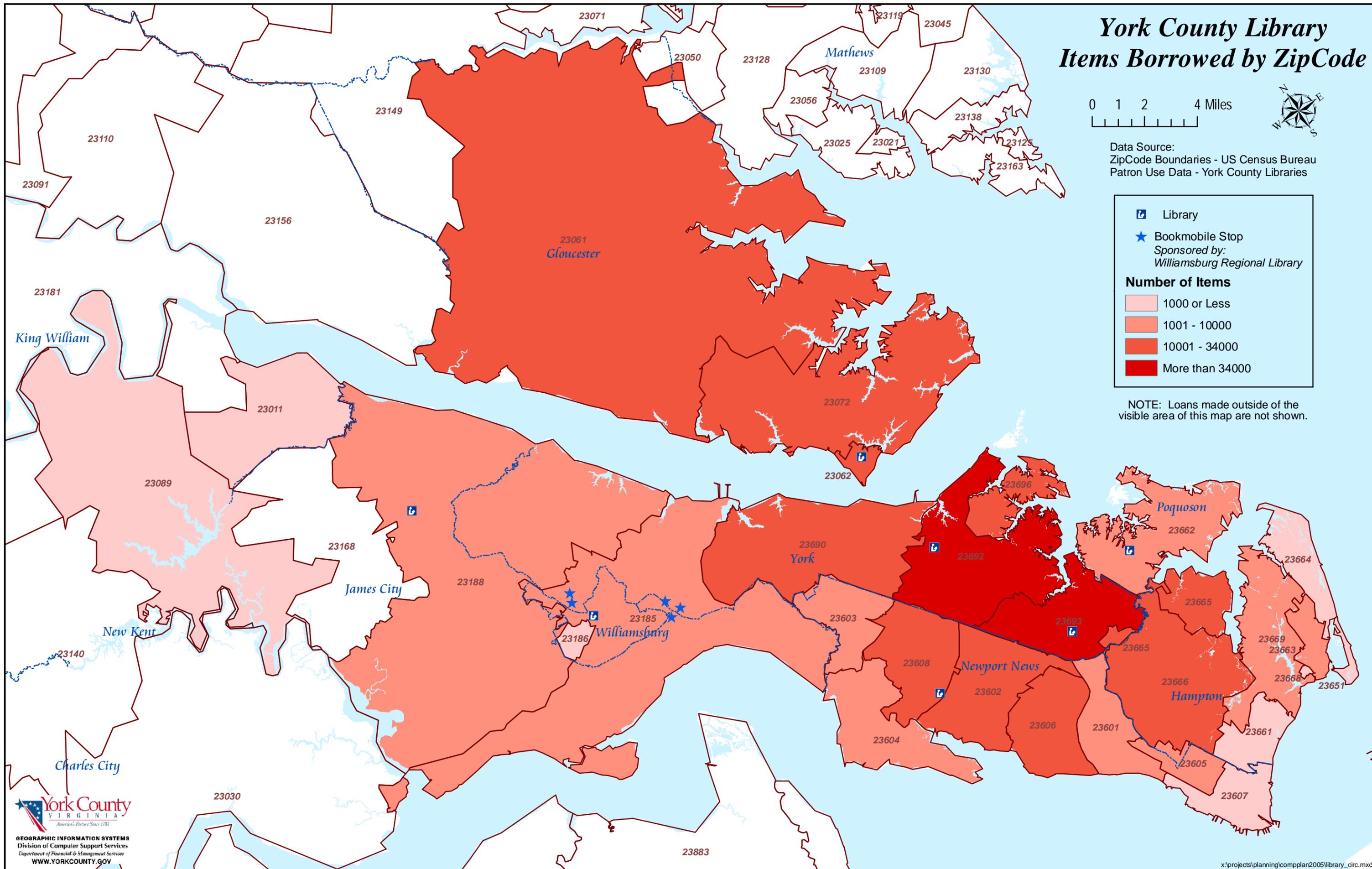
Library

Bookmobile Stop  
Sponsored by:  
Williamsburg Regional Library

**Number of Items**

- 1000 or Less
- 1001 - 10000
- 10001 - 34000
- More than 34000

NOTE: Loans made outside of the visible area of this map are not shown.



renovated to include the most current technology available, including smart boards and new audio/visual systems.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Recreational Programs

York County offers a variety of programs for active and passive recreation for both youth and adults. Available to young people are a wide range of programs including soccer, tennis, basketball, roller skating, summer playgrounds, sports and recreation camps, and a variety of instructional classes (art, music, dance, etc.). Adult programs include softball, basketball, tennis, volleyball, aerobics, and instructional classes.

For senior adults, York County operates the Senior Center of York, which is located in the Washington Square Shopping Center and offers a wide variety of activities, classes, special events, and trips. In addition, programs and activities sponsored by the Historic Triangle Senior Center, located in the James City County-Williamsburg Community Center, are available to seniors living in the upper County.

Residents of all ages can participate in the County's open gym program, instructional classes, and the two "Skate, Rattle, and Roll" roller skating programs. The open gym program is conducted at an elementary school gymnasium throughout the year and is geared toward casual/pick-up basketball games. Instructional classes are taught at various locations throughout the County at varying times. Skating in the upper County is held in rented space at the Historic Triangle Community Services Center; in the lower County, the program is operated in the Dare Elementary School gymnasium.

Several recreational programs are also available to County residents through private organizations or other public agencies. Private organizations sponsoring programs in both the upper and lower County include four youth baseball/softball associations, four youth football/cheerleading associations, four soccer clubs, three swim team/aquatic clubs, two youth wrestling associations, and one lacrosse association. In addition, the Williamsburg and James City County Parks and Recreation Departments make available, programs and facilities to upper County residents. Many of these organizations use County facilities, and they meet a significant portion of the demand in the County for recreational activities.

Since the adoption of the 1999 *Comprehensive Plan* the youth, adult, and family programs sponsored by the County have seen a rise and fall in participation. Overall, County-sponsored recreational programs have decreased in participation by 35% (**Figure 4**). This is mainly attributable to the declining popularity of the skating programs and an increase in the number of youth participating in non-County sponsored recreation programs. At its peak (1999), the skating program had a participation of 35,740 people. Because of waning popularity, the program in 2004 had

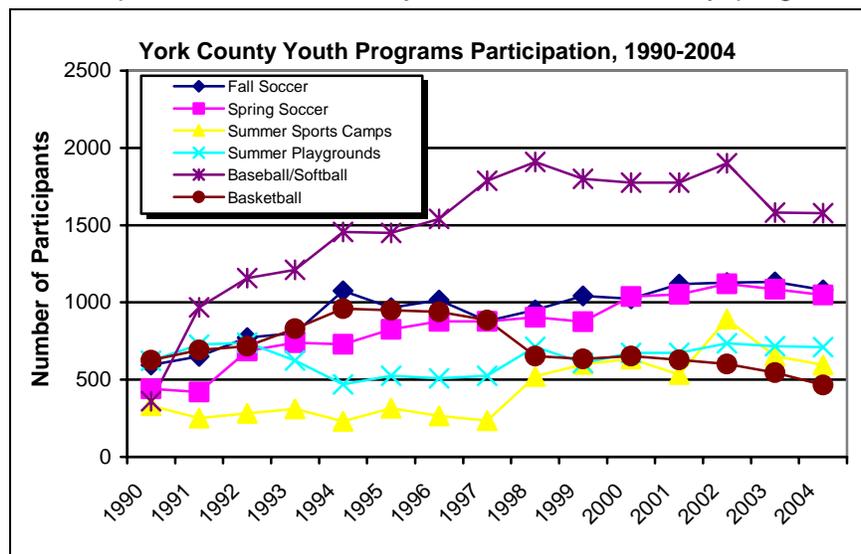


Figure 4

12,338 people attend and a -69% change. In addition, youth programs declined 34% between 1999 and 2004, with basketball (-27%) and baseball/softball (-12%) declining the most. However, even though there was a decrease in County sponsored programs, the overall number of youths participating in some form of organized recreation in the County in 2004 was 12,103. Out of these youths, 55% participated in a non-County-sponsored program and used County-owned facilities for practices and games.

While the number of participants in Parks and Recreation programs has decreased slightly, there has been a large influx of private and church groups offering similar programs. Three churches, as well as an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) organization are now offering youth basketball leagues. There has been a great increase in the number of AAU baseball and softball teams in the County. Currently there are approximately 15-20 private AAU baseball and softball teams. (It is hard to quantify the exact number since these teams fluctuate more than the established organizations.)

Not all County programs have seen a decrease. Adult and family programs have experienced some increases since 1999 (Figure 5). The largest change has been in instructional classes, which increased by 470% since 1999. Class topics range from financing and investing to

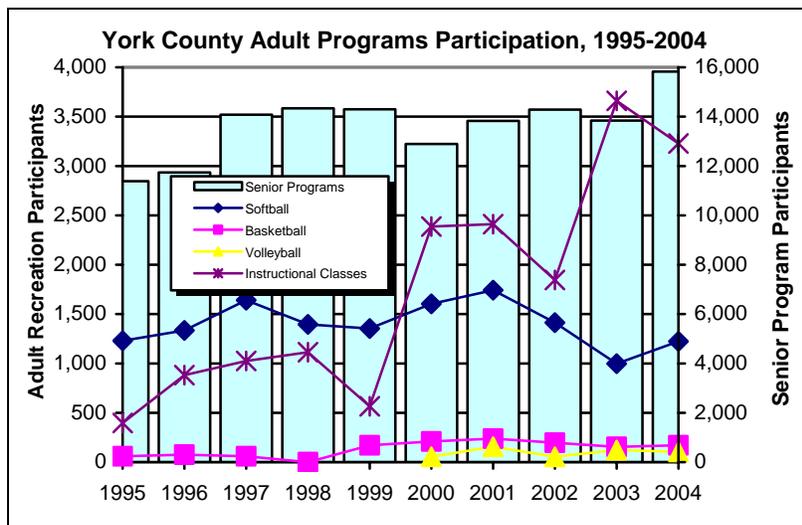


Figure 5

etiquette, art to adult and youth dance, Tae Kwon Do to adult and youth fitness. Introduced in 2000, adult volleyball also has grown, increasing participation by 93% since it began. Another program that has reached an all-time high is the County's senior program. Currently there are 15,828 adult seniors participating. Since 2000, growth in the program has increased by 23%. Activities offered to seniors include: a computer club, preventative health services including blood pressure checks, flu shots, an annual health fair, and education seminars on scams

and crimes. Furthermore, seniors can take advantage of a breakfast club, dining club, bridge club, canasta group, and the Birthday Bash. There are also a variety of classes including crafts, ceramics, knitting, crocheting, and quilting, and line dancing classes for all levels.

### School/Park Facilities

York County's development of recreational facilities at school sites for community use, known as the "school/park concept," has proven to be an effective means of providing athletic fields, gymnasiums, basketball and tennis courts, and playground areas that serve both school and community needs. In fact, if the County were to provide separate facilities comparable to what is found at the 18 school sites, millions of additional dollars would have to be spent to duplicate the infrastructure that already exists at school sites (utilities, parking, etc.). Citizens have been well served by the school/park concept in York County and will continue to be so for years to come. In this regard, York County is a model for other communities wishing to provide recreational facilities in a cost-effective manner.

Development of school/park facilities began in 1985 after a joint effort by County and School staffs to develop master plans for each school site in the County was completed. In addition to

utilizing the sites to the fullest extent possible for community and school purposes, the master planning effort also tried to achieve equity among the schools by establishing a basic set of core facilities that should exist at each site. For example, each elementary school master plan depicts these core facilities: a gymnasium, two playground areas, a youth baseball/softball field, a soccer field, and two outdoor basketball courts. However, in addition to these core facilities, some elementary school sites may have, for example, larger soccer fields that are lighted, two baseball fields, tennis courts, and so forth if the site is able to accommodate such development and if there is a need in that geographic area for such a facility. These plans have also been revised periodically as the need to expand school buildings and/or provide additional facilities occurred. With the exception of York High School, the vast majority of the County's school sites have been fully developed and upgraded with the installation of irrigation and/or lighting systems, improving drainage on infields, and renovating turf grass.

Because of the commitment to the school/park concept, most of the County's recreational activities take place on school grounds. In order to maximize the community's use of these facilities, the Board of Supervisors and the School Board first entered into an agreement in 1991, updated in 1997, whereby the Parks and Recreation Division assumed responsibility for scheduling after-school use of gymnasiums and outdoor facilities at all elementary schools and three of the four middle schools. (Elementary and middle schools are the primary school/park sites since they do not have as many after-school activities as the high schools.) An additional benefit of this centralized scheduling approach is that valuable usage data is compiled and analyzed in order to assess the existing demand and long-term needs for recreational facilities.

While participation in York County-sponsored programs has decreased, the supplemental non-County organizations have still grown and facility usage has grown. **Figure 6** shows that reservation hours have increased steadily, rising from 13,500 hours in 1990 to 56,091 hours in 2004. This represents a 315% increase in just 15 years. Since the last plan update in 1999, usage has increased 63% and is showing no signs of slowing.

York County Outdoor Facility Reservation Hours, 1990-2004

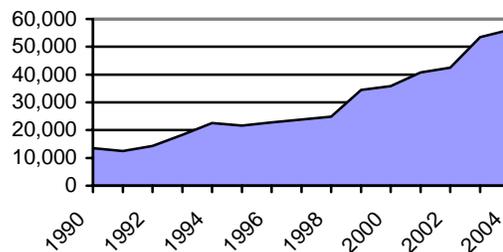


Figure 6

A final issue relating to facility use is the effect that inadequate high school facilities has had on other school and park facilities that are supposed to be available for community use. For example, the Tabb and Grafton High School soccer teams have had to use Tabb Elementary School, Mount Vernon Elementary School, and Wolf Trap Park for their practices and games because of a lack of athletic fields at these high schools. The intensity of high school interscholastic sports has had a detrimental effect on these fields to the point that they need to be renovated. However, with the heavy demand for field usage, it would be extremely difficult to take these fields out of service without having an adverse effect on community-based programs.

### **Park and Recreational Facilities**

Complementing the school/park facilities are a variety of other park and recreational facilities. County facilities include Back Creek Park, Charles E. Brown Park, Chisman Creek Park, Kiln Creek Park, New Quarter Park, Wolf Trap Park, the Yorktown Waterfront, and the Old Wormley Creek and Rodgers A. Smith public boat landings. Also located in the County are several non-County parks, including the Colonial National Historical Park, which is owned and operated by the National Park Service, Waller Mill Park (City of Williamsburg), and Harwoods Mill Park (City of Newport News). In addition, the County rents space at the Washington Square Shopping Center in Grafton, for the Senior Center of York, and space in the Historic Triangle Community Services Center on Waller Mill Road for the "Skate, Rattle and Roll" roller skating program.

Finally, many subdivision and apartment complexes in the County have private recreational facilities – such as swimming pools, playing fields, tennis courts, weight rooms – available for their residents’ use. **Table 5** above, breaks out recreational opportunities available in various portions of the County.

<b>Outdoor Recreational Facilities Inventory</b>								
Type of Facility	Upper County		York/Dare Area		Grafton/Tabb Area		Total County	
	1998	2004	1998	2004	1998	2004	1998	2004
Instructional Soccer	1	1	4	4	1	1	6	6
Soccer/Football	4	4	8	8	7	10	19	22
Youth Baseball/Softball	5	5	8	6	6	7	19	18
Regulation Softball	0	0	2	2	0	2	1	4
Regulation Baseball	2	2	5	3	2	5	9	10
Practice	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Track	1	1	1	1	2	1	5	4
Tennis Courts	6	8	22	20	6	6	34	32
Outdoor Basketball Courts	6	7	18	18	11	11	35	36
Boat Ramps	0	0	5	5	2	2	7	7
Picnic Areas	1	14	2	3	0	0	3	17

The York/Dare area includes facilities north of Dare Road up to Charles Brown Park in Lackey

**Table 5**

Back Creek Park is located on Goodwin Neck Road in the Seaford area. Amoco Oil Company donated these 27 acres of waterfront property on Back Creek to the County in 1978, and the park was opened for use in 1981. Facilities include six lighted tennis courts, a boat launching facility, a fishing/crabbing pier, a small picnic area and a rest room building with a small office for seasonal staff who oversee park activities. Back Creek Park serves as the hub for the County’s tennis programs, which include leagues, lessons, camps and tournaments for youths and adults. The boat launching facility is considered to be one of the finest on the Peninsula and as a result is heavily used.

A 10-acre site on Route 238 in Lackey, Charles E. Brown Park, was opened in 1978 as the County’s first park. Park facilities available for public use include a 3,000-square foot Community Building, two tennis courts, two basketball courts (one lighted), a baseball field, a playground area, a picnic shelter (donated by the York County Business Association), interpretive wetlands area, and a rest room facility. Constructed with a combination of federal and local funds, the Community Building has two small meeting rooms and a large meeting room with a kitchenette that is available for use free of charge. The only lighted outdoor basketball court in the County is located at this facility.

Two reclaimed fly ash sites are leased from Dominion Virginia Power by the County for recreational use. Chisman Creek Park is a 13-acre parcel on Wolf Trap Road in Grafton that opened in the spring of 1991. This park has two lighted softball fields and a rest room facility and is used as the primary site for the adult softball league program. However, because of the increasing demand for lighted athletic fields, both of the softball fields are being used for soccer play in the fall. The second reclaimed fly ash site, Wolf Trap Park, is also located on Wolf Trap Road. Opened in 1992, this 28-acre site features four soccer fields, a rest room facility, and two small ponds.

Kiln Creek Park is the most recent addition to the County’s inventory of park facilities. This 20-acre site on Kiln Creek Parkway in Tabb was dedicated to York County’s School Division by the developer of the Villages of Kiln Creek for a future school/park site. The County has leased this property from the School Board for use as a park until there is a need to construct a school on the site. The site was master-planned as a school/park facility, so the addition of a school building on the property will have minimal disruption to the existing recreational facilities. A lighted soccer field, lighted baseball field, youth baseball/softball field, two half-basketball

courts, a playground area, small picnic shelter, and rest room facility were completed in 1999. The athletic fields were developed during the first construction phase in 1997 and opened for use in the spring of 1998. Lighting was added in 2000.

Located in the upper County, adjacent to the Queens Lake subdivision and the Colonial Parkway, is New Quarter Park. This 545-acre tract, which was acquired from the federal government by the County free of charge through a surplus land program in 1976, is the largest single parcel of County-owned park acreage in the County. Most of the land is heavily wooded, with only eight acres developed for use a group activity area and approximately 95 acres of large open grassy areas. Park facilities include 14 picnic shelters (1 donated by the Yorktown Rotary Club,) with three available for group rental, a campfire circle with seating for 100 people, softball field, two half-basketball courts, horseshoe courts, a floating pier on Queen Creek, and hiking trails. In 2004-05 the park was renovated and added 5.5 miles of mountain bike trails (developed by the Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike Association), a sand volleyball court, a one-mile asphalt pedestrian bike path, three miles of natural surface hiking trail (developed by the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club) and two playground areas.

Since opening for use in 1986, New Quarter Park has hosted activities such as family reunions, church/company picnics, weddings, civil war reenactments, scout jamborees, and primitive camping. In 2000, New Quarter Park was opened to the general public for seasonal use (May through November) on a trial basis. Because of damage from Hurricane Isabel in 2003, the park was closed while under-going repair and construction of new facilities. In the spring of 2005, the newly renovated park was opened for use by the public on weekends from April 1 to Memorial Day and Labor Day to Thanksgiving weekend, and daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

In 2005 the County entered into a lease agreement with the City of Newport News to develop a public park on 187 acres of property owned by Newport News Waterworks. Final design approval is targeted for March 2006, with construction beginning in September 2006. The park should be opened to the public no later than the spring of 2008. According to the agreement, the County will not only address regional stormwater drainage but site drainage for the athletic fields constructed on site. Proposed facilities include lighted athletic fields for: youth baseball, soccer, and adult softball. Other amenities will include restrooms, maintenance facility, parking, playgrounds, picnic shelters and trails.

The Yorktown Waterfront occupies a total of 12.5 acres along the York River in historic Yorktown and provides opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, beach picnicking, fishing, and boating. Two acres of the property came under the ownership of the County in July 2003 and was previously owned by the Yorktown Trustees and managed by the County. In 2004, the National Park Service turned over management of the beach picnic area to the County, adding 10.5 acres to the beachfront. Originally improved in 1977 with a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Yorktown Waterfront is the only public beach facility in York County. Additionally in 2005, the County completed Riverwalk Landing, a 21,000 square-foot retail/restaurant destination that consists of eight new buildings, a renovated freight shed and parking terrace. As part of the project, the Yorktown Pier, which was damaged by Hurricane Isabel in 2003, was renovated into a fishing pier.

Riverwalk Landing includes two additional floating piers. One pier, located at the foot of Ballard Street, is designed to accommodate medium and large sized vessels. The second pier located behind the restaurant and between the larger pier and the Coleman Bridge, is intended to accommodate smaller craft such as day-trippers and pleasure boaters visiting the village shops and restaurants. The piers provide the ability for overnight stays. The large 395-foot T-pier provides ample space for tall ships, navy vessels, and regional cruise lines. Electrical service, water, telephone, and sewer pump out facilities are available pier side. Restroom and shower facilities are available specifically for overnight boaters and ship crews.

The Senior Center of York is located in 6,367 square feet of rented storefront space in the Washington Square Shopping Center in Grafton. The Center was first located in a 1,000-square foot unit in the Patriot Square Shopping Center in 1991 but was moved to a larger 3,000 square foot facility in 1993 because the number of citizens participating in senior adult programs had outgrown the capacity of the facility. The Center moved again in 2001 into its current space. In addition to its regular activities, the Center serves as a nutrition site for the Peninsula Agency on Aging. This facility is open during the day, Monday through Friday.

The County also leases approximately 7,000 square feet in the Historic Triangle Community Services Center on Waller Mill Road for the operation of a roller skating program called "Skate, Rattle and Roll." This program began in October of 1994 and generally operates on Friday evenings, October through April.

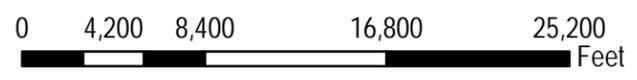
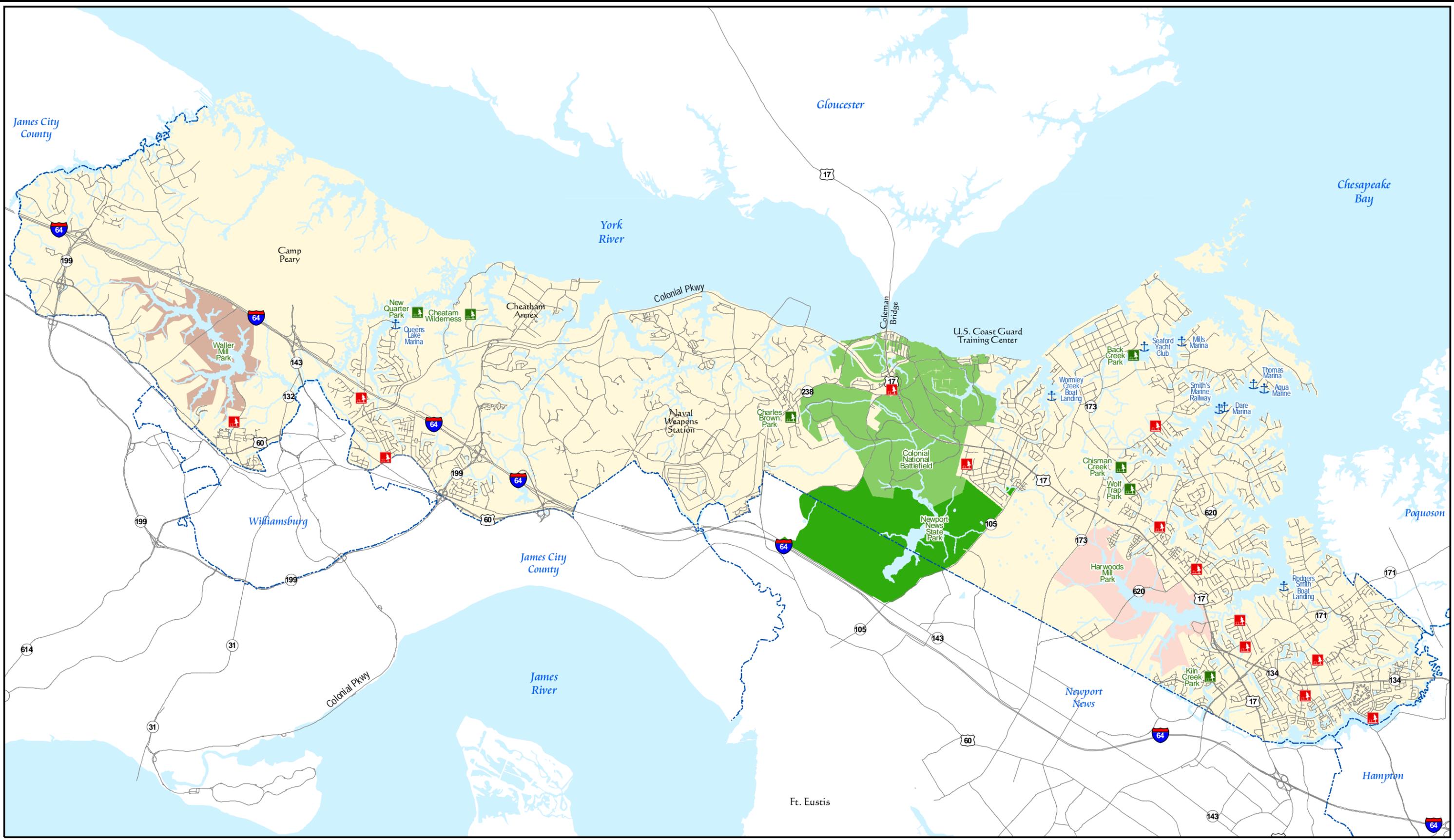
In response to citizens advocating the development of a community center, land on Route 134 adjacent to the Tabb library facility was made available by the County for development of the Victory Branch of the YMCA. A YMCA recreation center was constructed on the site and opened in January 2003. The facility serves the residents in the lower County and has 11,081 members. The existing 49,000-square foot building has an eight-lane swimming pool, gymnasium, health and wellness area with track, aerobics studio, climbing wall, two racquetball courts, teen center, and child watch area. Even though recently completed the YMCA facility has exceeded membership expectations and the second phase of development is under design. The expansion would add 11,000 square feet, expanding the health and wellness area, teen center, and child watch area. In addition, an auxiliary gymnasium and separate area for youth 6-12 years old will be constructed.

Upper County residents can currently utilize the James City County-Williamsburg recreation facilities; however, plans are in progress to locate a new YMCA near the Sentara Williamsburg Community Hospital location on Mooretown Road. York County residents can join the James City County-Williamsburg recreation facilities as non-resident members and be reimbursed by the County for the difference between non-resident and resident fees. There are two locations in James City County that can be utilized. The first is the James River Community Center at 8901 Pocahontas Trail (Route 60), which has a full-size gymnasium, fitness room, multipurpose room, and rentable meeting rooms and racquetball court. The second facility, the James City/Williamsburg Community Center is located at 5301 Longhill Road and offers a gymnasium, indoor track, dance/aerobic room, teen area, senior area, arts and crafts area with kilns, a fitness room, racquetball court, a 275-seat multi-purpose room and other smaller meeting rooms, whirlpool, and a 25-meter x 25-yard swimming pool with zero depth entry and wheelchair accessibility.

## **Water Access**

In 2000 Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government, signed agreements to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem. The agreement, committed the organizations to nurture and sustain a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Partnership and to achieve certain goals. The following water access goals were set out:

- By 2010, expand by 30 percent the system of public access points to the Bay, its tributaries and related resource sites in an environmentally sensitive manner by working with state and federal agencies, local governments and stakeholder organizations.
- By 2005, increase the number of designated water trails in the Chesapeake Bay region by 500 miles.
- Enhance interpretation materials that promote stewardship at natural, recreational, historical and cultural public access points within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.



# Parks & Water Access

## York County Facilities

-  Marina
-  Park
-  School/Park



- By 2003, develop partnerships with at least 30 sites to enhance place-based interpretation of Bay-related resources and themes and stimulate volunteer involvement in resource restoration and conservation.

Since the goals were adopted in 2000, the York River Water Trail has been established, along with several Chesapeake Bay Gateway Network sites, including the Yorktown Visitor Center and Battlefield. The York River Water Trail follows approximately 120 miles along the tidal York, Mattaponi, and Pamunkey Rivers. Connecting multiple Gateway sites (Yorktown, Gloucester Point, York River State Park and the Pamunkey Indian Reservations), the route spans a diverse landscape.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation published the *2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan*, which is the state's official conservation, outdoor recreation, and open space plan. It is intended to serve as a guide to all levels of government and the private sector. During the plan development, a survey of Virginia citizens was conducted, and the respondents ranked swimming, fishing, sunbathing, and boating 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>, respectively, out of the top ten activities, as the most popular outdoor recreational activities. Additionally, 55.7% of respondents stated that the provision of improved water access for fishing, boating, and swimming was the most important outdoor recreation resource needed. Because of the popularity of water-based activities, the plan recommends that "all agencies should provide adequate support facilities and services, such as restrooms, concessions, parking and maintenance of existing public water and beach access areas." Furthermore, these locations should allow access to potable water supplies and appropriate sanitary facilities.

York County's commitment to providing public water access is evidenced through its seven public boat ramps, mainly located in the lower County. The County's proximity to the York River and the Chesapeake Bay makes boating an extremely popular activity. However, proximity does not guarantee access, as much of the County's shoreline is in federal ownership (National Park Service, Camp Peary, Cheatham Annex, Naval Weapons Station, and the Coast Guard Training Center). This contributes to the shortage of boat landings in the County, as evidenced by overcrowding issues at the Rodgers A. Smith and Back Creek Park facilities.

York County has stayed committed to providing improved water access, making improvements to existing public access sites and working to acquire new land for water access recreational use. The Rodgers A. Smith boat ramp received a complete renovation in 2005, replacing the boat launching ramps, floating piers and fishing pier. The County has also added public rest room facilities at this location in conjunction with the extension of sanitary sewer. In addition, through a grant from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, a crabbing and fishing pier was built at Back Creek Park, and the County replaced the floating wooden dock with a concrete floating dock. The County has also made many improvements to Yorktown beach.

The 1990 Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan offered several suggestions for accommodating increased demand for water-oriented activities, including the following:

- Additional boating access for areas west of the Coleman Bridge and east of York River State Park,
- Additional boating sites on the Poquoson River in order to relieve the heavy boat traffic near the mouth of the York River,
- Increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County for nature study,
- Environmental education, and
- Analysis of the lands along the Colonial Parkway to identify potential sites where water access could be improved by providing additional parking areas.

In addition to these areas, land along Queen Creek was identified as a potential access area. Chisman Creek would also be a good site for a public boat launching facility because there is deeper water suitable for launching larger boats. The parking lot at Back Creek Park could also be considered for expansion. For canoeists and kayakers, the Old Wormley Creek Landing has potential for improved access. In addition, increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County would allow for nature study and environmental education. Existing and potential water access sites in the County, both public and private, are depicted on the Parks map, with detailed information on each provided in the next three **Tables 6, 7, and 8:**

**Existing Public Shoreline and Water Access Points – York County**

<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Day Use</b>	<b>Seasonal Use</b>	<b>Limited Parking Lot</b>	<b>Large Parking Lot</b>	<b>Boat Launch Ramp</b>	<b>Car Top Board Only</b>	<b>Dock</b>	<b>Bank and Pier Fishing</b>	<b>Swimming Beach</b>	<b>Hiking Trails</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>Restrooms</b>	<b>Handicapped Access</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Natural Heritage Areas</b>	<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Pumpout</b>
Back Creek Park	x			x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x			
Cheatham Wilderness								x		x	x	x			x	x		
Colonial National Historic Park	x		x					x			x	x	x	x	x		x	
New Quarter Park	x	x		x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Old Wormley Creek Landing	x		x		x		x	x						x	x			
Rodgers A. Smith Landing	x		x		x		x	x			x		x	x	x			
Yorktown Waterfront	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x
<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Water Body</b>		<b>Remarks</b>															
Back Creek Park	Back Creek		Tennis, crabbing, fishing, picnicking															
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek		Limited access, open by permit only, eagle/osprey nesting															
Colonial National Historic Park	York River		Historic site, bike path, interpretive center, camping by permit															
New Quarter Park	Queen Creek		Limited access – open to public seasonally															
Old Wormley Creek	Wormley Creek		Launch at high tide only, dock															
Rodgers A. Smith Landing	Poquoson River		Three ramps, pier for fishing and crabbing															
Yorktown Waterfront	York River		Historic site, food, swimming, picnicking, docking, and fishing pier															
<b>Sources:</b>																		
Chesapeake Bay and Its Tidal Tributaries & Susquehanna River Public Access Guide, 1989; revised map 1995																		
Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan. Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990																		

**Table 6**

**Existing Commercial/Private Marinas, Boat Ramps & Recreation Areas – York County**

<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Water Body</b>	<b>Boat Launch Ramp</b>	<b>Number of Wet Ships</b>	<b>Dockside Pumpout</b>	<b>Restrooms</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Riverwalk Landing	York River		40*	x	x	1,420 lineal feet of dock space, electric, water, telephone, showers.
Aqua Marine	Chisman Creek	x	25		x	Repairs, convenience store, shower.
Belvin Marine	The Thorofare	x	8		x	Boat lift, electric, engine sales, repairs, beverages.
Camp Skimino	Skimino Creek					Girl Scout reservation.
Dare Marina	Chisman Creek		50	x	x	300' floating dock, 128 dry storage, marine store, gas, ice.
Marlbank Cove	Wormley Creek		12			Private
Mills Marina	Back Creek		58	x	x	Marine store, gas, electric, bait.
Queens Lake Boat Dock	Queen Creek	x	88	x		Private
Seaford Yacht Club	Back Creek		30			Private
Smith's Marine Railway	Chisman Creek	x	6			Repairs only.
Thomas Marina	Chisman Creek		35		x	Dock, electric
Williamsburg KOA	Skimino Creek					Campground off Lightfoot Road (Rt 646)
Wormley Creek Marina	Wormley Creek		72	x	x	40 dry storage, repairs, showers, gas, diesel, electric, beverages
Sources: <i>Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan.</i> Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990. <i>Boating Almanac.</i> Volume 4, 1993 *Number based on 35-foot boats occupying the dock						

**Table 7**

Potential Public Shoreline and Water Access Points – York County										
Public Access Area	Boat Launch Ramp	Car Top Boat Only	Bank and Pier Fishing	Swimming Beach	Camping	Nature Study/Education	Picnicking	Wetlands	Cultural Resources	Pumpout
Chisman Creek Site	X		X				X	X		
Back Creek Park								X		X
Cheatham Wilderness	X			X	X					
Poquoson River Site	X		X			X	X	X		
York River Potential Site		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Yorktown Waterfront	X		X							
Public Access Area	Water Body	Remarks								
Back Creek Site	Chisman Creek	Potential for pier or dock								
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek	Limited access, eagle/osprey nesting								
Poquoson River Site	Poquoson River									
York River Potential Site	York River	Potential for pier or dock								
<i>Source:</i> <i>Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan. Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990.</i>										

**Table 8**

## **Greenways**

The 1999 *Comprehensive Plan* recommended the establishment of greenways and trails throughout the County. Since that time the Board of Supervisors has set aside funds for greenways development in the annual Capital Improvements Plans. Greenways can be defined as linear parks, alternative transportation routes, or other open space conservation areas that provide passive recreational opportunities, pedestrian and/or bicycle paths, and/or the conservation of open spaces or natural areas. Typically they include natural corridors (riverfronts, streams, valleys, ridgelines), railroad rights-of-way, power line rights-of-way, and bicycle or walking paths. A community greenways system can make use of existing scenic roads, parks, nature reserves, and cultural or historic areas and can link targeted populated areas such as neighborhoods or small commercial nodes.

There are many benefits to having greenways in a community, including economic, healthier lifestyle, environmental, and historical and cultural resources enhancement. Economically, studies have shown that having greenways nearby increases real property values by increasing the marketability. They provide attractive views as well as easy access for homeowners to recreational activities. Additionally, expenditures by residents and tourists may increase because of the linkages established between shops, restaurants, recreational areas, etc. and neighborhoods. Furthermore, having greenways close to residential areas may encourage citizens to engage in recreational activities that they might never have participated in if it were not for the easy access that the paths provide. Greenways can provide opportunities for activities such as biking, walking, in-line skating, jogging, and even horseback riding. Some greenways and paths even provide alternative modes of travel to and from work or other activities.

# Greenways Plan York County, Virginia



- Park and Ride
- Existing Parks
- Existing Schools
- Existing Public Beach
- Greenway
- Connection to Greenway



The environment and a community's historical and cultural resources also benefit from the establishment of greenways. Trails promote an alternate mode of travel other than the automobile, thus reducing pollution as well as traffic. In some instances implementing a greenway plan can help to protect critical wetland and environmentally sensitive areas thus creating a larger ecological system for migratory species of animals and also providing a link for isolated species. Greenways can offer walkable access to significant historical sites. They often make use of existing historic railroad corridors or canals that were used as primary trade or traveling routes. These routes often have historical buildings that are of interest to tourists and regular users of the trail, and the inclusion of historic buildings and places along a greenway helps to preserve history in places that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Understanding the benefits that such a greenway can bring to a jurisdiction, a preliminary Greenway concept has been developed. The Greenways Plan shows the approximate routing that the trails might take, using a combination of natural area and roadside segments, and how the trails could link key public properties such as schools, parks, and government buildings to neighborhoods, shopping areas, and historical and recreational opportunities. With continued funding through the CIP, and more detailed planning, design, property or easement acquisition, and construction, such a system could become a reality and could provide substantial recreational and aesthetic enhancements for County citizens.

## **SCHOOLS**

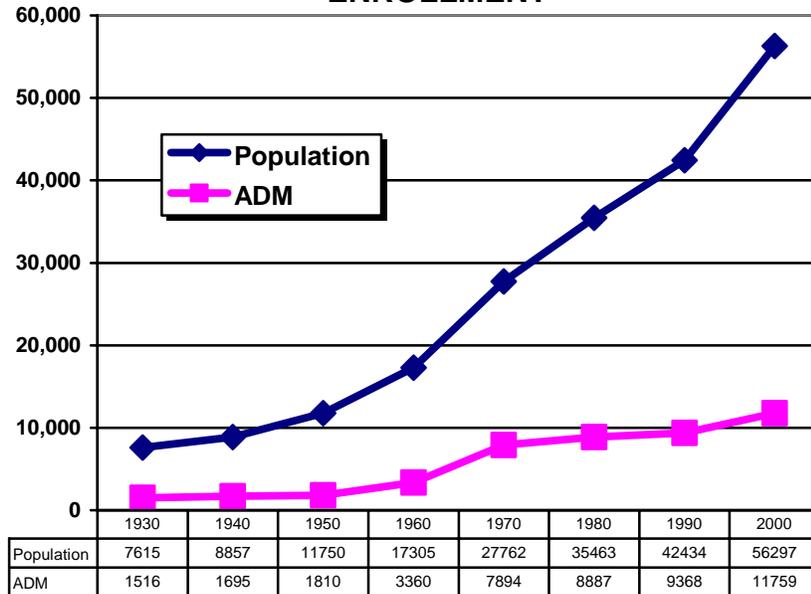
The York County School Division consists of ten elementary schools, four middle schools, and four high schools. In addition, the County School Board owns an undeveloped 20-acre school site in the Kiln Creek area. The County School Board operates three magnet school programs: the School of the Arts at Bruton High School; the Math, Science, and Technology Magnet School at Yorktown Elementary; and the Fine Arts Magnet School at Waller Mill Elementary. York County's only charter school, York River Academy, located on the York High School campus, serves selected ninth and tenth grade students with an innovative academic and career preparatory education in core subject areas with an emphasis on computer and web-based technology. The County School Board also provides adult learning opportunities through GED (General Educational Development) classes for adults who want to get a GED diploma or just want to improve their basic math and reading skills. These classes are held at the Lifelong Learning Center/Adult Education Center at York High School. The School Board also offers ESL (English as a Second Language) classes at Tabb High School and Bethel Baptist Church.

### **School Enrollment History**

School enrollment is measured in terms of Average Daily Membership (ADM). The ADM represents the total number of York County schools students in membership (enrolled) for each day in the month, divided by the number of school days in the month. For convenience, the terms ADM and enrollment are used interchangeably in this plan.

As shown in **Figure 7**, school enrollment was fairly constant prior to World War II, but the postwar baby boom brought a dramatic increase in school-age children, which put tremendous pressure on school systems all over the country in the 1950s and '60s. In York County, school enrollment jumped by 86% – 6.4% a year, on average – between 1950 and 1960 while the total County population climbed by 47%. As a result, the ratio of school students to the total population rose from 15% in 1950 to 19% in 1960. This growth in school membership, dramatic though it was, pales in comparison to the 1960s, which brought a 60% increase in population and a 135% increase in school membership (an average annual increase of 8.8%); by 1970, the student/population ratio had climbed to nearly 30%. In response to this enormous growth in student population a major expansion in school facilities was undertaken adding ten of the County's eighteen existing schools between 1954 and 1969.

## YORK COUNTY POPULATION AND SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



**Figure 7**

The 1970s and '80s brought relative stability to school enrollment, with increases of 12% (1.3% annually) and 6% (0.5% annually) respectively. In contrast, the County's population growth rate was 28% during the '70s and 20% during the '80s. As a result, the student/population ratio fell to 25% in 1980 and to 22% in 1990. In fact, student membership actually *declined* between 1980 and 1986 despite continued housing construction. It then increased fairly steadily through the end of the decade as the so-called "baby boom echo" (the offspring of the baby boom generation) began to reach school age.

Enrollment growth accelerated during the 1990s, increasing by 25.5% (2.3% annually, on average), but still trailed the 32.7% increase in population, thus reducing the student population ratio to 20.9%. Since 2000 enrollment growth has slowed somewhat to an annual average of 1.8%, increasing enrollment by 9.1% from 11,759 in 2000 to 12,825 in 2005.

Just as most of York County's population and housing growth has been in the lower County, so too has most of the school enrollment growth. Between the 1993-94 and 2003-04 school years, for example, ADM increased by 18.6% in the lower County and by 10.5% in the upper County. Approximately 90% of the net growth in school enrollment during that period was in the lower County.

### **School Enrollment Projections**

More art than science, projecting future school enrollment is basically an exercise in educated guesswork that relies as much on good luck as on perceptive judgment. This is particularly true of long-range projections because of the many intangible variables involved, which in York County are compounded by the sizable military population that introduces another layer of uncertainty into an already uncertain projection equation.

<b>Average Daily Membership, York County Schools, 1996 – 2005 (September figures)</b>									
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Upper County</b>									
Elementary	781	796	758	753	788	799	796	814	877
Middle	473	447	457	476	510	493	479	484	521
High	546	548	548	567	585	622	662	703	735
Total	1,800	1,791	1,763	1,796	1,883	1,914	1,937	2,001	2,133
<b>Lower County</b>									
Elementary	4,288	4,380	4,363	4,341	4,299	4,376	4,411	4,413	4,437
Middle	2,364	2,371	2,427	2,418	2,490	2,562	2,623	2,583	2,663
High	2,730	2,895	3,071	3,196	3,270	3,352	3,476	3,566	3,595
Ungraded	23	17	18	8	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9,405	9,663	9,879	9,963	10,059	10,290	10,510	10,562	10,693
<b>Total County</b>									
Elementary	5,069	5,176	5,121	5,094	5,087	5,175	5,207	5,225	5,314
Middle	2,837	2,818	2,884	2,894	3,000	3,055	3,102	3,068	3,184
High	3,276	3,443	3,619	3,763	3,855	3,974	4,137	4,269	4,330
Total	11,205	11,454	11,642	11,759	11,942	12,204	12,446	12,562	12,828
Note: Figures do not include Early Childhood Special Education students, who have increased in number in recent years and could potentially affect space needs if growth continues.									
Source: York County School Division									

**Table 9**

The methodology for deriving the ADM projections in this plan is essentially a two-step process. Step 1 involves the development of a base enrollment figure projected for each grade level using the standard *grade progression method* of enrollment projection by which the number of students in each grade is assumed to equal the number of students in the previous grade during the previous year (**Table 9**). The number of kindergartners has to be estimated since there is no previous grade from which to advance. Since the base projection does not account for net migration, for students who fail or drop out of school, or for the many first-graders who do not attend public kindergarten, Step 2 in the projection process involves the adjustment of the base figures for each grade level by a change factor. This change factor reflects projected population growth in the County from both births and net migration as well as historical patterns of increase or decline at each grade level that have occurred in York County within the previous ten years.

Projected school enrollment through 2025 is shown in **Table 10**. Even with the aging of the population, which the VEC projects will eventually cause the senior population (65 and over) to outnumber the school-age population (ages 5 through 19), York County is projected to experience continued growth in school enrollment from 2005 through 2025. However, the magnitude of growth is projected to be lower than in previous decades, with a 11.7% increase between 2000 and 2010, followed by a 5.9% increase between 2010 and

<b>York County Actual and Projected School Enrollment, 2000-2025</b>						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>Upper County</b>						
Elementary	753	877	920	960	1,010	1,050
Middle	476	521	540	510	560	580
High	567	735	780	780	730	780
Total	1,796	2,133	2,240	2,250	2,300	2,410
<b>Lower County</b>						
Elementary	4,341	4,437	4,660	4,850	5,040	5,200
Middle	2,418	2,663	2,570	2,620	2,820	2,910
High	3,196	3,595	3,670	3,710	3,760	3,940
Total	9,963	10,695	10,900	11,180	11,620	12,050
<b>Total County</b>						
Elementary	5,094	5,314	5,580	5,810	6,050	6,250
Middle	2,894	3,184	3,110	3,130	3,380	3,490
High	3,763	4,330	4,450	4,490	4,490	4,720
Total	11,759	12,828	13,140	13,430	13,920	14,460
Sources: York County School Division (actual) York County Planning Division (projected)						

**Table 10**

2020. By 2025 ADM is projected to reach about 14,500 students – a net increase of approximately 12.7% over the 20-year period. Although net growth in the number of students is projected to occur at every grade level in both the upper and lower County between 2005 and 2025, there will likely be intervals within that 20-year period during which enrollment will likely decline. One-fifth of the projected growth in enrollment is projected to be in upper County schools, which accounted for only one-tenth of the enrollment increase between 1994 and 2004. This reflects the diminishing supply of vacant residential land in the lower County and the significant growth potential of the upper County, particularly with the eventual extension of public water and sewer throughout the Skimino area.

These projections are lower than the projections previously published in the 1999 *Comprehensive Plan*. The earlier projections were developed by a committee of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors at a time of fairly rapid enrollment growth that the committee assumed would continue. Actual enrollment has fallen short of those projections and, in fact, is lower than the low-growth enrollment scenario considered by the committee.

For purposes of comparison, two additional sets of projections were prepared utilizing a different methodology based entirely on trend analysis. The first of these “alternative projection series” assumes that the student/population ratio will decrease continually over the next twenty years by a progressively smaller amount, following a regression equation that was derived from historical data from 1970 through 2000. School enrollment will continue to climb under this scenario, reaching slightly over 14,000 students by 2025. The second alternative projection series uses the same methodology but with a different variable; it assumes that the ratio of school students to housing units will follow the same general trend as the student/population ratio. Once again a regression equation was derived using data from 1970 through 2000. Under this scenario enrollment would increase through 2020 and decrease between 2020 and 2025. All three enrollment scenarios are shown in **Figure 8**.

### Alternative Enrollment Projection Scenarios

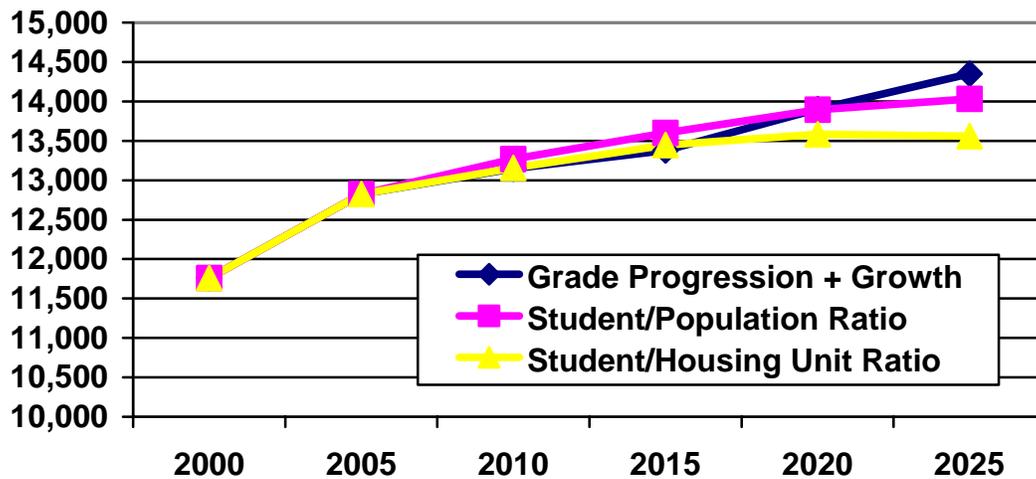


Figure 8

### School Capacity

School capacities are calculated by the School Division on the basis of not just physical space, but also by the constraints placed on physical space by programs. State education mandates, School Board policies, changes in educational philosophy, and desires and expectations of the community can influence program capacities over time. In the early 1990s the School Board

recalculated school capacities contracted with Dr. Glen Earthman, a recognized expert on school capacity calculation, based on the concept of program capacity rather than architectural capacity. This resulted in a total school *program* capacity of 8,941, almost 25% below the *design* capacity (11,530) of the then existing buildings. The combination of significant unexpected growth in school membership and the change from design to program capacity of school buildings ultimately led to a substantial school construction program that increased total school capacity by over 5,000 students. During the 2004-05 school year, the School Board adopted new capacity figures based on a recalculation of program capacity on the part of the individual school administrations. This resulted in an increase in program capacity of almost 800 students. As of April 2005, according to the School Division, the cumulative capacity of the County's eighteen schools totaled 14,298 students. This does *not* include portable classrooms (trailers), which are not considered permanent classrooms and therefore are not included in the school capacity figures.

According to the School Division, the school system currently has capacity (as of April 2005) for 14,298 students. Although some schools are experiencing overcrowding, there is surplus school capacity at all three grade levels in both the upper and lower County. The adopted Capital Improvements Program for Fiscal Years 2005-06 through 2010-11 includes school expansion projects that will add a total of 30 classrooms in the next six years, increasing elementary school capacity by 504 students in the lower County and 72 students in the upper County, increasing the total capacity of the system to 14,874 students.

Future school enrollment and capacity is depicted in **Figure 9**. Projections indicate that with the addition of space for 576 additional elementary school students that is programmed to occur by the 2010-2011 school year, there will be enough school capacity at each level in both the upper and lower County to handle expected increases in enrollment at least through the year 2020. After 2020, it appears that minor overcrowding will begin to occur at the elementary school level in the upper County and that elementary and high schools in the lower County will be approaching or slightly exceeding capacity. The prediction that there will be adequate capacity is predicated on an inherent assumption that there will be no changes in school programs or policies that reduce space utilization. It also assumes that development will be in accordance with the designations and densities set forth in the Land Use element of this plan.

### Future School Enrollment & Capacity York County Schools

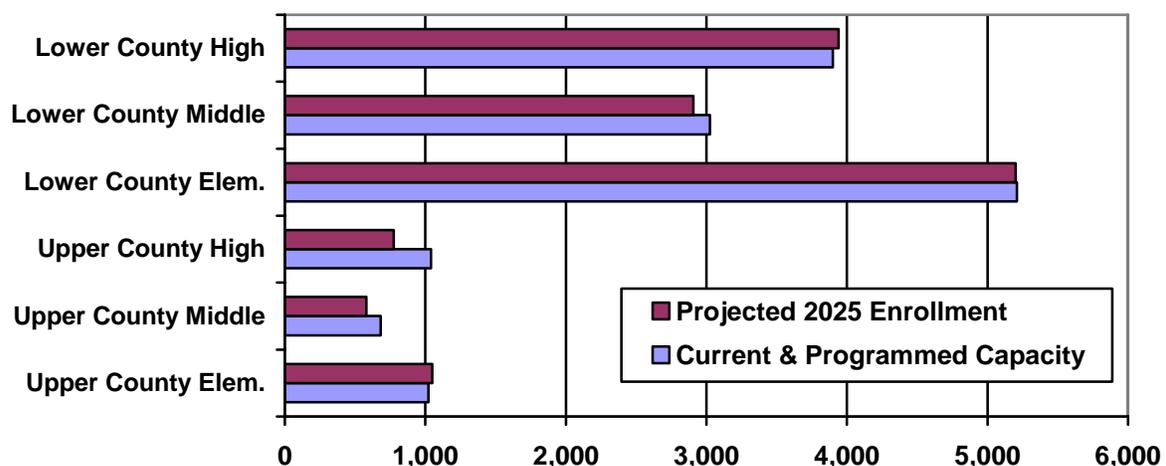


Figure 9

## CITIZEN INPUT

Community facilities were discussed in a variety of ways during the citizen input process. During the Neighborhood Open Houses, several citizens talked about more open space, trees, and in general more green space. Others commented on the need for more parks, recreational facilities, and athletic fields, and more bike and pedestrian accommodations. The telephone survey also highlighted the importance the citizens place on the natural environment, parks, libraries, schools, bike and pedestrian facilities, and office facilities.

The County's jail, Sheriff's Office, and Fire and Rescue operations are all priorities in the provision of services to York County's residents; however, they received few comments from citizens during the neighborhood sessions. During the telephone survey, half the citizens said that it was important to open more satellite Sheriff's offices. More upper County residents felt that it was extremely important (32%), than lower County residents (18%). Furthermore, two-thirds of the citizens consider building more fire stations important and ranked it second in priority among the other community facilities, with an average score of 3.74 out of five. More fire stations were especially important with lower County residents, where 60% responded that it was important.

In the input process, citizens did not express much interest in adding office space or libraries. During the neighborhood sessions citizens found the Tabb Library to be very attractive and said that other developments should reflect such quality. The telephone survey indicated that upper County residents (53%) favor opening satellite County offices. Nevertheless, over two-thirds of the citizens were neutral or did not find it important. Also, when citizens were asked about the importance of building more libraries, they were evenly split with one-third finding it important, one-third being neutral, and one-third saying it was not important. Here again, almost half the upper County residents found building more libraries was important.

Overall, protecting the natural environment and preserving open and green space were the number one and three priorities citizens commented on or responded to during the citizen input process. Seventy-two percent of the citizens found it was extremely important to protect the natural environment, while 86% said that it was important for York County to preserve open and green space. These results mirror the requests received during the neighborhood sessions for more recreation facilities, sporting fields, bike paths, and parks. When citizens were asked about the importance for creating more parks for hiking, biking, picnicking, or playing; half said that it was important. Additionally, almost a third of lower County respondents stated that it was extremely important. Residents also, stated that it was important to build more ball fields for organized sports (39%), while 40% wanted more walking trails in natural areas.

A question in the telephone survey asked citizens to name the main reason they first chose to live in York County. More than anything else, the response was "the schools," given by more than a third (35%). The second highest response – quiet, rural character – received less than half as many "votes." Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan questionnaire asked people what they like most about living in York County. Again "schools" and "rural/small town qualities" were the respondents' top two choices, although in the reverse order. These results come as no surprise, as the quality of the school system has long been a source of pride for York County residents, and maintaining the quality of the school system consistently ranks as a top priority in public opinion surveys of County residents. In addition, when telephone survey participants were asked to rate the importance of constructing new public facilities of various types on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being "extremely important," schools were ranked higher than any other type of community facility on the survey, with an average score of 3.80.

## **PLANNING ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE**

As population grows as a result of residential development, it will be essential for York County to keep pace with improvements or additions to community facilities. Development in these areas impact the way services are delivered to each citizen and York County's surrounding neighbors. The County should continue to plan for expected needs in all functions of community facilities, even though some will only experience mild increases in needs.

### **Emergency Services**

Telephone survey respondents felt it was important for more Sheriff's offices to be provided in the County. This suggests that citizens perceive such offices as an effective deterrent to crime by establishing a presence within the community. However, resources and manpower are limited and would not be adequate need to be greatly expanded to support opening offices throughout the County. Additional offices would require not just more deputies but also administrative staff to be present to assist citizens on a walk-in basis. The Sheriff's Office currently maintains an effective law enforcement presence by providing ongoing patrols throughout the County, which efficiently utilizes manpower by enabling each deputy to cover a larger area than if they were stationed in an office.

The County's fire and rescue response continues to be affected by population growth in York County and the surrounding area in a variety of ways. As growth continues and particularly as buildings age, the activity level of each fire station will change accordingly and will affect its ability to respond adequately. The key to acceptable response times is the availability of units within an acceptable distance, as well as an adequate transportation network with limited traffic congestion. Currently, the County has an additional fire station site on Kiln Creek Parkway in Tabb. However, as residential and commercial development continues, particularly in the upper County, other stations may be needed and existing fire stations may need to be expanded in order to continue to achieve rapid response.

Furthermore, residential growth will continue in potential hurricane impact areas and in proximity to a transportation network that already carries large amounts of hazardous materials. More people also will live within the ten-mile emergency protection zone of the Surry Nuclear Power Station. An efficient transportation network not only in York County but throughout the region will be critical to the ability of residents to evacuate from Hampton Roads. In addition, recent experiences with community wide disasters such as Hurricane Isabel have demonstrated the need to provide critical emergency management facilities (shelters, fire stations, and other support facilities) with sufficient emergency power generating capacity to allow them to effectively support operations during emergencies lasting several days to several weeks.

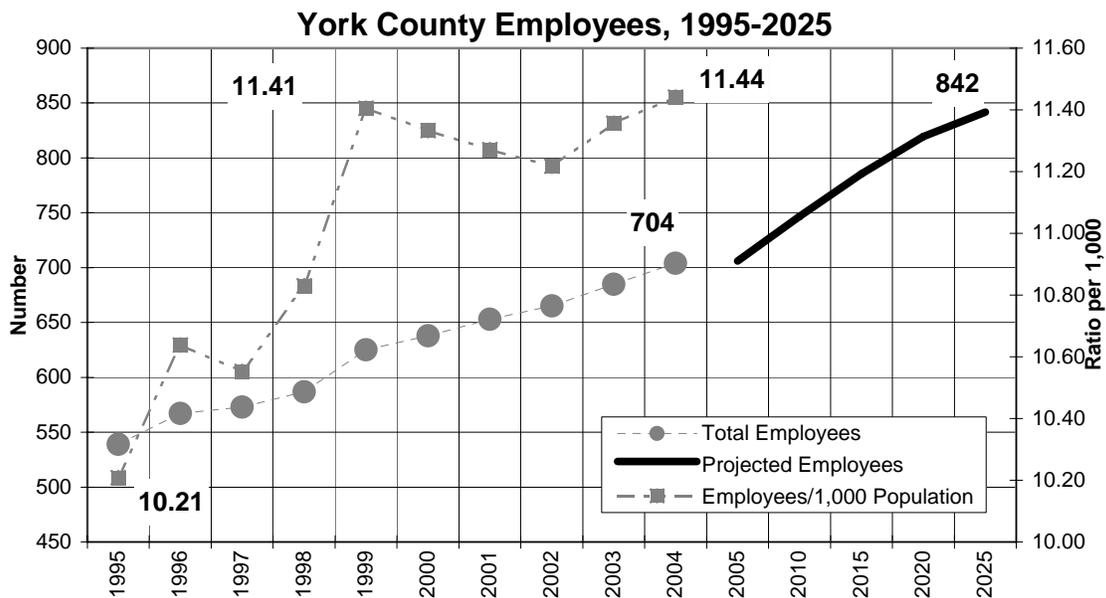
The Sheriff's Office and the Department of Fire and Life Safety both have limited storage and maintenance areas available in the Public Safety Building, fire stations, and satellite offices. Both agencies have an increasing need to manage inventory and maintenance requirements for equipment systems that tax the capabilities of their existing space. A logistical warehouse would assist with these storage and maintenance issues for required equipment (i.e., medical supplies, fire hoses and appliances, uniforms, personal protective equipment, firearms, ammunition, and general supplies) and provide space for equipment maintenance (i.e., drive through bay and work areas for mobile radio installation and maintenance). Additionally, such storage space could be used for other County departmental needs for storage and warehousing of equipment and materials.

Additionally, both the Sheriff's Office and Fire and Life Safety are required to ensure that staff obtains and maintains an ever increasing technical knowledge, skills set, and array of abilities to successfully counter the growing number, variety, and technical complexity of threats to citizens lives and property. To accommodate these needs the County continues to develop more training programs. Currently, this training occurs at the Public Safety Building in the large

meeting room, which is centrally located in multiple fire station districts and helps maintain a maximum response capability while conducting training on-duty. All County departments coordinate use of the room, which is often booked completely for use. Also, training for emergency personnel is becoming more technical, requiring specialized equipment (i.e., computer-simulated situation targeting range, real equipment training, etc.), which would currently require personnel to set up and break down equipment each session. A centrally located training facility with several large classroom spaces, multiple smaller break-out training rooms, specific training rooms for specialized training, technical library capabilities, and computer labs, would alleviate training pressures. The facility could also be used to accommodate training for other County departments as well as citizen requests for public meeting spaces. The logistics and training facilities would also support County emergency management activities during large-scale incidents such as hurricanes or other major disasters by providing logistics support and employee respite areas.

### **Government Offices**

In a steadily growing community, it is almost inevitable that the size of the government – particularly at the local level, where most government services are directly provided – will grow to meet the needs of its citizens. York County’s continued progression from a rural county to a suburban one, facing ever more complex issues, will continue to affect the size of the County’s workforce. Between 1995 and 2004, the number of employees per thousand residents increased from 10.2 to 11.4, respectively (**Table 11**). Although not a dramatic increase, the number of employees rose from 539 in 1995 to 704 in 2004. The average ratio of employees per thousand residents between 1995 and 2004 was 11.03.



**Table 11**

If the ratio of employees to population were to remain stable in the future as the population grows – or even to decline somewhat as a result of increased efficiency through technological advances – the County can expect employee numbers to increase, but at a very slow rate, adding 138 employees in the twenty-year period. Although some of these employees will be field employees (deputies, laborers, mechanics, etc.) who do not need office space, others will require office space.

Without the acquisition of more land, there is little opportunity to expand office facilities in Yorktown other than at the Administration Center property, where the existing building is old and is not architecturally or aesthetically compatible with historic Yorktown. If the Administration Center were demolished, it is possible that a new building could be constructed that could address aesthetic issues and, if necessary, provide some additional office space. In contrast to Yorktown, the Operations Center has significant land area (52 acres) that can accommodate more office and shop space for County departments and agencies without acquiring more land.

In addition, new technologies now provide opportunities to reduce the need for office space. Telecommuting, for example, which allows employees to work in their homes, connected to the office by a computer and a modem, has been in use for years in private industry and also in some public agencies that have found it to be far more cost-effective than building, operating, and maintaining office buildings. This concept should become more widespread and efficient in local government when video conferencing becomes more popular and cost-effective. Similarly, the use of CD-ROM and other electronic means of file storage and retrieval can greatly reduce the County's record storage space needs. The adequacy of and need for additional office space should be continuously monitored and assessed as York County's population increases throughout the next twenty years.

### **Libraries**

According to Virginia State Library Board standards, the York County library is providing excellent services to its patrons; however, it is beginning to feel the need for additional space for library materials, public meeting spaces, and computers. Patrons of the library are spread far and wide within the County and in the surrounding areas. However, forty percent of patrons currently live outside the borders of the County, and therefore pay none of the operation costs associated with the library. The library has initiated many policies to help lighten the pressures felt by increased demands from patrons. Staff has begun replacing old material, increased printing fees, and lowered the time a patron can use a computer. Nevertheless, these measures will only serve to stabilize the system over the short term, and new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities will need to be considered over the next twenty years.

In the upper County, residents receive excellent service from the Williamsburg Regional Library system, but since York County is not a part of the regional system, there is no guarantee that this service will always be available. Sometime in the future the County may be faced with the need to become a full partner in the regional library system, or at least to increase the amount of funding it provides.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The demand for recreational programs and facilities to accommodate them is evident in the increasing number of County residents participating in such programs. Participation in recreational programs will continue to grow as the population grows, provided that the programs and facilities are available. Parks and recreational facilities rated relatively highly in the citizen input process.

In planning future recreational programs and facilities, it is important to consider the age structure as well as the size of the population. Demographic trends indicate steady aging of the population as the baby boom continues to move through the life cycle. York County's population is projected to grow by more than 13,000 people in the next twenty years, while the 65 and older population is projected to grow from 9.1% of the population in 2000 to 28.1% by 2025. The youth population will also grow in the next twenty years but at a much slower pace, declining as a percentage of population. The size of these two populations is particularly important since these larger proportions will generally have more leisure time than 20-64 age population ranges.

The opening of New Quarter Park and the recent lease agreement with the City of Newport News to develop a 187-acre public park on property owned by Newport News Waterworks should help alleviate the need for recreational facilities in the County, at least in the short-term. A more extensive master park plan should be completed to better assess the needs for additional facilities in the future. The 545-acre New Quarter Park, although not adding major athletic facilities to the upper County, provides picnic shelters, a softball field, two half-basketball courts, a sand volleyball court, horseshoe courts, a floating pier, and hiking/biking trails. The proposed facilities for the Waterworks property include lighted and non-lighted athletic fields for youth and adults and other amenities such as playgrounds and trails. Consideration should also be given to lighting as many athletic fields as possible in order to maximize the available number of usage hours. Acquisition of additional land should always be a priority, especially if there is any need in the future to develop other types of park and recreational facilities such as an outdoor pool, picnic areas/facilities, walking/bicycle trails, etc.

In previous comprehensive plans, citizens have advocated the development of a community center. During the Neighborhood Open Houses, no one specifically called for a community center, but asked for facilities for additional youth and senior programs, recreational facilities, and public space. One benefit of a community center is that it can be designed to accommodate the needs of different age groups and therefore is able to serve a large segment of the population. The County acquired land on Route 134 adjacent to the Tabb library site, which was made available to the YMCA to construct a recreation facility serving Lower County residents. Similarly, Upper County residents will be served by the construction of another YMCA near the Sentara hospital site. Both YMCA's provide recreational services to the communities, but provide little public space or discounts for membership to York County residents.

## **Schools**

As noted, the York County school system appears to have sufficient capacity to accommodate projected enrollment for the next 20 years, although by 2025 lower County elementary and high schools are projected to be near or slightly exceeding capacity while upper County elementary schools are projected to have slight overcrowding (i.e., 28 students above capacity). Projections can be wrong, however, and often are. School enrollment can be highly volatile and thus is difficult to forecast beyond the short term, and future program changes – at the state, local, or Federal level – are unknown. It would not be realistic, therefore, to make school construction recommendations or decisions on the basis of long-range membership projections. A six-year horizon, which corresponds with the County's Capital Improvement Program, is appropriate for school facility planning. Unless there is a remarkable unforeseen increase in enrollment over the projected levels, it appears that no new school buildings or additions beyond those that are already programmed will be needed to enlarge capacity in the next six years.

There are several ways to address school overcrowding. The least costly and most efficient method – although often the least popular – is to change the attendance zones to provide for a more equal distribution of students among schools. This allows surplus capacity to be put to use while reducing the burden on overcrowded schools. Another cost-effective solution, also not particularly popular, is to use portable classrooms that are much less expensive to lease than additions are to build. These solutions are particularly appropriate for dealing with crowding that is temporary and/or relatively minor in scale. For sustained crowding conditions that cannot be effectively addressed by changing the attendance zones or installing trailers, additions to existing schools – or construction of new schools depending on the extent of the shortage of space – is the appropriate solution. For economic reasons, building additions are the preferred choice. This is why a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board states that no new school buildings will be constructed until all existing schools have been expanded to their maximum allowable capacity. Of course, cost-effectiveness is not the only consideration, and it must be balanced against the need to keep schools to an appropriate size; when the amount of school overcrowding at any level in either the upper or

lower County begins to approach the minimum desirable school size and opportunities for expansions do not exist, it is necessary to plan for new construction.

## **GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### **Goal**

York County should be a community where the citizens feel safe from crime, receive prompt and effective emergency services when needed, and have convenient access to public facilities at appropriate locations to serve them economically and efficiently.

### **Objectives**

#### **GENERAL**

1. Coordinate the location and timing of public facilities in recognition of existing and anticipated needs and characteristics -- including the age distribution and location -- of present and projected future populations.
2. Avoid wasteful duplication of effort in the construction and operation of public facilities.

#### **GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

1. Maintain historic Yorktown as the seat of County government.
2. Make optimum use of existing office space.
3. Provide greater opportunities for the training of County personnel, in particular specialized training for law enforcement and fire and rescue personnel.

#### **DETENTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

1. Provide Sheriff's facilities to accommodate manpower levels sufficient to provide prompt and effective crime protection, prevention, and law enforcement to all areas of the County.
2. Provide detention/correctional facilities of sufficient capacity to house securely and safely the County's future adult and juvenile inmate population.

#### **FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY**

1. Provide fire stations to accommodate manpower levels sufficient to provide prompt and effective fire and emergency medical response to all areas of the County.
2. Maintain a five-minute average fire and emergency response time to at least 90% of the County's land area.

#### **LIBRARIES**

1. Achieve higher levels of excellence in library service.
2. Provide convenient library service to all areas of the County.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

1. Protect the natural environment and preserve open space.
2. Provide for a range of recreational facilities and activities adequate in number, type, size, and location to accommodate the needs of County residents.
3. Ensure that athletic fields and other recreational facilities are well maintained.
4. Increase public recreational, fishing, and boating access to waterways.

## **SCHOOLS**

1. Provide a learning environment that is conducive to the education of all present and future school-age children in the County.
2. Achieve and maintain the following overall student/classroom ratios and program capacity guidelines at each school:

<b>SCHOOL LEVEL</b>	<b>STUDENT/CLASSROOM RATIOS</b>	<b>PROGRAM CAPACITY GUIDELINES</b>
Kindergarten	20:1	350-700 students
First – Second	22:1	
Third – Fifth	25:1	
Sixth – Eighth	25:1	700-1000 students
Ninth – Twelfth	25:1	1200-1800 students

3. Optimize use of school facilities and grounds.
4. Promote lifelong learning.

## **Implementation Strategies**

### **GENERAL**

1. Use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the budgeting of County funds for capital improvement projects.
2. Annually review and update funding, with a resolution from the Planning Commission to certify its conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, the six-year Capital Improvements Program.
3. Provide public buildings that set an example for quality development in the County.
4. Provide regular, ongoing review, maintenance, and repair of all public buildings.
5. Where feasible, cooperate with neighboring localities to establish and maintain regional public facilities for the use of residents of multiple jurisdictions.
6. Design public buildings to accommodate a variety of uses.

## **GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

1. Continue to use technology to improve on space-saving computer-based methods of storing and retrieving County files and records.
2. Evaluate the need for and feasibility for constructing a warehousing center for the storage needs of County departments.
3. Provide greater opportunities for the training of County emergency services and administrative personnel in a strategically central location by assessing the feasibility of creating a stand-alone training facility.

## **DETENTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Evaluate the need for, feasibility, and potential effectiveness of establishing Sheriff's substations in strategic locations throughout the County.

## **FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY**

1. Locate and design fire stations in such a way as to provide opportunities for expansion of service as necessary based on future population growth and development patterns.
2. Continue to cooperate with neighboring localities and area military installations through mutual emergency aid agreements providing for the sharing of resources in the event of a major fire or other disaster.
3. Consider the needs of the Fire and Rescue Service with regard to roadway access and water availability prior to approval of development plans and in all decisions regarding utility extension and roadway construction.

## **LIBRARIES**

1. Expand the number and range of library books, tapes, periodicals, and other materials as necessitated by population growth, public demand, and technological changes.
2. Continue the current practice of contributing funding to the Williamsburg Regional Library system in exchange for service to York County residents.
3. Maintain state-of-the-art on-line access to the library services of York County.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

1. Continue implementation of the "school/park" concept to enhance recreational use of school sites.
2. Develop a comprehensive parks and recreation master plan to coordinate the long-range acquisition of sufficient acreage for recreation facilities and public access to waterfront areas to meet the existing and future demands for both public and private recreation programs.
3. Consider the need for and feasibility of developing a public space for community events requiring meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, and multi-purpose rooms.
4. Provide for the particular needs of the young, the elderly, and the disabled when planning for recreational facilities.

5. Explore opportunities to work with the National Park Service to increase public recreational, fishing, and boating access to waterways.
6. Increase public awareness about private and other non-County facilities and programs that help meet the recreational demands of County residents.
7. Promote the provision of open space and recreational facilities in new residential development.
8. Continue to place lighting at County athletic fields to increase usage beyond daylight hours.

## **SCHOOLS**

1. Consider the general boundaries of residential neighborhoods and their proximity to schools in establishing school attendance zones.
2. Review school enrollment projections every three years.
3. Before approving rezonings and planned developments, consider their potential impact on the school system so as to minimize school crowding.
4. Provide a cafeteria and gymnasium in every school.
5. Provide regular, ongoing review, maintenance, and repair of school buildings.
6. Support and strengthen the vocational and technical school program with private sector assistance in the development of the school curricula.
7. Provide for regional alternative education programs.
8. When feasible, alleviate school overcrowding through revisions to school attendance zones as long as there is excess school capacity at the appropriate grade level in the system.
9. Install portable classrooms to alleviate temporary overcrowding (i.e., three years or less).
10. Alleviate long-term overcrowding by optimizing school capacity through permanent additions to and modifications of existing schools.
11. Build new schools if and only if capacity deficits are projected to exceed the minimum program capacity level at the appropriate grade level for five or more years.
12. Encourage future magnet programs, if any, to be located where excess capacity exists.
13. Maintain the formal written agreement between the School Board and the Board of Supervisors providing for the sharing of recreational facilities on school grounds and setting specific terms for their use.
14. Participate with neighboring localities in providing for regional "continuing education" programs for adults – such as the Regional Partnership for Continuing Education and Peninsula Workforce Center at Thomas Nelson Community College – in York County and throughout the Peninsula.

