



POPULATION NEEDS TECHNICAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

Since 1990, the youth population in James City County has decreased in relation to the overall population, while the population over the age of 65 has seen a dramatic increase. However, the number of youth and aging citizens has continued to increase as the population of the County has risen. Both youth and senior issues remain an important concern for many residents and County agencies. Many of the issues that face youth and senior citizens are the same: availability of transportation, affordable health care, and recreational activities. In many respects this section continues the work initiated by other James City County Departments including Community Services, Parks and Recreation, Social Services, all of which contributed vital information.

Like the 2001 Community Services report “Strategic Plan for Children and Youth,” (Appendix B) this section summarizes the current status of youth within the County and identifies objectives ensuring that “all children and youth in our community will be valued as an asset, and as such, will be given every opportunity to grow up healthy, safe and prepared for a positive future.”

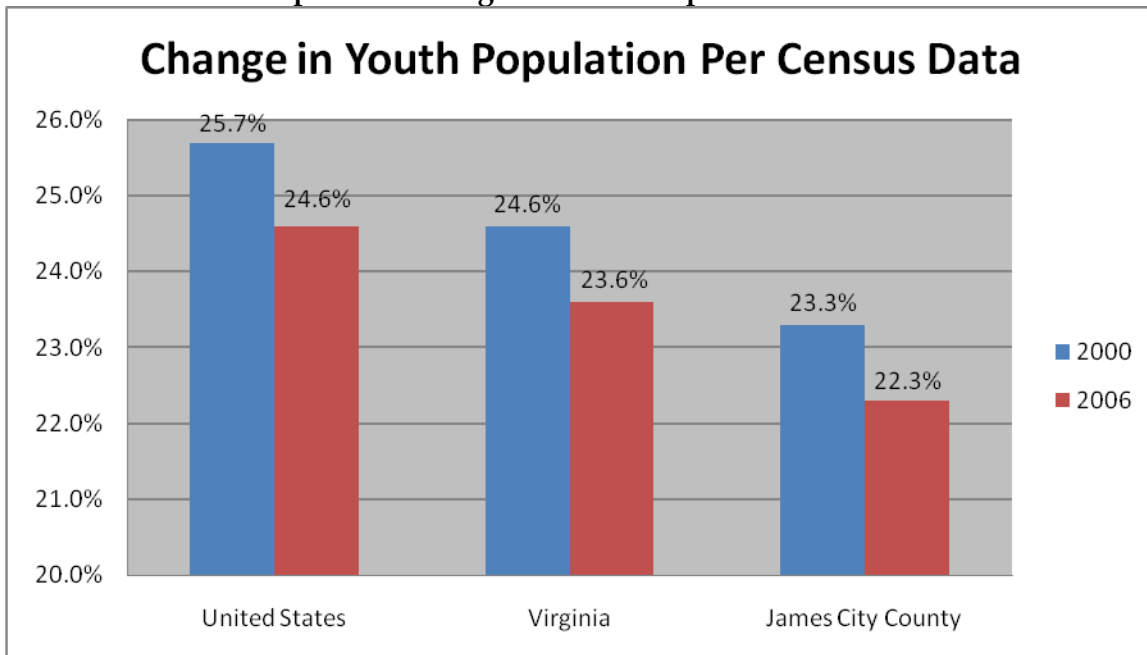
While senior services are new to this section of the Comprehensive Plan, it is intended to serve as a start to promoting, building, and sustaining a healthier and safer community for seniors through a comprehensive senior services system in James City County.

2. Key Indicators for Youth

2a. Demographic Changes in Youth Population

As the table below illustrates, the youth population of James City County (residents under 18) has decreased in proportion to other demographic groups. Similarly, Census data for the state and the nation show a decrease as well. While the youth segment has decreased proportionally the raw numbers show substantial growth from 8,493 in 1990 to 11,213 in 2000 and 13,183 in 2006 (U.S. Census and Weldon Cooper Population Estimates). This growth has placed an increased demand for youth services in the County.

Chart 1: Population change for Youth Population between 2000 and 2006



Source: U.S. Census for the 2000 data and the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service for 2006 data.

2b. Other Indicators

KIDS COUNT, an annual publication, periodically studies the relative status of youth within Virginia. Utilizing a set of fourteen key indicators, KIDS COUNT studied Virginia's 135 localities and allows each to be compared to the rest of the state. Based on data collected over the past year, the following chart summarizes how James City County rates against the rest of the state in the 2008 KIDS COUNT survey:

Table 1: KIDS COUNT Indicators

Indicator	James City County	Virginia
Prenatal Care Beginning First Trimester	82.3%	83.5%
Low Birth Weight Babies	6.3%	8.3%
Founded Victims of Child Abuse or Neglect (per 1,000)	4.9	3.9
Juvenile Intake Cases ¹	15%	14%
Child Day Care Capacity ²	17%	26%
Children in Foster Care (per 1,000)	2.0	3.9
Children Receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) per 1,000	16	32
Unemployment Rate	2.6%	3.0%
Poverty (ages 0-17)	8%	13%
Infant Mortality (per 1,000)	6.8	7.4

Source: KIDS COUNT Data Book 2008.

The number of youth with special needs is also increasing dramatically, about 10% per year. In 2005, there were 24 special needs youth in the Rec Connect program. Today, there are 65.

3. Barriers to Youth Services

In focus group sessions conducted for the Community Services' Youth Strategic Plan, participants identified several barriers to youth services relevant to the Comprehensive Plan. Lack of space for programs and services, lack of adequate transportation, and cost to client directly affect the larger considerations of child care, recreation facilities, and community economic development.

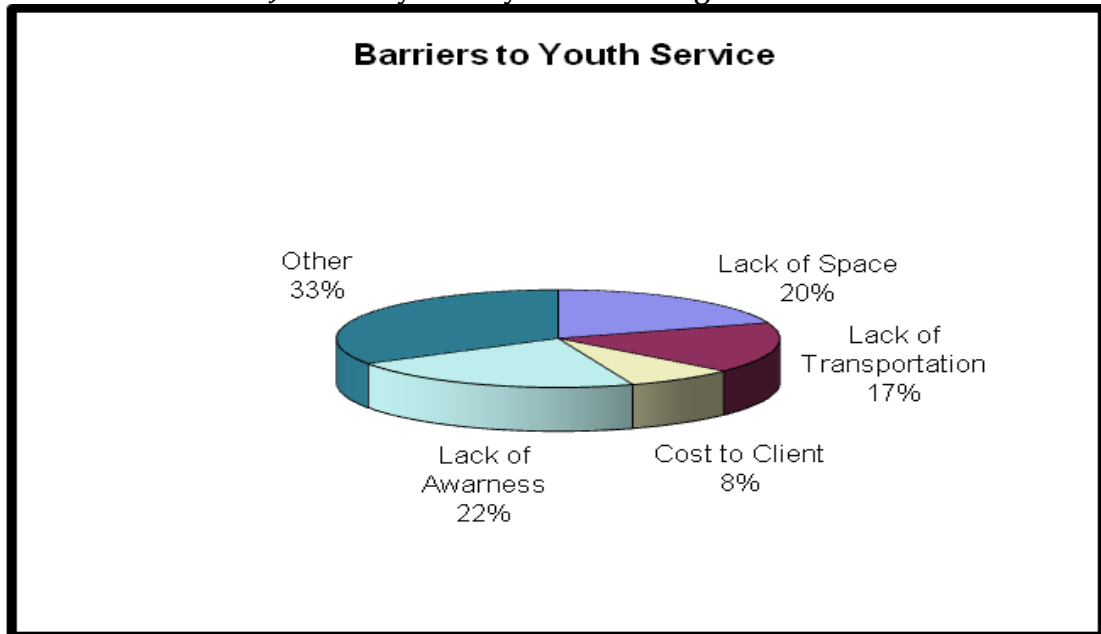
When asked to list the barriers to serving youth, participants' most popular response was lack of awareness, with 22% stating this as their most significant obstacle. As a result, increasing public information efforts is a critical component of the Comprehensive Plan.

These barriers were further validated during recent focus groups involved in developing the Community Needs Assessment conducted by Parks and Recreation and Social Services as part of a federal requirement to continue funding for youth service initiatives.

¹ *Juvenile Intake Cases Definitions:* Number of cases per 100 adolescents ages 13-17 referred to intake in a Court Service Unit for a complaint. These cases may then be deemed unfounded, diverted, or petitioned to court by the Court Service Intake Staff.

² *Child Day Care Capacity Definitions:* Number of child care slots per 100 children ages 0-12. Slots represent total capacity of child care regulated by the Virginia Department of Social Services in four categories: licensed child day centers, licensed family day homes, church-exempt facilities (which are not licensed).

Chart 2: James City County Youth Strategic Plan Barriers to Service



Source: James City County Strategic Plan for Children and Youth 2001

3a. Transportation

Of residents who participated in the focus groups for the Community Services Youth Strategic Plan, 70% cited transportation as an issue adversely affecting James City County's youngest segment. Many youth cannot access existing programs because they are unable to travel to the program location. Households without a stay-at-home parent face additional difficulties, as do households without convenient access to public transportation or without adequate pedestrian or bicycle connections. The location of County programs also aggravates transportation considerations; for example, 50% of the focus group participants felt youth programs and services are not equally distributed throughout the County, thus decreasing their accessibility. The nature of the County's road system also presents significant obstacles. The majority of youth served by prevention programs reside in rural areas of the County and need connectivity to community resources.

Incentives designed to alleviate transportation problems specific to youth already exist. For instance, middle and high school students can ride free on the Williamsburg Area Transport with their student ID cards. Since the initiation of the program in 2000, the number of student riders has increased from 1,975 to 44,270 in FY 08. While this number continues to increase, the program continues to be underutilized based on a lack of knowledge and a perception by the youth that the system is complicated and daunting. Public transportation connects many areas within the County; however, current service to local schools is very limited. The County also works with developers to provide sidewalks and/or bicycle lanes with their development plans whenever possible.

3b. Recreation Facilities

Although 90% of focus group participants for the Youth Strategic Plan praised existing recreational facilities, they also identified the lack of meeting space and recreational space as a major obstacle to youth services. Almost half of the respondents reported that the County should spend more on youth-specific community programs and facilities. Responses to open-ended survey questions supported additional after-school and weekend activities for youth, including teen nightclubs, performing arts, sports programs, and arts and crafts. Completion of the Warhill Sports Complex as well as new partnerships with Athletic and Arts organizations are positive steps in meeting youth service needs.

Not all neighborhoods in the County have recreational facilities near them. It is important to provide access to these types of facilities from all areas of the County. Lack of access to information about recreational activities, as well as transportation programs to these activities is a barrier as well. Access to bus schedules and maps of bike paths, for instance, should be made available to all youth in the community. Playgrounds have been added to a number of neighborhood communities and additional connectivity to larger recreation areas such as the completion of the multiuse trail at Warhill Sports Complex needs to be considered during review of the development of neighborhoods and trails.

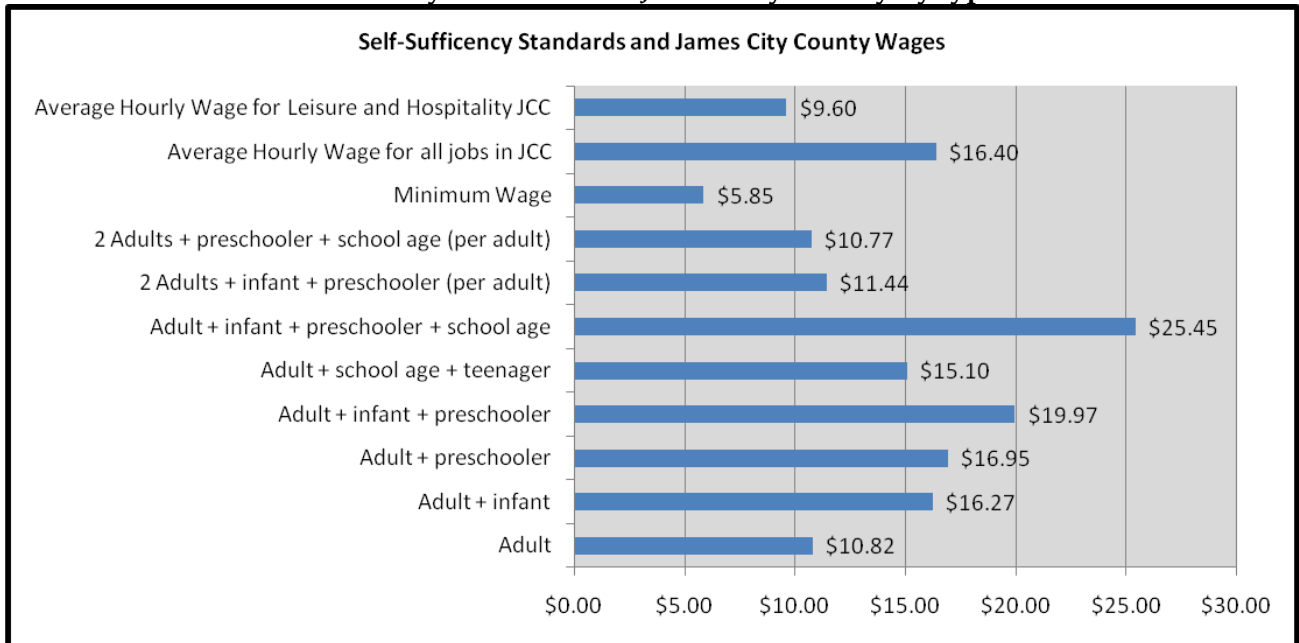
In general, citizens are satisfied with the facilities provided by the County but would like to have more of these facilities available to all citizens with programs geared toward specific interests and age groups.

3c. Economic Development, Child Care and Health Care

Economic indicators from the 2008 KIDS COUNT data for James City County are generally positive, but the Community Services Youth Strategic Plan also notes that the cost of youth programs often deters low- and moderate- income parents from enrolling their children. Programs such as Parks and Recreation's Financial Assistance program offer broad based coverage for families to participate in a number of recreation services. Over \$100,000 was provided in scholarships and financial assistance during FY 08 and a significant amount of that was used in providing assistance with child care costs.

Single-income families, in particular, are more likely to not enter their children in County programs due to concerns over the cost. Leisure and Hospitality workers comprise about a quarter of the workforce in James City County. A comparison of their hourly wages to the Self-Sufficiency Standards developed by the Action Alliance for Virginia's Youth reveals the difficulty a single-income household in this field has in supporting a family. The Self-Sufficiency Standards define the amount of income required to meet basic needs (including paying taxes) in the regular "marketplace" without public or private/informal subsidies. These standards account for child care and regional adjustments but do not include saving for future retirement or education.

Chart 3: Self-Sufficiency Standards for James City County by type of household in 2006



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Virginia Workforce Connection State Wage Survey from May 2006 listing the minimum wage needed to support a household.

The Community Services Youth Strategic Plan reinforces the importance of child care: “Almost 60% of children under age 5 are in child care on a regular basis and 44% of infants are in child care on a regular basis.” Studies also continue to link the quality of child care and pre-school experiences to success in school. In addition, half of those participating in focus groups identified child care as an important issue. Unfortunately, adequate child care is seldom available to lower-income families. For example, child care is rarely available on nights or weekends, hours required by many working parents.

In addition to child care, economics directly affects the quality of children’s health care. According to the Action Alliance for Virginia’s Children and Youth, part-time or temporary jobs that do not provide benefits to employees force some parents to remain on Welfare in order to keep their Medicaid health care coverage.

4. Youth Service Goals

4a. Youth Leadership

James City County Parks and Recreation and Virginia Cooperative Extension 4H Youth Development have identified key leadership skills that will enable youth to gain a better understanding of themselves, their peers and community and have integrated it into its programming. Their belief is that Youth need to be involved in decision-making that directly impacts their lives and their communities. The Youth Advisory Council, Teens Towards Success and 4H Leadership programs provide mechanisms through which young people can shape and influence the decision making that affects their lives and communities and enables them to make data driven recommendations for change in their programs and communities.

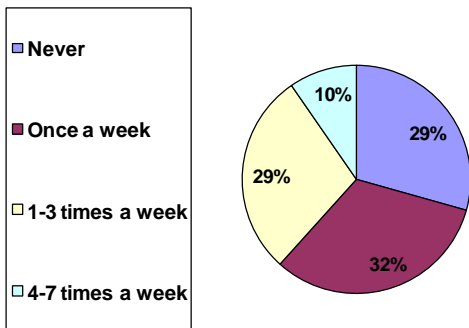
The Youth Advisory Council was formed nine years ago for the purpose of serving as a link between the youth and the government of James City County. The Council serves as a forum for the youth of the County to present their ideas, needs, and suggestions and to enhance the awareness of needs, challenges, and issues affecting the youth of James City County. Fifteen youth, who represent a diverse population by gender, race, school, and grade make up the Youth Advisory Council.

The Council works to create a “youth friendly” community and to advocate and increase awareness of youth issues.

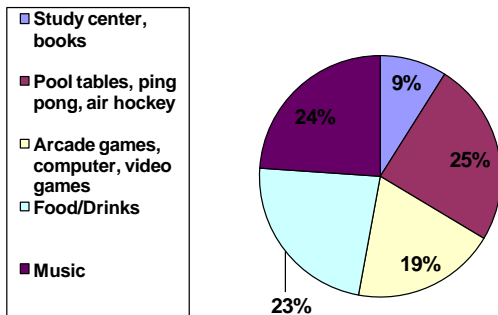
The Council administered a survey in Spring 2007 to 7th, 9th, and 11th graders in all of the middle and high schools in our area. The survey had 14 questions and included one open-ended question, all dealing with teen facilities, physical health and activity, community activities, transportation and job opportunities. In total, 1,408 youth responded, including 893 high school students and 515 middle school students. Youth generally felt that transportation was a problem, and that there were not enough jobs in the County either. Additionally, youth were in favor of a teen center or a place to hangout and participate in a variety of activities.

The following is more specific data from the 2007 survey pertaining to a teen center:

If there were a center dedicated to teens in James City County, how often would you use the facility?



If you could decide what goes in the center for teens, which of the following would you choose?



The survey indicated the need for a teen “friendly” facility in the central part of the County. The center would need to be accessible through public transportation and be affordable and safe. Youth felt that there should be structured programs, but also provide for “drop-in” activities as well.

Overall, youth desired more youth/teen facilities in the County, more bike paths and sidewalks, less development in the County, as well as a frisbee golf area for additional recreational opportunities.

Another program promoting Youth Leadership is Teens Towards Success. Teens Towards Success provides an avenue for teens to develop leadership skills, career development, communication skills and increased self esteem while volunteering their time and sharing their talents in a work study environment. Over 100 teens have participated in this program volunteering for over 1500 hours of leadership to their community.

4H Youth Development provides a full array of leadership programming for all ages of youth in the community. The development of leadership skills is the basis for 4H programming and youth are encouraged to continue their development and implementation of skills in the environment that is most comfortable for them. Leadership opportunities vary from leading a specific interest area club to becoming a certified Peer Mediator and finally to providing input and leadership to entire curriculums such as outdoor education.

4b. Building Life-skills

Prevention programming that teaches life skill development such as Peer Mediation, Too Good for Drugs, G.R.E.A.T. and Computers for Kids provide the skills, tools and knowledge to assist youth resist the influences of substance abuse and gangs. There is considerable evidence showing that gang members are both the victims and perpetrators of violence and are responsible for greater levels of crime and delinquency than their non-gang counterparts.

The G.R.E.A.T. program (Gang Resistance Education and Training), run by the James City County Police Department, helps youth resist gang membership, avoid violence and criminal activity, and develop a positive relationship with law enforcement. The G.R.E.A.T. program aims to produce attitude and behavioral changes through a unique combination of skills training, cooperative learning, discussion, and role playing.

According to G.R.E.A.T. program materials Youths who are involved in gangs show a lack of important socialization skills, have low self-esteem, tend to be poor academic achievers, have low levels of self-control, and have poor refusal skills. The G.R.E.A.T. curriculum provides needed coaching in developing both socialization skills and cognitive decision-making skills.

Peer Mediation, run by James City County Parks and Recreation and Virginia Cooperative Extension 4H Youth Development, teaches youth how to peacefully resolve disputes by building self respect and respect for others, improving verbal communication and by developing effective problem solving and decision making skills. Over 175 youth have been trained since the program's inception in 2007.

Too Good For Drugs, funded by the Historic Triangle Substance Abuse Coalition, builds on five essential life skills: goal setting, decision making, bonding with pro social others, identifying and managing emotions and communicating effectively. Over 500 youth have completed this training.

Computers for Kids operated by James City County Parks and Recreation through a partnership with Computer Recycling of Virginia provides computers for qualifying youth, at no charge, to

assist with their academic needs. Over 400 computers have been provided to decrease the digital divide and increase the potential for academic achievement.

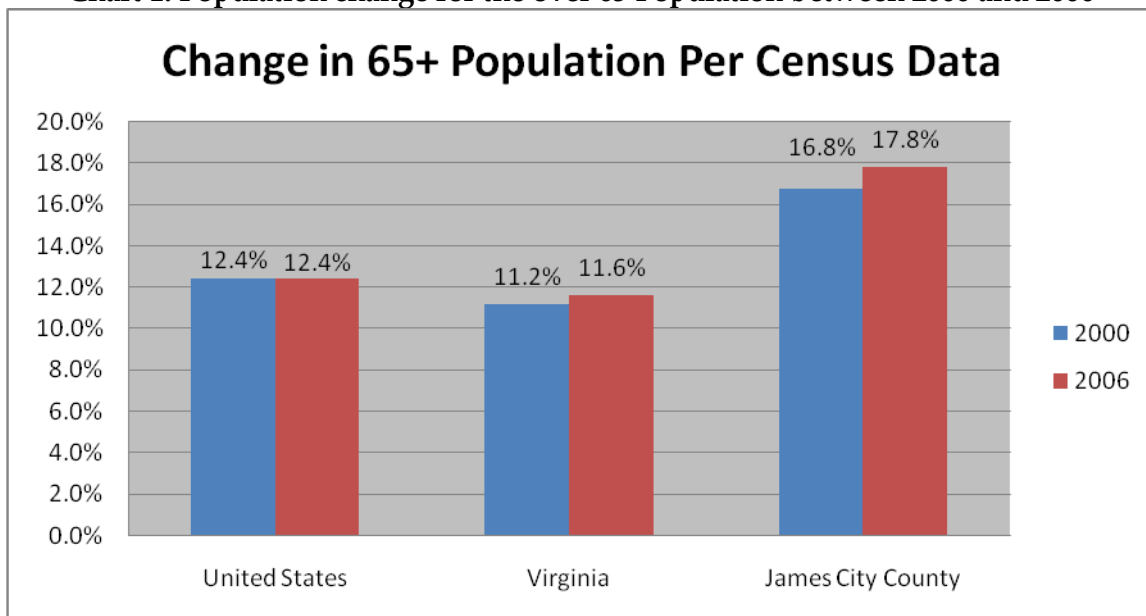
The private sector offers many other programs and services for youth. Organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Girl Scouts, and YMCA are just a few of the ones available to young people in our community. For a complete list of these organizations, please see appendix C for the “Greater Williamsburg Youth Prevention Services Program Inventory.”

5. Key Indicators for the over 65 Population

5a. Demographic Changes in Aging Population

As the table below illustrates, the over 65 population of James City County has increased in proportion to other demographic groups. Census data for the state and the nation also show an increase, but not as great of an increase as James City County. In James City County there were 8,097 citizens over the age of 65 in 2000. In 2006, Census data indicated an increase to 11,540 people. Growth of this section of population can be attributed to: 1) natural aging of the population (baby-boomers aging in place), and 2) people moving to James City County to retire. This substantial growth of the aging population has placed an increased demand for senior services in the County.

Chart 1: Population change for the over 65 Population between 2000 and 2006



Source: U.S. Census for the 2000 data and the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service for 2006 data

The 2000 Census and Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) project a 94% increase in the over 60 population in James City County by 2020 and 117% increase in the over 85 population. By 2020 the VEC projects the over 65 population in James City County to be 21,051 people.

6. Barriers to Senior Services

The Senior Services Coalition (SSC) is a membership organization dedicated to identifying and addressing issues pertinent to seniors living in James City County, the City of Williamsburg, and York County. The SSC does not provide direct client services, but facilitates planning, program development, and collaboration between senior service providers. It is made up of 39 member organizations, including local governments, for profit and not-for-profit organizations, as well as individuals.

The SSC has conducted a review and identified three critical issues for the senior population: Health Care, Housing, and Employment.

Health Care: With changing demographic trends and the increasing longevity of the senior population there is an increase in need for health care services. The significant growth is causing a strain on the County's resources. Provision of needed health care services is mainly coming from the private sector at this time. Specific problems such as older adult addiction, the need for additional geriatric psychiatric beds, as well as the need for personal care providers, and increased incidence of dementia, memory loss and Alzheimer's disease have been cited as problems for the senior population. The 2000 Census also stated that 2,681 people over the age of 65 (or 33% of those over 65) have a disability. There is going to be a great need for comprehensive and affordable health care in the future in James City County. The growing number of aging citizens requires a variety of different health care services and there will be a growing need for additional health care service providers in the coming years.

Housing: At the time of the 2000 Census, of the 19,003 households in the County, there were 1,706 householders over the age of 65. Many seniors require different types of care, and a large number of seniors are forced into situations where they can no longer live in their homes. There is a need for both affordable housing units for seniors, as well as affordable in-home care and services to allow seniors to remain in their homes as they age. While affordability is a concern for the aging population, location of housing is also an issue. Seniors often cannot drive and therefore require public transportation or sidewalks to get around the community. Housing needs to be located along public transportation routes and adequately served by pedestrian facilities in order to accommodate seniors around the community. Transportation concerns, especially for the disabled, were listed as a major concern during the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update process.

Employment: Many seniors are on fixed incomes and are negatively impacted by inflation, forcing them to seek employment to support themselves. The SSC states the need for job matching opportunities to maximize utilization of seniors' job skills with available employment. A study for the Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance noted that the area's over-50 population comprises over 18 percent of the workforce. These individuals, in addition to those over 65, are skilled and well-educated and require little on-site job training. Many of these individuals want to hold part-time employment positions. Efforts to increase and expand the area's workforce should include strategies to inform employers of the availability of this potential workforce and encourage them to employ these retirees.³

The County will need to continue monitoring these important issues of the senior population and work with the Senior Services Coalition and their partner agencies in developing and initiating

³ Business Climate Task Force Report, January 2008.

action plans to address these critical issues. Lack of awareness of services has also been identified as a problem for seniors, and information about senior services should be made available to a greater extent. While these issues are currently being addressed mainly by the private sector, public organizations need to be cognizant of these issues and must be prepared to respond should the private sector not be fully equipped to handle them.

7. Community Sustainability Spotlight

While all citizens of James City County are important, the youth and senior populations have specific needs that have been expressed as concerns by the community. In order to provide a healthy and safe community for the youth and senior populations, James City County has identified the following strategic issues for sustaining a strong community:

Youth Share Leadership

- Youth need opportunities on both the local and regional level to share leadership and participate fully in decisions that affect them.
- Encourage youth engagement in civic activities.
- Teens should be equipped with the proper skills to succeed in a job.
- Youth should have access to employment opportunities that provide training and work related skills.

Places to Go and Things to Do for Youth and Seniors

- Youth should have places specifically set aside for them that can be easily accessed and are affordable.
- James City County should have places and activities that entice young adults to choose James City County as a place to live.
- There should be a wide variety of age appropriate activities in neighborhoods for all citizens, especially youth and seniors.
- Neighborhoods and public places in which youth meet and recreate should be safe.

Getting Around

- Youth and seniors should have knowledge about transportation accessibility and have options available both locally and regionally.
- Youth and seniors should have knowledge about how to get around using public transportation.
- Transportation should be available that meets the needs of individuals with special health issues and a variety of physical abilities.

Senior Needs

- Affordability of health care and housing is vitally important to seniors in James City County. Providing a wide range of services that allows seniors to age in place is important.
- Housing options that range from independent living to skilled-care retirement centers are needed to meet the needs of seniors.

By promoting these skills and goals, a community is preparing their young people for active roles in adulthood and providing the ability for seniors to maintain a high quality of life.

Appendix A Citizen Commentary

James City County's Citizen Survey 2007 Input

- ◆ Almost six in ten respondents (55.9%), from the Virginia Tech survey, rate the current recreational and cultural opportunities for youths in the County as either “excellent” or “good”.
- ◆ The most prevalent responses on the open ended portion of the Virginia Tech survey regarding specific desired activities for youths were: more music venues, clubs, more parks and recreational centers; more activities or places where teens could go at night; and more opportunities to reach these areas through public transportation.
- ◆ Other repeated responses included requests for more after school and weekend activities for youth, including teen nightclubs, performing arts, sports programs, and arts and crafts. A number of respondents indicated that the County should ensure that these facilities are drug-free and safe and could be afforded by all income levels.
- ◆ Healthcare, housing, transportation, and activities for seniors were also raised as issues by multiple respondents to the survey.

Community Conversation Input

- ◆ Many people felt that costs for recreational centers and programs were prohibitive. Respondents felt that these services should be available to all income levels.
- ◆ Participants also felt that there should be more activities and places to go for the youth in the County.
- ◆ Transportation for youth was cited as a concern during the Community Conversations.
- ◆ Community Conversation discussions included concerns over the amount of affordable housing programs for the handicapped and senior citizens.
- ◆ Healthcare, housing, transportation, and activities for seniors were also something people were concerned about in the Community Conversations.
- ◆ In the second round of Community Conversations, respondents stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements (percentages of positive responses stated at the beginning of the question):
 - a. 82% “Promote and educate citizens/youth about available physical health, mental health, and social services and benefits.”
 - b. 89% “Provide better access to youth spots through availability of public transportation.”
 - c. 89% “Increase the number of youth friendly gathering areas/activities.”
 - d. 87% “Remove barriers to safe neighborhoods, such as vacant lots and buildings, dark streets and walkways, and overgrown vegetation.”
 - e. 96% “Promote community design that encourages walking and outdoor recreation (sidewalks, crosswalks, and parks).”

- f. 76% "Provide community health care centers for persons of all ages and cultures within close proximity to where people live."
- g. 87% "Provide additional affordable housing, including Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs), for all income levels."
- h. 90% "Provide a range of transportation options to address the needs of individuals with special health issues and a variety of physical abilities."
- i. 81% "Provide community arts and recreational activities inclusive of all ages and cultures."

Other Input (CPT forums, listening stations, additional surveys)

- ◆ Of the 69 students surveyed at Jamestown High School, a large majority of them identified having more "youth friendly" places or activities as a priority.
- ◆ On the Youth Advisory Council survey conducted in 2007, most respondents indicated that they think that young people should have their own recreational facilities and buildings to gather.
- ◆ Child Development Resources presented to the Citizen Participation Team and explained the need for quality preschool service and affordable day-care. This included the need for ALL families to have the opportunity to access the information and support they need to help them promote their child's optimal development and school readiness, along with four other goals.
- ◆ Listening station comments and comment cards in general included the following statements: more activities for children; new hangouts for young people; interesting fun activities for kids; re-evaluate recreation center costs; services for low-income residents; availability of transit; amount of affordable housing

Appendix B

James City County Department of Community Services Strategic Plan for Children and Youth, September 2001

Appendix C

Greater Williamsburg Youth Prevention Services Program Inventory