

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.

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 and services. Regional and cooperative partnerships provide opportunities for increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness not only because they can prevent needless duplication of effort but also because economies of scale can be realized.

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 serving an even larger number of jurisdictions, 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 87 law enforcement deputies as of 2011). 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 758 residents. James City County has the closest ratio to York's with one officer for every 748 citizens. The City of Williamsburg has the highest ratio on the Peninsula with one officer for every 396 citizens. Since 2003, the ratio has improved in York County, Newport News, and Hampton while declining in all other Peninsula localities, with James City County having the largest difference.

Ratio of Law Enforcement Officers to Population				
Locality	2011 Officers	2011 Population	2011 Ratio	2003 Ratio
James City Co.	92	68,874	1/748	1/672
Hampton	277	137,372	1/496	1/543
Newport News	398	181,027	1/455	1/471
Poquoson	21	12,240	1/583	1/580
Williamsburg	36	14,256	1/396	1/376
York	87	65,973	1/758	1/862

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 office space in the York County-Poquoson Courthouse. In 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, eleven criminal investigators, the Sheriff's and captain's offices, evidence room, squad room, computer support, interview room, evidence processing laboratory, and equipment/weapons storage. Additional storage space for the evidence room was obtained in 2010 with the addition that was attached to the 9-1-1/Emergency Communications building. The limited space at the existing office locations will eventually need to be addressed by expansion into other parts of the building or into other existing or new facilities.

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, the number of incidents of crime in the County declined by 6% between 2001 and 2011. In fact, York County has one of the lowest crime rates on the Peninsula with only 2,818 incidents reported in 2011 (**Figure 1**).

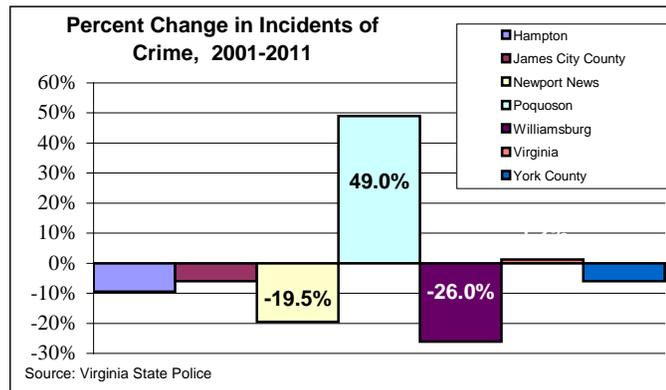


Figure 1

Of area jurisdictions, the City of Williamsburg had the largest reduction in crime during this time with a decline of 26% while Virginia and Poquoson experienced increases of 1.2% and 49% respectively.

The Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail is a collaborative effort on the part of 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.

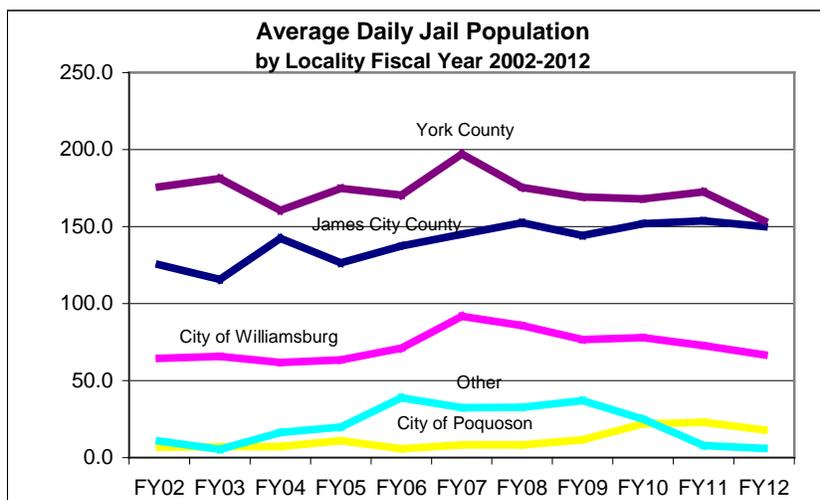
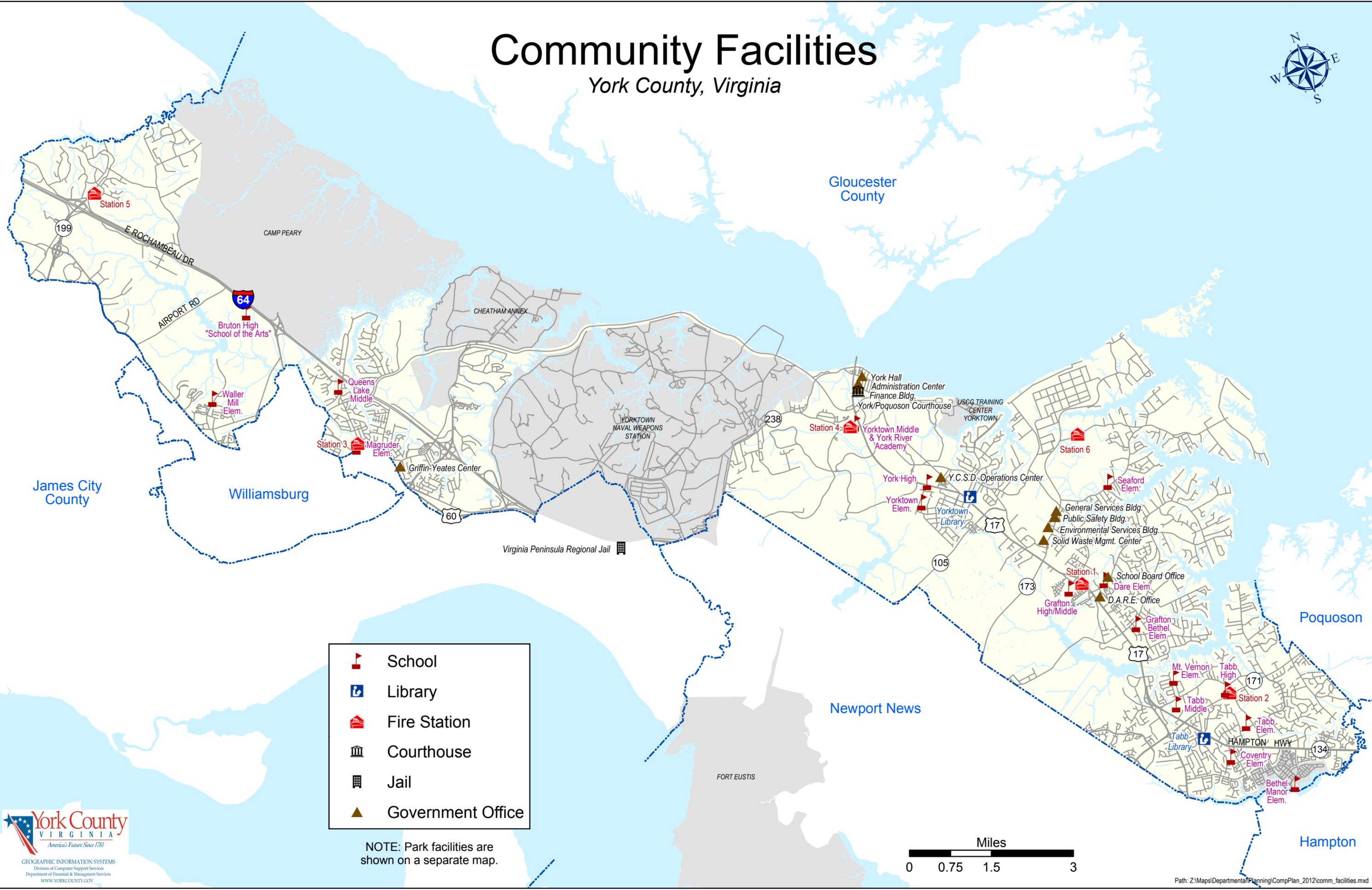


Figure 2

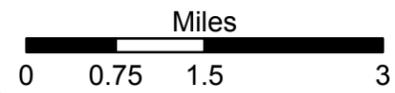
Community Facilities

York County, Virginia



-  School
-  Library
-  Fire Station
-  Courthouse
-  Jail
-  Government Office

NOTE: Park facilities are shown on a separate map.



Prisoners are offered several opportunities for education, mental growth, and physical activity through a variety of community programs. As of 2012, there were approximately 100 volunteers serving at the facility, providing G.E.D., creative writing, art, and religious study classes, as well as several recovery and substance groups.

Since the update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2005, the Regional Jail has experienced a 1.5% increase in the average daily population (ADP). It should be noted that any increase or decrease does not necessarily mean a change in crime has occurred, but rather reflects the overall increase in the population of the four localities. **Figure 2** shows that York County currently has the highest ADP in the system (153.7), representing 39% of the ADP in 2012. However, since 2002 Poquoson and James City County have had the highest percentage increase in daily population with 166% and 20%, respectively, while Williamsburg has only had a 3.5% 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. In some cases juveniles sentenced to the post-dispositional program, or returning to the community from a Juvenile Correctional Center on re-entry, can stay up to six months through age nineteen. 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 misdemeanors or felonies including property crimes or offenses against the person that range up to and can include murder. Residents are provided with nutritional meals, clothing, and hygiene items and receive medical care, therapeutic counseling, behavioral modification, and public education 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 or to a lesser level of oversight, such as a group home or probation. For more serious offenses including felonies or repeated acts of violence, some youth are committed to juvenile 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. During the four-year period between 2008 and 2011, York County utilized an average of 14% of the juvenile admissions to the Merrimac Center, with the highest usage being 17% in 2011.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY

The York County Department of Fire and Life Safety is responsible for the provision of Fire Suppression, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, 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. Fire and rescue field operations are conducted from six fire stations located strategically throughout the County. The department also maintains mutual aid agreements with surrounding localities and federal facilities that provide for the sharing of resources. The department is organized into a number of functional areas, Fire and Rescue Operations, Technical Services and Special Operations, Prevention and Community Safety, Emergency Management, and Animal Control. The largest function is the provision of fire and rescue services, which includes fire suppression, 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 meet increased service demand, improve response times and to complement the Grafton, Tabb, and Bruton stations 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, water tanker capability (for non-hydranted areas), as well as brush/wildland 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, including but not limited to emergency medical incidents, fires, rescues, and vehicle accidents etc. 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. Special/unique incident response teams use personnel normally assigned to normal/traditional fire and EMS response duties; however, in addition to their normal/traditional 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 materials response, maritime/waterborne fire and rescue, and a Metropolitan Medical Strike Team.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety is regularly developing mechanisms and processes that support ongoing emergency response effectiveness. For example, fire and rescue response units have the ability to control traffic signals through what are known as pre-emption devices. This allows for a safer and more efficient response through signalized intersections. Other examples include the implementation of electronic EMS field based reporting capabilities that can be interfaced with receiving hospitals. Another process that has been implemented in recent years is a procedure known as Induced Hypothermia, which allows EMS field personnel to treat cardiac arrest victims with IV fluids that have been cooled, which in turn lowers the body temperature potentially improving chances of survival and recovery. These are but a few examples of ongoing improvements to emergency response systems and processes.

The technical rescue team includes rope rescue, confined space, dive, trench/excavation, structural collapse, and large/heavy vehicle rescue. This team is also a part of the larger Peninsula Regional and Tidewater Regional Technical Rescue Teams. Additionally, team members also participate as members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue – Team/Virginia Task Force – Two and have responded to major federally declared incidents such as the Olympics, the September 11, 2001 attack on the Pentagon, major hurricanes such Katrina and Rita, an earthquake in Haiti, and many others.

The presence of roadways, railroads, waterways, and Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport contribute to the County's vulnerability to a variety of hazardous materials emergencies. All County fire and rescue personnel are trained to provide defensive and some minimal offensive 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 Specialists that operate as part of the department's Hazardous Materials Response Team. If the capabilities of the County are exceeded, then additional regional hazardous materials response resources/teams are requested through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to augment the department's team.

York County maintains a maritime/waterborne fire and rescue capability for water rescue, waterborne firefighting, and EMS 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 major medical incidents including mass casualty events/disasters and the potential of 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 (MMRS), including an associated response team known as the Metropolitan Medical Strike Team. As an MMRS partner, members of the Department of Fire and Life Safety serve in key positions such as command leadership, logistics, and communications functions. Currently, York County manages and maintains the Strike Team's logistics equipment caches for the Peninsula component. Members of the department are also a part of the federal (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services--HHS) Virginia – One Disaster Medical Assistance Team and have responded to major federally declared incidents including hurricanes such as Katrina and Rita, the earthquake in Haiti, Presidential Inaugurations, the President's State of the Union Address, and many others.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety coordinates and/or conducts most of the training required for its responders. Much of this training is required by various regulatory agencies and standards organizations. 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 firefighter recruit and officer development training and routinely conducts in-house drills, training classes, continuing education, and refresher training. Through the department's cooperation with state agencies and other localities in Hampton Roads, York County is a partner in the Peninsula Regional Live Fire Training Facility and Training Tower located in the Lee Hall area of Newport News. The department operates (in partnership with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management) the York County Hazardous Materials/CBRNE training facility. Additionally, Fire and Life Safety persistently pursues further provision of training resources with such things as hazardous materials and technical rescue training props/capabilities. The department is continuously seeking ways to conduct in-service training for on-duty crews, utilizing strategic training locations, so fire companies/crews can remain available for emergency calls.

The Prevention and Community Safety function of the department enforces state and local laws, codes, and ordinances pertaining to fire and life safety. This service area conducts plan reviews and inspections, as well as tests of fire suppression and alarm systems for commercial and public buildings. Division staff, with support from specially trained firefighters on each operational shift, determine cause and origin of fires and investigate arson and fires of unknown or suspicious origin/cause. In addition, this division provides a variety of prevention and public life safety education programs.

Large-scale (major) emergencies and/or disasters, unlike structure fires, medical emergencies, and vehicle accidents, which 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 department's emergency management division develops and maintains emergency operation plans to guide mitigation and preparedness activities and education, as well as 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 incidents/events that effect those portions of the County that are within the ten-mile emergency planning zone for the Surry Nuclear Power Plant.

York County, through the Department of Fire and Life Safety's Office of Emergency Management, continues to improve emergency disaster sheltering. Through coordination with the School Division, a number of schools have been identified and designated as emergency disaster shelters, four of which are equipped with some level of electrical back up generator

capability. 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 persons with functional needs, debris management, a regional hazard mitigation plan, and have been directly involved in a regional catastrophic disaster planning initiative.

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 recognized CERT(ified) neighborhood and receive a sign to post in their community.

Getting information out to the citizens is one of the biggest challenges in responding to a disaster or major emergency. 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. Additionally, the department has also created a Fire Station Community Assistance Liaison program, which designates a Fire and Life Safety member that serves as a liaison for necessary community support during a disaster and lends logistics support to the fire station's operations while they handle disaster related responses.

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

- A "Storm Surge Look Up" tool on the County's website which helps a property owner determine what level of storm (water) surge they may be at risk for (if any).
- Child seat Awareness and Restraint Education (CARE): 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 County, in cooperation with other Peninsula localities has developed a regional hazard mitigation plan.

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.

The reporting of emergencies by the public are routed through the Emergency Communications/9-1-1 Center. This center provides dispatch services for the department as well as other agencies. The Fire and Life Safety Department has emergency radio communications capabilities to coordinate responses with surrounding localities during day-to-day emergencies, major emergencies, and/or disasters. Additionally, processes and capabilities are in place for the use of radio technology, web based technology, conference call systems, and RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services) for ongoing communications (among numerous entities locally, regionally, and with the Commonwealth of Virginia) during major emergencies and/or disasters.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

York County has two major government office complexes – one in Yorktown and one on Goodwin Neck Road – with a total of thirteen 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, a Sheriff's Office satellite office, two libraries, and several Parks and Recreation facilities that are discussed in other sections of this plan.

Governmental offices and meeting facilities 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, and the Office of the Registrar. 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 Financial and Management Services (FMS) Department, Real Estate Assessment division, and the Treasurer and Commissioner of Revenue offices occupy the facility. Part of the FMS Computer Support Services division is housed in the Post Office Building, which serves as a secure site for equipment critical to the operation of 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. Civic groups and an arts center/gallery also utilize the building. In 2005, improvements were made to the basement, where the York County 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 or alternate space to meet storage needs.

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. These were 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 Emergency Communication Center in 2004-05, which was expanded again in 2010 to add dispatch area and office spaces. 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 Parks and Recreation Building. Some opportunities for future expansions on this campus exist but will be constrained by the presence of non-tidal wetlands and Dominion Power transmission line easements.

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 are integral to supporting literacy, providing opportunities for life-long learning, and contributing to a high quality of life for York County residents. Libraries help foster a sense of community and serve as a focal point for citizen interaction. 21st Century libraries are now adopting the title “information commons” or “learning commons” to describe what they are to their communities. 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 has a memorandum of agreement with the Williamsburg Regional Library. The Yorktown library, which opened in 1984, is an 11,900 square-foot building located on George Washington Memorial Highway (Route 17) at Battle Road. The Tabb library opened in October 1999 and is a 32,000 square-foot facility located on Hampton Highway (Route 134) and Long Green Boulevard. These two locations primarily serve citizens residing in the lower County (i.e., south of the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station).

Upper County residents are served by the Williamsburg Regional Library. 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. In Fiscal Year 2010-11, York County citizens constituted 12% of the Williamsburg Regional system’s registered borrowers.

Measures of Service and Quality

The Virginia State Library Board has established guidelines for the provision of library services in the document, *Planning for Library Excellence: Standards and Guidelines for Virginia Public Libraries* (PLE). The PLE uses a rating/ranking indicator modeled on the bond rating systems employed by Moody’s, Standard and Poor’s, and Fitch (A, AA, AAA) to rank the quality of investments:

- A = Investment grade but likely to be subject to changing business conditions.
- AA = Investment grade at a strong level on all qualities.
- AAA = Strongest investment grade and not subject to business cycle extremes.

The PLE states, “We believe it is possible to view public library services in a similar fashion and continue to recognize that a primary goal of each library is to serve its community at the highest levels possible given its resources. Like businesses, libraries strive to grow or profit, in order to provide better services to their consumers.”

The York County Library uses four strategic planning areas of library service for analysis: Staffing, Collections, Facilities, and Technology. It is the goal of the Library administration and Library Board of Trustees to strive for AAA ratings in all aspects of library service.

Staffing

The success of a library system is based on the competency and commitment of its staff. Libraries cannot meet community needs without sufficient staffing to provide high-quality service. In addition to the director, each library requires skilled employees in the following areas: youth, reference, circulation, technical services, technology, administration, and building maintenance.

Current rating: A (based on Full-Time Employees (FTE) per capita and professional librarians per capita)

- AAA rating requires 32.4 FTE; The York County Library system currently has 33.5 FTE.
- AAA rating requires 14 librarians with master's degree in Library and Information Science; The York County Library system currently has 6 librarians with this requirement.

The Williamsburg Regional Library system, serving citizens in the Upper County, has a AAA rating.

Collections

For public libraries, collections are similar to a living organism in that they are always growing and developing. Quantity, except for temporary popular items, is an inadequate measurement to judge library service. Based on its mission, the library provides materials to meet expressed and anticipated community needs for information and education. A successful collection supports the services the library provides and helps the library meet its defined goals. An effective collection requires the selection of materials in a variety of formats as identified by an ongoing process of community analysis including demographic information, library-use patterns, collection-use data, and public input. Collection development also takes into account other library and information resources in the community, region, and the state.

Current rating: A (based on number of items per capita and collection development budget.)

- AAA rating requires 245,000 items; The York County Library system currently has 175,000 items.
- AAA rating requires minimum of 15% of budget on collections; The York County Library system currently spends 11%.

The Williamsburg Regional Library system's current rating is AA.

Facilities

A public library building should compel citizens to enter, read, listen, and learn. The building design should be flexible in order to respond to the changing needs of patrons and service patterns. It must be able to accommodate growing collections in a variety of formats. The design of the building needs to encourage extensive public use, support staff efficiency, and encourage economy. It must comply with the latest regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and all local and state requirements for public buildings.

Current rating: AA (based on square feet per capita)

- AAA rating requires 55,000 square feet; The York County Library system currently has 44,000 square feet. (Note: the Library Board has proposed a 10,000 square foot expansion of the Yorktown Library and a 1,000-square foot addition to the Tabb Library in its Capital Improvements Program submissions)

The Williamsburg Regional Library system's current rating is AAA.

Technology

Information technology is paramount to the 21st Century public library. Through technology, patrons and library staff access information within and outside the library. To use technology effectively, the library must plan carefully, provide ongoing support and training, and continuously evaluate, upgrade, and replace hardware, software, and information resources.

Current rating: AA (based on public computer workstations per capita)

- AAA rating requires 53 computers; The York County Library system currently has 46 computers.

The Williamsburg Regional Library system’s current rating is AAA.

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, summer playgrounds, sports and recreation camps, and a variety of instructional classes (art, music, dance, etc.). Adult programs include softball, tennis, 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 instructional classes and the “Skate, Rattle, and Roll” roller skating program. Instructional classes are taught at various locations throughout the County at varying times. The skating program is operated in the Dare Elementary School gymnasium.

County-sponsored youth recreational programs have decreased in participation by 8% since 2004 (**Figure 4**). Similarly, the York County Little League (which has a contractual agreement with the County to provide recreationally based youth baseball and softball) has also seen a decrease in overall participation.

The primary reason for declining numbers in County sponsored youth recreational programs is the increasing number of program offerings provided to residents by private organizations and other public agencies. Some of these are recreational while others offer a more competitive structure. Private organizations sponsoring programs in both the upper and lower County

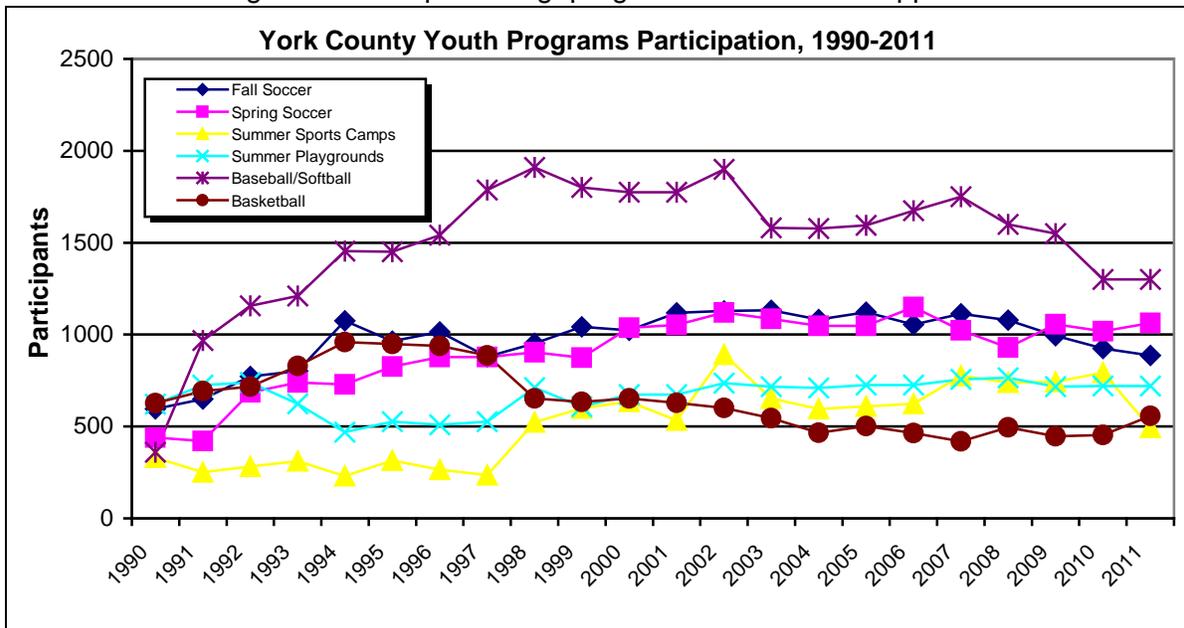


Figure 4

include 2 youth baseball/softball associations; over 20 private AAU baseball and softball teams; 5 youth football/cheerleading associations; 4 soccer clubs; 3 swim team/aquatic clubs; 2 church-sponsored and 3 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) organizations offering youth basketball; 2 youth wrestling associations; and 1 youth/adult volleyball organization. In addition, in 2005 lacrosse returned to the County. This fast growing sport now has over 400 children playing in two local organizations.

Not all County programs have seen a decrease in participation. Adult and family programs have experienced some increases since 2005 (**Figure 5**). For example, the Adult Softball program has recently rebounded. Adult softball has seen a steady decline across the region, especially in the number of men's teams and leagues. However, in recent years coed adult softball has

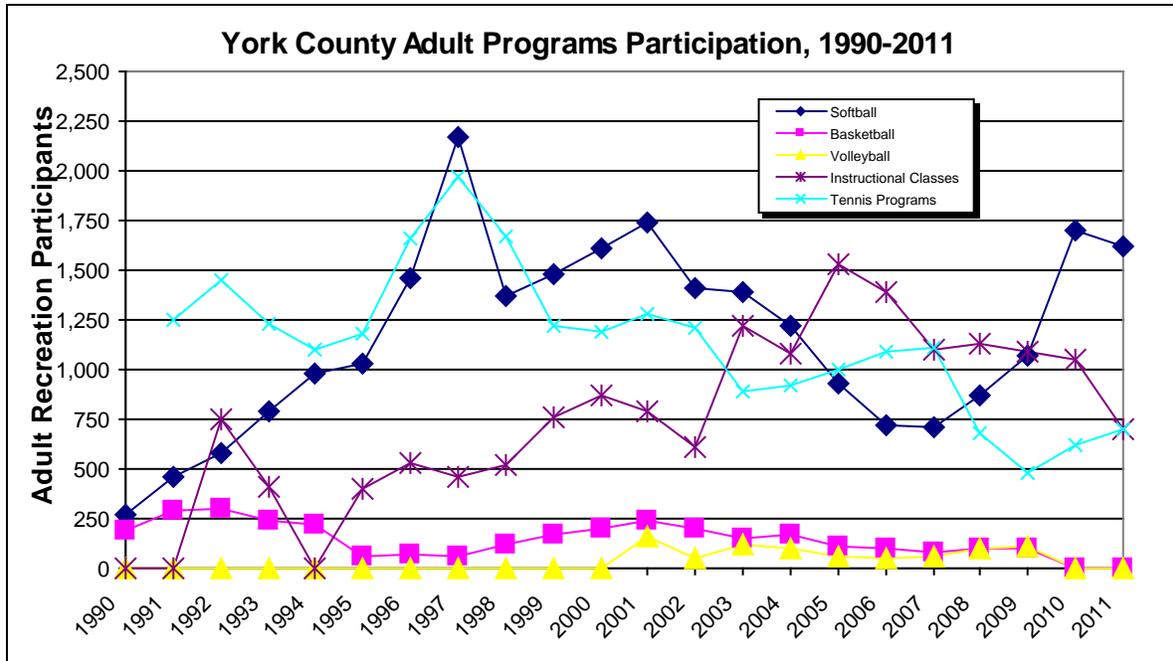


Figure 5

grown in popularity. As a result, the County's Adult Softball program has grown by 75% since 2005. Reductions in funding or elimination of other programs (such as Adult Basketball and Volleyball) have affected overall participation totals in other areas as shown in **Figure 5**.

As the population of the County and the nation continues to age, senior programs remain popular. Annually there are almost 20,000 senior patron visits (**Figure 6**) to the Senior Center of York. Since 2001, the Senior Center of York has occupied over 6,300 square feet of leased space in the Washington Square Shopping Center. In 2011, adjacent storefront space was added, bringing the total square footage to approximately 8,800 square feet. Since 2000, the number of patron visits has

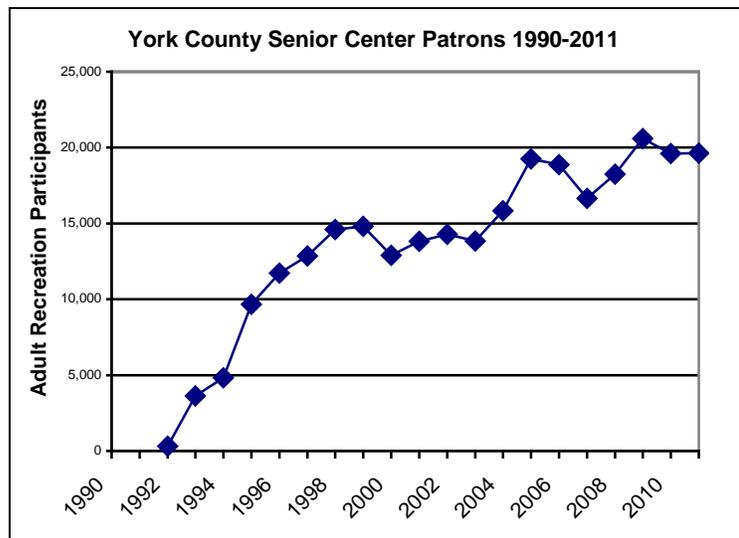


Figure 6

increased by 53%. Activities offered to seniors include a computer club, preventative health services including weekly free blood pressure checks, annual health fair and flu shots, and periodic education seminars on safety and such issues as scams and identify theft. Seniors can also take advantage of AARP driver safety classes, a dining club, bridge club, canasta group, and the monthly "Birthday Bash." There are also a variety of special events as well as regular classes and groups in exercise, art, crafts, knitting, crocheting, quilting, and line dancing for all levels.

In recent years, budgetary constraints and low participation rates have resulted in several programs being discontinued. These include the open gym program, Hershey Track and Field programs, adult basketball and volleyball, as well as the roller skating program in the upper County that was held in the Historic Triangle Community Services Building. With respect to the upper County, it should be noted that York has partnership agreements with the City of Williamsburg and James City County Parks and Recreation Departments to make available programs and facilities to upper County residents. These localities use York County facilities for some of these programs and help meet a significant portion of the demand for recreational activities in the upper County.

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, playground areas, basketball and tennis courts 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 just to duplicate the basic infrastructure that already exists at these school sites (land, utilities, parking, etc.) in addition to recreation facilities themselves. Citizens have been well served by the school/park concept in York County and will continue to be 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, and in fact was recognized for this initiative by the National Association of Counties (NACo).

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 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 includes these core facilities: a gymnasium, two playground areas, a youth baseball/softball field, a soccer field, and two outdoor basketball courts. In addition to these core recreational facilities, some elementary school sites may have a larger soccer field that is lighted, two baseball fields, or even tennis courts. Additional recreational amenities like these depended on what the site was able to accommodate and if there was a need for certain recreational facilities within that particular geographic area of the County. Over the years these plans have also been revised periodically as the need arose to expand school buildings and/or provide additional recreational facilities.

Because of this commitment to the school/park concept, many of the County's recreational activities take place on school grounds. In order to maximize the community's use of these facilities, in 1991 the Board of Supervisors and the School Board entered into an agreement whereby the Parks and Recreation Division assumed responsibility for scheduling after-school use of gymnasiums and outdoor facilities at all elementary schools and at three of the four middle schools. (Note: Elementary and middle schools are the primary school/park sites since they do not have as many school sponsored after-school activities as the high schools.) In 2005, this agreement was revised to reflect facility changes that had been completed. 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 throughout the County.

Athletic Field Reservations

The number of reservation hours of athletic fields at schools and parks has increased by 51% since 2004 (**Figure 7**). While the York County Sports Complex accounts for much of this increase, reservations of other parks and school facilities still increased by 14% the first full year the complex was open. Community organizations continue to be the largest user of athletic fields at middle and elementary schools and at park sites as they reserve 76% of the overall usage time. By comparison, the County-run recreation programs reserve 18% of usage time while high school interscholastic teams and programs reserve 5% of the usage time.

York County Outdoor Facility Reservation Hours, 1990-2011

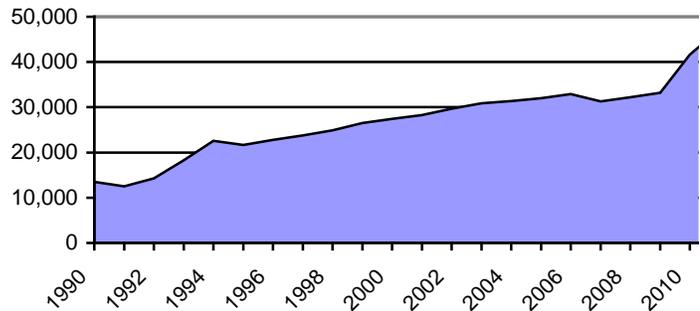


Figure 7

Another important issue relating to recreational 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. The usage time required by high school interscholastic sports has often created scheduling restrictions for community usage elsewhere. For example, the Tabb and Grafton High School boys and girls varsity and junior varsity teams have to use Tabb Elementary School, Mount Vernon Elementary School, Tabb Middle School, Coventry Elementary School, Kiln Creek Park and Wolf Trap Park for their practices. The athletic fields at these high schools simply cannot support all of their school teams. In addition, the time and intensity of school competition has also had a detrimental effect on the condition of these fields. In fact, the time demand for school usage is expected to increase considerably since the Virginia High School League (VHSL) recently approved year-round practices for interscholastic teams. Prior to this, high school teams could only practice during their specific season. The increased demand by school teams limits the time available for community recreational usage and makes it difficult to schedule a time for renovating over-used fields. The installation of synthetic turf playing fields could help both the schools and the County as these fields could be used year-round without the need to be taken out of service for field repair/renovation. Currently, many natural turf fields are shut down in the summer to repair the turf. This in turn affects programming. Natural turf fields are also not able to be used in the winter as the fields can be damaged by playing on them when the grass is dormant. As a result, synthetic fields with year-round playing capabilities are becoming an increasingly desirable and potentially viable option.

Outdoor Park and Recreational Facilities

Complementing the outdoor school/park facilities are a variety of other park and recreational facilities. County outdoor park facilities include Back Creek Park, Charles E. Brown Park, Chisman Creek Park, Wolf Trap Park, Kiln Creek Park, New Quarter Park, York County Sports Complex, 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). Finally, many subdivision and apartment complexes in the County have private recreational facilities – such as

swimming pools, playing fields, tennis courts, and exercise rooms – available for their residents' use. **Table 5** lists recreational opportunities available in various areas of the County.

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 restroom building with a small office for seasonal staff who oversee park activities. Back Creek Park serves as the hub for the County's tennis program, which includes leagues, lessons, camps, and tournaments for youth and adults. The boat launching facility is considered to be one of the finest on the Peninsula and is heavily used.

Situated on 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 Services Building, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a baseball field, a playground area, a picnic shelter and a restroom facility. Constructed with a combination of federal and local funds, the Community Services Building features a large meeting room with a kitchenette that is available for use free of charge. The facility is used to host many family receptions and birthday parties. There is also a Wetlands Interpretive Sanctuary for Education (WISE) trail at Charles E. Brown Park, which is a half-mile trail, and interpretive area that borders approximately two acres of wetlands.

The County leases two reclaimed EPA Superfund fly ash sites from Dominion Virginia Power 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 restroom facility and is used as the primary site for the adult softball league program. The second reclaimed fly ash site is **Wolf Trap Park**. It is also located on Wolf Trap Road and opened in 1992. This 28-acre site features four soccer fields and a restroom facility.

Kiln Creek Park is a 20-acre site on Kiln Creek Parkway in Tabb. It was dedicated to York County's School Division by the developer of the Villages of Kiln Creek for a future school 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 possible future addition of a school building on the property will have minimal disruption to the existing recreational facilities and parking lots. A lighted soccer field, lighted baseball field, youth baseball/softball field, two half-basketball courts, playground area, small picnic shelter, and restroom 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.

New Quarter Park is located in the upper County, adjacent to the Queens Lake subdivision and the Colonial Parkway. This 545-acre tract was acquired free of charge in 1976 from the federal government through a surplus land program. Today it remains the largest single parcel of County-owned park acreage. Park facilities include 14 picnic shelters, with three available for group rental; a campfire circle with seating for 100 people; softball field; two half-basketball courts; horseshoe courts; and, a floating pier on Queen Creek. Between 2004 and 2006 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, 18-hole disc golf course, three miles of natural surface hiking trail (developed by the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club) and two playground areas.

Since opening for use by group reservation only 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, the Board of Supervisors opened New Quarter to the general public for seasonal use (May through November) on a trial basis. Following this successful change in the park's usage, the Board authorized funding for additional facilities and recreational amenities to enhance the park's use by visitors. Because of damage from Hurricane Isabel in 2003, the park was closed while undergoing repairs as well as

construction of planned additional facilities. In the spring of 2005, the newly renovated park was opened for weekend use from April 1 to Memorial Day and from Labor Day to Thanksgiving weekend. It was also opened on a daily basis from Memorial Day to Labor Day. In 2011, over 62,000 visitors enjoyed the park's scenic beauty, recreational amenities, and many outdoor activities, programs, and special events. The park continues to host family and private group picnics and receptions, and is also frequented by many individuals who come to walk, kayak, mountain bike, or play disc golf. In fact, there were over 4,200 rounds of disc golf played at New Quarter in 2011, and the course has played host to many tournaments. It has been acclaimed as being one of the finest courses in the region. (Note: Because of its location in the upper county and the availability of large open areas, New Quarter Park has also been used several times as a debris collection area after large storms or hurricanes. When this occurs, the park has to be closed to the public for extended periods.)

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. The **York County Sports Complex** opened in May of 2009. The 70 acres of developed park area have been well received by York County citizens and patrons from neighboring localities alike. Featuring 13 lighted athletic fields, the sports complex is for County-run adult softball and fall and spring youth soccer programs as well as for summer youth sports camps. It also serves as a home for the York County Little League and is available for rent to other organizations and users for games, tournaments, and sports camps.

Other amenities at the Sports Complex include a multipurpose path, bike lane, playgrounds, and 31 picnic shelters. Three concession stands and restroom buildings serve the park's visitors. A new feature at the park during the winter of 2012 was a bald eagles' nest with two baby eagles. These eagles drew 15-20 daily visitors who took pictures and watched the eagles.

Activities at the Sports Complex have continued to increase each year since it opened. During 2011 the site hosted over 3,700 activities (an 8% increase) and over 140,000 vehicles (a 14% increase) over 2010. The park has hosted a variety of local, state, and regional tournaments and sports events including baseball, softball, soccer, kickball, lacrosse, and ultimate Frisbee. Over 20 different organizations have hosted events and teams from at least 11 states have played in tournaments at the complex. The trails, playgrounds, and picnic shelters provide opportunities for individuals and families to enjoy the park as well.

The **Rodgers A. Smith Boat Landing** remains one of the most popular landings in the County. Located on the Poquoson River at the end of Tide Mill Road in Tabb, this landing features many grant-assisted improvements completed in FY2006. Based on recommendations from the Recreational Fishing Advisory Board, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission awarded the County two grants to help fund the Smith Landing Waterfront Improvements Project. This grant program paid 75% (\$472,500) of the total project cost, and required that the County pay the remaining 25% (\$157,500). Project items included the replacement of two boat launching ramps with redesigned concrete ramp areas that increased the boat launching depth from four feet of water to five feet; the replacement of aging all-wooden piers with new ADA accessible floating aluminum piers and ramps as well as new wooden support pilings and approach decks; the replacement of the adjacent fishing/crabbing pier with a wider, ADA accessible one that provides a larger T-area and increases the fishing depth by one foot; and, extensive site improvements for traffic flow, parking, and lighting. The facility, which now includes restrooms as well, is widely used by boating and fishing enthusiasts alike.

Old Wormley Creek Landing is a much smaller facility at the end of Old Wormley Creek Road. It consists of a small boat ramp and adjacent fixed wooden pier used for fishing and crabbing. The County has completed the design work to renovate the landing for small boats, canoes, and kayaks and funding opportunities are being pursued.

The **Yorktown Waterfront**, which occupies approximately 12.5 acres along the York River in historic Yorktown, provides opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, beach picnicking, fishing, and boating. In July 2003 the County assumed ownership of two acres of the property that was previously owned by the Yorktown Trustees and managed by the County. The remaining 10.5-acre portion comprising the National Park Service's Beach Picnic Area was turned over to County management in 2004. 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. In 2005, the County completed Riverwalk Landing, a 21,000 square-foot retail/restaurant destination that consists of eight new buildings, the renovated Freight Shed, and a parking terrace. As part of the project, the Yorktown Pier, which was damaged by Hurricane Isabel in 2003, was renovated into a fishing pier. The County obtains an annual permit that allows residents and visitors to fish and crab from this pier without a personal fishing license.

Riverwalk Landing includes two additional concrete floating piers. The large 395-foot T-pier located at the foot of Ballard Street can accommodate tall ships, visiting military vessels, medium and large-sized private vessels, as well as regional commercial cruise ships. Electrical service, water, telephone, and sewer pump out facilities are available pier side. The second pier located behind the restaurant and between the larger pier and the Coleman Bridge, is intended to accommodate transient overnight and pleasure boaters visiting the village shops and restaurants as well as smaller craft such as day-trippers. The piers provide the ability for overnight stays with restroom and shower facilities specifically available for overnight boaters and ship crews. The piers have also become homeport to two commercial tall ships that provide day and evening sails and are also used by a small boat operator who conducts fishing and sightseeing charters.

The open space at Riverwalk Landing referred to as Chischiak Green has become the hub for activities and special events on the waterfront. Currently it is the site of the well-attended "Shagging on the Riverwalk" and "Rhythms on the Riverwalk" concert series as well as the Yorktown Market Days. The County's Freight Shed meeting facility, performance area, and beach have become popular spots for hosting weddings and receptions.

Indoor Park and Recreational Facilities

As mentioned above, The **Senior Center of York** is located in 8,800 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 original facility. The Center moved again in 2001 into its current space and added an adjacent storefront in 2010 to reach its current size. 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.

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 Family YMCA**. This YMCA opened as a 46,000-square foot facility in January 2003 and was expanded by an additional 11,000 square feet in 2006 to serve more youth, teens, and families. This total included 3,400 square feet of space for Mary Immaculate Hospital to use for physical therapy. In 2011, renovations of 11,000 square feet were completed to further enhance family wellness programs at the facility. The Victory Family YMCA serves the residents in the lower County and has over 15,500 members and more than 17,000 program participations annually. The existing 57,000-square foot building features an eight-lane swimming pool, gymnasium, health and wellness areas for adults and families, walking track, aerobics studios, climbing wall, two racquetball courts, teen center, and child watch area. The branch distributed over \$600,000 in financial assistance, which has allowed more than 16,000 individuals annually to participate in YMCA programs and services. In fact, some 47% of its members qualify for reduced membership fees as it practices its mission.

In 2007, the **R.F. Wilkinson Family YMCA** opened its doors to upper York County residents. Located on the Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center campus on Mooretown Road, the 37,000-square foot facility includes a warm water family/therapeutic pool, lap swim/aqua fitness pool, whirlpool, sauna, gymnasium, child watch, group exercise room and wellness center. The facility also includes an additional 6,845 square feet dedicated to Sentara physical therapy services. The Wilkinson Family YMCA has 6,500 members and over 7,500 program participations annually. The branch distributes over \$450,000 in financial assistance to allow over 10,000 individuals each year to participate in YMCA programs and services. A full 57% of its members qualify for reduced membership fees.

In addition to the York County-based Wilkinson Family YMCA, upper County residents can also utilize recreation facilities located in James City County and Williamsburg. York County residents can join (as non-residents), purchase day passes, and/or participate in programs and activities at several facilities including: the **James City County's James River Community Center** (8901 Pocahontas Trail or Rte 60), which has a full-size gymnasium, fitness room, multipurpose room, and rentable meeting rooms and racquetball court; the **James City/Williamsburg Community Center** (5301 Longhill Road) that features 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, smaller meeting rooms, whirlpool, and a 25-meter x 25-yard swimming pool with zero depth entry and wheelchair accessibility; and, the **City of Williamsburg's Quarterpath Recreation Center** (202 Quarterpath Road, just off Rte 60), featuring a large double gymnasium, a dance/aerobics room, two classrooms, and a large multi-purpose room.

The **York County Boys & Girls Club** opened its doors in June 2010 as a unit of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula. Thanks to the partnerships and support provided by York County, the York County School Division, Cox Communications, Dominion Virginia Power, private businesses, and individuals, the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula were able to provide a new state-of-the-art facility located at the Yorktown Middle School site that serves as the York River Academy during the school day and as a Boys & Girls Club during the afternoons and in the summer. With the pledges from York County and the School Division of \$1 million each toward the total construction cost of \$4.3 million, the vision for this facility came to fruition. This 24,000-square foot space includes a full size gym with stage, a games room with a kitchenette, an arts and crafts room, a reading room, a video games room, a computer lab and classrooms to better serve the youth. The York County Boys & Girls Club serves youth, ages 6-18, from York County and the surrounding areas afterschool and in the summer.

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% 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.
- 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 adoption of these goals 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. In 2006, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail was dedicated. This is a series of trails on the Chesapeake Bay that make up the routes Captain Smith traveled between 1607 - 1609 while mapping and exploring the area. The various routes combine for over 3,000 miles and this Historic Trail is one of only two water trails that are part of the National Trail System.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation published the *2007 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. Respondents respectively ranked swimming, sunbathing, fishing, and boating as 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th out of the state's top ten most popular outdoor recreational activities. Yet, in spite of the Plan's finding that water related activities are so important to Virginians, it also determined that there are only 29 miles of public tidal beachfront land in the entire State. In other words, less than 1% of Virginia's tidal shoreline is publicly owned and accessible to all of its citizens and visitors.

In preparation for the next *Virginia Outdoors Plan*, the state conducted a Virginia Outdoors Demand Survey in 2011. In this survey, 60% of the respondents stated that, "public access to state waters for fishing, swimming, and beach use" are "most needed in Virginia." In fact, in rating the most desirable water related activities, respondents ranked "sunbathing/relaxing on a beach" (41%) and "swimming at a beach" (38%) as numbers two and three, just behind top ranked "swimming in a pool" (43%).

York County's commitment to providing public water access is evidenced through its seven public boat ramps, which are all located in the lower County except for the canoe/kayaking access at New Quarter Park. 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. The County has also identified and created a Water Trails map outlining over 27 miles of trail routes from several of its parks.

York County has stayed committed to providing improved water access, making improvements to existing public access sites. The Rodgers A. Smith boat ramp underwent a complete renovation in 2005, replacing the boat launching ramps, floating piers and fishing pier. The County has also added public restroom 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 and the Yorktown Pier. As the Back Creek Park and Rodgers Smith Landing boat ramps increase in popularity, it will be important to continue maintaining these facilities and ensure that the launching areas do not become blocked with sediment. Periodic inspection of the channel and dredging may be needed to ensure these docks can continue to support the size of boats using them.

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 small boats, canoeists and kayakers, the Old Wormley Creek Landing has potential for improved access with a new landing and pier. 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 **Tables 6, 7, and 8**:

Existing Public Shoreline and Water Access Points – York County

Public Access Area	Day Use	Seasonal Use	Limited Parking Lot	Large Parking Lot	Boat Launch Ramp	Car Top Board Only	Dock	Bank and Pier Fishing	Swimming Beach	Hiking Trails	Nature	Picnicking	Restrooms	Handicapped Access	Wetlands	Natural Heritage Areas	Cultural Resources	Pumpout
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
Public Access Area	Water Body		Remarks															
Back Creek Park	Back Creek		Tennis, crabbing, fishing, picnicking															
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek		Federal ownership - Limited access, not open to the general public, 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															
<i>Sources:</i> York County Division of Parks and Recreation																		

Table 6

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

Public Access Area	Water Body	Boat Launch Ramp	Number of Wet Slips	Dockside Pumpout	Restrooms	Remarks
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.
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:

York County Division of Parks and Recreation

*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	Federal ownership, eagle/osprey nesting								
Poquoson River Site	Poquoson River									
York River Potential Site	York River	Potential for pier or dock								
<i>Source:</i> York County Division of Parks and Recreation										

Table 8

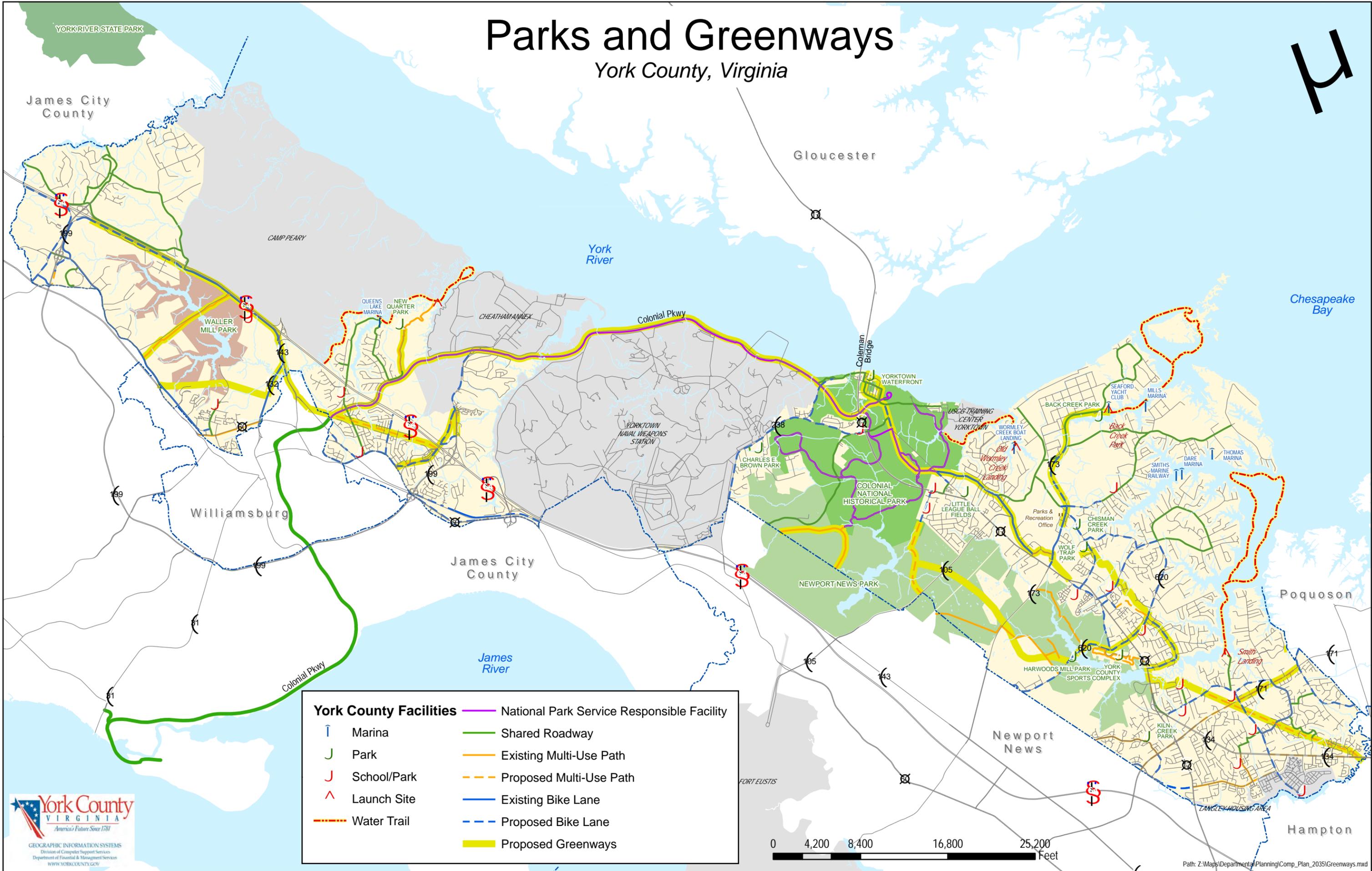
Greenways

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 Program (CIP). 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), old railroad rights-of-way, power line rights-of-way, and bicycle or walking paths. A community greenways system can include scenic roads, parks, nature preserves, and cultural or historic areas, and should function to provide linkages between these resources, neighborhoods and/or small commercial nodes.

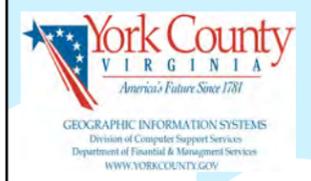
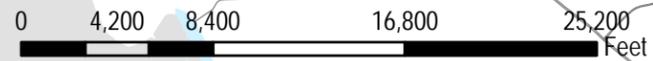
There are many benefits to having greenways in a community, including economic, healthier lifestyle, environmental, and historical and cultural resources enhancement. Economically, studies have shown that having greenways nearby increases real property values by increasing their marketability. They provide 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.

Parks and Greenways

York County, Virginia



York County Facilities	
	Marina
	Park
	School/Park
	Launch Site
	Water Trail
	National Park Service Responsible Facility
	Shared Roadway
	Existing Multi-Use Path
	Proposed Multi-Use Path
	Existing Bike Lane
	Proposed Bike Lane
	Proposed Greenways



The environment and a community's historical and cultural resources also benefit from the establishment of greenways. 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 (see Greenway Map). 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 areas. With continued funding through the CIP and available grant funds, 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 School Division operates four magnet school programs: the School of the Arts at Bruton High School; the Queens Lake Middle School Arts Magnet; 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 Middle School campus, serves selected ninth through twelfth grade students with an innovative academic and career preparatory education in core subject areas with an emphasis on computer and web-based technology. The School Division 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 Division also offers ESL (English as a Second Language) classes at Tabb High School and Bethel Baptist Church.

The school division earned full accreditation from the Virginia Department of Education based on the 2011-2012 Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests for all schools. This is the tenth consecutive year that every school in the division has earned Virginia's highest accreditation standard. In addition, all 19 schools exceeded performance requirements established as part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The division has also earned District Accreditation from AdvancED, a global organization that provides school divisions with a comprehensive review of their organizational effectiveness.

The York County School Division utilizes a wide area network (WAN) consisting of 100 MB to 1 GB fiber optic circuits from every school to the school board office. The division is connected to the Internet via a broadband circuit of 300 MB. All buildings have 100% Wi-Fi coverage. The division uses extensive virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) to provide access to students and teachers from both within the school division's facilities as well as via Internet access from anywhere in the world through a secure gateway. Students and teachers can connect to the division network using any device and access all of the files, programs and resources to which they are entitled to access or use while working in the division.

School Enrollment History

School enrollment is measured in terms of Average Daily Membership (ADM). The ADM represents the total number of York County school 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 8**, 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.

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 *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 ADM 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%. Enrollment growth between 2000 and 2010 slowed to an annual average of 0.5%, increasing enrollment by 5.6% from 11,759 in 2000 to 12,420 in 2010. In contrast to previous years, the average annual growth rate was higher in the upper County (1.1%) than in the lower County (0.5%). Upper County ADM spiked upward from 2005 to 2008 but has been declining ever since. Lower County ADM climbed steadily from 2000 through 2005 and then was relatively flat through 2010.

In addition to the public school system, the County has private schools and parents who elect to home school their children. Currently there are 17 private schools in the County. The actual number of York County residents attending these private schools is unknown, since many private school students could be from other jurisdictions and neither the County nor these private schools are required to maintain enrollment numbers with the State. Parents that decide to home school their children are required to submit a notice of intent to the local superintendent in August. York County has 356 home-school students residing within its boundaries.

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.

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.

Three sets of projections have been prepared based on differing assumptions about overall growth and development in the County (low, medium, and high growth) through 2035. The fourth “blended” set of projections is based on more detailed assumptions about growth in the upper and lower County for different intervals within the 2011-2035 periods. The “blended” projection series, listed in **Table 10** and shown in **Figure 9**, form the basis for the recommendations in this Plan regarding future school capacity needs. The low, medium, and high growth projection series are also shown in Figure 8 for purposes of comparison.

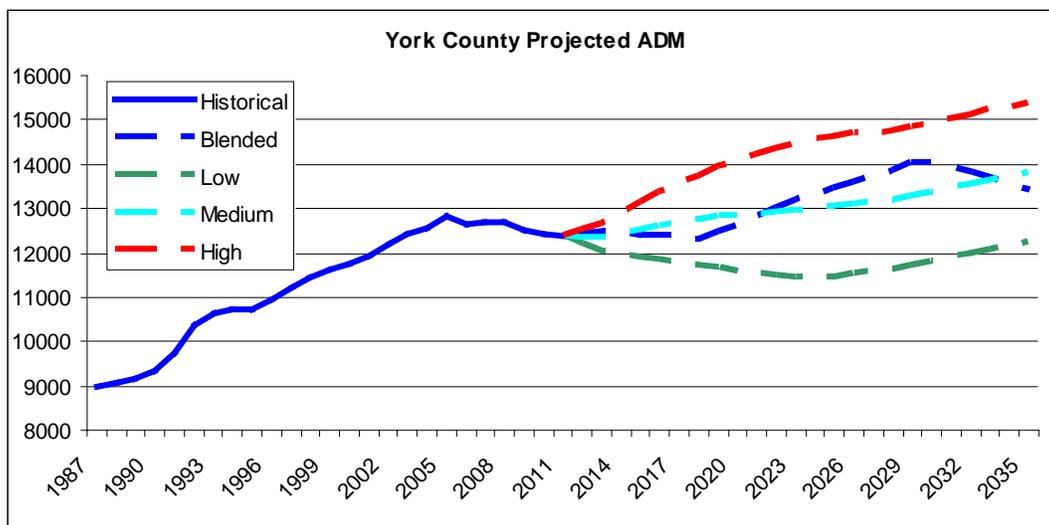


Figure 9

Even with the general aging of the population, which the Virginia Employment Commission projects will cause the senior population (65 and over) to outnumber the school-age population (ages 5 through 19) by 2020, York County is projected to experience net growth in school enrollment between 2011 and 2035. However, the overall magnitude of growth is projected to be lower than in previous decades, with a 2.1% increase between 2011 and 2020, followed by an 11.2% increase between 2020 and 2030, after which, ADM is projected to decline, falling to about 13,400 students – a net increase of approximately 8.6% over the

York County Actual and Projected School Enrollment, 2000-2025						
	2011	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Upper County						
Elementary	893	873	911	962	1,025	1,019
Middle	472	525	520	561	597	605
High	614	579	739	722	826	806
Total	1,978	1,977	2,170	2,245	2,448	2,430
Lower County						
Elementary	4,380	4,455	4,368	5,112	4,704	4,514
Middle	2,424	2,526	2,559	2,675	2,899	2,577
High	3,578	3,439	3,526	3,403	3,985	3,895
Total	10,382	10,420	10,453	11,191	11,588	10,987
Total County						
Elementary	5,273	5,328	5,279	6,074	5,729	5,533
Middle	2,896	3,051	3,079	3,236	3,496	3,183
High	4,191	4,018	4,265	4,125	4,811	4,701
Total	12,360	12,397	12,623	13,436	14,036	13,417

Sources: York County School Division

Table 10

24-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 2011 and 2035, there are intervals within that 24-year period during which enrollment is projected to decline.

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. During the summer of 2009, the School Board adopted new capacity figures based on a recalculation of program capacity on the part of the individual school administrations. As of FY11, according to the School Division, the cumulative capacity of the County's eighteen schools totaled 15,101 students. This does *not* include portable classrooms (trailers), which are not considered permanent classrooms and therefore are not included in the school capacity figures.

Future School Enrollment & Capacity York County Schools

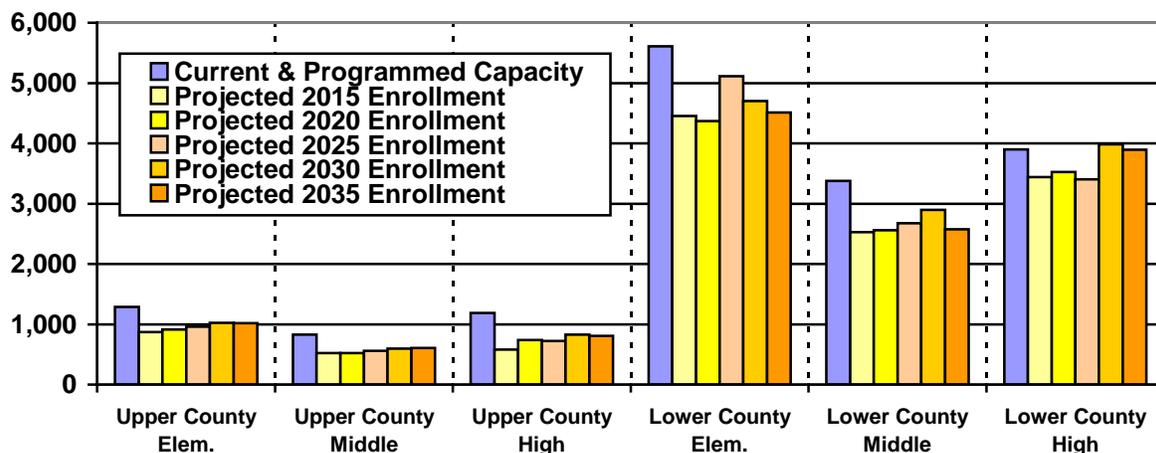


Figure 10

Future school enrollment and capacity are depicted in **Figure 10**. Projections indicate that there will be enough school capacity at each level in both the upper and lower County to accommodate expected increases in enrollment at least through the year 2035. The capacity is based on programmed expansions currently within the York County School's Capital Improvement Plan, which will add classrooms to Seaford (six classrooms), Tabb (six classrooms), and Waller Mill (ten classrooms) elementary schools; Queens Lake Middle School (six classrooms); and Bruton High School (six classrooms). Classrooms are projected to hold up to 25 children. Also, overcrowding is projected to occur at the high school level in the lower County by 2030 and over then to drop back to at-capacity by 2035, while upper County elementary schools are projected to be approaching capacity by 2030.

The prediction that there will be adequate capacity, at least in the aggregate, is predicated on the 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. Thus, any residential rezonings of non-residential land will likely have an impact on future enrollment, which makes it essential to consider school enrollment/capacity impacts when evaluating development proposals submitted

in accordance with the Mixed-Use Overlay designation. It should also be noted that the existence of surplus capacity at different grade levels or in the system overall does not necessarily mean that additional school capacity will not be needed. Enrollment growth will be unevenly distributed around the County, and the ability to adjust school attendance zone boundaries to address overcrowding is greatly limited by two longstanding School Board policies: that students will be assigned, to the maximum extent possible, to the schools closest to their neighborhood, and that students will not be bussed between the upper County and the lower County (except by choice). For example, the presence of excess capacity at Dare Elementary does nothing to address overcrowding at Tabb Elementary, and to try to adjust this imbalance by changing attendance zones would require changes to at least two other attendance zones between them, potentially disrupting hundreds of students. Two potential problem areas are the Yorktown Elementary and Waller Mill Elementary School attendance zones, where several residential developments are somewhere in the development approval pipeline with significant numbers of future housing units (approximately 540 and 400 respectively). Yorktown and Waller Mill are the northernmost elementary schools in the lower County and the upper County respectively, which limits the ability to address crowding by shifting the attendance zone boundaries.

CITIZEN INPUT

Based on the results of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan telephone survey, York County's citizens generally support the expansion of community facilities in the County. Support is especially strong for the schools, which the respondents cited as the thing they like most about the County. Similarly, the survey asked citizens to rate the importance of building or expanding various public facilities in York County, and schools received the most positive response. On a scale of zero (not at all important) to ten (extremely important), schools received an average (mean) rating of 7.59. 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. The second overall priority for community facilities, according to the survey, are parks for recreation activities (6.71), These two were followed in order by fire stations (6.38), and public libraries (5.60). All of these facilities, it should be noted, had an average rating above the neutral mid-point of five, indicating more support than opposition. The survey also asked if there were any facilities other than those named that should be built or expanded in the next twenty years. The vast majority of respondents (64%) answered "no"; the most frequently named facilities cited by the 34% who answered "yes" those who answered "yes" to this question, were YMCAs, recreation centers, and youth centers (named by 11% of all respondents), followed by playgrounds, parks (including dog parks), and open space (named by 5%).

The survey also asked people what they like least about living in York County, and the number two overall response (named by 17% of the respondents) was the quality of County services/facilities. However, the survey question asking what changes people would like to see in the County in the next twenty years did not elicit strong support for more facilities. Dissatisfaction with services/facilities is particularly strong in the upper County, where it was the top response, cited by 32% of respondents (compared to 14% of lower County respondents).

PLANNING ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

As continued residential development brings more population, 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.

Public Safety

The two future priorities for the Sheriff's Office are additional office space and a firing range for weapons training and state-mandated qualification. The Sheriff's Office currently has office space in three locations in the county. The administration and law enforcement offices are located at 301 Goodwin Neck Road and occupy approximately 5,500 square feet of space. Currently, there is no room for expansion at this location unless one or both of the other users (FLS and Social Services) are displaced. The Sheriff's Office also has space at the York-Poquoson Courthouse facility for the Civil Process Division as well as offices for a Captain, Lieutenants, Sergeants, and other support staff. The D.A.R.E office is located in office space at Washington Square Shopping Center. The cumulative amount of space that the Sheriff's Office currently occupies is less than 10,000 square feet. The average square footage of law enforcement facilities for agencies the size of the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office in Virginia is 35,000 square feet.

The County's fire and rescue response continues to be affected by population (both permanent and transient, i.e., tourists) as well as commercial development 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 apparatus and personnel capable of responding from within an acceptable distance as well as an adequate transportation network with limited traffic congestion. As a result of the planned widening of Route 17 (which will reduce the distance between the travel lanes and the front of the fire station and affect the safety of operations) as well as the age of the facility itself, overcrowding, and inefficient operational space, Fire Station 1 in Grafton is proposed to be replaced, perhaps on a different site. As development continues, additional stations or resources are expected to be needed. In particular, increased development and service demands in the entire upper County (Bruton and Skimino) create a potential need for a fire station in the Mooretown/Bypass Road corridor in the near future. In addition, activity in the Tabb area may require an additional fire station or increased resources and/or personnel at existing stations. Other existing fire stations may need additional resources and/or personnel to meet ever-increasing response demands in their specific response areas.

Furthermore, residential growth will continue in potential hurricane/storm surge/coastal flooding areas and in proximity to a transportation network that already carries large amounts of hazardous materials. More people will also live within the ten-mile emergency protection zone (EPZ) 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 Tropical Storms Ernesto, Isabel, and Irene, have demonstrated the need to ensure that the County has in place critical emergency management facilities [shelters, a permanent emergency operations center (EOC), fire stations, and other support facilities] and that they are sufficient, adequate for the needs, and equipped with sufficient emergency power generating capacity to allow them to effectively support operations during emergencies lasting several days to several weeks.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety has limited office and support space for administrative staff and options for additional space will need to be considered in the very near future. Ideally, this space should be immediately adjacent to the EOC in order to ensure effective coordination during emergency events as well as day-to-day operational efficiencies. Additionally, with the amount of specialized didactic training necessary for the Department of Fire and Life Safety and the Sheriffs Office, a centrally located training facility with several large classroom spaces, multiple smaller breakout training rooms, specific training rooms for specialized training, technical library capabilities, and computer labs, would alleviate training pressures. 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.

The Sheriff’s Office and the Department of Fire and Life Safety have increasing needs for inventory management and maintenance requirements for equipment systems that are taxing the capabilities of their existing space. Logistical warehouse-type space is severely needed for storage and maintenance of required equipment (i.e., medical supplies, fire hoses and appliances, uniforms, personal protective equipment, firearms, ammunition, and general supplies).

Government Offices

In a steadily growing community, it is almost inevitable that the size of the government operations – 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 2002 and 2012, the ratio of employees per thousand residents increased from 10.06 to 10.94, respectively (**Table 11**) with the actual number of employees increasing from 595 to 733. The average ratio of employees per thousand residents during this period was 10.84. The decline in the ratio from 11.71 in 2009 to 10.94 in 2012 reflects the cost-cutting measures (hiring freezes and employment reductions through attrition or layoffs) that were necessary as a result of the economic downturn and the effect on York County’s budget.

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

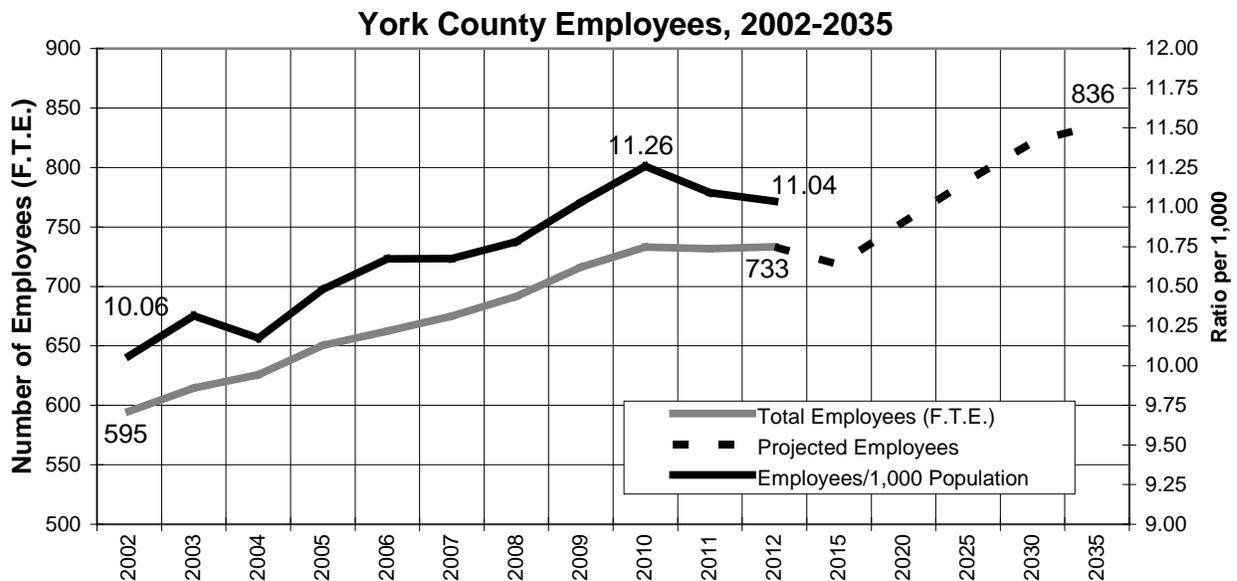


Figure 11

advances – employee numbers are still expected to increase, but at a very slow rate, adding 115 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.

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. Additionally, The Goodwin Neck Operations Center is significantly encumbered by non-tidal wetlands and power line easements, so space for new or expanded buildings and facilities is limited.

New technologies will continue to 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 in some public agencies that have found it to be more cost-effective than building, operating, and maintaining office buildings. This concept could 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 the Library of Virginia's *Planning for Library Excellence: Standards for Virginia Public Libraries*, York County Public Library meets the required minimum standards, having an A or AA rating in each of the four categories used for evaluation. The Library administration and Library Board of Trustees recommend the expansion of the Yorktown Library by 10,000 square feet and a 1,000-square foot addition to the Tabb Library, which would enable the library system to achieve a AAA rating in Facilities, Collections, and Technology.

In the upper County, residents continue to receive quality service from the Williamsburg Regional Library system. The continuation of a memorandum of agreement with WRL will ensure that upper County residents have the benefit of access to adequate library services and programs.

Parks and Recreation

The demand for recreational programs and facilities to accommodate them is evident in the number of County residents participating in such programs. Participation in recreational programs will likely continue to grow as the population grows, provided that the programs and facilities are available, and the availability of adequate parks and recreational facilities continues to be rated relatively high as a priority in the citizen input process.

In planning future recreational programs and facilities, it will be increasingly 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 12.1% of the population in 2010 to 19.5% by 2030. The youth population will also grow in the next twenty years, but at a much slower pace, growing from 24.0% in 2010 to 27.6% in 2020, and leveling off thereafter (27.8% by 2030).

The seasonal opening and additional amenities at New Quarter Park as well as the opening of the York County Sports Complex have greatly helped to meet the ongoing need for recreational opportunities in the County. Potentially desirable future parks and recreational facilities might include such things as an outdoor pool, indoor facilities, picnic areas/facilities, walking/bicycle trails, waterfront property, etc. Citizens have also expressed the desire for more "passive recreation" areas in the County, as currently there are very few places at public parks that are not developed into athletic facilities or adjacent to program areas. These passive areas would allow citizens to enjoy the outdoors and nature by providing areas to read a book, enjoy nature,

have a picnic on a blanket, fly a kite, take a quiet walk, throw a Frisbee, play ball, etc. The *2011 Virginia Outdoor Demand Survey* asked respondents to identify the “most frequently needed recreation opportunities in Virginia.” The top three were “trails for hiking” (68%), public access to state waters for fishing, swimming, and beach use” (60%), and “access to natural areas” (55%).

Currently, the majority of indoor community recreational programs either takes place in schools or leased space. While leased space has served the County well in the case of the Senior Center, the use of school space is more problematic. School programs as well as school maintenance and construction priorities necessarily cause scheduling difficulties at times for community recreational use. These issues often require Parks and Recreation programs (and/or privately sponsored community recreational activities) to be cancelled or relocated, sometimes with little notice. Also some programs have had to be altered, reduced or discontinued due to the limitations of school facilities.

For many years citizens advocated the development of a community center that could accommodate the needs of different age groups and thereby serve a large segment of the population. It was largely in response to these concerns that the County acquired land on Route 134 adjacent to the Tabb library site, and made it available to the YMCA to construct a recreation facility serving Lower County residents. Similarly, upper County residents are served by another YMCA on the Sentara hospital site. Both YMCAs provide recreational services to the communities. Looking to the future, it will be important to monitor and assess whether these fee-based facilities, in combination with continued use of school facilities, meet the needs of all segments of the County’s population for indoor community recreational programs and opportunities.

Schools

As noted, the York County school system appears to have sufficient capacity to accommodate projected enrollment for the next 20 years, although by 2035 lower County high schools are projected to be near or slightly exceeding. 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 based on 20-year membership projections. Instead, the ten-year horizon of the County’s Capital Improvement Program is more appropriate for school facility planning and construction decisions. Using that time horizon 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, unless there is a remarkable unforeseen increase in enrollment over the projected levels.

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 enrollment at any level in either the upper or lower County begins to approach the program capacity, and opportunities for expansions do not exist due to site

constraints, maximum desirable school size, or other factors, it will be 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 and use electronic technology to the maximum feasible extent to minimize the need for physical space to accommodate administrative and storage functions.
3. Provide greater opportunities for the training of County personnel, in particular specialized training for law enforcement and fire and rescue personnel, in a convenient and cost-effective location(s).

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 staffing 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.
3. Ensure that adequate disaster support facilities are in place to accommodate preparation for, response to, and recovery from major emergencies/disasters.

LIBRARIES

1. Achieve higher levels of excellence in library service according to State standards.

2. Ensure the provision of library services to citizens throughout the County.

PARKS AND RECREATION

1. Continuously assess and evaluate future needs for the following:
 - Outdoor and indoor recreational facilities and activities
 - Public areas for passive recreation for citizens to enjoy the outdoors
 - Greenways/Trails to include a network of open space areas, water trails, natural corridors, bike and pedestrian trails, and historical and recreational sites.
2. Protect the natural environment and preserve open space.
3. Based on the *Virginia Outdoors Plan*, increase public recreational, fishing and boating access to waterways.
4. Ensure that athletic fields and other recreational facilities are well maintained.

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:

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENT/CLASSROOM RATIOS	PROGRAM CAPACITY GUIDELINES
Kindergarten through 2 nd	20:1	350-700 students
3 rd through 5 th	25:1	
6 th through 8 th	25:1	700-1000 students
9 th through 12 th	25:1	1200-1800 students
9 th through 12 th (English classes)	24:1	

Source: York County School Division

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. (S)
2. Annually review and update the ten-year Capital Improvements Program and include a process for Planning Commission review, and certification by resolution, of its conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. (S)
3. Provide public buildings that set an example for quality development in the County. (M)

4. Provide regular, ongoing inspection, maintenance, and repair of all public buildings. (S)
5. Where feasible, cooperate with neighboring localities to establish and maintain regional public facilities and programs for the use of residents of multiple jurisdictions. (M)
6. Design public buildings to accommodate a variety of uses. (M)

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

1. Continue to use technology to improve on space-saving computer-based methods of storing and retrieving County files and records. (S)
2. Evaluate the need for and feasibility for constructing a warehousing center for the storage needs of County departments. (M)
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. (L)
4. Evaluate the need for and feasibility for constructing a maintenance complex in the northern end of the County to reduce travel times and increase field personnel productivity. (M)

DETENTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. Evaluate and work to address the space needs to accommodate future growth in manpower and support functions of the Sheriff's Office. (M)
2. Evaluate the need for, feasibility, and potential effectiveness of establishing Sheriff's substations in strategic locations throughout the County. (M)

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 or where necessary in order to meet response time goals, address target hazard needs and/or to meet service demands. (S)
2. Replace, expand, and/or renovate fire stations when circumstances warrant due to facility upkeep, operational response changes/additions and/or development/geographical changes that impact response etc. (M)
3. 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. (S)
4. Continue efforts to improve or construct facilities (such as the emergency operations center (EOC), shelters, public safety facilities) needed for adequate major emergency/disaster coordination and support. This should include adequate and appropriately equipped space with necessary utility support (i.e., back up emergency power etc.). (S)
5. Ensure adequate facilities and resources (such as training space, office areas and logistics space) are in place to support the operations that serve the County. (M)
6. Consider the needs of the Fire and Rescue Service with regard to roadway/driveway access and water availability prior to approval of development plans and in all decisions regarding utility extension and roadway construction. (S)

LIBRARIES

1. Expand the number and range of library books, digital resources, audio-visual materials, and online access to information as necessitated by citizen needs and technological changes. (S)
2. Continue to provide equitable library service to all districts of York County. (S)
3. Maintain information technology in library facilities. (S)

PARKS AND RECREATION

1. Continue implementation of the “school/park” concept to enhance recreational use of school sites. (S)
2. Develop a comprehensive parks and recreation master plan to address existing and future demands for both public and private recreation programs and any needs for additional recreation facilities and grounds. (M)
3. Consider the need for and feasibility of developing a public space for community events requiring meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, and multi-purpose rooms. (M)
4. Provide for the particular needs of the young, the elderly, and the disabled when planning for recreational facilities. (S)
5. Explore opportunities to work with the National Park Service and the U.S. Military installations/bases to increase public recreational, fishing, and boating access to waterways. (M)
6. Increase public awareness about private and other non-County facilities and programs that help meet the recreational demands of County residents. (M)
7. Promote the provision of open space and recreational facilities in new residential development. (S)
8. Continue to place lighting at County athletic fields to increase usage beyond daylight hours. (M)
9. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of conversion of selected high-use athletic fields from natural turf to synthetic turf to allow for year-round activities and programs and increased usage during times when natural turf fields would otherwise have to be annually rested or renovated to maintain turf quality (M)

SCHOOLS

1. Consider the general boundaries of residential neighborhoods and their proximity to schools in establishing school attendance zones. (S)
2. Review school enrollment projections every three years. (S)
3. Before approving rezonings and planned developments, consider their potential impact on the school system so as to minimize school crowding. (S)
4. Provide a gymnasium in every school. (M)
5. Provide regular, ongoing inspection, maintenance, and repair of school buildings. (S)

6. Support and strengthen the career and technical school program with private sector assistance in the development of the school curricula. (S)
7. Provide for regional alternative education programs. (M)
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. (M)
9. Install portable classrooms to alleviate temporary overcrowding (i.e., three years or less). (S)
10. Alleviate long-term overcrowding by optimizing school capacity through permanent additions to and modifications of existing schools. (M)
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. (L)
12. Encourage future magnet programs, if any, to be located where excess capacity exists. (M)
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. (S)
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. (S)
15. Continue opportunities for students and staff to utilize technology that is designed to amplify and improve the quality of student work and increase access to digital resources anywhere, anytime, and on any internet-ready device. (S)