

## What is Important to YOU? POPULATION NEEDS!



### *What are the hot topics and what do we do with them?*

For the past six months, in preparation for the Comprehensive Plan update, the Community Participation Team has been collecting your thoughts and ideas on the issues facing James City County. We have read all the input received, which is available for you to examine at [www.jccplans.org](http://www.jccplans.org), and have developed a list of hot topics that are on your minds. Hot topics were strongly related and many comments crossed categories, but generally included the impacts of growth, community character/quality of life, transportation, economic climate, environment, housing, population needs, and water. We are going to highlight the topics on a regular basis leading up to the second round of Community Conversation meetings. **Population needs will be discussed at the Community Conversation on Wednesday, August 13 from 6-9 at Lafayette High School, 4460 Longhill Road.**

### *What do we mean by "population needs"?*

Population needs are the seventh hot topic to come out of the first round of public input. This topic area incorporates the idea that the needs of all population segments, particularly youth and seniors should be addressed. Generally, citizen comments expressed a lack of available youth and young adult activities. Youth concerns included wanting a safe place to hangout with friends that's open later at night, such as an arcade, mall, club, or concert venue. Better retention of young adults post-education was linked to the provision of entertainment options and more interesting (and higher paying) job opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum were comments centered on the quickly increasing senior population and ensuring that adequate and affordable healthcare, housing, transportation options, and activities are available. Several citizen comments asked for an increased awareness of individuals with disabilities and foreign workers and also ensuring that their needs are met. Finally, comments addressed the population in general by noting that diversity in age and backgrounds provided a necessary vibrancy and liveliness in the County that made it a more interesting place to live.

### *How do population needs affect my daily routine?*

Population diversity plays a large role in the types of services the County offers and the social community formed by citizens. Likewise, population distribution plays a part in making sure there is a balanced workforce in the community. Diversity in the ages, backgrounds, economic status, and culture of citizens can greatly enrich the community with the types of events, such as concerts, dinners, markets, and lectures, which are offered on a continuous basis. In turn, the demographics of the County has been shifting lately, and all need to be tuned in to this shift to ensure that adequate services are available and provided to each population segment.

### *How did we get here and how would the Comprehensive Plan address the issue?*



In 2003, through the public input process, youth needs were seen as a rising topic and were given a separate section of the Comprehensive Plan. Now another issue related to population needs, this time regarding the growing senior population, has been identified and will be incorporated into this section as a new 'diversity of ages' component. Growth in this population segment is a natural or anticipated trend due to the aging of the baby boomer generation and longer lifespans. But this increase in the senior population is also

partially because the high quality of life and services provided within James City County have attracted a disproportionate number of individuals from outside the area who choose to retire here. As a result, the U.S. Census and Virginia Employment Commission, [approximately 30% of the County's population will be over 65 by the year 2030](#). This is nearly double the over 65 population tallied in the 2000 Census. In comparison, [the percentage of the under 19 population is estimated to remain relatively stable between 2000 \(27%\) and 2030 \(22%\)](#). We want to hear which issues facing our aging population are most important at the Community Conversations.

Several areas related to both population groups are planned to be incorporated into the updated Comprehensive Plan, including how to balance the provision of services to meet the needs of both population groups. For youth needs, a new sub-section regarding employment opportunities for high school aged individuals. This ties strongly with the economic climate hot topic and also relates to concerns about adequate alternative transportation to job centers and the provision of affordable day care services for members of the work force with younger children. Alternative transportation includes both the availability of the facilities (bike lanes, buses) and availability of information about the facilities and how it's distributed to interested youths. Also, the section which addresses recreational facilities available to youth will be expanded to include a discussion on all "youth friendly" places in the County whether publically or privately owned. Specifically, it will address the idea of a teen center as a safe place for youth to hang out. Finally, gang activity has been in the spotlight in County newspapers recently and is currently being examined by the JCC Police Department through their GREAT (Gang Resistance Education And Training) program. Components of this program and overall gang awareness will also be considered during development of Comprehensive Plan. [At the Community Conversations, JCC will be looking to hear about what you think the best strategies are for creating positive futures for our County's young people.](#)



#### *Where can I go for more information?*

- 2003 Comprehensive Plan: <http://www.jccegov.com/government/administration/comp-plan.html>
- JCC Department of Community Services Strategic Plan for Youth and Children: <http://www.jccegov.com/communityservices/strat-plan-youth.html>
- JCC Youth Advisory Council: <http://www.jccegov.com/communityservices/youth-advisory.html>
- JCC Police- Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program: <http://www.jccegov.com/police/police-GangAwareness.html>
- KIDS COUNT: <http://kidscount.org/census/>
- Voices for Virginia's Children: <http://www.vakids.org>
- America's Children- Well-Being Indicators: [www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2007/ac\\_07.pdf](http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2007/ac_07.pdf)
- Virginia Department for the Aging: <http://www.vda.virginia.gov/>
- Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging: <http://www.vaaaa.org/>