

# 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.

## TOURISM

The Yorktown Waterfront is York County's downtown, "front porch", and "shining crown" all rolled up into one and it was a long time in the making. The process of developing the Yorktown Master Plan began in 1988 with the Yorktown Revitalization Steering Committee. The master plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1993 set the



vision that led to the village as it exists today and continues to guide the County's efforts to create a vibrant downtown where citizens and visitors can come together and experience this beautiful venue. With the grand opening of Riverwalk Landing in 2005 and the events and celebrations that followed, a precedent for a robust schedule of events, tall ships, vibrant dining, retail, and history-making celebrations was set in motion. The work of Tourism Development staff is focused on enhancing the experience and connection to the waterfront for citizens and stays vibrant as a destination for visitors who sleep in the village's hotels and bed-and-breakfasts, eat in the restaurants, and spend money in the Yorktown retail stores. Additionally, the Tourism Development staff is committed to maintaining Yorktown and York County as a vital component of the Greater Williamsburg destination brand through integrated and

1 targeted marketing campaigns including robust social media and digital presence. These efforts solidify  
2 Yorktown as a premier destination in the region.

3  
4 The **Yorktown Waterfront**, which occupies approximately 12.5 acres along the York River in historic  
5 Yorktown, provides opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, beach picnicking, fishing, and boating. In July  
6 2003 the County assumed ownership of two acres of the property that was previously owned by the  
7 Yorktown Trustees and managed by the County. The remaining 10.5-acre portion comprising the National  
8 Park Service’s Beach Picnic Area was turned over to County management in 2004. Originally improved in  
9 1977 with a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Yorktown Waterfront is the only public  
10 beach facility in York County. In 2005, the County completed Riverwalk Landing, a 21,000 square-foot  
11 retail/restaurant destination that consists of eight new buildings, the renovated Freight Shed, and a  
12 parking terrace. As part of the project, the Yorktown Pier, which was damaged by Hurricane Isabel in 2003,  
13 was renovated into a fishing pier. Annually, the County obtains a permit that allows residents and visitors  
14 to fish and crab from this pier without a personal fishing license.

15  
16 **Riverwalk Landing** includes two  
17 additional concrete floating  
18 piers. The large 395-foot T-pier  
19 located at the foot of Ballard  
20 Street can accommodate tall  
21 ships, visiting military vessels,  
22 medium- and large-sized private  
23 vessels, as well as regional  
24 commercial cruise ships.  
25 Electrical service, water, WiFi,  
26 and sewer pump -out facilities  
27 are available on the pier-side.  
28 The second pier located behind  
29 the restaurant and between the  
30 larger pier and the Coleman



31 Bridge is intended to accommodate transient overnight and pleasure boaters visiting the village shops and  
32 restaurants as well as smaller craft such as day-trippers. The piers provide for overnight stays with  
33 restroom and shower facilities specifically available for overnight boaters and ship crews. The piers have  
34 also become homeport to a commercial tall ship that provides day and evening sails.

35  
36 The open space at Riverwalk Landing referred to as Chischiak Green has become the hub for activities  
37 and special events on the waterfront. Currently it is the site of the well-attended “Sounds of Summer”  
38 and “Rhythms on the Riverwalk” concert series as well Yorktown Market Days, art shows, festivals and  
39 tall ship events. The County’s Freight Shed rental facility, performance area, and beach have become  
40 popular spots for hosting weddings, receptions and other special occasion events.

41 Below are events that have evolved throughout the years in Yorktown:  
42  
43

**2005**

- Grand Opening of Riverwalk Landing
- First Tall Ship at Piers
- Fall Concert Series Launches

**2006**

- Summer Concert Series Launches
- 225th Anniversary of Victory at Yorktown

**2007**

- 400th Anniversary of Jamestown
- Yorktown Market Days Begins

**2008**

- Pirates Invade Yorktown
- Toyland Parade Begins

**2009**

- Cabin Fever Series Launches
- Movies on the Green

**2010**

- Market Days Fall Festival
- Yorktown Wine Festival

**2011**

- Summer Series Moves to Thursdays
- Schooner Serenity Joins Alliance

**2012**

- Opsail Maritime Weekend
- Yorktown Art Stroll

**2014**

- Blues, Brews & BBQ Festival

**2015**

- Lafayette’s Hermione Voyage
- Sister Cities French Market
- Riverwalk Landing 10th Anniversary
- YMCA Race

**2016**

- Oyster Roast in the Freight Shed
- El Galeon & Hokule’a Visits

**2017**

- Vintage Market at the MAC

**2018**

- Market Days Harvest Festival

**2019**

- Market Days Paws at the River
- Market Days Maritime Festival

**2020**

- Market Days First Responders Market
- Market Days Mistletoe Market
- Expansion of Christmas Market on Main
- Yorktown Trolley 20th Anniversary

**2021**

- Market Days Winter Markets

**2022**

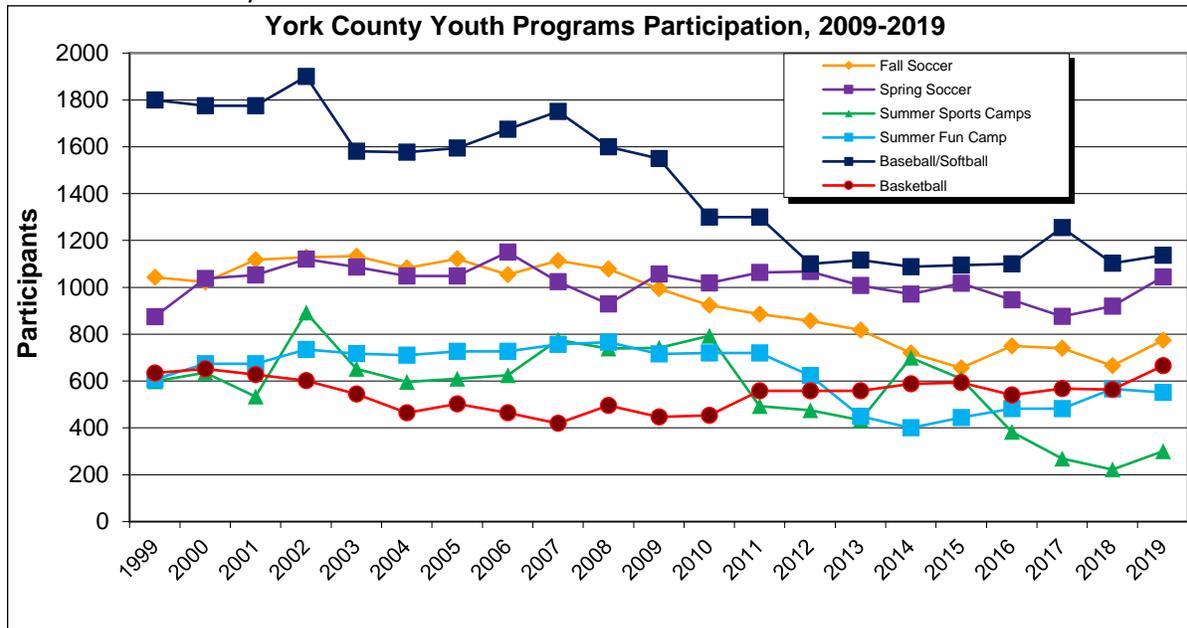
- Market Days Fun in the Sun Market
- Vintage Market & Car Show on Main Street
- An Enchanted Evening on Main Street

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**PARKS AND RECREATION**

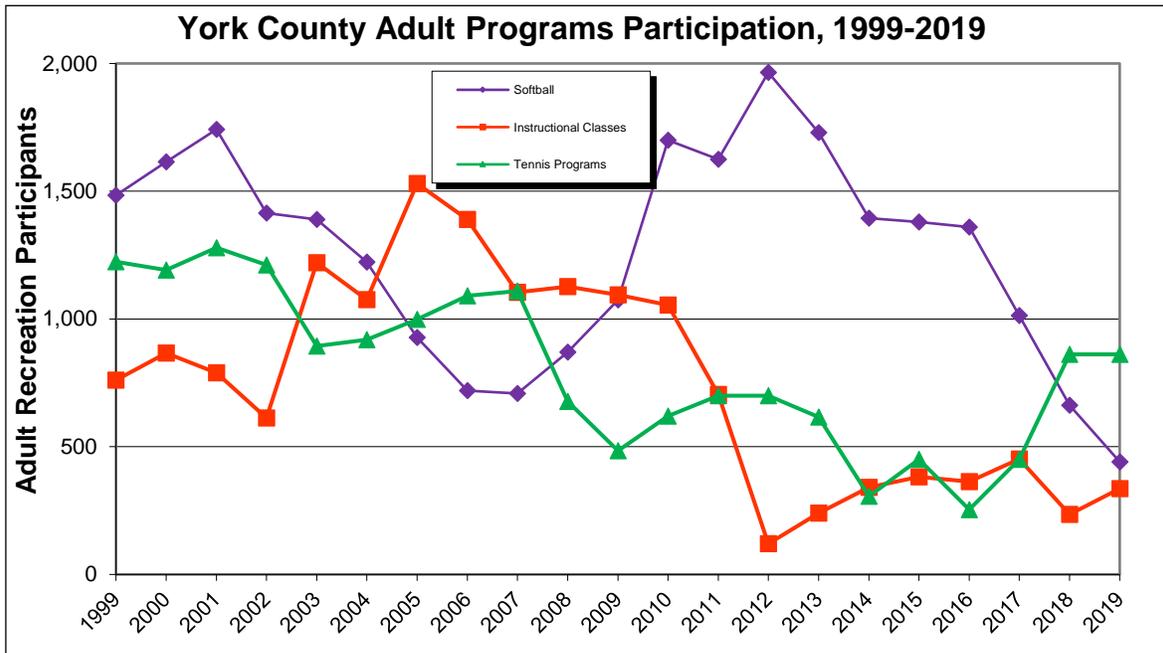
**Recreational Programs**

York County offers a variety of programs for active and passive recreation for both youth and adults. Available to young people are a wide range of programs including soccer, tennis, basketball, summer day camp, sports and recreation camps, kayak tours, a variety of instructional classes (art, educational Tae Kwon Do, etc.), and a recent addition of outdoor programs. Adult programs include softball, tennis, fitness classes, educational, and instructional classes. **Figure 4** below shows how various programs have grown and declined over the years.



**Figure 4**

1 The above chart shows that County-sponsored youth sports leagues have seen a 10% increase while sports  
2 camps have declined by 50% since 2015. The primary reason for declining sports camps is the increasing  
3 number of program offerings provided to residents by private organizations and other public agencies as  
4 well as the fact that some youth are playing a single sport year-round. Some of these are recreational  
5 while others offer a more competitive structure. Summer Fun Camp participation has also seen a 25%  
6 increase since 2015. Another sports organization that has grown in popularity is the York County Little  
7 League, which has a contractual agreement with the County to provide recreationally-based youth  
8 baseball and softball, with a 4% increase in overall participation. Though the County provides sports  
9 leagues, it should be noted that there are several private organizations sponsoring programs in both the  
10 upper and lower County. These include three youth baseball/softball associations; over 50 private  
11 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) baseball and softball teams; five youth football/cheerleading associations;  
12 four soccer clubs; three swim team/aquatic clubs; two church-sponsored and three AAU organizations  
13 offering youth basketball; two youth wrestling associations; and two lacrosse organizations. While youth



**Figure 5**

14 sports leagues have seen an increase, **Figure 5** below shows that participation in adult softball decreased  
15 by almost 70% , whereas adult and family programs have experienced some increases since 2015.  
16 Residents of all ages can participate in the County’s instructional classes, such as the “Skate, Rattle, and  
17 Roll” roller skating program, disc golf, and multiple special events at various outdoor parks. The skating  
18 program is operated in the Dare Elementary School gymnasium, while New Quarter Park houses an 18-  
19 hole championship disc golf course. In addition, instructional classes are taught at various locations  
20 throughout the County in the evenings and on the weekends. Special events such as “Movie in the Parks”  
21 are offered at New Quarter Park, Charles Brown Park, and the McReynolds Athletic Complex (MAC).  
22

23 For senior adults, York County operates the Senior Center of York, which is located in the Washington  
24 Square Shopping Center and offers a wide variety of activities, classes, clubs, special events, and trips. For  
25 seniors living in the upper County, James City County Recreation Center offers “The Lounge” membership  
26 for a non-resident fee. In addition, throughout the year, the County offers programming in partnerships  
27 with community organizations and local, state, and federal agencies for seniors.  
28

29 As the population continues to age, senior programs have grown in popularity, increasing from 15,000 to  
30 19,000 in 2019 (**Figure 6**). Since 2001, the Senior Center of York has occupied over 6,300 square feet of

1 leased space in the Washington Square  
2 Shopping Center. In 2011, adjacent  
3 storefront space was added, increasing  
4 the total area to 8,817 square feet.  
5 Activities offered to seniors include a  
6 computer club, preventative health  
7 services, annual health fair and flu  
8 shots, dining club, and educational  
9 seminars on such issues as scams and  
10 identify theft. Seniors can also take  
11 advantage of AARP driver safety classes  
12 and tax assistance programs. There are  
13 a variety of monthly programs that  
14 include knitting, crocheting, quilting,  
15 bridge club, canasta group, and the  
16 “Birthday Bash.” There are also a  
17 variety of special events as well as  
18 regular classes and groups in exercise,  
19 art, crafts, and line dancing for all levels.

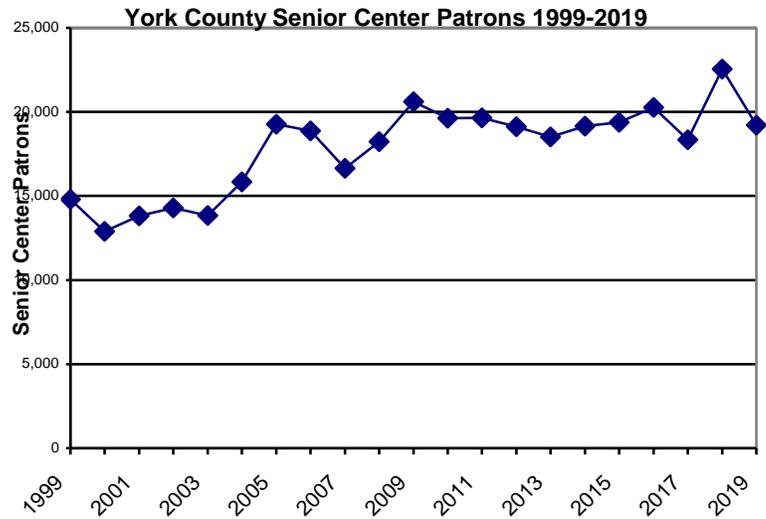


Figure 6

21 In the past, budgetary constraints and low participation rates have resulted in several programs being  
22 discontinued. These included the Hershey Track and Field programs, adult basketball and volleyball as  
23 well as the roller skating program in the upper County that was held in the Historic Triangle Community  
24 Services Building. With respect to the upper County, it should be noted that York has partnership  
25 agreements with the City of Williamsburg and James City County Parks and Recreation Departments to  
26 make programs and facilities available to upper County residents. These localities use York County  
27 facilities for some of these programs and help meet a significant portion of the demand for recreational  
28 activities in the upper County at a non-resident rate.

30 Because of severe limitations on public gatherings during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic on, no  
31 data on participation in recreation programs is provided for 2020. Programs in this time period were  
32 cancelled and participation was extremely limited or nonexistent.

34 **School/Park Facilities**

36 York County’s development of recreational facilities at school sites for community use, known as the  
37 “school/park” concept, has proven to be an effective means of providing athletic fields, gymnasiums,  
38 playground areas, basketball and tennis courts that serve both school and community needs. In fact, if the  
39 County were to provide separate facilities comparable to what is found at the 18 school sites, millions of  
40 additional dollars would have to be spent just to duplicate the basic infrastructure that already exists at  
41 these school sites (land, utilities, parking, etc.) in addition to recreation facilities themselves. Citizens have  
42 been well served by the school/park concept and will continue to be for years to come. In this regard, the  
43 County is a model for other communities seeking to provide recreational facilities in a cost-effective  
44 manner, and in fact was recognized for this initiative by the National Association of Counties (NACo).

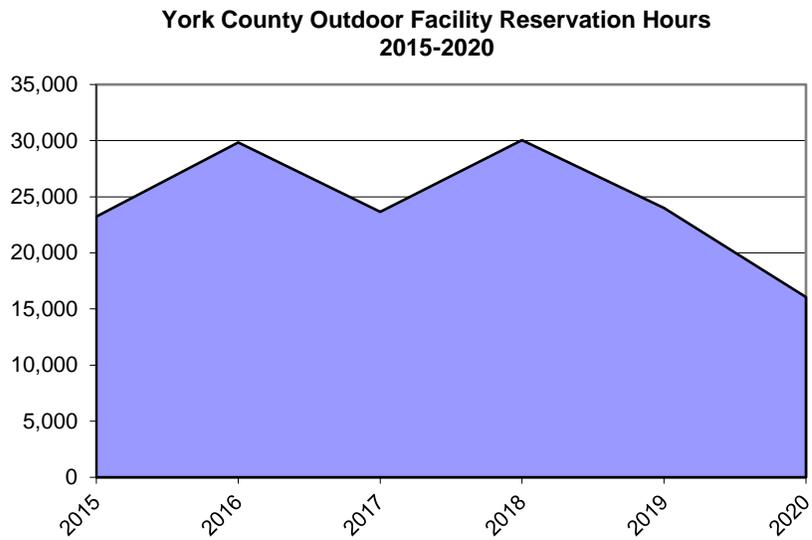
46 Development of school/park facilities began in 1985 after a joint effort by County and School Division  
47 staffs to develop master plans for each school site was completed. In addition to utilizing the sites to the  
48 fullest extent possible for community and school purposes, the master planning effort also tried to achieve  
49 equity among the schools by establishing a basic set of core facilities that should exist at each site. For  
50 example, each elementary school master plan includes these core facilities: a gymnasium, two playground  
51 areas, a youth baseball/softball field, a soccer field, and two outdoor basketball courts. In addition to  
52 these core recreational facilities, some elementary school sites may have a larger soccer field that is  
53 lighted, two baseball fields, or even tennis courts. Additional recreational amenities like these depended

1 on what the site was able to accommodate and if there was a need for certain recreational facilities within  
2 that particular geographic area of the County. These plans have been revised periodically over the years  
3 as the need arose to expand school buildings and/or provide additional recreational facilities.  
4

5 Because of this commitment to the school/park concept, many of the County’s recreational activities take  
6 place on school grounds. In order to maximize the community’s use of these facilities, the Board of  
7 Supervisors and the School Board entered into an agreement in 1991 whereby the Parks and Recreation  
8 Division assumed responsibility for scheduling after-school use of gymnasiums and outdoor facilities at all  
9 elementary schools and middle schools. The elementary and middle schools are the primary school/park  
10 sites since they do not have as many school-sponsored after-school activities as the high schools. In 2005,  
11 this agreement was revised to reflect facility changes that had been completed. An additional benefit of  
12 this centralized scheduling approach is that valuable usage data is compiled and analyzed in order to  
13 assess the existing demand and long-term needs for recreational facilities throughout the County. There  
14 are many challenges that impact facility availability such as Virginia High School League (VHSL) allowing  
15 year round practices, more gymnasium hours needed during winter seasons, tennis courts being covered  
16 by portable classrooms, storage limitations at facilities, and facility space that could be utilized during  
17 school hours.  
18

19 **Athletic Field Reservations**

20  
21 The number of reservation hours of athletic fields at schools and parks was at an all-time high in the first  
22 two years after the McReynolds  
23 Athletic Complex opened. Since  
24 2015, reservation hours have  
25 fluctuated between 23,000 and  
26 30,000 for outdoor facilities  
27 **(Figure 7)**. Reservations at  
28 school facilities have decreased  
29 by 30% since 2015. Because of  
30 the use of natural turf fields at  
31 all County facilities, weather  
32 affects reservation hours at  
33 outdoor facilities. Community  
34 organizations continue to be the  
35 largest user of athletic fields at  
36 middle and elementary schools  
37 and at park sites as they reserve  
38 76% of the overall usage time.  
39 By comparison, the County-run  
40 recreation programs reserve  
41 18% of usage time while high  
42 school interscholastic teams and  
43 programs reserve 5% of the usage time.  
44



45 **Figure 7**

46 Another important issue relating to recreational facility use is the effect that inadequate high school  
47 facilities have had on other school and park facilities that are supposed to be available for community use.  
48 The usage time required by high school interscholastic sports has often created scheduling restrictions for  
49 community usage elsewhere. For example, the Tabb and Grafton High School boys’ and girls’ varsity and  
50 junior varsity teams have to use Tabb Elementary School, Mount Vernon Elementary School, Tabb Middle  
51 School, Coventry Elementary School, Kiln Creek Park, and Wolf Trap Park for their practices. Furthermore,  
52 the athletic fields at these high schools simply cannot support all of the school’s teams’ needs for space.  
53 Another area of concern is the time and intensity of school competition and its detrimental effect on the  
condition of the fields. In fact, the time demand for school usage has increased since the VHSL approved

1 year-round practices for interscholastic teams. Previously, high school teams could only practice during  
 2 their specific season. The increased demand by school teams limits the time available for community  
 3 recreational usage and makes it difficult to schedule a time for renovating over-used fields.

4  
 5 **Outdoor Park and Recreational Facilities**

6  
 7 Complementing the outdoor school/park facilities are a variety of other park and recreational facilities,  
 8 including Back Creek Park, Charles E. Brown Park, Chisman Creek Park, Wolf Trap Park, Kiln Creek Park,  
 9 New Quarter Park, the McReynolds Athletic Complex, and the Old Wormley Creek and Rodgers A. Smith  
 10 public boat landings. Also located in the County are several non-County parks, Waller Mill Park (City of  
 11 Williamsburg), and Harwoods Mill Park (City of Newport News). Finally, many subdivision and apartment  
 12 complexes in the County have private recreational facilities – such as swimming pools, playing fields,  
 13 tennis courts, and exercise rooms available for their residents’ use. **Table 5** lists recreational opportunities  
 14 available in various areas of the County.  
 15

Type of Facility	Upper County			York/Dare Area			Grafton/Tabb Area			Total County		
	2004	2010	2022	2004	2010	2022	2004	2010	2022	2004	2010	2022
Instructional Soccer	1	1	1	4	3	3	1	3	3	6	7	7
Soccer/Football	4	4	5	8	10	10	10	13	13	22	27	28
Youth Baseball/Softball	5	5	5	6	8	8	7	11	11	18	24	24
Regulation Softball	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	5	5
Regulation Baseball	2	2	2	3	5	5	5	4	4	10	11	11
Practice	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	2
Track	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	1	1	4	5	5
Tennis Courts	8	8	8	20	20	18	6	8	6	32	36	32
Outdoor Basketball Courts	7	11	8	18	10	9	11	17	11	36	38	28
Boat Ramps	0	1	1	5	5	6	2	3	3	7	9	10
Picnic Areas	14	14	14	3	3	3	0	0	33	17	17	50
Playgrounds			7			10			16			33
The York/Dare area includes facilities north of Dare Road up to Charles Brown Park in Lackey												

**Table 5**

16  
 17  
 18 **Back Creek Park** is located on Goodwin Neck Road in Seaford.  
 19 The Amoco Oil Company donated these 27 acres of  
 20 waterfront property on Back Creek to the County in 1978,  
 21 and the park was opened for use in 1981. Facilities include  
 22 six lighted tennis courts, a boat launching facility, a  
 23 fishing/crabbing pier, a small picnic area, and a restroom  
 24 building with a small office for seasonal staff who oversee  
 25 park activities and kayak rentals. Back Creek Park serves as  
 26 the hub for the County’s tennis and Pickleball program,  
 27 which includes leagues, lessons, camps, and tournaments for youth and adults. The boat launching facility  
 28 is considered to be one of the finest on the Peninsula and is heavily used.  
 29





Situated on a 10-acre site on Route 238 in Lackey, **Charles E. Brown Park** was opened in 1978 as the County’s first park. Park facilities available for public use include the 3,000-square foot Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Building, two basketball courts, a baseball field, a playground, a picnic shelter, and a restroom facility. Constructed with a combination of federal and local funds, the Community Building features a large meeting room with a kitchenette that is available for recreational

10 programs as well for the public to rent. The facility is utilized to host family receptions, birthday parties,  
11 meetings, trainings, and events such as the “Grinch’s Night Out”. There is also a “Wetlands Interpretive  
12 Sanctuary for Education” (WISE) trail at Charles E. Brown Park, which is a quarter-mile trail, and  
13 interpretive area that borders approximately two acres of wetlands. Additionally, a 12,000 square foot  
14 community garden was installed in the park with two ADA compliant garden beds and twenty-eight other  
15 garden beds.

16  
17 The County leases two reclaimed EPA Superfund fly ash  
18 sites from Dominion Energy for recreational use. **Chisman**  
19 **Creek Park** is a 13-acre parcel on Wolf Trap Road in Grafton  
20 that opened in the spring of 1991. This park has two lighted  
21 softball fields and a restroom facility and is utilized for the  
22 adult softball league program, tournaments, and  
23 community athletic organizations. The second reclaimed fly  
24 ash site is **Wolf Trap Park**, which is also located on Wolf  
25 Trap Road and opened in 1992. This 28-acre site features  
26 four soccer fields and a restroom facility.



27  
37 **Kiln Creek Park** is a 20-acre site on Kiln Creek Parkway in Tabb.  
38 It was dedicated to the School Division by the developer of the  
39 Villages of Kiln Creek for a future school site. The County has  
40 leased this property from the School Board for use as a park  
41 until there is a need to construct a school on the site. The site  
42 was master-planned as a school/park facility, so the possible  
43 future construction of a school building on the property will  
44 have minimal disruption to the existing recreational facilities  
45 and parking lots. A lighted soccer field, lighted baseball field,  
46 youth baseball/softball field, two half-basketball courts, a playground, small picnic shelter, and restroom  
47 facility were completed in 1999. The athletic fields were developed during the first construction phase in  
48 1997 and opened for use in the spring of 1998. Lighting was added in 2000.



49  
50 **New Quarter Park** is located in the upper County, adjacent to the  
51 Queens Lake subdivision and the Colonial Parkway. This 545-acre  
52 tract was acquired free of charge in 1976 from the federal  
government through a surplus land program. Today it remains the  
largest single parcel of County-owned park acreage. Park facilities  
include 14 picnic shelters, with three available for group rental, a  
campfire circle with seating for 100 people, multi-purpose field, two  
half-basketball courts, horseshoe courts, and, a floating pier on  
Queen Creek. Between 2004 and 2006 the park was renovated with  
the addition of 5.5 miles of mountain bike trails (developed by the Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike  
Association), a sand volleyball court, a one-mile asphalt pedestrian bike path, 18-hole championship disc  
golf course, three miles of natural surface hiking trail (developed by the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club),



1 and two playground areas. In 2017, the mountain bike trail was expanded to slightly over 7 miles. In  
2 addition, one of the two playgrounds was replaced in 2019.



In 2005, the County entered into a lease agreement with the City of Newport News to develop a public park on 187 acres of property owned by Newport News Waterworks. Also known as the MAC, the **McReynolds Athletic Complex** (originally named the York County Sports Complex) opened in May 2009. The 70 acres of developed park area have been well received by York County citizens and patrons from neighboring localities alike. Featuring 13 lighted athletic fields, the athletic complex is for County-run adult softball, fall and spring

13 youth soccer programs, and for summer youth sports camps. It also serves as a home for the York County  
14 Little League and is available for rent to other organizations and users for games, tournaments, and sports  
15 camps. This complex is also utilized for special events such as “Movie in the Parks” and the Vintage Market.  
16

17 Other amenities at the MAC include a multipurpose path, bike lane, playgrounds, and 31 picnic shelters.  
18 Three concession stands and restroom buildings serve the park’s visitors.  
19

20 Utilization of the MAC in recent years has not been as heavy as when it originally opened. In 2019 the site  
21 hosted over 3,007 activities (a 20% decrease) and over 120,000 vehicles (a 1% decrease) when compared  
22 to 2010. Attendance have been affected by a decrease in adult sports and some user groups relocating to  
23 our other parks. The County has started to offer additional special events at the facility to increase the  
24 range of activities offered as well as increase usage when it is not being utilized for athletic events. The  
25 park has hosted a variety of local, state, and regional tournaments and sports events including baseball,  
26 softball, soccer, kickball, lacrosse, and flag football. The trails, playgrounds, outdoor fitness stations, and  
27 picnic shelters provide opportunities for individuals and families to enjoy the park as well.  
28

29 The **Rodgers A. Smith Boat Landing** is one of the most popular  
30 landings in the County. Located on the Poquoson River at the  
31 end of Tide Mill Road in Tabb, this landing features many grant-  
32 assisted improvements completed in FY 2006. The Virginia  
33 Marine Resources Commission awarded the County two grants  
34 to help fund the Smith Landing Waterfront Improvements  
35 Project. This grant program paid 75% (\$472,500) of the total  
36 project cost, and required that the County pay the remaining  
37 25% (\$157,500). Improvements included the replacement of two boat launching ramps with redesigned  
38 concrete ramp areas that increased the boat launching depth from four to five feet of water; the  
39 replacement of aging all-wooden piers with new ADA-accessible floating aluminum piers and ramps as  
40 well as new wooden support pilings and approach decks; the replacement of the adjacent fishing/crabbing  
41 pier with a wider, ADA-accessible one that provides a larger T-area and increased the fishing depth by one  
42 foot; and, extensive site improvements for traffic flow, parking, and lighting. The facility, which now  
43 includes restrooms as well, is widely used by boating and fishing enthusiasts alike. In 2018, an Eagle Scout  
44 troop added a kiosk and bench to the facility.  
45



**Old Wormley Creek Landing** is a much smaller facility at the end of Old Wormley Creek Road. It consists of a small boat ramp and adjacent fixed wooden pier used for fishing and crabbing. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission awarded the County a grant to assist with adding a boardwalk and an ADA canoe/kayak launch at this facility. This feature was opened in 2019 and received a 2020 National Association of Counties Award.

1  
2 **Indoor Park and Recreational Facilities**  
3

4 As mentioned above, the **Senior Center of York** is located in  
5 8,817-square feet of rented storefront space in the Washington  
6 Square shopping center in Grafton. The Center was first located  
7 in a 1,000-square foot unit in the Patriot Square Shopping  
8 Center in 1991 but was moved to a larger 3,000-square foot  
9 facility in 1993 because the number of citizens participating in  
10 senior adult programs had outgrown the capacity of the original  
11 facility. The Center moved again in 2001 into its current space  
12 and added an adjacent storefront in 2010 to reach its current  
13 size. In addition to its regular activities, the Center serves as a  
14 nutrition site for the Peninsula Agency on Aging. This facility is  
15 open during the day, Monday through Friday.  
16



17 In response to citizens advocating the development of a community center, land on Route 134 adjacent to  
18 the Tabb library facility was made available by the County for development of the **Victory Family YMCA**. This  
19 YMCA opened as a 46,000-square foot facility in January 2003 and was expanded by an additional 11,000  
20 square feet in 2006 to serve more youth, teens, and families. This total included 3,400 square feet of space  
21 for Mary Immaculate Hospital to use for physical therapy. In 2011, an 11,000-square foot renovation was  
22 completed to further enhance family wellness programs at the facility. The Victory Family YMCA serves the  
23 residents in the lower County and in 2019 had 12,400 members and 17,133 participants in the YMCA's  
24 programming annually. The existing 57,000-square foot building features an eight-lane swimming pool,  
25 gymnasium, health and wellness areas for adults and families, walking track, group exercise studios,  
26 climbing wall, two racquetball courts, teen center, and child watch area. In 2019, the branch distributed  
27 \$464,000 in financial assistance. In fact, approximately 20% of its members qualify for reduced membership  
28 fees as it practices its mission.  
29

30 In 2007, the **R.F. Wilkinson Family YMCA** opened its doors to upper York County residents. Located on the  
31 Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center campus on Mooretown Road, the 37,000-square foot facility  
32 includes a warm water family/therapeutic pool, lap swim/aqua fitness pool, whirlpool, sauna, gymnasium,  
33 child watch, and group exercise room and wellness center. The facility also includes an additional 6,845  
34 square feet dedicated to Sentara physical therapy services. The Wilkinson Family YMCA in 2019 had 4,296  
35 members and over 12,000 program participations annually. The branch distributed over \$178,203 in  
36 financial assistance to allow over 10,000 individuals each year to participate in YMCA programs and services.  
37 A full 57% of its members qualify for reduced membership fees.  
38

39 In addition to the York County-based Wilkinson Family YMCA, upper County residents can also utilize  
40 recreation facilities located in James City County and Williamsburg. York County residents can join (as non-  
41 residents), purchase day passes, and/or participate in programs and activities at several facilities including:  
42 the **Abram Frink, Jr. Community Center** (8901 Pocahontas Trail), which has a full-size gymnasium, fitness  
43 room, multipurpose room, and rentable meeting rooms and locker rooms with showers; the **James City**  
44 **County Recreation Center** (5301 Longhill Road), which features a gymnasium, indoor track, dance/fitness  
45 room, teen area, senior area, arts and crafts area with kilns, a fitness room, racquetball court, a 275-seat  
46 multi-purpose room, smaller meeting rooms, whirlpool, and a 25-meter x 25-yard swimming pool with zero  
47 depth entry and wheelchair accessibility; and the **City of Williamsburg's Quarterpath Recreation Center**  
48 (202 Quarterpath Road), featuring a large double gymnasium, a dance/fitness room, two classrooms, and a  
49 large multi-purpose room.  
50

51 The **York County Boys & Girls Club** opened its doors in June 2010 as a unit of Boys & Girls Clubs of the  
52 Virginia Peninsula. Thanks to the partnerships and support provided by the County, the School Division, Cox  
53 Communications, Dominion Energy, and various private businesses and individuals, the Boys & Girls Clubs

1 of the Virginia Peninsula were able to establish a new facility at the Yorktown Middle School site that serves  
2 as the York River Academy during the school day and as a Boys & Girls Club during the afternoons and in the  
3 summer. With the contributions from the County and the School Division of \$1 million each toward the total  
4 construction cost of \$4.3 million, the vision for this facility came to fruition. This 24,000-square foot space  
5 includes a full-size gym with stage, a games room with a kitchenette, an arts and crafts room, a reading  
6 room, a video games room, a computer lab and classrooms to better serve the youth. The York County Boys  
7 & Girls Club has 63 registered youth, ages 6 through 18, from York County who participate in after-school  
8 programs and approximately 90 to 100 youth in the summer program.  
9

## 10 **Water Access**

11  
12 In 2000 Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and  
13 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (representing the federal government) signed agreements to  
14 protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay’s ecosystem. The agreement committed the organizations to  
15 nurture and sustain a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Partnership and to achieve certain goals. The  
16 Chesapeake Watershed Agreement was signed in 2014 and amended in 2020 and outlined five themes,  
17 goals, and outcomes. The following were established for the public access component:  
18

- 19 • Goal: Expand public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries through existing and new  
20 local, state, and federal parks, refuges, reserves, trails and partner sites.  
21
- 22 • Desired Outcome: In addition to meeting the goal of 300 sites by 2025, the document cites a  
23 desire for partners to focus on improving the quality of new public access sites. Where feasible,  
24 the partners are ensuring that there are ample parking spaces, amenities, and multilingual signs  
25 to meet the needs of diverse communities. Efforts will also be aimed at adding new access  
26 opportunities at existing sites to take advantage of existing infrastructure.  
27

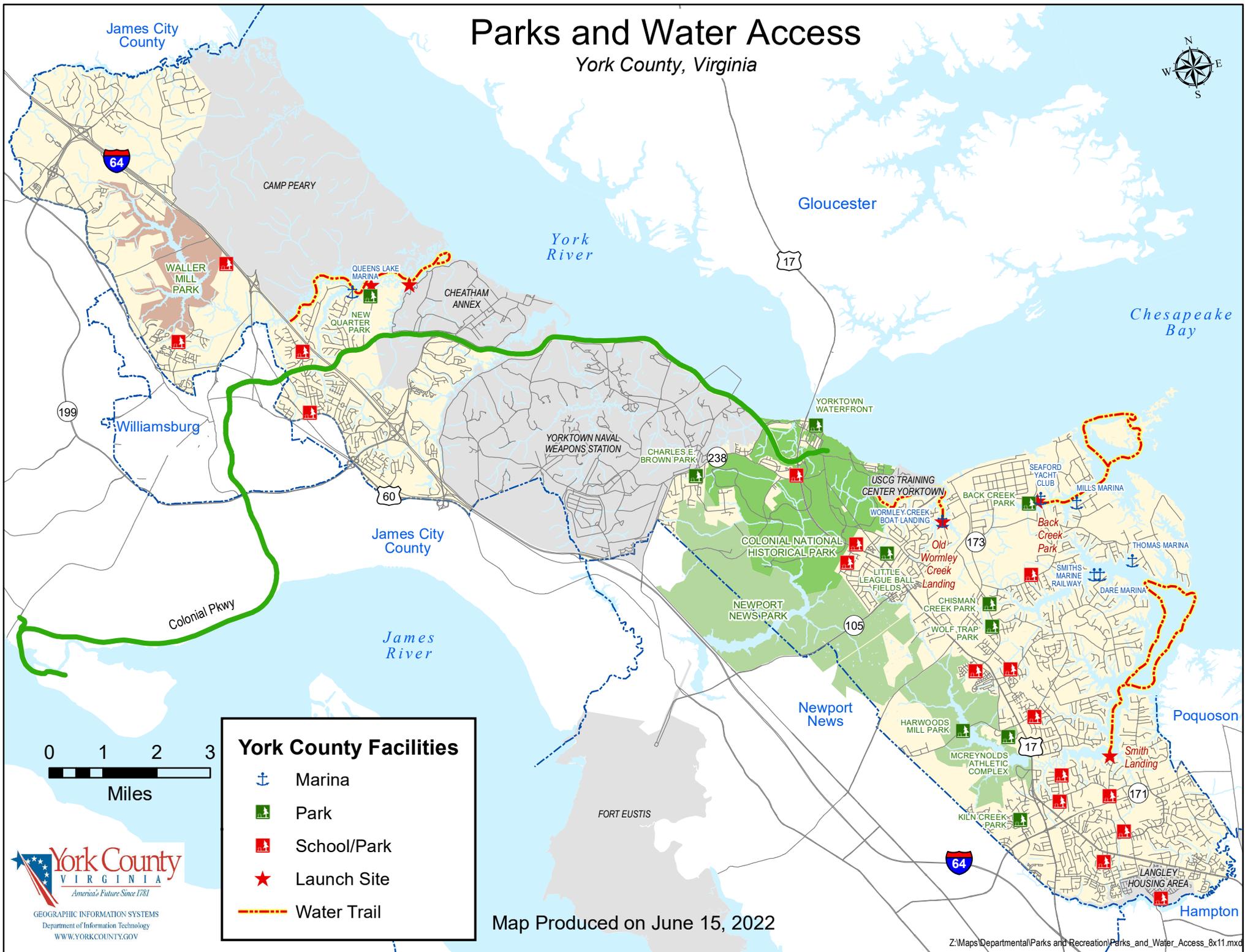
28 Since the adoption of the original goals in 2000, the York River Water Trail has been established, along  
29 with several Chesapeake Bay Gateway Network sites, including the Yorktown Visitor Center and  
30 Battlefield. The York River Water Trail follows approximately 120 miles along the tidal York, Mattaponi,  
31 and Pamunkey Rivers. Connecting multiple Gateway sites (Yorktown, Gloucester Point, York River State  
32 Park, and the Pamunkey Indian Reservations), the route spans a diverse landscape. In 2006, the Captain  
33 John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail was dedicated. This is a series of trails on the Chesapeake  
34 Bay that make up the routes Captain Smith traveled between 1607 and 1609 while mapping and exploring  
35 the area. The various routes combine for over 3,000 miles, and this Historic Trail is one of only two water  
36 trails that are part of the National Trail System.  
37

38 The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation published the *2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan*,  
39 which is the state’s official conservation, outdoor recreation, and open space plan. It is intended to serve  
40 as a guide to all levels of government and the private sector. During the plan development, a survey of  
41 Virginia citizens was conducted to identify the most popular outdoor recreational activities in the state.  
42 Among the ten top-ranked activities were water access and land trails (tied for third), swimming/outdoor  
43 pool (fifth), sunbathing/relaxing on a beach (sixth), swimming/beach/lake/river (eighth), and fishing  
44 (tenth). The Plan determined that in spite of the importance of water-related activities to Virginians, there  
45 are only 29 miles of public tidal beachfront land in the entire state. In other words, less than 1% of  
46 Virginia’s tidal shoreline is publicly owned and accessible to all of its citizens and visitors.  
47

48 The state also conducted a Virginia Outdoors Demand Survey in 2018. In this survey, 60% of the  
49 respondents stated that, “public access to state waters for fishing, swimming, and beach use” are “most  
50 needed in Virginia.” In fact, in rating the most desirable water-related activities, respondents ranked  
51 “sunbathing/relaxing on a beach” (47%) and “swimming at a beach” (37%) as numbers two and four, just  
52 behind the top-ranked “swimming in a pool” (48%).  
53

# Parks and Water Access

York County, Virginia



**York County Facilities**

- Marina
- Park
- School/Park
- Launch Site
- Water Trail



Map Produced on June 15, 2022

1 York County’s commitment to providing public water access is evidenced through its six public boat ramps,  
2 which are all located in the lower County except for the canoe/kayaking access at New Quarter Park. The  
3 County’s proximity to the York River and the Chesapeake Bay makes boating an extremely popular activity.  
4 However, proximity does not guarantee access, as much of the County’s shoreline is in federal ownership  
5 (National Park Service, Camp Peary, Cheatham Annex, Naval Weapons Station, and the Coast Guard  
6 Training Center). This contributes to the shortage of boat landings in the County, which has led to  
7 overcrowding at the Rodgers A. Smith and Back Creek Park facilities. The County has also identified and  
8 created a Water Trails map outlining over 27 miles of trail routes from several of its parks.  
9

10 York County has stayed committed to providing improved water access, making improvements to existing  
11 public access sites. The Rodgers A. Smith boat ramp underwent a complete renovation in 2005, replacing  
12 the boat launching ramps, floating piers and fishing pier. The County has also added public restroom  
13 facilities at this location in conjunction with the extension of sanitary sewer. In addition, through a grant  
14 from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, a crabbing and fishing pier was built at Back  
15 Creek Park, and the County replaced the floating wooden dock with a concrete floating dock. In 2019,  
16 improvements were made at Old Wormley Creek Landing with the addition of an ADA canoe/kayak launch  
17 access with the assistance of a grant from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.  
18

19 The following suggestions would require partnerships with the federal government (National Park Service  
20 and/or military installations) for accommodating increased water access in York County.  
21

- 22 • Additional boating access for areas west of the Coleman Bridge and east of York River State Park;
- 23 • Analysis of the lands along the Colonial Parkway to identify potential sites where water access  
24 could be improved by providing additional parking areas.
- 25 • Additional boating sites on the Poquoson River in order to relieve the heavy boat traffic near the  
26 mouth of the York River;
- 27 • Increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County for nature study,  
28 and to foster environmental education opportunities.  
29

30 The County’s Parks and Recreation Division has identified the following potential access areas or potential  
31 site improvements to increase water access in the County.  
32

- 33 • Identified land along Queen Creek;
- 34 • A public boat launching facility on Chisman Creek, which has deeper water suitable for launching  
35 larger boats;
- 36 • Expansion of the parking lot at Back Creek Park;
- 37 • Increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County, which could  
38 provide an opportunity for nature study and environmental education.  
39

40 Existing and potential water access sites in the County, both public and private, are depicted on the Parks  
41 map, with detailed information on each provided in **Tables 6, 7, and 8**.  
42

**Existing Public Shoreline and Water Access Points**

<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Day Use</b>	<b>Seasonal Use</b>	<b>Limited Parking Lot</b>	<b>Large Parking Lot</b>	<b>Boat Launch Ramp</b>	<b>Car Top Board Only</b>	<b>Dock</b>	<b>Bank and Pier</b>	<b>Swimming Beach</b>	<b>Hiking Trails</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>Restrooms</b>	<b>Handicapped Access</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Natural Heritage</b>	<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Pump Out</b>	
Back Creek Park	X			X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X				
Cheatham Wilderness																			
New Quarter Park	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Old Wormley Creek Landing	X		X		X		X	X						X	X				
Rogers A. Smith Landing	X		X		X		X	X			X		X	X	X				
<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Water Body</b>		<b>Remarks</b>																
Back Creek Park	Back Creek		Tennis, crabbing, fishing, picnicking																
New Quarter Park	Queen Creek		Limited access – open to public seasonally																
Old Wormley Creek	Wormley Creek		Launch at high tide only, fishing pier, ADA kayak launch area																
Rogers A. Smith Landing	Poquoson River		Three ramps, pier for fishing and crabbing																
<b>Source:</b> York County Division of Parks and Recreation																			

**Table 6**

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

<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Water Body</b>	<b>Boat Launch</b>	<b>Number of Wet Slips</b>	<b>Dockside Pump Out</b>	<b>Restrooms</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Oyster Landing	Chisman Creek	X	25		X	Repairs, convenience store, shower
Camp Skimino	Skimino Creek					Girl Scout reservation
Dare Marina	Chisman Creek		52	X	X	300' floating dock, 132 dry storage racks, 175 outside storage racks, repairs and maintenance, gas, marine store
Marlbank Cove	Wormley Creek		12			Private
Mills Marina	Back Creek	X	57	X	X	Marine store, gas, electric, bait.
Queens Lake Boat Dock	Queen Creek	X	57	X		Private
Seaford Yacht Club	Back Creek		30	X	X	Private
Smith's Marine Railway	Chisman Creek	X	6			Repairs only
Thomas Marina	Chisman Creek	X	40		X	Dock, electric
Williamsburg KOA	Skimino Creek				X	Campground off Lightfoot Road (Rt. 646)
Wormley Creek Marina	Wormley Creek	X	72	X	X	40 dry storage racks, repairs, showers, gas, diesel, electric, beverages (seasonal)

**Source:**  
*York County Division of Parks and Recreation*

**Table 7**

**Potential Public Shoreline and Water Access Points**

<b>Public Access Area</b>	<b>Boat Launch Ramp</b>	<b>Car Top Boat Only</b>	<b>Bank and Pier Fishing</b>	<b>Swimming Beach</b>	<b>Camping</b>	<b>Nature Study/Education</b>	<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Pump Out</b>
Chisman Creek Site	X		X				X	X		
Back Creek Park								X		X
Cheatham Wilderness	X		X	X						
Poquoson River Site	X		X			X	X	X		
York River Potential Site		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
<b>Public Access Area</b>										
<b>Water Body</b>										
<b>Remarks</b>										
Back Creek Site	Chisman Creek		Potential for pier or dock							
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek		Currently private federal ownership, possible partnership							
Poquoson River Site	Poquoson River									
York River Site	York River		Potential for pier or dock							
<b>Source:</b>										
<i>York County Division of Parks and Recreation</i>										

**Table 8**

**1     Greenways**

2

3     The 1999 Comprehensive Plan recommended the establishment of greenways and trails throughout the

4     County. Greenways can be defined as linear parks, alternative transportation routes, or other open space

5     conservation areas that provide passive recreational opportunities, pedestrian and/or bicycle paths,

6     and/or the conservation of open spaces or natural areas. Typically they include natural corridors

7     (riverfronts, streams, valleys, and ridgelines), old railroad rights-of-way, power line rights-of-way, and

8     bicycle or walking paths. A community greenways system can include scenic roads, parks, nature

9     preserves, and cultural or historic areas, and should function to provide linkages between these resources,

10     neighborhoods, and/or small commercial nodes.

11

12     There are many benefits to having greenways in a community. Economically, studies have shown that

13     having greenways nearby increases real property values. They provide attractive views as well as easy

14     access for homeowners to recreational activities. Additionally, expenditures by residents and tourists may

15     increase because of the linkages established between shops, restaurants, recreational areas, etc. and

16     neighborhoods. Furthermore, having greenways close to residential areas may encourage citizens to

17     engage in recreational activities that they might never have participated in if it were not for the easy

18     access that the paths provide. Greenways can provide opportunities for activities such as biking, walking,

19     in-line skating, jogging, and even horseback riding. Some greenways and paths even provide alternative

20     modes of travel to and from work or other activities.

21

22     The environment and a community’s historical and cultural resources also benefit from the establishment

23     of greenways. In some instances implementing a greenway plan can help to protect critical wetland and

24     environmentally sensitive areas thus, creating a larger ecological system for migratory species of animals

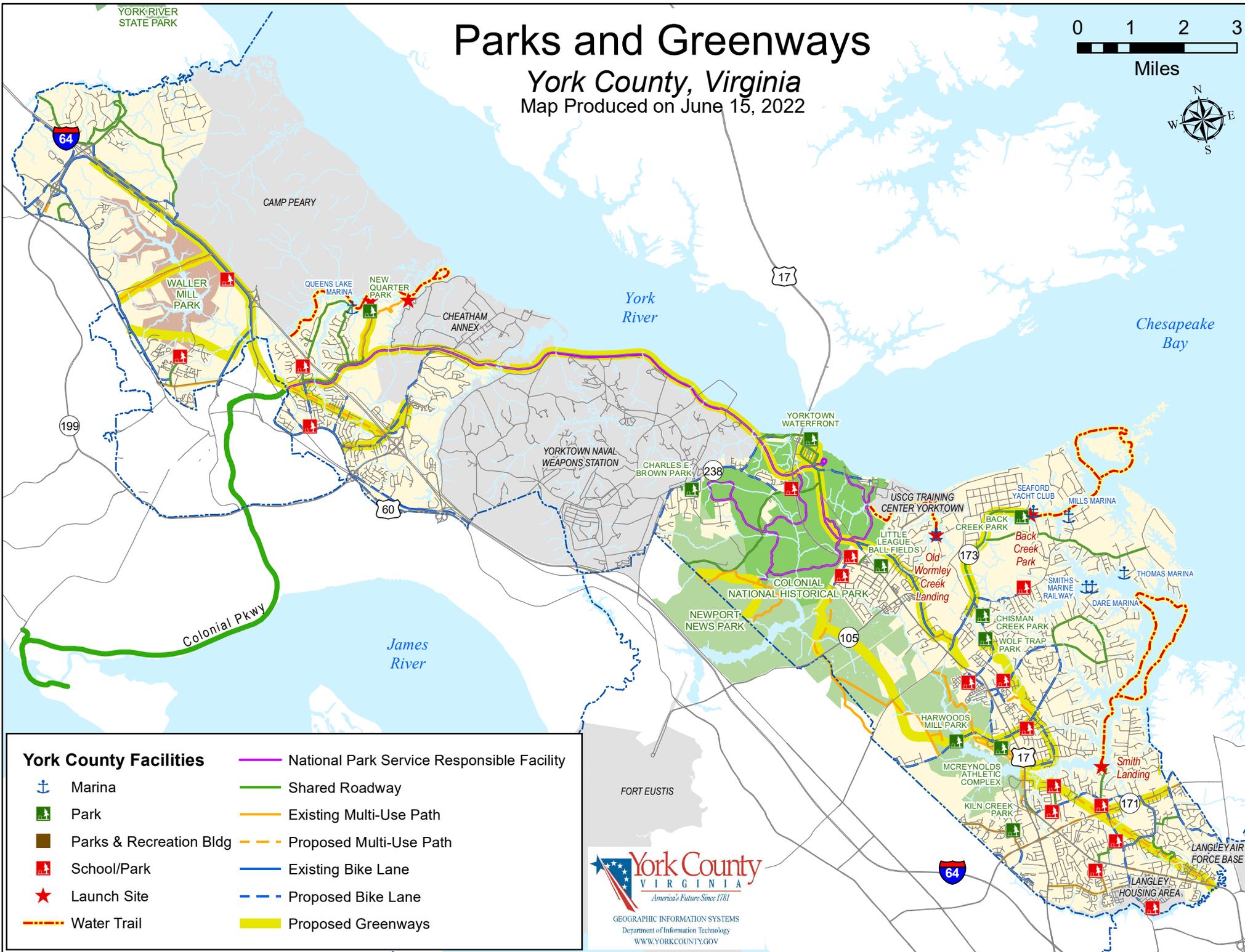
25     and also providing a link for isolated species. Greenways can offer walkable access to significant historical

1 sites. They often make use of existing historic railroad corridors or canals that were used as primary trade  
2 or traveling routes. These routes often have historical buildings that are of interest to tourists and regular  
3 users of the trail, and the inclusion of historic buildings and places along a greenway helps to preserve  
4 history in places that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.  
5

6 In recognition of these benefits, a preliminary Greenway concept has been developed (see Greenway  
7 Map). The Greenways Plan shows the approximate routing that the trails might take, using a combination  
8 of natural area and roadside segments, and how the trails could link key public properties such as schools,  
9 parks, and government buildings to neighborhoods, shopping areas, and historical and recreational areas.  
10 With funding through the CIP and grant funds, and more detailed planning, design, property or easement  
11 acquisition, and construction, such a system could become a reality. Greenways could provide substantial  
12 recreational and aesthetic enhancements for County citizens.  
13

# Parks and Greenways

York County, Virginia  
Map Produced on June 15, 2022



## York County Facilities

- |  |                         |  |  |
|--|-------------------------|--|--|
|  | Marina                  |  | National Park Service Responsible Facility |
|  | Park                    |  | Shared Roadway                             |
|  | Parks & Recreation Bldg |  | Existing Multi-Use Path                    |
|  | School/Park             |  | Proposed Multi-Use Path                    |
|  | Launch Site             |  | Existing Bike Lane                         |
|  | Water Trail             |  | Proposed Bike Lane                         |
|  |                         |  | Proposed Greenways                         |

1 **SCHOOLS**

2  
3 The York County School Division consists of ten elementary schools, four middle schools, and four high  
4 schools. In addition, the School Board owns property in Kiln Creek that is currently being leased to the  
5 County for use as a park, and a potential future school site in the upper County was proffered to the  
6 County by the developer of the Marquis in connection with a rezoning in 2013. The School Board also  
7 owns property next to the Yorktown Middle School campus, but it is too small for an elementary school  
8 site. The School Division operates four magnet school programs: the School of the Arts at Bruton High  
9 School; the Queens Lake Middle School Arts Magnet; the Math, Science, and Technology Magnet School  
10 at Yorktown Elementary; and the Fine Arts Magnet School at Waller Mill Elementary. York County's only  
11 charter school, York River Academy, located on the Yorktown Middle School campus, serves selected ninth  
12 through twelfth grade students with an innovative academic and career preparatory education in core  
13 subject areas with an emphasis on computer and web-based technology. The School Division also provides  
14 adult learning opportunities through GED (General Educational Development) classes for adults who want  
15 to get a GED diploma or just want to improve their basic math and reading skills. These classes are held at  
16 the Lifelong Learning Center/Adult Education Center at York High School. The School Division also offers  
17 ESL (English as a Second Language) classes at Tabb High School and Bethel Baptist Church.

18  
19 In addition to the public school system, the County has private schools and parents who elect to home-  
20 school their children. There are seventeen private schools in the County, but the number of County  
21 residents attending them is unknown since many private school students could be from other jurisdictions  
22 and there is no requirement for reporting enrollment numbers to the state. Parents who home-school  
23 their children are required to submit a notice of intent to the local superintendent in August.

24  
25 **School Capacity and Enrollment**

26  
27 School capacities are calculated by the School Division on the basis of not just physical space but also the  
28 constraints placed on that space by programs. State education mandates, School Board policies, changes  
29 in educational philosophy, and desires and expectations of the community can influence program  
30 capacities over time. As of FY20, according to the School vision, the cumulative instructional capacity of  
31 the County's eighteen schools totaled 14,869 students. This does *not* include portable classrooms  
32 (trailers), which are not considered permanent classrooms and therefore are not included in the school  
33 capacity figures.

34  
35 In 1993 the Board of Supervisors and the School Board agreed to use the following capacity targets in  
36 planning for school construction:

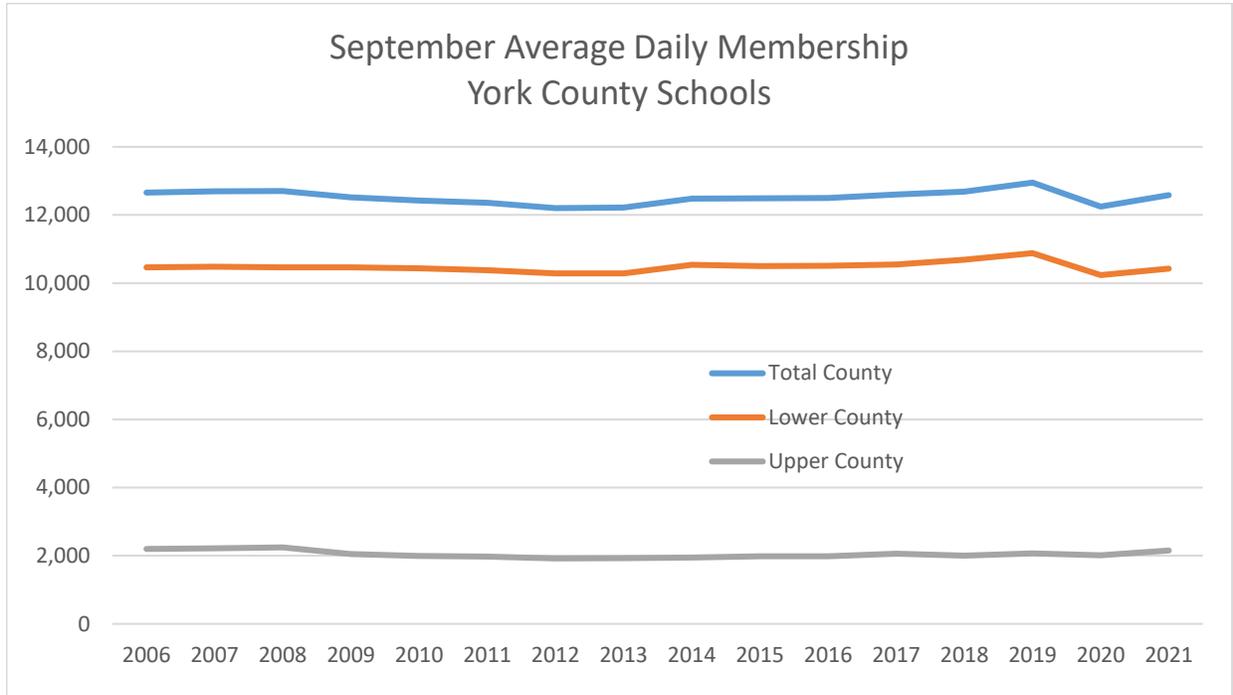
- 37  
38
  - Elementary Schools – 700 students
  - Middle Schools – 1,000 students
  - High Schools – 1,200 to 1,800 students

39  
40  
41  
42 Most additional school capacity over the past two decades has been achieved with additions to existing  
43 schools. Coventry Elementary School was the last new building added to the elementary school inventory,  
44 opening in 1989. Magruder Elementary School was rebuilt and reopened in 1990. Grafton Middle School  
45 and Grafton High School were the last secondary schools built, opening in September 1996. The School  
46 Division has plans for several elementary school additions that will add space for an additional 352  
47 elementary school students in the lower County, 132 elementary school students in the upper County,  
48 and 184 middle school students in the upper County. Funding for these capacity enhancement projects is  
49 programmed in the County's adopted Capital Improvements Program for FY 2023 through FY 2028.

50  
51 Most current school sites will not easily accommodate any further expansion of the school buildings.  
52 However, the sites at the following schools can accommodate limited future expansion: Seaford

1 Elementary School, Waller Mill Elementary School, Queens Lake Middle School, Bruton High School and  
2 Yorktown Middle School.

3  
4 The School Division reports Average Daily Membership (ADM) of each school on a monthly basis. These  
5 numbers can fluctuate dramatically from year to year and even from month to month. In the 2021-22  
6 school year, for example, ADM ranged from a low of 12,187 students in March to a high of 12,753 in  
7 December. For projection purposes, the September ADM figures are used. As shown in **Figure 8**,  
8 enrollment declined fairly steadily from 2008 through 2013 and then reversed course, rising every year  
9 through the 2019-20 school year. ADM then dropped significantly in the 2020-21 school year during the  
10 height of the COVID-19 pandemic and, although there was some rebound in 2021-22, it still lower than it  
11 was five years ago.



**Figure 8**

12 While school capacity exceeds enrollment in the aggregate by more than two thousand, there are six  
13 elementary schools in the lower County that are operating at or above their capacity: Bethel Manor,  
14 Coventry, Grafton-Bethel, Mt. Vernon, and Tabb. None of the middle schools are experiencing  
15 overcrowding.

16  
17

## 18 **PLANNING ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE**

19

20 As discussed in the Demographic Profile and Projections chapter, the County’s population is expected to  
21 continue to grow over the next few decades, adding an estimated 10,000 residents by 2040. This  
22 population growth will put pressure on public facilities and generate needs and demands for  
23 improvements. The results of the Comprehensive Plan telephone survey demonstrate citizen support for  
24 public facilities especially schools, which the respondents cited as the thing they like most about the  
25 County. In addition, 78% of the respondents considered it either important or very important to build or  
26 expand schools. This come as no surprise, as the quality of the school system has long been a source of  
27 pride for York County residents, and maintaining the quality of the school system consistently ranks as a  
28 top priority in public opinion surveys. The second overall priority for public facilities, according to the  
29 survey, are parks for active recreation (66%). These two were followed in order by bike paths and

1 sidewalks (61% and 60% respectively) with access to natural water bodies and fire stations at 59%. The  
2 survey also asked if there were any facilities other than those named that should be built or expanded in  
3 the next twenty years. On this question, the respondents were evenly divided: 49% said yes and 49% said  
4 no.

5  
6 In recent years, the County has made significant capital investments through its Capital Improvements  
7 Program (CIP) to address longstanding public facility needs in the areas of schools, public safety, parks and  
8 recreation, libraries, and office space. These investments will yield huge dividends for many years to come  
9 in terms of enhanced service and quality of life for the County’s citizens.

10  
11 **Tourism**

12  
13 **Facilities**

14  
15 Over the next 20 years it will be important to  
16 upgrade waterfront operations and facilities to  
17 allow increased use and County revenue growth  
18 at the waterfront. One of these identified  
19 facilities is the Freight Shed, a heavily used  
20 waterfront facility available for rent. The facility  
21 serves as a premier waterfront wedding venue in  
22 Hampton Roads and often stays booked for  
23 certain dates up to eighteen months in advance.  
24 It hosts many functions including weddings,  
25 reunions, parties, banquets, concerts, business  
26 meetings, and lectures. Ongoing management of



27 and improvements to the Freight Shed have brought a steady growth in revenue. The County has  
28 upgraded the audio-visual equipment and added Wi-Fi to make the facility more marketable at higher  
29 rental rates, continued upgrades and monitoring of this facility’s condition will foster its ongoing success.  
30 The current CIP includes the replacement of the existing Freight Shed tent with a permanent structure  
31 that will allow for the expansion of not only paid usage but also year round events.

32  
33 Improvements to the Fishing Pier have also been  
34 identified as a future planning consideration. The  
35 pier remains popular among residents and  
36 tourists and often is crowded on holidays and  
37 weekends. One proposed improvement would be  
38 to extend it farther into the York River to allow  
39 access to fishing in deeper water. The  
40 construction of an enlarged “T” section at the end  
41 of a new extension would also be beneficial as  
42 this space could accommodate more people,  
43 benches, bait cutting stations, and handicapped accessible stations, as well as additional lighting and  
44 security on the pier.



45  
46 As identified in the FY2023-2028 Adopted CIP, funding for construction of a new Dockmaster’s Building is  
47 programmed for 2025. This new multifunctional building will serve several crucial functions. The office  
48 manages cruise ship arrivals, waterfront events and activities, and pier operations. As the only facility that  
49 can house County Waterfront operations staff, it has become a de facto visitors center, lost and found,  
50 first aid station, and home base for Yorktown ambassadors and parking attendants. It is where boaters  
51 pay to dock, and visitors can reserve an amphibious wheelchair. Most importantly, it provides public  
52 restrooms for beachgoers and other visitors. The building will be climate-controlled and will include year-

1 round ADA-accessible public restrooms. The ADA-accessible beach access mat, fishing pier, and trolley  
2 stop are all located near the Dockmaster’s Office.

3  
4 **Placemaking**

5  
6 The County should also invest in targeted placemaking and  
7 connectivity initiatives at historic Yorktown. Additional  
8 sidewalks, signage, and the introduction of Wi-Fi would  
9 greatly enhance how community members and visitors  
10 enjoy the space. More sidewalks would create a walkable  
11 connected community throughout the historic district.  
12 The ability to walk between Main Street and the Yorktown  
13 waterfront could result in a better experience, longer visiting hours, and ultimately more tourism revenue.  
14 Specifically, there is a need to add a brick paved sidewalk, to match the existing waterfront sidewalk, along  
15 the riverside of the National Park Service beach picnic area.



16  
17 Developing a Wayfinding master plan with signage would increase the use of the sidewalk system and  
18 enhance the visitor experience by making it easier for to navigate the historic village, waterfront, and  
19 other attractions. This system would provide pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular signage, information kiosks,  
20 directional signage, mapping, and technology assisted parking.

21  
22 Likewise, providing Wi-Fi at the waterfront would also improve the visitor experience. Increasing and  
23 making internet speeds more reliable will help visitors access County websites, social media, and the  
24 newly established trolley tracking app more easily. Improved accessibility to these County and business  
25 resources could increase visitation to the adjacent attractions and help bring awareness to special  
26 promotions by local businesses. Furthermore, with growing visitation to the waterfront and an increasing  
27 number of events, open wireless broadband internet service would be an important public safety tool. A  
28 sufficient broadband system could be used to promptly reach those in the area and inform them of public  
29 safety related warnings. These notifications would address emergencies such as impending weather, lost  
30 children or family members, and other emergency scenarios through cell phone notifications.

31  
32 **Parks and Recreation**

33  
34 The demand for recreational programs and facilities to accommodate them is evident in the number of  
35 County residents participating in such programs. Participation in recreational programs will likely continue  
36 to grow as the population grows, provided that the programs and facilities are available, and the  
37 availability of adequate parks and recreational facilities continues to be rated relatively high as a priority  
38 in the citizen input process.

39  
40 In planning future recreational programs and facilities, it will be increasingly important to consider the  
41 age structure along with the size of the population. Demographic trends indicate steady aging of the  
42 population as the baby boom continues to move through the life cycle. York County’s population is  
43 projected to grow by about 10,000 people in the next twenty years, while the 65 and older population is  
44 projected to grow from 16.8% of the population in 2020 to 19.6% by 2040. The youth population as a  
45 percentage of the population will remain relatively constant in the next twenty years, fluctuating around  
46 21%. In terms of raw numbers, both age groups are projected to see continuous growth over the next 20  
47 years, with a net increase of 2,500 school age and 4,000 senior residents by 2040.

48  
49 The seasonal opening and additional amenities at New Quarter Park as well as the opening of the  
50 McReynolds Athletic Complex have greatly helped to meet the ongoing need for recreational  
51 opportunities in the County. Potentially desirable future parks and recreational facilities might include  
52 such things as an outdoor pool, indoor facilities, picnic areas/facilities, walking/bicycle trails, waterfront  
53 property, etc. Citizens have also expressed the desire for more “passive recreation” areas in the County,

1 as currently there are very few places at public parks that are not developed into athletic facilities or  
2 adjacent to program areas. These passive areas would allow citizens to enjoy the outdoors and nature by  
3 providing areas to read a book, enjoy nature, have a picnic on a blanket, fly a kite, take a quiet walk, throw  
4 a Frisbee, play ball, etc. The *2018 Virginia Outdoor Demand Survey* asked respondents to identify the  
5 “most needed outdoor recreation opportunities in Virginia.” The top three were “natural areas” (53%),  
6 parks (51%), and “trails” (55%).  
7

8 Currently, the majority of indoor community recreational programs either takes place in schools or leased  
9 space. While leased space has served the County well in the case of the Senior Center, the use of school  
10 space is more problematic. School programs on top of school maintenance and construction priorities  
11 necessarily cause scheduling difficulties at times for community recreational use. These issues often  
12 require Parks and Recreation programs (and/or privately sponsored community recreational activities) to  
13 be cancelled or relocated, sometimes with little notice. Also some programs have had to be altered,  
14 reduced, or discontinued due to the limitations of school facilities.  
15

16 The installation of synthetic turf playing fields could help both the schools and the County as these fields  
17 could be used year-round without the need to be taken out of service for field repair/renovation.  
18 Currently, many natural turf fields are shut down in the summer to allow for repair of the turf, which in  
19 turn affects programming. Natural turf fields are also not able to be used in the winter as the fields can  
20 be damaged by playing on them when the grass is dormant. As a result, synthetic fields with year-round  
21 playing capabilities are becoming an increasingly desirable and potentially viable option, albeit a costly  
22 one.  
23

24 For many years citizens advocated the development of a community center that could accommodate the  
25 needs of different age groups and thereby serve a large segment of the population. It was largely in  
26 response to these concerns that the County acquired land on Route 134 adjacent to the Tabb library site,  
27 and made it available to the YMCA to construct a recreation facility serving lower County residents.  
28 Similarly, upper County residents are served by another YMCA on the Sentara hospital site. Both YMCAs  
29 provide recreational services to the communities. Looking to the future, it will be important to monitor  
30 and assess whether these fee-based facilities, in combination with continued use of school facilities, meet  
31 the needs of all segments of the County’s population for indoor community recreational programs and  
32 opportunities.  
33

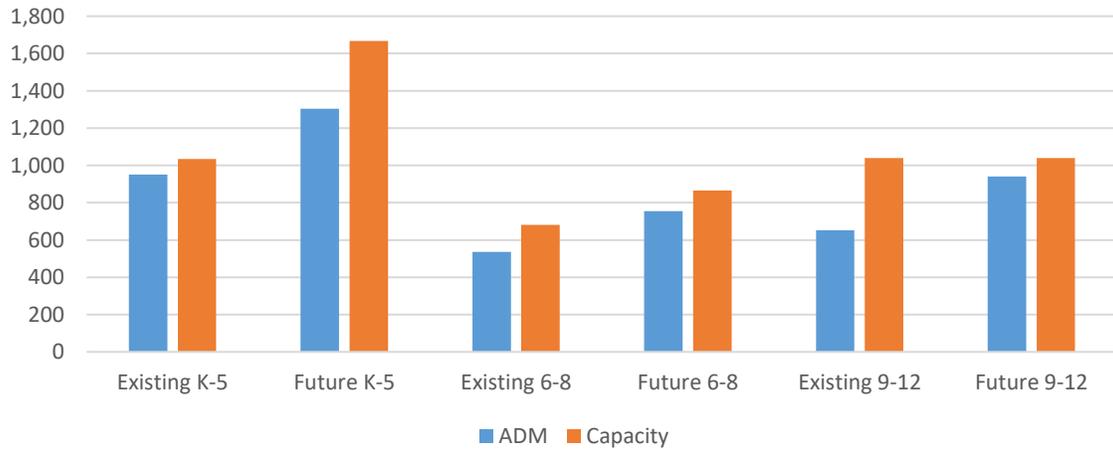
34 As the Back Creek Park and Rodgers Smith Landing boat ramps increase in popularity, it will be important  
35 to continue maintaining these facilities and ensure that the launching areas do not become blocked with  
36 sediment. Periodic inspection of the channel and dredging may be needed to ensure these docks can  
37 continue to support the size of boats using them.  
38

### **Schools**

39 School enrollment growth or decline is driven by net migration, which is largely a function of residential  
40 development, and resident births. Enrollment can be highly volatile and unpredictable, and the margin of  
41 error for developing projections increases dramatically the further out one projects. As part of the build-  
42 out analysis conducted for this Plan, an attempt was made to project how many school students there  
43 would be if the remaining developable residentially zoned land in the County were developed at its  
44 maximum allowable density. The purpose of this exercise was to try to get at least a rough picture of what  
45 the County’s ultimate school facility needs might be. Based on this analysis, it is estimated that at full  
46 build-out, there would be approximately 1,800 students in the system – about 1,000 in the lower County  
47 and 800-900 in the upper County.  
48  
49  
50

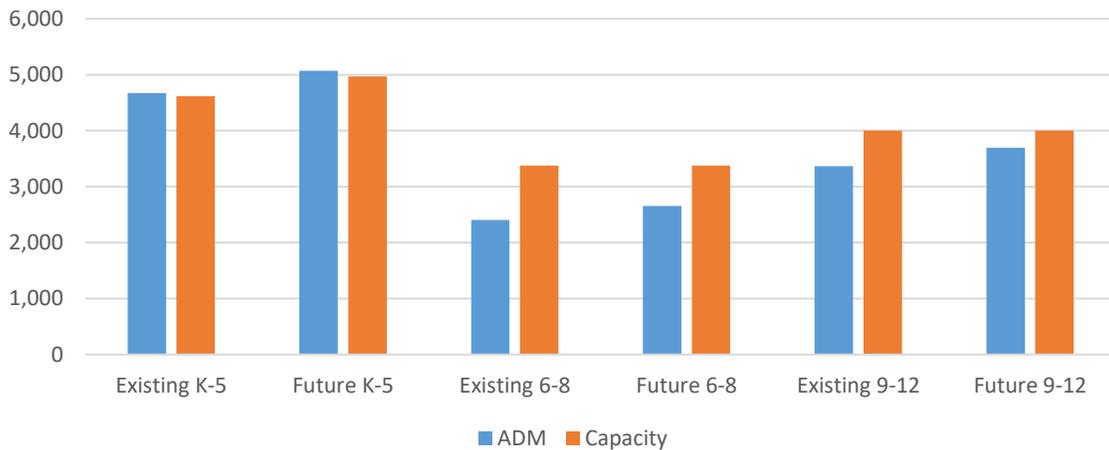
1 **Figures 9 and 10** graphically show the relationship between school enrollment and capacity both currently  
2 and at ultimate build-out in both the upper County and the lower County. The calculation of future  
3 capacity includes existing capacity plus the additional capacity programmed in the adopted CIP, which  
4 includes several classroom additions as well as a new 500-student elementary school in the upper County.  
5 The charts indicate that there would appear to be sufficient capacity – either existing or planned –  
6 throughout the school system except at the elementary school level, which would have an estimated  
7 aggregate capacity deficit of about 100 students.  
8

**Upper County School Enrollment and Capacity  
Existing and Projected**



**Figure 9**

**Lower County School Enrollment and Capacity  
Existing and Projected**



**Figure 10**

9  
10 It should be emphasized that this is a very broad, long-range analysis, and many things can change in the  
11 next fifteen to twenty years. For example, if history is any guide, there will likely be program changes in  
12 the future – at the state, local, or federal level – that will reduce school capacity, perhaps significantly. It

1 would not be realistic to make school construction decisions based on long-range projections. Instead,  
2 the six-year horizon of the County’s CIP is more appropriate for school facility planning and construction  
3 decisions.

4  
5 There are several ways to address school overcrowding. The least costly and most efficient method –  
6 although often the least popular among students and parents – is to change school attendance zone  
7 boundaries to provide for a more equal distribution of students among schools. This allows surplus  
8 capacity to be put to use while reducing the burden on overcrowded schools. Another cost-effective  
9 solution, also not particularly popular, is to use portable classrooms that are less expensive to lease than  
10 additions are to build. These solutions are particularly appropriate for dealing with crowding that is  
11 temporary and/or relatively minor in scale. For sustained crowding conditions that cannot be effectively  
12 addressed by changing the attendance zones or installing trailers, additions to existing schools – or  
13 construction of new schools depending on the extent of the shortage of space – is the appropriate  
14 solution. For economic reasons, building additions are the preferred choice. This is why a Memorandum  
15 of Understanding between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board states that no new school  
16 buildings will be constructed until all existing schools have been expanded to their maximum allowable  
17 capacity. Of course, cost-effectiveness is not the only consideration, and it must be balanced against the  
18 need to keep schools to an appropriate size. When the enrollment at any level in either the upper or lower  
19 County begins to approach the program capacity, and opportunities for expansions do not exist because  
20 of site constraints, maximum desirable school size, or other factors, it will be necessary to plan for new  
21 construction.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES**

**GENERAL**

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**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.**

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**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 **TOURISM**  
2

3 **Goal: Maximize the beautiful York River waterfront and historic area to enhance our citizens’**  
4 **quality of life and make it a premier destination for tourists who contribute to our economic**  
5 **success.**  
6

7 **Objective 1: Upgrade waterfront operations and facilities**  
8

9 1. Identify areas that can be managed for increases in use and revenues.  
10

- 11 a. Freight Shed: The Freight Shed is a premier waterfront wedding venue in Hampton Roads. This  
12 highly sought after waterfront facility stays booked up to eighteen months in advance for the  
13 most popular dates. Tourism’s oversight of the freight shed has brought steady growth in revenue  
14 every year. We’ve also upgraded the audio-visual equipment in the facility and added Wi-Fi to  
15 maximize rental fees. The current CIP includes the replacement of the existing Freight Shed tent  
16 with a permanent structure that will allow for the expansion of not only paid usage but also year  
17 round events.  
18
- 19 b. Piers: Fishing Pier improvements could include extending it into deeper water and constructing  
20 an enlarged “T” section at the end to accommodate more people, handicapped accessible  
21 stations, benches, bait cutting stations, and additional lighting and security.  
22
- 23 c. Dockmaster’s building: The current CIP includes the Dockmaster’s building, which will serve as an  
24 information center and provide additional public restrooms. This new facility will allow for a more  
25 robust information and welcoming service for our visitors and provide additional ADA compliant  
26 restrooms. Additionally, the new building will provide offices for staff that manages Yorktown  
27 waterfront operations.  
28

29 2. Promote and grow year-round visitation to Yorktown and Riverwalk Landing.  
30

- 31 a. Expanded event schedule; state of the art trolleys, and cruise ships  
32
- 33 • Two different concert series, weekly farmers markets, art shows, festivals, and visiting tall  
34 ships.
  - 35 • Add new events and enhance existing events such as the Maritime Market, Go Green, First  
36 Responders, and Market on Main Street by adding more activities, entertainment, and unique  
37 vendors and by increasing and spreading the footprint of events.
  - 38 • The trolley service carries approximately 90k passengers per year. Ridership has grown  
39 steadily since 2014 even though older trolleys have experienced maintenance issues that put  
40 them out of service.
  - 41 • The trolley service has become an attraction in and of itself for locals and all of the trolleys  
42 are ADA compliant.
  - 43 • The trolley system is equipped with “ETA SPOT” tracking software which can be accessed  
44 using either the web or the mobile app so visitors can track their wait time.
  - 45 • Another popular sight at the piers are the cruise ships, which dock primarily in the spring and  
46 fall, bringing thousands of visitors to Yorktown who spend money in our restaurants, stores,  
47 and attractions.
  - 48 • Focus on ways to cross promote and connect events on Main Street and the waterfront.  
49

50 **Objective 2: Invest in placemaking and connectivity within Yorktown**  
51

52 1. Increase the provision of accessible sidewalks within the village.  
53

1  
2 Creating a walkable community and connectivity throughout the historic district would be a  
3 meaningful upgrade to the citizen and visitor experience. The ability to walk between historic Main  
4 Street and the Yorktown waterfront could result in a better experience, longer visiting hours to  
5 Yorktown, and ultimately more revenue. As we add more ADA accessible amenities to the waterfront  
6 there is a need to add a brick paved sidewalk to match the existing sidewalk at the waterfront along  
7 the riverside of the National Park Service beach picnic area. It also enhances the overall experience of  
8 the citizens and visitors.  
9

10 2. Increase Wi-Fi internet access and public address system throughout the waterfront.

11  
12 Visitors of the waterfront expect to be able to use their technology. Wi-Fi would not only enhance the  
13 visitor experience, it would also provide a strong internet connection for visitors to reach County  
14 websites, social media, and the newly established Trolley tracking app which gives real time updates  
15 on its location. This could also increase visitation to the adjacent attractions and help bring awareness  
16 to special promotions by the local businesses using GPS and location markers.  
17

18 With growing visitation to the waterfront and an increasing number of events, a public address system  
19 and open wireless broadband internet service would be an important public safety tool. This would  
20 allow officials to promptly reach those in the area and inform them of public safety related warnings  
21 such as impending weather, lost children or family members, and other emergency scenarios.  
22

23 3. Review signage and wayfinding within the historic village.

24  
25 The Wayfinding Masterplan with signage will make it easier for visitors to navigate the historic village,  
26 waterfront, and other attractions. An integrated wayfinding system will enhance the visitor  
27 experience by providing pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular signage, information kiosks, directional  
28 signage, mapping, and technology assisted parking.  
29

30 **PARKS AND RECREATION**

31  
32 **Goal: Build community amongst and enhance the quality of life for York County residents**  
33 **through the operation and maintenance of park and recreation facilities and programs.**  
34

35 **Objective 1:** Continuously assess and evaluate the future need for outdoor and indoor recreational  
36 facilities and activities to serve County residents.  
37

38 1. Continue implementation of the “school/park” concept to enhance recreational use of school sites.

39  
40 York County’s development of recreational facilities at school sites for community use, known as the  
41 “school/park” concept, has proven to be an effective means of providing athletic fields, gymnasiums,  
42 playground areas, basketball and tennis courts that serve both school and community needs. Sharing  
43 these sites is also extremely cost effective opposed to building and maintaining separate sites for  
44 school and recreational uses. Developments utilizing this concept are often both a mutually beneficial  
45 and cost effective strategy to expand recreational facilities.  
46

47 2. Develop a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

48  
49 A comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan would address specific existing and future  
50 demand for both public and private recreation programs and any needs for additional recreation  
51 facilities and grounds. The plan would provide the opportunity for an adjustable master plan to  
52 account for future residents desires.

- 1  
2 3. Consider the need for and feasibility of developing a public space for community events requiring  
3 meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, and multi-purpose rooms.

4  
5 Demand for facilities with meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, and multi-purpose rooms may increase  
6 as the County population grows over the next 20 years. These facilities provide services that are  
7 currently utilized at York County Boys & Girls Club and Charles E. Brown Park and at other recreation  
8 facilities located in James City County and Williamsburg for upper County residents. School sites have  
9 also been used to fulfill the need for these spaces but school programs, school maintenance, and  
10 construction priorities cause scheduling difficulties for community recreational use. This has resulted  
11 in many short-notice cancelations and program alterations due to the limitations of school facilities.  
12

- 13  
14 4. Provide for the particular needs of the young, the elderly, and the disabled.

15  
16 Both the number of young and elderly residents are expected to increase in the county over the next  
17 20 years. Special attention should be given to the unique needs of these subgroups of residents in  
18 future planning and development of both facilities and programs. Special attention should also be  
19 given to the needs of the disabled to provide equitable access to County recreational programs and  
20 facilities.  
21

- 22 5. Increase public awareness about private and other non-County facilities and programs that help meet  
23 the recreational demands of County residents.

24  
25 Informing County residents of these resources can serve to meet their demand for these programs  
26 and facilities without costly substantial investment in new facilities and programs. Some of these  
27 resources include privately run athletic programs, the Victory Family (lower County) and R.F.  
28 Wilkinson Family (upper County) YMCAs, and recreation facilities located in James City County and  
29 Williamsburg.  
30

- 31 6. Continue to place lighting at County athletic fields to increase usage beyond daylight hours.

32  
33 Placing lighting at County athletic fields is an efficient way to increase their hours of use. As demand  
34 for athletic fields increases, this strategy can effectively be used to meet demand without having to  
35 develop and maintain new fields. Additionally, recently the time demand for school usage has  
36 increased dramatically as a result of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) approval of year-round  
37 practices for interscholastic teams. This has left less time for the recreational use of many of the  
38 Counties athletic fields. Lighting has been found to double or even triple a field's hours of use,  
39 provided the turf system is strong enough to endure the increased use.  
40

41 **Objective 2: Protect the natural environment and preserve open space.**

- 42  
43 1. Continuously assess and evaluate the future need for public areas for passive recreation for citizens  
44 to enjoy the outdoors.

45  
46 Citizens have repeatedly expressed the desire for more passive recreation areas in the County.  
47 Currently, there are very few places at public parks that are not developed into athletic facilities or  
48 adjacent to program areas. The development of passive recreational areas would allow citizens to  
49 enjoy the outdoors by providing areas to read a book, enjoy nature, have a picnic, fly a kite, take a  
50 walk, throw a Frisbee, etc.  
51

- 1 2. Continuously assess and evaluate the future need for greenways/trails to include a network of open  
2 space areas, water trails, natural corridors, bike and pedestrian trails, and historical and recreational  
3 sites.  
4

5 There are a series of proven economic, health, environmental, historical, and cultural benefits to  
6 having greenways in a community. The Greenways Plan shows the approximate routing that the trails  
7 might take, using a combination of natural area and roadside segments, and how the trails could link  
8 key public properties such as schools, parks, and government buildings to neighborhoods, shopping  
9 areas, and historical and recreational areas. The Greenway Plan depends on continued funding  
10 through the CIP, the availability of grant funds, detailed planning and design, property and/or  
11 easement acquisition, and adequate construction. Implementation of Greenways would provide  
12 substantial recreational and aesthetic enhancements for County citizens.  
13

- 14 3. Promote the provision of open space and recreational facilities in new residential development.  
15

16 As continued residential development increases the County’s population, it will be essential to expand  
17 or develop recreational facilities and open space to meet new demand. The inclusion of recreational  
18 facilities and open space in certain housing proposals may justify new residential development.  
19 Greenways and open space close to residential areas can encourage citizens to participate in new  
20 activities and provide alternative mode of travel to work or other destinations.  
21  
22

23 **Objective 3: Increase public access to waterways to include recreational, fishing and boating uses.**  
24

- 25 1. Explore opportunities to work with the National Park Service and the U.S. Military installations/bases  
26 to increase public access to the waterways.  
27

28 Based on the 2018 *Virginia Outdoors Plan* water related activities are extremely important to  
29 Virginians. Less than 1% of Virginia’s tidal shoreline is publicly owned and accessible. This is especially  
30 a challenge in York County, as in addition to private ownership, much of the County’s shoreline is in  
31 federal ownership (National Park Service, Camp Peary, Cheatham Annex, Naval Weapons Station, and  
32 the Coast Guard Training Center). This contributes to a shortage of water access in the County.  
33 Partnerships forming public access sites would be extremely beneficial to County residents and  
34 visitors.  
35

- 36 2. Continuously explore and assess the need and ability to maintain, expand, and/or establish new public  
37 water access points on nonfederal land.  
38

39 With water access limited by private and federal land ownership, opportunities for the County to  
40 expand water access outside federal areas should constantly be explored and assessed. Some  
41 identified actions include water access on Queen Creek, a public boat launching facility on Chisman  
42 Creek, expansion of the parking lot at Back Creek Park and increased accessibility of large tidal  
43 marshes along the County’s creeks.  
44

45 **Objective 4: Ensure that athletic fields and other recreational facilities are well maintained.**  
46

- 47 1. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of conversion of selected high-use athletic fields from natural turf to  
48 synthetic turf.  
49

50 The conversion to synthetic turf would allow the fields use for year-round activities and programs.  
51 There is often increased usage on County fields during times when natural turf fields would otherwise  
52 have to be annually rested or renovated to maintain turf quality. Recently, the time demand for school  
53 usage has increased dramatically as a result of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) approval of

1 year-round practices for interscholastic teams. This has left less time for the recreational use of many  
2 of the Counties athletic fields. If determined to be cost effective, the conversion to synthetic turf  
3 would require less maintenance and allow for year-round use.  
4

## 5 **SCHOOLS**

---

7 **Goal: Create a school system where together, all students and staff are inspired to explore**  
8 **paths leading to personal and collective success.**

---

10 **Objective 1: Provide a learning environment that is conducive to the education of all present and future**  
11 **school-age children in the County.**

- 12
- 13 1. Consider the general boundaries of residential neighborhoods and their proximity to schools in  
14 establishing school attendance zones.

15

16 As the number one tool in addressing overcrowding at school, changes in zones should evaluate  
17 multiple options for maintaining neighborhood unity, while keeping schools as close as possible to the  
18 students they serve.  
19

- 20 2. Review school enrollment projections every year.

21

22 As growth in new residential development fluctuates frequently and families move in and out of the  
23 community, school enrollment projections should be consistently reviewed to consider where more  
24 enrollment may occur. Many factors contribute to changes in enrollment that make prediction of  
25 numbers flawed. A consistent review of short term projections should be analyzed annually.  
26 Additionally, before approving rezonings and planned developments, the School Division and County  
27 should consider their potential impact on the school system so as to minimize school crowding.  
28

29 **Objective 2: Optimize use of school facilities and grounds.**

- 30
- 31 1. Utilize school facilities as multi-use structures.

32

33 The School Board and Board of Supervisors should continue to partner to utilize school facilities for  
34 parks and recreation programming, as well for community support. Each school should provide where  
35 possible athletic fields, gymnasiums, playground areas, basketball and tennis courts that serve both  
36 school and community needs. Furthermore, there should be continued support for use of school  
37 facilities for after-hours classroom use.