

PUBLIC 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, geographic distribution, and tourist population. Seniors and school-age children, for example, have very different service and facility needs. Additionally, the concentration of people in the lower County must be considered in facility planning, since facilities should be convenient to the citizens who use them. Public 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 public 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 future planning issues. Like the other elements, this element concludes with a section detailing the Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies.

PUBLIC SAFETY

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 a larger number of jurisdictions, was constructed next to the Peninsula Regional Jail site in 1997.

The Code of Virginia sets out the state’s funding for the Sheriff's Office in Section 15.2-1609.1 and delineates the number of deputies based on each locality's population (one law enforcement deputy for every 1,500 residents, or 47 law enforcement deputies as of 2020). However, the Board of Supervisors has created and funds additional deputy positions beyond the state's allotment. 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 775 residents. James City County, which has its own police department in addition to a sheriff’s office, is fairly comparable with one officer for every 749 citizens. The City of Williamsburg has the highest ratio on the Peninsula with

Ratio of Law Enforcement Officers to Population				
Locality	2020 Officers	2020 Population	2020 Ratio	2015 Ratio
James City Co.	102	76,484	1/749	1/751
Hampton	325	136,673	1/420	1/478
Newport News	449	181,587	1/404	1/436
Poquoson	24	12,466	1/519	1/503
Williamsburg	40	15,457	1/386	1/422
York County	90	69,792	1/775	1/778

Source: Virginia Department of State Police, Crime in Virginia 2020

Table 1

1 one officer for every 386 citizens. Since 2015, the ratio has slightly declined in York County, while also
2 decreasing moderately in all other Peninsula localities, with Hampton having the largest difference. It
3 should be noted that data from the York County 911 call center shows calls for service have increased by
4 40% since 2015 with 67,478 calls versus 93,969 in 2019.

5
6 The Sheriff’s Office headquarters is located in the Public Safety Building in the County Operations Center
7 on Goodwin Neck Road. The Sheriff’s Office shares the first floor with the Department of Fire and Life
8 Safety, while the second floor is occupied by the York-Poquoson Department of Social Services. The
9 Sheriff’s Office utilizes the space for administration, criminal investigators, the Sheriff’s and captain’s
10 offices, evidence room, squad room, computer support, interview room, evidence processing laboratory,
11 and equipment/weapons storage. Additional storage space for the evidence room was obtained in 2010
12 with an addition to the 9-1-1/Emergency Communications building. Additionally, the Sheriff’s Office has
13 separate office space for the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program in the Washington
14 Square shopping center and office space in the York County-Poquoson Courthouse.

15
16 The space constraints of the existing office locations will be addressed by the new Law Enforcement
17 Building that is currently under construction and should be completed in the spring of 2023. The new
18 facility will be located along Goodwin Neck Road north of its intersection with Service Drive, not far from
19 the County Emergency Communications Center and Public Safety Building. This 51,500-square foot two-
20 story building will include space for all divisions of the Sheriff’s Office, featuring a training wing, meeting
21 spaces, and a community room. The Sheriff’s Office plans to use the community room to interact with
22 community members and organizations and offer safety training seminars to the public.

23
24 Effective law enforcement is dependent more on manpower, equipment, and programs than on physical
25 facilities, and because of the County’s linear shape, Sheriff’s deputies cover a great distance. The regional
26 detention facilities built in the late 1990s eliminated overcrowding problems in York County facilities;
27 however, these facilities do nothing to
28 prevent crime from occurring or to
29 make people (other than the jailers and
30 perhaps the inmates) feel safer.
31 Nevertheless, the number of incidents
32 of crime in the County declined by 23%
33 between 2015 and 2020. In fact, York
34 County has one of the lowest crime
35 rates on the Peninsula with only 2,365
36 incidents reported in 2020 (**Figure 1**).
37 Among area jurisdictions, James City
38 County had the next largest reduction
39 in crime during this time with a decline
40 of 9%, while the City of Williamsburg
41 experienced the largest increase in
42 reported incidents by 18%.

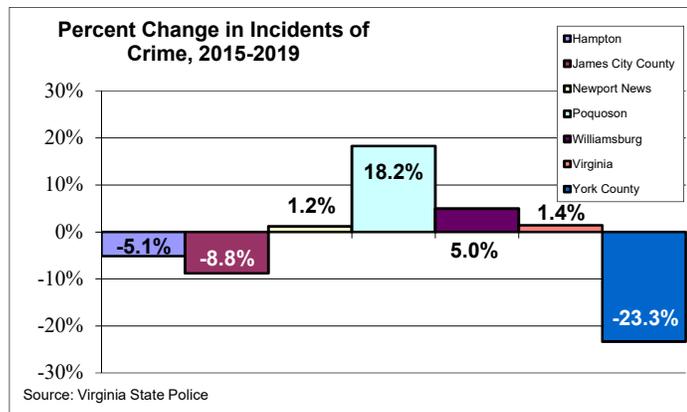


Figure 1

43
44 The Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail (VPRJ) is a regional facility that houses prisoners from York County, James
45 City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson. Located on Merrimac Trail (Route 143) in James City County, the
46 166,000-square foot detention facility occupies a 15-acre site. The facility began operation in 1997 and can
47 house approximately 600 prisoners; it is designed to accommodate future expansion should the need arise.
48 There are six housing pods, each a self-contained unit with 48 double-bunked cells for the confinement of
49 prisoners. Other spaces include classrooms, a library, a full kitchen, laundry room, medical clinic, indoor
50 recreation, and administration offices. VPRJ houses adult offenders, while the adjacent Merrimac Center
51 houses juvenile offenders. The Merrimac Center is managed by the regional Middle Peninsula Juvenile
52 Detention Commission, which consists of eleven counties and cities from the 9th Judicial District and seven
53 counties from the 15th Judicial District.

1 The jail offers a variety of instructional, religious, and other programs to help inmates rehabilitate and
2 prepare them for reentry into society. The population at the VPRJ consists of adult men and women. These
3 individuals have charges ranging from simple trespassing to driving under the influence (DUI) to more violent
4 crimes, including homicide and sexual battery.

5
6 The VPRJ’s Average Daily Population (ADP) has generally ranged between 450 and 520 inmates since FY
7 2015, except in FY 2020, when the ADP dropped to 406. The average ADP between FY 2015 and FY 2020 was
8 469. Individuals who were given non-consecutive sentences – so-called “weekenders” who serve their
9 sentences during the weekends – were tallied separately. Data these “weekenders” is not shown in the
10 chart. In FY 2020, 258 individuals persons were sentenced to serve non-consecutive sentences during the
11 weekends, and between FY 2015 and FY 2020, an average of 29 different individuals were booked into the
12 VPRJ every month to serve weekend sentences.

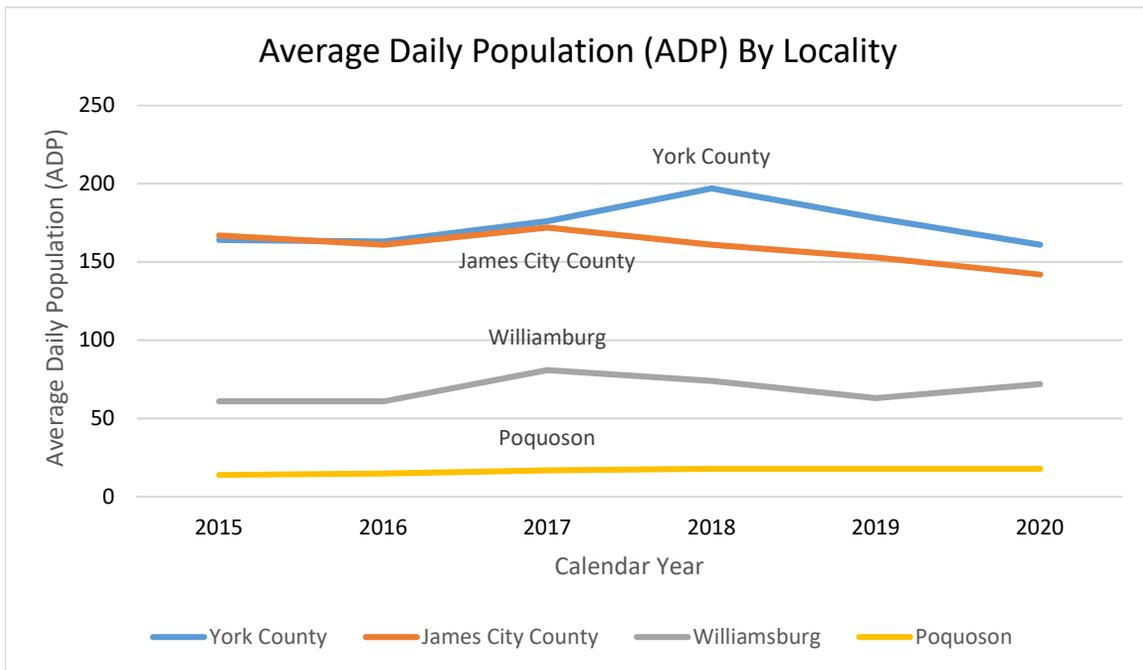


Figure 2

14 Inmates from York and James City Counties comprise a sizable majority of the jail’s ADP, while Poquoson has
15 the fewest inmates. As shown in **Figure 2**, commitments from most localities, except Williamsburg, began
16 to decrease in 2018, with York County’s commitments declining substantially from 197 to 161 in 2020.
17 Williamsburg has seen a steady rise in its ADP from 63 in FY 2019 to 72 in FY 2020. As of August 2021, the
18 VPRJ’s ADP stands at 357. This is largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and joint attempts by stakeholders
19 in the criminal justice community to not commit individuals to a congregate environment who were not
20 violent and not flight risks.

21
22 In addition to serving the four localities, VPRJ previously held an agreement with the Immigration and
23 Custom’s Enforcement (ICE) division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. That agreement was
24 discontinued in the fall of 2019, which, along with the Covid-19 pandemic, contributed to the reduced ADP
25 numbers.

26
27 As stated above, York County participates in the regional Middle Peninsula Juvenile Detention
28 Commission, consisting of the eleven counties and cities from the 9th Judicial District and seven counties
29 from the 15th Judicial District for juvenile service needs. The Commission owns and operates the
30 Merrimac Center – a secure juvenile detention facility located next to the Regional Jail that serves both

1 male and female youths. The Merrimac Center opened in December 1997 with 32 beds and in July 1998
2 added 16 more beds. The Merrimac Center is a self-contained facility with 24-hour per day supervision of
3 up to 48 juvenile offenders, ages seven to twenty-one under detention or commitment orders from a
4 court. Overall, the length of residence at the Center can range from a few days to several years depending
5 on the nature of the offense and the complexity of the adjudication by the courts.
6

7 The Commonwealth pays a portion of the operating costs and the member localities pay an annual rate
8 based on average usage in the previous five years. During the five-year period between 2017 and 2022,
9 York County utilized an average of 7% of the juvenile admissions to the Merrimac Center, with the highest
10 usage being 18% in fiscal year 2016. Local utilization of the Center has been declining over the past several
11 years, so the addition of the DJJ Community Placement Program, funded by the state, has been fiscally
12 helpful for the local jurisdictions.
13

14 **FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY**

15
16 The York County Department of Fire and Life Safety is responsible for the provision of fire suppression,
17 rescue, emergency medical services (EMS), emergency management, and animal services. The
18 department’s administrative offices and Emergency Operations Center are located in the Public Safety
19 Building at the County Operations Complex on Goodwin Neck Road. Fire and rescue field operations are
20 conducted from six fire stations, with a seventh expected to become operational in 2023, located
21 strategically throughout the County. The department also maintains mutual aid agreements with
22 surrounding localities and federal facilities that provide for the sharing of resources. The department is
23 organized into of the following functional areas: Fire and Rescue Operations, Technical Services and
24 Special Operations, Prevention and Community Safety, Support Services, Emergency Management,
25 Administrative Services as well as Animal Services.
26

27 The largest function is the provision of fire and rescue services, which includes fire suppression, rescue,
28 and emergency medical services from each of the County’s fire stations. The location of each fire station
29 was strategically chosen to ensure that emergency units leaving the fire station would arrive at an
30 emergency scene in most areas of the County on an average of five minutes or less. As response activity
31 and demands increase, additional challenges are realized that may affect response time and emergency
32 unit availability. Fire and rescue resources at the various fire stations include capabilities for fire attack
33 operations (firefighting) as well as advanced life support emergency medical services operations.
34 Additionally, the department maintains resources in both the upper and lower County ensuring aerial
35 ladder, vehicle rescue/extrication, water tanker (for areas without fire hydrants), and brush/wildland
36 firefighting capabilities. In 2019 construction of a replacement building for the outdated original Fire
37 Station 1 (Grafton) was completed. The new fire station located on Dare Road ensures a more efficient
38 and safer response to emergencies and includes much improved living quarters. The facility and bay space
39 arrangement provides much improved space circulation and movement of personnel as well as vehicles,
40 compared to the former facility, as they respond to emergencies. This combined with the location of the
41 facility make getting emergency vehicles in and out much faster and safer. In 2022, the County also began
42 construction of a new fire station in the upper County. Fire Station 7, expected to be completed in 2023,
43 will greatly improve response times in busy areas such as Mooretown, Waller Mill, Bypass, and Richmond
44 Roads in the upper County. In addition to the tremendous benefit to York County, the new fire station will
45 also enhance the long-standing automatic mutual aid system with James City County and the City of
46 Williamsburg. This new facility will fulfill the long-established need for a new fire station in this area to
47 ease the workload of the Bruton and Skimino fire stations. Both of these stations have seen rapidly
48 growing demand as a result of tourism and new residential and commercial development. The County
49 was able to utilize much of the infrastructure for the new building from the former regional Crossroads
50 Community Youth Home that closed in 2020. In addition to moderate renovation of the space, new
51 apparatus bay space will be added to house emergency response vehicles to complete the fire station.
52

1 Fire and rescue personnel are required to respond to a wide variety of emergency types including, but not
2 limited to, emergency medical incidents, fires, rescues, hazardous materials incidents, vehicle accidents,
3 unique/specialized circumstances etc. In order to ensure response to most potential emergencies within
4 the County, the Department of Fire and Life Safety has developed contingencies for special incident
5 responses, either locally or regionally. Special/unique incident response teams use personnel normally
6 assigned to normal/traditional fire and EMS response duties; however, in addition to their
7 normal/traditional duties, personnel obtain and continue training in specific specialties. Special incident
8 response teams include technical rescue, hazardous materials response, maritime/waterborne fire and
9 rescue, dive rescue/recovery, drone operations (jointly operated with the Sheriff’s Office), and a
10 Metropolitan Medical Response Strike Team.

11
12 The Department of Fire and Life Safety is regularly developing mechanisms and processes that support
13 ongoing emergency response effectiveness. For example, fire and rescue response units have the ability
14 to control traffic signals through what are known as pre-emption devices. This allows for a safer and more
15 efficient response through signalized intersections. Other examples include the implementation of
16 electronic EMS field-based reporting capabilities that can be interfaced with receiving hospitals. In
17 partnership with the Sheriff’s Office, the Department established an aerial and underwater robotics team
18 that uses drones with specialized cameras, sensors, and payload delivery/recovery devices to assist with
19 tasks such as providing situational awareness to incident commanders and critical decision makers, search
20 and rescue operations, and delivery of equipment and supplies to inaccessible areas. These are but a few
21 examples of ongoing improvements to emergency response systems and processes.

22
23 The technical rescue team includes rope rescue, confined space, trench/excavation, structural collapse,
24 and large/heavy vehicle rescue. This team is also a part of the larger Peninsula Regional and Tidewater
25 Regional Technical Rescue Teams. Team members also participate as members of the Federal Emergency
26 Management Agency’s (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue – Team/Virginia Task Force – Two and have
27 responded to major federally declared incidents such as the Olympics, the September 11, 2001, attack on
28 the Pentagon, major hurricanes such Katrina and Rita, an earthquake in Haiti, and many others.

29
30 The presence of roadways, railroads, waterways, and Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport
31 contributes to the County’s vulnerability to a variety of hazardous materials emergencies. All County fire
32 and rescue personnel are trained to provide defensive and some minimal offensive tactics should a spill,
33 leak, or fire occur with limited types of hazardous materials. A more specialized group of County fire and
34 rescue personnel are trained as Hazardous Materials Technicians and Specialists that operate as part of
35 the department’s Hazardous Materials Response Team. If the capabilities of the County are exceeded,
36 then additional regional hazardous materials response resources/teams can be requested through the
37 Virginia Department of Emergency Management to augment the department’s team.

38
39 York County maintains a maritime/waterborne fire and rescue capability for water rescue, waterborne
40 firefighting, and EMS because of the large amount of water area and many miles of shoreline/waterfront
41 properties including residential, commercial, and federal establishments. The personnel assigned to this
42 capability have specialized training in maritime fire and rescue operations and boat operations. Some of
43 these members are also part of the regional Hampton Roads Maritime Incident Response Team.

44
45 The Department of Fire and Life Safety has been involved in a variety of planning efforts to improve
46 medical response to major medical incidents including mass casualty events/disasters and the potential
47 of terrorist incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives weapons. To
48 address these needs, the Hampton Roads region established a Hampton Roads Metropolitan Medical
49 Response System (MMRS), including an associated response team known as the Metropolitan Medical
50 Response Strike Team. As an MMRS partner, members of the Department of Fire and Life Safety serve in
51 key positions such as command leadership, logistics, and communications functions. Currently, York
52 County manages and maintains the Strike Team’s logistics equipment caches for the Peninsula
53 component. Members of the department are also a part of the federal (U.S. Department of Health and

1 Human Services--HHS) Virginia – One Disaster Medical Assistance Team and have responded to major
2 federally declared incidents including hurricanes such as Katrina and Rita, the earthquake in Haiti,
3 Presidential inaugurations, the President’s State of the Union Address, and many others.

4
5 The Department of Fire and Life Safety coordinates and/or conducts most of the training required for its
6 responders. Much of this training is required by various regulatory agencies and standards organizations.
7 This training, which often requires certification and recertification at the state level, is critical to the
8 County’s continued readiness for response and service. The department participates on a regional basis
9 for its firefighter recruit and officer development training and routinely conducts in-house drills, training
10 classes, continuing education, and refresher training. Through the department’s cooperation with state
11 agencies and other localities in Hampton Roads, York County is a partner in the Peninsula Regional Live
12 Fire Training Facility and Training Tower located in the Lee Hall area of Newport News. The department
13 operates (in partnership with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management) the York County
14 Hazardous Materials/CBRNE training facility. Additionally, Fire and Life Safety persistently pursues further
15 provision of training resources with such things as hazardous materials and technical rescue training
16 props/capabilities. The department is continuously seeking ways to conduct in-service training for on-duty
17 crews, utilizing strategic training locations, so fire companies/crews can remain available for emergency
18 calls.

19
20 The Prevention and Community Safety function conducts plan reviews of new developments as well as
21 existing commercial, industrial, and public facilities to ensure compliance with the life safety aspects of
22 the Building Code as well as local ordinances and standards. This division also enforces state and local
23 laws, codes, and ordinances pertaining to fire prevention and life safety. This service area also conducts
24 inspections, along with tests of fire suppression and alarm systems for commercial and public buildings.
25 Division staff, with support from specially trained firefighters on each operational shift, determine cause
26 and origin of fires and investigate arson and fires of unknown or suspicious origin/cause. In addition, this
27 division provides a variety of prevention and public life safety education programs.

28
29 Unlike structure fires, medical emergencies, and vehicle accidents, which are often isolated to one or two
30 buildings or individuals; large-scale (major) emergencies and/or disasters affect many more people with
31 significant damage to structures and infrastructure over larger geographic areas. The department’s Office
32 of Emergency Management (OEM) develops and maintains emergency operation plans to guide mitigation
33 and preparedness activities and education, plus response and recovery actions for major emergencies and
34 disasters. These vulnerabilities include hurricanes, winter storms, tornadoes, various types of flooding and
35 storm surge, brush/wood/wildland fires, and manmade hazards, such as transportation and industrial
36 accidents, potential acts of terrorism, and incidents/events that effect those portions of the County that
37 are within the ten-mile emergency planning zone for the Surry Nuclear Power Plant.

38
39 York County, through the OEM continues to improve emergency disaster sheltering. Through coordination
40 with the School Division, a number of schools have been identified and designated as emergency disaster
41 shelters, two of which have full generator back-up electrical power and two more that have limited back-
42 up generator electrical power. Other County schools serve as supplemental shelters and open according
43 to need and circumstances. At the regional level, the OEM has coordinated planning efforts for persons
44 with functional needs, debris management, a regional hazard mitigation plan, and have been directly
45 involved in a regional catastrophic disaster planning initiatives. Further, a number of critical County
46 facilities are equipped with back-up power capability, contributing to the County efforts to ensure
47 continuity of operations during major emergencies, disasters and/or extended power outages.

48
49 In addition to the Fire and Life Safety response to disasters or major emergencies, public preparedness
50 programs were created and expanded to promote public response during these events. A Community
51 Emergency Response Team (CERT) training program was created to provide basic response training to
52 people who live and/or work in York County. Furthermore, neighborhoods that have 10 or more adults

1 can participate in the CERT training and prepare a neighborhood disaster plan to become a recognized
2 CERT(short for CERTIFIED) neighborhood and receive a sign to post in their community.
3

4 Getting accurate information out to the citizens is one of the biggest challenges in responding to a disaster
5 or major emergency. As a result, there are a number of means through which the County disseminates
6 disaster information to the public. These include the use of the York Alert notification systems, various
7 disaster publications, multiple social media platforms, variable/digital message signs, routine media
8 communications, and cable channel broadcasts.
9

10 While response capabilities are important, the department has created several programs designed to
11 avert emergencies or reduce an emergency’s severity. Some examples are:
12

- 13 • A “Storm Surge Look Up” tool on the County’s website which helps a property owner determine
14 what level of storm (water) surge they may be at risk for (if any).
- 15 • Collectively with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, a “Know Your Zone”
16 evacuation information tool was developed so that areas of the County that may be required to
17 or recommended for evacuation is identified and the public can be easily informed.
- 18 • Child seat Awareness and Restraint Education (CARE): provides inspection and instruction free of
19 charge for the proper installation of child safety seats.
- 20 • Safety Smartz: teaches school children about fire and life safety practices and educates them on
21 ways to prevent fires and injuries.
- 22 • “Heads Up” program: managed through the County 9-1-1 Center (using a unique database) allows
23 9-1-1 dispatchers to provide responders with lifesaving information about pre-existing medical
24 conditions or unusual situations that are then relayed to emergency responders as they respond
25 to identified locations.
- 26 • Emergency Medical Dispatching program: allows 9-1-1 dispatchers to provide emergency medical
27 telephone instructions, allowing them to provide medical care to victims until emergency
28 responders arrive on scene.
- 29 • The County, in cooperation with other Hampton Roads localities has developed a regional hazard
30 mitigation plan.
31

32 The department’s Animal Services Bureau is responsible for the enforcement of laws and regulations
33 pertaining to animal control and protection. Animal Control Officers respond to threats posed by domestic
34 animals running at-large, diseased animals and dangerous/vicious animals. They also promote the
35 humane treatment and prevention of cruelty to animals and conduct educational programs.
36

37 The reporting of emergencies by the public are routed through the Emergency Communications/9-1-1
38 Center. This center provides dispatch services for the department as well as other agencies. The Fire and
39 Life Safety Department has emergency radio communications capabilities to coordinate responses with
40 surrounding localities during day-to-day emergencies, major emergencies, and/or disasters. Additionally,
41 processes and capabilities are in place for the use of radio technology, web based technology, conference
42 call systems, and RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services) for ongoing communications (among
43 numerous entities locally, regionally, and with the Commonwealth of Virginia) during major emergencies
44 and/or disasters.
45

46 **GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

47

48 York County has two major government office complexes—one in Yorktown and one on Goodwin Neck
49 Road—and five offices in the Washington Square shopping center. The Waste Management Building,
50 transfer station, and compost facility operated by the Virginia Peninsulas Public Service Authority (VPPSA)
51 is also located on Goodwin Neck Road, while the Griffin-Yeates Center is located on Government Road in
52 the upper County. The Washington Square offices include the Parks and Recreation, York/Poquoson

1 Virginia Cooperative Extension, and D.A.R.E. offices, as well as the Senior Center of York, and the Office of
2 the Registrar. An additional Registrar’s office for upper County residents is located in the Victory Village



York Hall, Finance Building, and Vehicle Maintenance buildings

3 shopping center on Mooretown Road. The County also operates six fire stations, two libraries, and several
4 parks and recreation facilities that are discussed in other sections of this plan. Construction of a new Law
5 Enforcement building on Goodwin Neck Road and Fire Station 7 on Mooretown Road are currently
6 underway as well as an expansion of the Yorktown Library.

7
8 Government offices and meeting facilities located in Yorktown include the Administration, Economic &
9 Tourism Development, Dockmaster’s, Finance, and Post Office Buildings, as well as York Hall. The
10 Administration Building, originally built in 1929 as a school building, has undergone many renovations
11 over the years and includes offices for County Administration, Community Services, the County Attorney,
12 and Human Resources. The Economic and Tourism Development Building was leased and renovated in
13 2019. The Dockmaster’s Building, managed by the Department of Economic and Tourism Development,
14 was originally built in 1977 as a lifeguard building. Funding for construction of a new larger building to
15 replace the existing building is programmed in the FY2023-2028 Adopted Capital Improvement Program
16 (CIP) for FY24 and FY25. The Finance Building was built in 1980 as the Courts and Office Center (which
17 later became the District Court Building) and was renovated in 2001 to house the Finance Department,
18 and since then also houses Information Technology (IT), the Real Estate Assessment Division, the
19 Treasurer’s Office, and the Commissioner of the Revenue’s Office. Additionally, a portion of the IT
20 Department is housed in the Post Office Building, which serves as a secure site for equipment critical to
21 the operation of the County’s computer network. This building was built in 1958 and was renovated in
22 2000. The most historically significant structure, York Hall, has had many reincarnations since first being
23 built in 1955. In 2000, the structure underwent extensive renovations, with the Circuit Court having moved
24 to a new building in 1997. Currently, York Hall serves as a meeting space for the Board of Supervisors,
25 School Board, Planning Commission and other County Boards and Commissions. Civic groups and an arts
26 center/gallery also utilize the building. In 2005, improvements were made to the basement, where the
27 York County Historical Museum maintains exhibits.

28
29 In addition to being one of the County’s major government centers, Yorktown is home to the York-
30 Poquoson court system. The Circuit Court, General District Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court,
31 Commonwealth Attorney’s office, and Court Security/Civil Process Division for York County and Poquoson
32 operate out of the York-Poquoson Courthouse in Yorktown, which opened in 1997. This 59,680-square
33 foot courthouse was built to accommodate the rapidly growing number of caseloads at that time and to
34 address numerous deficiencies in the former Circuit Court and District Court Buildings. Since 2000, court
35 filings have declined slightly but remained relatively stable overall. With a few minor renovations, the
36 courthouse is expected to meet the County’s court space needs at least through the year 2028 and at
37 most through 2032.

38
39 The second major government office complex, the 52-acre County Operations Center, is located on
40 Goodwin Neck Road. The Buildings and Grounds Maintenance, Development Services, and Vehicle
41 Maintenance buildings were all constructed in 1992-93. These were followed by the construction of the
42 Public Safety and Building Safety buildings in 1993-94, Public Works Administration building in 1995, the
43 Planning Division building in 1997-98, and the Emergency Communication Center in 2004-05, which was

1 expanded again in 2010 to add dispatch area and office spaces. Plans are underway for a 5,564-square
2 foot building addition that will connect the Development Services building with the Planning Division
3 building and create office space to be occupied by the Building Safety Division, thereby a single Planning
4 and Development Services building that will house the entire department and centralize services for
5 citizens. The Public Safety Building houses multiple departments/agencies for the County and serves the
6 Sheriff’s Office, Fire and Life Safety, and Department of Social Services. Once the new Law Enforcement
7 Building is complete, the current Public Safety Building will experience renovation and space adjustments
8 to meet the space needs of the Department of Fire and Life Safety as well as the Department of Social
9 Services. It will also provide an opportunity to have a permanently set up Emergency Operations Center.
10 Some opportunities for future expansions on this campus exist but will be constrained by the presence of
11 non-tidal wetlands and Dominion Energy transmission lines.
12

13 The Griffin-Yeates Center, located at 1490 Government Road in the upper County, was built in 1953 as a
14 public school. The building has undergone several renovations and was conveyed to the County in 1978.
15 The Center houses York County's Head Start program and the First Steps program operated by Child
16 Development Resources, along with storage for other Community Services divisions.
17

18 The Parks and Recreation, York/Poquoson Virginia Cooperative Extension, and D.A.R.E. offices, as well as
19 the Office of the Registrar in both the Washington Square and Victory Village shopping centers were all
20 leased and renovated in 2019. The Senior Center of York was leased and renovated in 2001 and expanded
21 in 2011. The new Law Enforcement building and Fire Station 7 are scheduled to open in the winter of
22 2023. The expanded Yorktown Library will reopen in the fall of 2022.
23

24 **LIBRARIES**

25
26 Library services are an integral part of the County’s educational ecosystem by supporting literacy,
27 providing opportunities for life-long learning, and contributing to a high quality of life for York County
28 residents. Libraries help foster a sense of community and serve as a focal point for citizen interaction.
29 Modern public libraries continue to evolve as “information commons” or “learning commons” to describe
30 what they are to their communities. The library system is open to anyone who wishes to use its facilities
31 and services, and the libraries welcome patrons from both inside and outside the County. The County’s
32 libraries also recently became “fine-free” to erase financial barriers that were preventing the utilization
33 of library services. The libraries are a place for learning and teaching as well as a platform for people to
34 incubate ideas and engage in constructive discourse. In 2019 there were a total of 557,764 checkouts for
35 materials (416,402 physical, 141,362 digital) to 52,592 registered patrons and 432,344 patron visits to
36 both libraries, with 607 programs servicing 17,091 people.
37

38 The County operates two libraries
39 and has a memorandum of
40 agreement with the Williamsburg
41 Regional Library. The Yorktown
42 Library opened in 1984 and is in the
43 process of being renovated and
44 expanded with a proposed opening
45 at the end of 2022. It is currently a 22,300 square-foot building located on George Washington Memorial
46 Highway (Route 17) at Battle Road. The Tabb library opened in October 1999 and is a 32,000 square-foot
47 facility located on Hampton Highway (Route 134) and Long Green Boulevard. These two facilities primarily
48 serve lower County citizens.



1 Upper County residents are served by the Williamsburg Regional Library.
2 The Regional Library operates two facilities – one in the City of
3 Williamsburg (40,000 square feet) and one in upper James City County
4 (35,000 square feet). Both library locations are geographically convenient
5 for upper York County residents. York County citizens constitute 12% of
6 its registered borrowers. The library system



Williamsburg Regional Library

7
8 **Measures of Service and Quality**

9
10 State standards for public libraries are published in the Library of Virginia’s *Planning for Library Excellence: Standards for Virginia Public Libraries*.

11
12 **Service-Level Ratings**

13
14 The document establishes the following service ratings: essential, enhanced and exemplary, accompanied
15 by a corresponding star rating for ease of use and advocacy.

- 16
17 • E= “Essential” services meeting the basic needs and expectations of a public library, including
18 circulation, internet access, and basic reference assistance, as mandated in the Code of
19 Virginia.★
- 20
21 • EE = “Enhanced” services, providing a robust array of services beyond basic needs and
22 expectations, such as community programming for all ages, a responsive digital environment,
23 and specific research assistance. ★★
- 24
25 • EEE = “Exemplary” services with advanced features in service provision on all fronts.★★★

26
27 Currently the library administration focuses on four strategic planning areas from *Planning for Library Excellence* to gauge service: staffing, collections, facilities, and technology. The goal of the Library Board is to strive for EEE ★★★ ratings in all aspects of library service.

28
29
30
31 **Staffing**

32
33 The success of a library system depends on the competency and commitment of its staff. Libraries cannot
34 meet community needs without sufficient staffing to provide high-quality service. In addition to the
35 director, each library requires skilled employees in the following areas: youth, reference, circulation,
36 technical services, technology, administration, and building maintenance.

37
38 The current York County rating is a EE ★★ (based on the number of full-time Equivalent (FTE) Employees
39 per capita and professional librarians per capita). The current WRL rating is EEE ★★★.

40
41 **Collections**

42
43 An effective library collection requires the selection of materials in a variety of formats as identified by an
44 ongoing process of community analysis including demographic information, library-use patterns,
45 collection-use data, and public input. Collection development also takes into account other library and
46 information resources in the community, region, and the state.

47
48 York County currently has a rating of EEE ★★★ (based on collection development policies and acquisition
49 of printed books, eBooks, and other digital resources). The WRL is currently rated with a EEE★★★.

1 **Facilities**
2

3 A public library building should be designed to encourage citizens to enter, read, listen, and learn. The
4 building design should be flexible in order to respond to the changing needs of patrons and service
5 patterns. It is important that facilities be able to accommodate the dynamic technological needs of
6 patrons. The design of the building needs to encourage extensive public use, support staff efficiency, and
7 encourage economy.
8

9 York County has a facility rating of EE ★★ (based on square feet per capita), but it will improve to EEE
10 rating with the opening of the 10,000-square foot expansion and renovation of the Yorktown library
11 meeting the per capita standards for the lower county citizens. The WRL facilities are rated as EE★★ with
12 the downtown facility needing expansion.
13

14 **Technology**
15

16 Information technology is paramount to the modern public library. Through technology, patrons and library
17 staff access information within and outside the library. To use technology effectively, the library must plan
18 carefully, provide ongoing support and training, and continuously evaluate, upgrade, and replace hardware,
19 software, and information resources.
20

21 Technology within the York County Library’s current system has a rating of EEE ★★★ (based on high-speed
22 internet connectivity, networking capabilities, and utilization of latest automated and emerging
23 technologies). The WRL is rated at EEE★★★.
24
25

26 **PLANNING ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE**
27

28 As discussed in the Demographic Profile and Projections chapter, the County’s population is expected to
29 continue to grow over the next few decades, adding an estimated 10,000 residents by 2040. This
30 population growth will put pressure on public facilities and generate needs and demands for
31 improvements. The results of the Comprehensive Plan telephone survey demonstrate citizen support for
32 public facilities especially schools, which the respondents cited as the thing they like most about the
33 County. In addition, 78% of the respondents considered it either important or very important to build or
34 expand schools. This come as no surprise, as the quality of the school system has long been a source of
35 pride for York County residents, and maintaining the quality of the school system consistently ranks as a
36 top priority in public opinion surveys. The second overall priority for public facilities, according to the
37 survey, are parks for active recreation (66%). These two were followed in order by bike paths and
38 sidewalks (61% and 60% respectively) with access to natural water bodies and fire stations at 59%. The
39 survey also asked if there were any facilities other than those named that should be built or expanded in
40 the next twenty years. On this question, the respondents were evenly divided: 49% said yes and 49% said
41 no.
42

43 In recent years, the County has made significant capital investments through its Capital Improvements
44 Program (CIP) to address longstanding public facility needs in the areas of schools, public safety, parks and
45 recreation, libraries, and office space. These investments will yield huge dividends for many years to come
46 in terms of enhanced service and quality of life for the County’s citizens.
47

48 **Public Safety**
49

50 The construction of the new Law Enforcement Center will address the space constraints experienced by
51 both the Sheriff’s Office and the Department of Fire and Life Safety. Many of the Sheriff’s offices will move
52 into the new building. This will free up space in the Public Safety Building that can then be renovated and

1 utilized by the Department of Fire and Life Safety as well as the Department of Social Services. This space
2 should be renovated and be immediately adjacent to a permanent Emergency Operations Center in order
3 to ensure effective coordination during emergency events as well as day-to-day operational efficiencies.
4

5 The Sheriff’s Office has experienced a significant increase in calls for service in the past five years. This
6 increase has led to deputies spending more time answering calls and writing reports, and less time
7 patrolling the County and proactively engaging in community policing activities with citizens and
8 businesses. Additional law enforcement deputies will be needed in the coming years to maintain the level
9 of service residents and businesses have come to expect. The new Law Enforcement Center and increasing
10 the number of law enforcement deputies will help to maintain a safe community.
11

12 As growth continues, public expectations increase and as buildings age, the activity level of each fire
13 station will change accordingly. This will affect the ability to respond adequately to emergencies. The key
14 to having an acceptable response time is the availability of apparatus and personnel capable of responding
15 from within an acceptable distance. This requires an adequate transportation network with limited traffic
16 congestion. As development continues, additional stations and resources are expected to be needed.
17 Additionally, as public expectations, development needs, and the activity of fire/rescue/EMS units have
18 increased and continue to do so, it is imperative that work continue on improving Fire and Life Safety
19 staffing levels. This is especially imperative on fire apparatus and in other support positions. Fire Station
20 7, expected to be completed in 2023, will greatly improve response times in busy areas such as
21 Mooretown, Waller Mill, Bypass, and Richmond roads in the upper County. The new fire station will fulfill
22 the long established need for a new fire station in this area to ease the workload of the Bruton and Skimino
23 fire stations. In the future, the Tabb area may require an additional fire station or increased resources
24 and/or personnel at existing stations. Other existing fire stations will likely need additional resources
25 and/or personnel to meet ever-increasing future response demands in their specific response areas.
26

27 Furthermore, residential growth will continue in potential hurricane/storm surge/coastal flooding areas
28 and in proximity to a transportation network that already carries large amounts of hazardous materials.
29 More County residents will also live within the ten-mile emergency protection zone (EPZ) of the Surry
30 Nuclear Power Station. An efficient transportation network, not only in York County but throughout the
31 region, will be critical to the ability of residents to evacuate from Hampton Roads. In addition, recent
32 experiences with community-wide disasters, such as major storms and, more recently, the COVID-19
33 pandemic; have demonstrated the need to ensure that the County has in place critical emergency
34 management facilities [shelters, a permanent emergency operations center (EOC), fire stations, and other
35 support facilities] that are equipped with adequate emergency power generating capacity to allow them
36 to effectively support operations during emergencies lasting several days to several weeks. The
37 Department of Fire and Life Safety also has increasing needs for inventory management and maintenance
38 requirements for equipment systems that are taxing the capabilities of their existing space. A logistical
39 warehouse-type space is severely needed for storage and maintenance of required equipment such as
40 medical supplies, fire hoses and appliances, uniforms, personal protective equipment, firearms,
41 ammunition, and general supplies.
42

43 Additionally, with the amount of specialized didactic training necessary for the Department of Fire and
44 Life Safety, a centrally located training facility with several large classroom spaces, multiple smaller
45 breakout training rooms, specific training rooms for specialized training, technical library capabilities, and
46 computer labs, would alleviate training pressures. The logistics and training facilities would also support
47 County emergency management activities during major storms or other major disasters, by providing
48 logistics support and employee respite areas.
49
50

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. The County’s population in 1960 (which included Poquoson at that time) was approximately 25,900. As of 2021, the population was 70,319. 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 2005 and 2020, the ratio of employees per thousand residents increased from 10.48 to 10.86 respectively (Figure 11), with the actual number of employees increasing from 650 to 758. The decline in the ratio from 11.26 in 2010 to 10.09 in 2015 reflects the cost-cutting measures (hiring freezes and employment reductions through attrition or layoffs) that were necessary as a result of

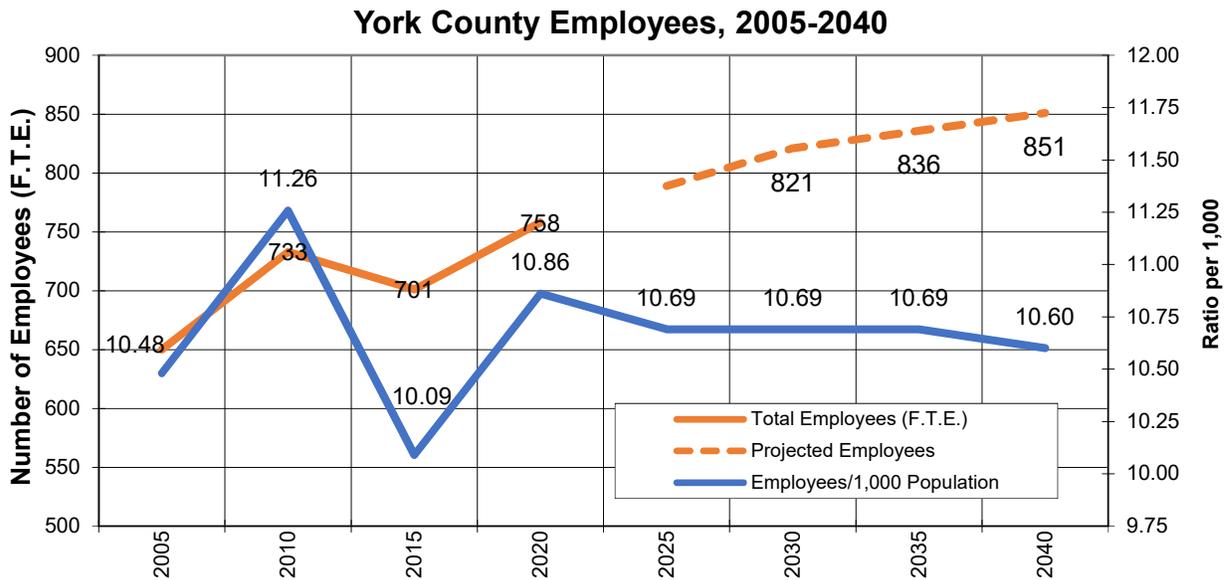


Figure 11

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 advances – employee numbers are still expected to increase, but at a very slow rate, adding 93 employees in the twenty-year period.

To assess space needs within the County, a study was completed in 2018 which looked at the various facilities utilized by the County. The study outlined personnel and support spaces for each department and forecast space needs based on each department’s estimate of personnel growth out to 2028. All the existing buildings were examined and options were outlined for how best to use the existing structures and opportunities for a variety of space adjustments. The study had the below recommendations:

- Construct new law enforcement building for The Sheriff’s Department;
- Convert the Public Safety Building for Social Services and Fire and Life Safety;
- Renovate the Finance Building to accommodate financial office needs;
- Several options are proposed for the existing Administrative Building;
- Consolidate Planning/Development/Building Regulations at one site;
- Expand Public Works;
- Relocate Parks and Recreation Administration to the Sports Complex; and
- Minor renovations to the Courthouse.

1 Many of these recommendations have been completed or are underway and described in other portions
2 of this element. The two main campus sites for County facilities, Yorktown and Goodwin Neck, have
3 limited expansion capacity. There is little opportunity to expand office facilities in Yorktown other than at
4 the Administration Center property, where the existing building is old and is not architecturally or
5 aesthetically compatible with historic Yorktown. If the Administration Center were demolished, it is
6 possible that a new building could be constructed that could address aesthetic issues and, if necessary,
7 provide some additional office space. Additionally, The Goodwin Neck Operations Center is significantly
8 encumbered by non-tidal wetlands and power line easements, so space for new or expanded buildings
9 and facilities is limited.

10
11 New technologies will continue to provide opportunities to reduce the need for office space.
12 Telecommuting, which the COVID-19 pandemic showed, allows employees to work in their homes,
13 connected to the office by computer. This has been in use for years in private industry and in some public
14 agencies that have found it to be more cost-effective than building, operating, and maintaining office
15 buildings. Similarly, electronic file storage and retrieval has greatly reduced the County’s record storage
16 space needs and will continue to as the County digitizes its archives. The adequacy of and need for
17 additional office space should be continuously monitored and assessed as York County’s population
18 increases throughout the next twenty years.

19
20 **Libraries**

21
22 According to the Library of Virginia’s *Planning for Library Excellence: Standards for Virginia Public Libraries*,
23 the York County Public Library meets the minimum standards and has the potential to meet and maintain
24 EEE rating for all levels of service. The 10,000-square foot expansion of the Yorktown Library by 10,000
25 square feet that is currently underway will result in the library system not only meeting but exceeding the
26 EEE rating in facilities, based on the population of its service area of the lower County. In fact, with a total
27 of 64,200 square feet of library space, the County will have enough library space to meet this standard for
28 the foreseeable future. The estimated maximum build-out population of the lower County is
29 approximately 60,000, and the EEE standard for facilities is 1.0 square feet per capita.

30 Upper County residents continue to receive quality service from the Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL)
31 system. The continuation of a contractual agreement with WRL will ensure that upper County residents
32 have the benefit of access to adequate library services and programs. As noted previously, the WRL is
33 rated as an EE for facilities by the standards. James City County and the City of Williamsburg are working
34 toward programming improvements with the possibility of a new facility within James City County and
35 the renovation of the downtown library or the demolition and rebuilding of the downtown library with a
36 larger library.

37

PUBLIC FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

GENERAL

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, contributing to a better quality of life for citizens.

Objective 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.

1. Use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the budgeting of County funds for capital improvement projects and annually review and update the six-year CIP and include a process for Planning Commission review, and certification by resolution, of its conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

The County should continue to utilize the CIP process to identify needed improvements to accommodate the needs of the citizens. The Virginia State Code requires the Planning Commission to review the CIP and ensure its compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. This is a key feature to making sure the public is involved in the continued process of public development.

2. Provide public buildings that set an example for quality development in the County

Government buildings are viewed as structures that the citizens would like to reflect back on commercial and residential development in the County. New York County buildings should continue to replicate these high standards.

3. Provide regular, ongoing inspection, maintenance, and repair of all public buildings

It is important for public facilities to meet certain standards that exceed citizen and visitor expectations. The County should continue to provide ongoing efforts to make sure all facilities go above and beyond the requirements for all those using them.

Objective 2: Avoid wasteful duplication of effort in the construction and operation of public facilities.

1. Where feasible, cooperate with neighboring localities to establish and maintain regional public facilities and programs for the use of residents of multiple jurisdictions.

Partnerships and cooperation with neighboring localities (Williamsburg, James City County, Newport News, and Hampton) and area military installations allow for the sharing of resources to best serve and protect residents of the peninsula. Mutual emergency aid agreements allow for timely and adequate response to emergency incidents. Maintaining cooperative agreements across the region will continue to provide excellent services to all the residents and visitors to our region.

2. Design public buildings to accommodate a variety of uses.

Moving forward, it is important that public building provide flexibility is space, design and usability. New libraries, school buildings, and other public facilities should seek to serve multiple needs within the community.

1 **PUBLIC SAFETY**
2

3 **Goal: Create and maintain a safe community through providing protection and life safety, to**
4 **prevent emergencies when possible, to respond quickly, and to minimize pain, suffering, and**
5 **loss when emergencies do occur.**
6

7 **Objective 1: Ensure adequate fire stations, supporting facilities, and personnel in order to provide**
8 **prompt and effective fire and emergency medical response to all areas of the County.**
9

- 10 1. Increase the number of firefighters to ensure that there is adequate staff responding on
11 fire/rescue/EMS apparatus so that safe and effective firefighting operations can be accomplished.
12 Further ensure that there is sufficient support staff to meet other associated needs (i.e. training,
13 prevention, administrative services, etc.).
14

15 With population increases and tourists continued attendance in the area, public safety personnel
16 should be assessed for adequate staffing levels performing in the field and within support roles.
17 Additional staffing should increase to meet the needs for response and appropriate training.
18

- 19 2. Add replace, expand, and/or renovate fire stations when circumstances warrant.
20

21 There are many factors that can affect an emergency response including but not limited to facility
22 upkeep, operational response changes/additions, and/or development/geographical changes that
23 would warrant the replacement, expansion, or renovation of a fire station. The ability of fire stations
24 to have the necessary operational resources to respond to emergencies should be constantly
25 measured to determine if a fire station needs to be updated or added. Specifically, the Tabb area has
26 been identified as possibly requiring an additional fire station or increased resources and/or personnel
27 at existing stations in that area in the near future.
28

- 29 3. Develop adequate facilities and resources to support fire and life safety operations
30

31 Fire and Life Safety requires many facilities and resources to operate effectively in addition to the fire
32 stations. These facilities and resources include but are not limited to training space, office areas, and
33 logistics space that is vital to having adequate responses to emergencies. A logistical warehouse-type
34 space is especially needed for storage and maintenance of required equipment such as medical
35 supplies, fire hoses and appliances, uniforms, personal protective equipment, firearms, ammunition,
36 and general supplies. Additionally a centrally located training facility with several large classroom
37 spaces, multiple smaller breakout training rooms, specific training rooms for specialized training,
38 technical library capabilities, and computer labs, would alleviate currently significant training
39 pressures. This space could also be an important facility supporting emergency response.
40

41 **Objective 2: Maintain a five-minute average fire and emergency response time to at least 90% of the**
42 **County's land area.**
43

- 44 1. Locate and design fire stations to provide opportunities for expansion of service, achieve response
45 time goals, address target hazard needs, and/or to meet service demands.
46

47 The location and design of fire stations should be carefully investigated and decided to best serve the
48 community needs. Future population growth and development patterns, current response times,
49 identified hazards, and areas with spikes in demand should all be considered in the location and design
50 of new facilities to serve both current and future residents.
51

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

- 3
4 1. Continue improvement efforts and/or construct facilities needed for adequate major
5 emergency/disaster coordination and support.

6
7 An effective response to major emergency/disaster events requires adequate facilities such as an
8 emergency operations center that is set-up and permanently available for activation 24/7/365,
9 shelters, public safety facilities, etc. These spaces should also be appropriately equipped with
10 necessary utilities such as sufficient back up emergency power and other utilities and resources that
11 allow them to effectively support operations during emergencies lasting several days to several
12 weeks. Further, it is essential that other critical County facilities, which are used to support County
13 operations during major emergencies or disasters and are critical to continuity of operations have
14 adequate back-up emergency power and associated appurtenances.

15
16 **Objective 4: Provide Sheriff’s facilities and employees to accommodate manpower levels sufficient to**
17 **provide prompt and effective crime protection, prevention, and law enforcement to all areas of the**
18 **County.**

- 19
20 1. Increase the number of law enforcement deputies.

21
22 As the County population is projected to increase over the next 20 years, the number of incidents that
23 must be responded to will most likely increase, as has been evident in recent years. Increasing the
24 number of officers proportional to County growth will allow the Sheriff’s Office to maintain the level
25 of service residents and the business community has come to expect from the York-Poquoson Sheriff’s
26 Office.

- 27
28 2. Move into and finalize operation of the Law Enforcement Building upon construction completion.

29
30 The new facility is planned to be completed in late 2023 and will be located along Operations Drive.
31 The two-story building is expected to be approximately 50,000 square feet and include space for all
32 divisions of the Sheriff’s Office, a training wing, meeting spaces, and a community room. This new
33 building will address the extremely limited space currently experienced at the existing offices.

34
35 **Objective 5: Provide detention/correctional facilities of sufficient capacity to house securely and safely**
36 **the County’s future adult and juvenile inmate population.**

- 37
38 1. Work with regional partners to ensure regional facilities have the capacity to house the regional inmate
39 population.

40
41 York County’s adult prisoners are housed in the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail (VPRJ) with prisoners
42 from James City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson. Juvenile inmates are housed at the Merrimac
43 Center, a regional juvenile detention that sits right next to the jail. The VPRJ is designed to accommodate
44 future expansion should the need arise. By continually working with regional partners to monitor the
45 conditions and capacity of these facilities, proactive plans to expand the facility can be made to
46 accommodate increased inmate populations.

47
48 **Objective 6: Ensure the public receives useful and accurate information in emergency situations.**

- 49
50 1. Continue to utilize a variety of means to disseminate disaster and emergency information to the
51 public.

1 Getting information out to the citizens is one of the biggest challenges in responding to a disaster or
2 major emergency. The County utilizes a variety of means to inform the public in an emergency event
3 including the use of the York Alert notification systems, various disaster publications, multiple social
4 media platforms, variable/digital message signs, routine media communications, and cable channel
5 broadcast. Continuing to utilize a variety of platforms simultaneously will allow the County to reach
6 the most amount of people in a relatively short amount of time. The County should also continuously
7 asses and evaluate additional means and platforms to best reach all residents.
8

9 **GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

10
11 **Goal: Maintain sufficient and conveniently located space to serve the County’s growing**
12 **population.**
13

14 **Objective 1: Retain historic Yorktown as the seat of County government.**

- 15
16 1. Evaluate the need for and feasibility of constructing a new larger administration building to replace
17 the existing one in Yorktown.
18

19 Yorktown has been a center for government in York County historically for centuries. York Hall
20 specifically has served as a courthouse, governmental offices, and now a central location for the
21 meetings of various local boards, committees, and groups. The conversion of the existing
22 Administration Center from a school in 1929 and renovation in 2000 has provided citizens a location
23 for the administrative offices; however, the limitations of the building is showing the growing pains
24 of the needs of citizens. The County should assess the possibility of providing administration services
25 in a building that would represent the seat of government in Yorktown.
26

27 **Objective 2: Make optimum use of existing office space and use electronic technology to the maximum**
28 **feasible extent to minimize the need for physical space to accommodate administrative and storage**
29 **functions.**
30

- 31 1. Continue to use technology to improve on space-saving computer-based methods of storing and
32 retrieving County files and records.
33

34 The County has already begun using solutions for reducing the number of paper records on file. These
35 efforts should be continued and expanded as technology advances.
36

- 37 2. Evaluate the need for and feasibility of constructing a warehousing center for the storage needs of
38 County departments.
39

40 The storage of large equipment and mass amounts of materials, especially in line with the needs for
41 emergency preparedness, as well as storing paper records is a critical need for County departments.
42 A feasibility study should be completed to determine overall needs and possible locations for
43 providing a storage location for these needs.
44

45 **Objective 3: Maintain and create ease of access to services.**

- 46
47 1. Seek to maintain central complexes where departmental offices are concentrated to make locating
48 services easier for citizens.
49

50 The County should seek to group similar services together such as development services where
51 citizens can access the offices that handle every step of the development process in one place.
52 Additionally, governmental offices should be maintained, and where possible, established in areas

1 that offer greater accessibility to governmental services. This could mean partnering with other
2 localities to create better ease of access to services for citizens in the upper county, like the library or
3 providing a satellite office, like the voter registrar.
4

5 **LIBRARY**

7 **Goal: Provide equal access to exemplary library information services and foster a community**
8 **of citizen interaction.**

9
10 **Objective 1: Achieve and maintain the highest levels of excellence in library service according to State**
11 **standards.**

- 12
13 1. Expand the number and range of library books, digital resources, audio-visual materials, and online
14 access to information as necessitated by citizen needs and technological changes.

15
16 As the population grows over the next 20 years and technology changes, it is vital that the library is
17 responsive to citizens’ needs and constantly looking to evaluate and expand its collection of materials.
18 This will allow the library to maintain EEE rating in collections.
19

- 20 2. Maintain, expand, and enhance information technology in library facilities.

21
22 Vital qualities of a modern library include access to books, study rooms, classrooms, open spaces, Wi-
23 Fi, and computers. Technology has become an increasingly important and constantly changing
24 resource that will need to be updated and expanded in the future to keep up with technological
25 advancements. This will allow the library to maintain EEE rating in technology.
26

- 27 3. Increase the number of full-time employees and professional librarians per capita.

28
29 The success of a library system is based on the competency and commitment of its staff. York County
30 Library’s currently have EE rating in Staffing. Additional full-time employees per capita and
31 professional librarians per capita would allow the library to reach EEE in staffing. Currently the library
32 staffing resources are at capacity to meet the demands for and programs, and will need to be
33 increased further to match the County’s growing population over the next 20 years. Each library
34 requires skilled employees in the areas of youth, reference, circulation, technical services, technology,
35 administration, and building maintenance. A consistent onboarding process, staff retention and
36 engagement methods, and policies and programs to support ongoing professional development have
37 been identified to foster a thriving library work environment to best serve the public.
38

- 39 4. Enhance the Cultural Arts Programs utilizing the new space at the Yorktown Library.

40
41 The Yorktown Library renovation and addition include many spaces, including a large auditorium like
42 space, which can be used for cultural arts programing. The extra space offers the opportunity to
43 enhance and further programing for the public, actions that were not feasible under previous space
44 restrictions.
45

- 46 5. Renovate Interior of Tabb Library.

47
48 The Tabb Library was constructed in 1999 under the recommendation of a prior Comprehensive Plan.
49 Since then, the role of the libraries has expanded to include study rooms, classrooms, open spaces,
50 Wi-Fi, and many technological advancements. A future renovation at the Tabb Library will result in a
51 greater and more efficient utilization of the space that is becoming outdated.
52

1 6. Explore storefront libraries in District 1.
2

3 District 1 residents rely on the Williamsburg Regional Library for convenient library access. With the
4 majority of new development occurring and projected in the upper County, a storefront library may
5 also be useful to better serve and reach out to these residents while repurposing abandoned retail
6 space.
7

8 **Objective 2: Ensure the equitable provision of library services and facilities throughout the County by
9 breaking down access barriers and engaging with the community**
10

11 1. Expand Outreach Services in the Lackey Community.
12

13 Access is likely a problem for Lackey residents as there are very few recorded library patrons from the
14 area. Efforts to reach out to this community have included a “pop-up” library at Charles Brown Park
15 initiated with a mobile van providing books and Wi-Fi access. Additional efforts will likely have to be
16 made to reach out to and ensure access for these residents.
17

18 2. Develop a plan for supporting English as a Second Language (ESL) and immigrant populations.
19

20 County residents who do not speak English as their first language have many more barriers to
21 accessing library services than other residents. A plan outlining strategies to accommodate and reach
22 out to these underserved populations would provide a platform to break down many of the barriers
23 preventing them from utilizing the library. Some strategies include providing more bilingual books and
24 material, having bilingual members of staff, and partnering with community organizations already
25 working with these populations to introduce them to library services and resources.
26

27 3. Expand library outreach services by extending service hours and locations.
28

29 Extending service hours and locations make visits to the library more convenient for many citizens.
30 Whether it is having time to go to the library after work or spending less time to get there, the strategic
31 expansion of library services will better serve County citizens. This also includes bringing the library to
32 people who otherwise can’t get there, including nursing homes, retirement communities, and other
33 underserved areas. “Pop up” libraries and book deliveries have been utilized in the past to connect
34 residents to library services.
35

36 4. Develop a plan to continuously assess and reconfigure library spaces according to community needs.
37

38 The uses and operation of the library has changed over the last 20 years to fulfill its goal and role in
39 the County. Spaces should be designed to be flexible in order to respond to the changing and dynamic
40 needs of patrons and service patterns. The library must continue to be flexible and responsive to
41 community needs to reconfigure spaces to best serve County residents.
42

43 5. Expand public relations and marketing efforts to increase awareness of the library’s vital role in the
44 community.
45

46 Many County residents are unaware of library programs and resources. Increasing awareness of the
47 library and what it can be used for would be beneficial to many residents. Proposed strategies include
48 the continued use of a marketing team, more effective utilization of social media, investigate
49 unexplored advertising methods, and to ensure ongoing evaluation of the library’s website and online
50 services.
51

52 **Objective 3: Foster local and regional partnerships for resource sharing and economy of service.**
53

1 1. Continue partnership with Williamsburg Regional Library.
2

3 The Williamsburg Regional Library continues to conveniently serve Upper County residents through
4 the operation of two locations. Continued support for this partnership will ensure Upper County
5 residents continue to have convenient access to a library.
6

7 2. Continue partnership with Parks and Recreation.
8

9 The library has successfully partnered with Parks and Recreation on a variety of events and programs.
10 Sharing resources like staff, meeting spaces, equipment, and ideas has led to the development or
11 enhancement of many programs enjoyed by County residents. Events like library programs at the
12 parks, Movies in the Park, Senior Center events, and a variety of monthly library programs have all
13 been successful because of collaboration with Parks and Recreation. The renovation and expansion of
14 the Yorktown Library offers the opportunity to expand partnered events and programs into this new
15 space.
16

17 3. Form Economic Development partnerships.
18

19 The library can be a useful resource for both professional development and many local businesses.
20 Meeting spaces, conference rooms, Wi-Fi, and library collections can all be utilized to promote
21 professional and economic development in the County. Businesses have used library space to provide
22 free seminars and engage with the public. Additionally, as more people begin to work remotely, the
23 library has become somewhere to work from with quiet spaces and a reliable internet connection.
24 Partnerships with Economic Development could establish and expand business development,
25 entrepreneurial, and professional programs to support County resident’s professional needs.
26

27 4. Form Partnerships with the York County School Division.
28

29 The library has many resources that are extremely useful and beneficial for both students and
30 educators. The Library should work to ensure every student has a library card and teachers know how
31 to best harness library services to support students. Partnerships would also increase instruction and
32 student potential, and possibly initiate use of the library by students beyond strictly academic related
33 activities. A combined effort to establish STREAM-based (Science Technology Reading Engineering Art
34 Math) initiatives and the development of makerspace programs would enhance the libraries use for
35 County students. The development of a school liaison position has also been proposed to coordinate
36 programs with the schools.
37

38 **Objective 4: Provide programs, outreach, and resources for the education and entertainment of all ages
39 to foster lifelong learning.**
40

41 1. Develop Makerspace programs.
42

43 These spaces can work to expand STREAM-based-initiatives and be an important resource developed
44 with coordination to the needs of the schools. These programs may require the acquisition of
45 necessary additional equipment and other resources. Additional staff should be trained in
46 Makerspace operation with the goal of providing staffed “Maker-hours” where the public can utilize
47 Makerspace equipment.
48

49 2. Support a vibrant and educated community.
50

51 The libraries should continue to develop classes and events supporting preschool, K-12, and life-long
52 learning. Proposed strategies are to explore collaboration with adult learning institutions and expand
53 workforce development and employment assistance support.