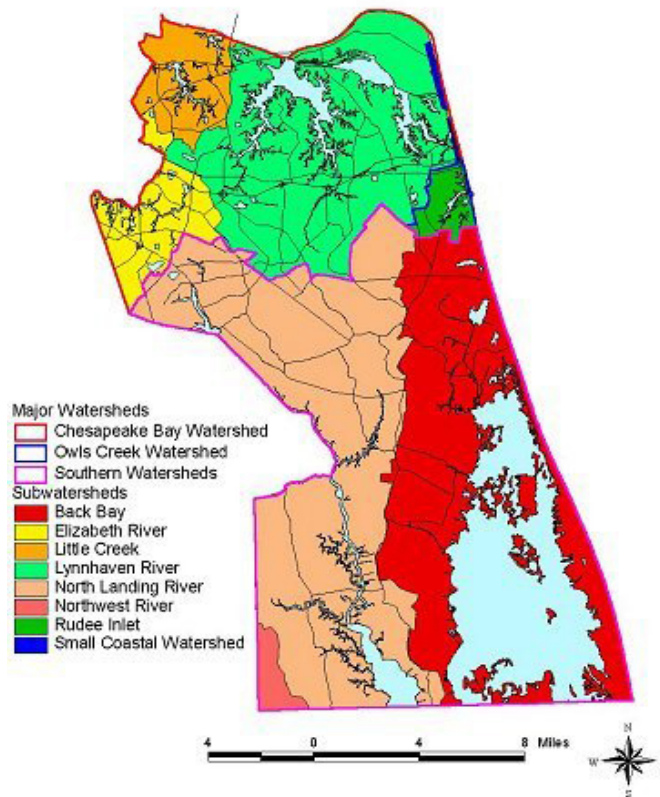




# Situation Analysis Report



## City of Virginia Beach 2018

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## Introduction

Every two years, the City of Virginia Beach conducts a citizen satisfaction survey to assess residents' satisfaction of City services. The 2017 survey was conducted to ensure unbiased assessment of how residents felt about City services. The survey indicated that 94% of residents are satisfied with living in Virginia Beach. The overall rating of Virginia was indicated by residents stating "Virginia Beach is a good place to live". Residents gave the City a rating of 88.2% as being a safe place to live, which is down from 94% in 2015. Residents were asked to evaluate 32 City services and characteristics. The overall satisfaction of City services was 90.7%. The high level of citizens' satisfaction has been relatively stable over the past 14 years.

Agriculture and Horticulture services including the City's Farmers Market received an overall rating of 91% satisfaction by citizens. Citizens were asked to name one thing they wanted the City to do to make Virginia Beach a better place to live. Respondents could give any answer they wanted. One-quarter of the responses were centered around two major topics: to road repair and to improve traffic congestion. To improve public education received 3.1% of responses, more green space, parks, and habitats received 2.8%, and cost of living received 2.6% of responses.

After the review of the 2017 Virginia Beach Citizen Satisfaction Survey, the Virginia Beach Extension unit, led by the Extension Leadership Council (ELC), felt additional information was needed regarding citizens' needs for the community related to Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) educational focus areas. Thus, the Virginia Beach VCE Unit and ELC conducted a comprehensive situation analysis in the summer and fall of 2018. VCE Agents, staff, and the ELC worked together to develop a unit profile, develop an Extension-focused community survey tool, and gather community and resident perspectives that were missing from general data collection. The purpose of the community survey was to collect information about issues in Virginia Beach. The results of the collaboration was a compiled list of priority issues to guide programs for the next five years.

The community survey consisted of 30 questions and had the following qualitative and quantitative sections:

- Awareness of Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Sectors of public that benefit from Extension
- Top five issues ranking related to Agriculture, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Sciences, Foods and Nutrition, and Youth Development
- Supplemental questions to obtain more information
- Demographic information

The Virginia Beach community survey was distributed to Extension Agent, Agriculture Department, and ELC listservs and on social media. In addition, business cards with the survey QR code were distributed to ELC members and Agents to share with the general public at community events.

## City of Virginia Beach Profile

Recognized globally as one of the best places to live, work and do business, Virginia Beach is a dynamic community strengthened by a diverse mix of industry, attractions and people. With 38 miles of beaches and 79 miles of scenic waterways, this vibrant East Coast city is situated along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. Virginia Beach is home to more than 461,663 people, laying claim to being the largest city in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the 39th largest city in the United States. The ethnic demographics in Virginia Beach are represented by the following: 65.4% White, 19.4% African American, 8.8% Hispanic, 7.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.9% Two or more races, 2.4% Other, and .04% American Indian. Census data indicate that 35.0% of the population is younger than 24 year of age; the largest representation of the population is between the ages of 25 and 54 which is 46.0% of the population with the median age at 36.1 years. Data also revealed that residents over the age of 55 represented 20% of the population. The female population is slightly larger than the male with 51% of the population being female and 49% male.

There are some 171,672 households in the City of Virginia Beach. The median income of these household has shown an increase past few years. The latest income statistics indicate the median household income increased from \$64,614 in 2011 to \$66,215 in 2016. Census data show an increase in the number of households above \$100,000. In 2016, the number of households above \$100,000 was 29.4% compared to 27.37% in 2011. Also the number of households with less than \$25,000 decreased from 13.0% in 2009 to 12.5% in 2016 of households.

The City is divided into two areas. The northern half is mainly urban and business. Although Virginia Beach contains a number of businesses, the City is also a bedroom community for thousands of citizens working in neighboring cities and on many area military bases. With its strategic location in the heart of the mid-Atlantic, Virginia Beach is well-positioned for manufacturers looking to import, export or ship their goods both domestically and internationally. The Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development recognizes sixteen international companies that do business in Virginia Beach. More than 20% of the region's manufacturers are located in the City of Virginia Beach, producing items ranging from medical equipment to electrical wire and power tools, high-powered and technologically advanced manufacturers, billion-dollar defense contractors and locally owned shops.

Virginia Beach has a number of attractions for residents and tourists, including three beaches and four fishing piers, 4,500-plus acres of community parks, over 100 miles of running and biking paths, seven community recreation centers, outdoor concert venue, 1,300 seat entertainment venue, art museum, and home to the Christian Broadcast Center. Other attractions include the Virginia Beach Convention Center, the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, and several historical homes and museums.

Virginia Beach is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the East Coast, hosting more than 10.1 million overnight visitors annually, compared to five million visitors in 2013. Virginia Beach visitors spent 2.45 billion dollars in 2017, a 6% increase over 2016. The tourist industry

is important to the economy, but it also strains the city's road systems, especially important water crossings in the summer months Virginia Beach is home to 11 major retail corridors, and retail stores employ more than 14.5% of the City's workers.

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools system is composed of 55 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, 11 high schools, one charter high school, and a number of specialty centers. Student enrollment is 67,214 from grades Kindergarten through 12 grade. The school system has a strong Career and Technical Education program that ensures workforce readiness for thousands of students. In the 2015-2016 school year, 11,327 students passed industry credential tests through courses. Virginia Beach is also home to four independent/private universities, three public university educational centers, one community college, and four technical/trade schools.

The southern half of the City is rural and agricultural. Agriculture is vital to the City's existence. Even though agriculture acreage has dropped, the value of agricultural products produced in Virginia Beach has continued to rise since 2004 and has a sizable economic impact on the City. Agriculture is the third largest industry, falling behind tourism and the military respectively. Virginia Beach was once the largest hog producer in the state with the largest single hog farm east of the Mississippi River. Today, there are no dairy farms and only one large swine operation remaining in the city. The estimated economic impact of Agriculture was over \$135 million in 2018 and the five year average was \$126.2 million. Agriculture in Virginia Beach is a very diverse business consisting of various size farm operations, such as the following: soybean, corn and wheat farms, livestock farms, fruit & vegetable farms, farm stands, and equestrian operations. Field crops (corn, wheat, soybeans), fruit and vegetables, are the primary crops produced on approximately 23,500 acres each year, with a growing emphasis on direct to consumer sales of produce and meat. In 2018, horses exceed \$25 million in total value and contributed over \$13 million to the agricultural economy in the City.

Faced with massive losses in farmland and rapidly growing requirements for schools, police, fire protection, and other City services, the City government enacted several programs to slow growth in the southern section of the City. The "Green Line" has given way to the "Transition Area". The City has enacted several programs to maintain the viability of agriculture. In addition to having a Department of Agriculture, the City is also a national leader in protecting farmland from development. Using dedicated City tax funds, the Agricultural Reserve Program purchases development rights from landowners at prevailing market rates. Over 9,900 acres of the 20,000-acre goal have been achieved to date in this program.

## **Community and Resident Perspectives**

Of the 295 recorded responses, 141 completed at least the first section notating top agriculture issues, and 114 completed the entire survey. The survey population was 78% female and 22% male. The highest number of respondents, 31.45% were between 50 and 59 years old, followed by 29.03% above 65 years old, 16.13% between 40 and 49, 8.87% between 30 and

39, between 60 and 64 years old, and 5.65% between 18 and 29. Over 83% of respondents described their race and ethnicity as White, followed by 7.94% other, 4.76% Black or African American, 3.17% Hispanic or Latino, and 0.79% American Indian. Most respondents or 33.06% held a Master's Degree and 29.94% were a college graduate. Over 15% completed some graduate work and 6.45% held a doctorate degree. Only 2 survey participants receive SNAP benefits, and 48% of respondents were Virginia Beach residents for more than 25 years. Most respondents, or 39.47% shared they have a gross family income between \$80,000 to \$120,000, followed by 28.07% between \$40,000 and \$79,999, 23.68% greater than \$120,000 and 8.77% between \$10,000 and \$39,999. An assertive effort was initiated to reach underserved audiences to complete the survey. However, a limited number of surveys were returned.

The largest percentage of survey participants correlated their awareness of VCE with attendance of a program, followed by those who currently utilize programs and services and volunteer. Forty-seven respondents were not aware of VCE. When asked "What sectors of the public benefit from VCE?" Respondents shared mainly positive perspectives including, "all who consume food", "potentially all sectors", and "everyone." Further, they added "everyone who gardens", "gardeners and farmers", "4-H", "youth and adults, and "children in school programs." Results suggest VCE educational programs benefit the City of Virginia Beach population.

Survey participants were asked to rank the top five issues related to Agriculture, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Sciences, Food and Nutrition, and Youth Development by importance. The following sections outline the findings and supplemental subject-specific responses.

### **Agriculture**

Survey participants were asked to rank the importance of agriculture issues in Virginia Beach, from most important to least important. There were 17 choices. Of the 17 choices, there was clear deviation between the top eight issues and the bottom nine. The top issues were Agriculture Profitability/profitability, Agriculture Preservation/transition, Agriculture Marketing, Local Food Systems, Natural Resource Protection, and Pests/pesticides. These are currently being addressed with VCE programming, local agent knowledge or through programs provided by the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and/or the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture. Food safety is the seventh issue which is heavily addressed through VCE programming. Further, growers receive the necessary tools at their disposal to address food safety concerns. Public Awareness of agriculture was the eighth issue. New programming and evaluation is needed to address this issue.

### **Horticulture**

Residents indicated the most important horticultural issues include the following: food security, growing your own food, protecting the watersheds, and preserving natural environments (pollinators, wildlife, native plants). Results from the community survey revealed residents believe growing your own fruits and vegetables was integral in providing families with fresh and

safe food to consume and creating enjoyable experiences throughout the plant growing season. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents already participate in growing their own food. Due to the geographic location of the City, the community identified watershed protection as a critical issue in terms of urban and suburban landscapes. They recognize areas of stormwater runoff and the misuse of pesticides and fertilizers as the underlying reasons for focus on watershed protection. Also in the urban and suburban landscape, the community has concern for preserving nature, specifically with the use of native plantings, habitat creation for wildlife and pollinators, and diversity and sustainability of landscapes.

### **Family and Consumer Sciences**

The Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) section of the survey asked citizens to rank the following issues from most important to least important needs/concerns in the City. The issues included aging population, consumer issues, finances and financial management, housing/home, leadership development, addiction/opioids, parenting, poverty, entrepreneurship, childcare, and school dropout. The community survey revealed the top five concerns for FCS included aging population, financial management, housing, consumer issues, and parenting. The survey further asked what concerns individuals had regarding personal finance. The results indicated that 28% of the respondents were concerned about having money for savings, 21% were concerned about the cost of housing, 18% concerned about the food costs, and 15% were concerned about the difficulties related to paying bills.

Citizens were also asked about the financial readiness of young adults graduating from high school and/or college. The majority of respondents' perspective revealed most young adults graduating from high school and/or college are ill-prepared for the financial obligations needed in adulthood. Several of the reasons cited for their perceptions regarding ill preparedness included the following: "Young people seem to think that they should have everything that their parents have and don't seem to understand how long it took their parent to acquire things." "Since many families don't have a good grasp on financial management many young people graduate unprepared for the challenges they will face financially." "It is not taught in high school curriculums." "Many live in the NOW world...always want the most up to date devices and in general lack financial responsibility - easier to go back to live with parent or have parents raise their children as a second family."

### **Foods and Nutrition**

The 2013 Unit Situation Analysis revealed that Nutrition was a high priority for Virginia Beach; thus, the community survey included questions to determine if nutrition was still a concern for citizens living and working in the City. Citizens were asked to rank the following nutrition issues from most important to least important needs/concerns in the City of Virginia Beach. The top five nutrition concerns for Virginia Beach were exercise/physical activity, health/wellness, food security/anti-hunger efforts, healthy food access, and nutrition.

Additional questions were asked, including "What challenges have you and/or your family encountered related to the choice of a healthier lifestyle?" to determine factors related to nutritional concerns. Several responses included: "It is getting too expensive to have the good

natural food, because boxed food is so cheap but full of sodium and other things that are not truly healthy.” “It is difficult to find time to cook home meals, exercise and to participate in free family activities.” Understanding the labels on food packaging” and “Most everything sold in the stores is processed food full of sugar and other unhealthy things.

Citizens were also asked, “Do local agencies, faith-based and other non-profit organizations in your community offer food and nutrition educational programs and services?” Results indicated that 52% of respondents stated yes and 41% indicated they were unsure. Other questions asked in the survey included “How far do you live from your nearest grocery store?”; “Do you have easy accessibility to fresh fruits and vegetables?”; and “How often do you and your family/household eat out?” Results from these questions revealed 47% of respondents live between one to five miles from the nearest grocery store, 39% live less than one mile, and 15% live more than five miles from the nearest store. Ninety-eight percent of citizens indicated they have easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Eighty-two percent of respondents eat out one to four times per week, while 12% eat out five to ten times per week.

### **Youth Development**

In the Youth Development section of the community survey, respondents were asked to rank the top five of eighteen youth-related issues, from most important to least important. The top five issues identified were before and after school programs, bullying, life skills, career training, and health.

When asked about youth education needs outside of school, the majority of community respondents mentioned skills development, specifically development in the following skills: leadership, social, life, gardening, outdoor living, financial, career training, and writing. More examples include, “civics, ethics, practical skills”, “financial planning, recreation, leadership and community programs”. Residents also believed youth need more activities, such as supervised youth activities other than sports, after school programs, and physical activities. Respondents said, “healthy but fun activities that promote good decision-making, leadership, community service, and life skills,” and “a variety of affordable activities, not just sports related.” Respondents recognized the need for more youth service activities, like volunteering, practicing citizenship, community service, and community involvement. One respondent mentioned, “connections to the community in either sports, volunteering or clubs to promote healthy relationships”. Teen and parental mentorship was another common occurring response.

Respondents were asked to share barriers preventing youth to participate in activities. The most common barrier was transportation to and from activities, followed by awareness, accessibility, cost, stigma, time, and family. Respondents said, “transportation, lack of program knowledge by parents/caregivers, lack of teen interest in topics, perceived as not cool by peers”, “awareness of programs, stigma that it is for ‘country’ kids or farmers”, “lack of active parent availability often due to work schedules, transportation, perhaps a lack of knowledge of 4H”, “transportation when both parents work, financial burden”, and “locations of regular meetings not close to central city and urban neighborhoods and work”.



## Priority Issues

Due to the structure of the survey, priority issues were identified in each Cooperative Extension educational subject area: Agriculture, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Sciences, Foods and Nutrition, and Youth Development.

### Agriculture

According to the community survey, the top five priority issues in agriculture include (1) agriculture production/profitability, (2) agriculture preservation/transition, (3) natural resources protection, (4) agriculture marketing, and (5) local food systems. All of these issues are being currently addressed through VCE programming and programs provided through agency partners.

In agriculture production/ profitability, agriculture marketing, and local foods, VCE agents and partners host grower meetings during the time of year when growers are able to attend. In these meetings, experts deliver university proven data over a wide range of topics. Further, programs are offered throughout the year to share timely and relevant information that is impactful to them. Topics presented at these meetings, workshops, conferences, and field days include entomology, pathology, weed science, alternative marketing strategies and production methods of all types on row crops, fruits and vegetables. Information on opportunities to better market crops, values added products, and agritourism events are shared continuously via electronic and postal mail to meet the needs of all growers regardless of access to technology. Site visits are available to growers throughout the year along with access to professional expertise in various fields and agencies to best suit grower needs and current issues.

For the issue of Natural Resources protection, the local Extension Agent works with all federal, state, and local agencies to address various aspects relevant to agriculture production. Local and neighboring Extension Agents host the annual Southeast Virginia Soybean/Corn Field days, promoting sustainable production practices, soil health building models, pesticide and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) education with additional VCE variety trials on a wide range of maturity groups of soybeans and most corn hybrid varieties. Since late 2018 VCE agents, SWCD Conservation Specialist, and NRCS District Conservationist have been working on a funded Conservation Innovation Grant called "The 20/20 Club." This collaborative grant effort brings together a small group of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake growers to increase corn and soybean yields 20% by 2020. The outcome of this pilot project is expected to pay dividends to participating growers in the future and is an example of what is being done to aggressively address this issue.

To address agriculture preservation/transition, the City of Virginia Beach Agricultural Reserve Program has purchased development rights for over 9,800 acres of agricultural land to

preserve agriculture use in perpetuity. The goal is to increase the number of acres to 20,000. However, with a consistent funding mechanism, the program adds acreage on a yearly basis, and is a national model for agriculture land preservation. In 2018, a group of City Departments, VCE, *non-governmental organizations*, and citizens were formed to aggressively pursue ways to protect forest lands which in turn addresses sea-level rise. This group will continue to work on voluntary ways to address agriculture preservation/transition on an important yet often overlooked crop like trees. Farm transition programs through VCE and other partners will be promoted to all producers.

Based on this information, the actual priority agriculture issues include the following:

1. Agriculture Production/Profitability
2. Agriculture Preservation Transition
3. Local Food Systems
4. Natural Resources Protection
5. Agriculture Marketing

### **Horticulture**

The community and resident participants of the community survey identified five priority horticulture issues. These issues were (1) food security and anti-hunger efforts, (2) watershed protection, (3) pollinators and wildlife, (4) vegetable and fruit gardening, and (5) native plants. Because some of these issues were closely related, the priority issues were re-categorized. Food security and anti-hunger efforts and vegetable and fruit gardening were combined into food security. Pollinators and wildlife and native plants were also combined to create preserving natural environments.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2015 nearly 40% of adults and adolescents reported consuming fruit less than once daily. The same was true for consuming vegetables by adolescents. Adults however reported just over 20% consuming vegetables less than once daily. The absence of these foods constitutes a lack of nutritional value in their diet. In some cases, the lack of consumption is due to availability of fresh fruits and vegetables. Less than 15% of farmers markets in Virginia accept SNAP benefits. Introducing alternative methods to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables can aid residents in access. Growing fruit and vegetable supplies can provide healthy foods, create a sense of pride in accomplishment, and ensure food safety in production. People must learn how to grow fruits and vegetables to be successful in providing for their families. Information on soils, plant health, and growing and harvesting are an important basis for proper production.

The City of Virginia Beach is bordered solely by water on two sides and encompasses three primary watersheds (the Chesapeake Bay, the Southern Rivers, and the Atlantic Coastal) that lead directly to the Atlantic Ocean. Due to this, a section of the City's Sustainability Plan is dedicated to water. The plan states: We will preserve and protect our water resources to ensure a continued potable drinking supply and we will achieve and maintain high water quality to ensure public health, protection and propagation of aquatic life, and recreation in and on the water. Contamination of the watershed can come from many different sources, but

horticulturally the focus is on the runoff and leaching of pesticides and fertilizers into water sources. Homeowners, Green Industry professionals, and farmers can all contribute to this issue if chemicals are not used properly. Lack of substantial plantings on properties or devices to capture storm water runoff can also allow contaminants to flow off property and into water sources.

In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency developed a Pollinator Protection Strategic Plan to focus on potential contributing factors to pollinator decline. The factors contributing to the decline include pesticide exposure, pathogens, habitat loss, management practices and nutritional stress. In 2017, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services developed its own plan (*Voluntary Plan to Mitigate the Risk of Pesticides to Managed Pollinators*) with the help of stakeholders from the Commonwealth. Improper use of pesticides and habitat loss are two areas that residents and the commercial industry alike can impact. Pesticide education for certified and non-certified applicators is key to combating pesticide misuse. Creating wildlife habitats and using native plantings can also rebuild ecosystems and sustain pollinators and wildlife.

### **Family and Consumer Sciences**

According to the community survey, the five top priority issues in FCS include (1) aging population, (2) financial management, (3) housing, (4) consumer issues, and (5) parenting. However, according to research and ELC input, the top priority issue as it relates to FCS is financial management. The Economic Policy Institute states, a family with two children living in Hampton Roads needs about \$6,404 monthly to maintain an adequate standard of living. There is a significant gap between the earnings of working families and the cost of living. Many families are supplementing their income with credit cards to make ends meet or simply falling behind on monthly obligations. According to a 2017 Harris Poll survey, less than 33% of Americans stick to a clearly defined budget and the majority are only able to save less than \$100 per month. In that same survey, more than 75% indicated they live paycheck to paycheck.

Local community leaders, stakeholders and Virginia Beach ELC members also indicated a high percentage of individuals living in Virginia Beach are struggling to pay their monthly financial obligations. This is due to the growing number of households depending on the high cost alternative credit options like payday lenders, title loans, and quick cash loan. A 2016 survey conducted by the *Bank On Hampton Roads* steering committee revealed that 40% of respondents spent more money than they made each month; 70% did not have emergency funds; and 64% paid their bill late every month.

In addition, Virginia Beach Mayor instituted “The Mayor’s Action Challenge for Children and Families” which objectives included: financial wellness, nutrition and health, job readiness and safe living environments. The Mayor’s committee for financial wellness developed and implemented strategies to achieve “500 Families Financially Fit for the Future.” This will be a priority focus area for FCS educational programming.

Actual priority issues include the following:

1. Financial management
2. Job readiness
3. Consumer issues
4. Housing

The FCS Agent conduct financial management workshops and simulations throughout the City for diverse audiences to address the need for financial literacy. Various curriculums are utilized depending upon the age, education, and income levels of the audiences. The FCS Agent also conducts workshops to training Master Financial Education Volunteers to assist with the delivery of financial education workshops.

In addition, the FCS Agent also conducts professional development workshops to assist with job readiness skills. The FCS Agent works with local agencies to assist with “First-time Home Buying” classes. To assist with the retention of housing, the FCS Agent conducts “Clean and Healthy Home” workshops for the Department of Human Services’ clients.

### **Foods and Nutrition**

According to the community survey, the five top priority issues in Foods and Nutrition include (1) exercise/physical activity, (2) health/wellness, (3) food security/anti-hunger, (4) healthy food access, and (5) nutrition. In additional findings, the United States Department of Health and Human Services report states, “Eating more fruits and vegetables adds nutrients to diets and reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers. These nutrients help manage body weight when consumed, rather than energy-dense foods.” Yet during 2010-2017, over half of the total country’s population consumed less than one cup of fruit and less than 1 ½ cups of vegetables per day. Seventy-six percent of the population did not meet fruit intake recommendations, and 87% did not meet vegetable intake recommendations. Further, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 60% of children did not eat enough fruit and 93% of children do not eat enough vegetables.

ELC members suggested, in order to maintain good health and prevent chronic disease, it is important that Virginia Beach residents learn how to make healthy sustainable changes to their lifestyle and diet. A simple educational step is to be more active and increase physical activity to at least 60 minutes per day. Residents must increase their intake of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, low-fat and fat free dairy products, in conjunction with decreasing the intake of processed foods. These foods are typically high in saturated and trans fats, added sugars and sodium. Residents should also practice limiting their intake of sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soda and fruit drinks. Because these drink choices are typically low in nutritional value and high in calories, choosing water, low-fat and fat free milk and 100% fruit juices are healthier choices. Nutrition education and a better understanding surrounding the relationships among agriculture, food supply, diet and disease, will strengthen our residents in both socio-economic, as well as health and wellness standpoint.

Actual priority issues for Foods and Nutrition include the following:

1. Food selection
2. Nutrition knowledge
3. Daily physical activity
4. Fruit and vegetable intake

The need to increase positive behavior change regarding food selection and to increase nutrition knowledge is being addressed through several educational programs conducted by Food and Nutrition Program Assistants, FCS SNAP-Ed Agent and FCS Agent. The FCS SNAP-ED Agent also conducts workshops to train volunteers to assist with the delivery of nutritional classes and workshops.

### **Youth Development**

In the community survey, community and residents identified the following youth development issues: (1) before and after school programs, (2) bullying, (3) life skills, (4) career training, and (5) health. Several of these issues are currently being addressed through Virginia Beach 4-H Youth Development programs.

Research shows that youth-serving organizations, including 4-H, provide experiences for youth and adults that leads to sound educational, social, and emotional outcomes. The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development identified key programmatic outcomes of youth program participants that include competence, confidence, caring, character, and connection. These key outcomes support community impact through increased community contribution and reductions in risky behavior.

4-H is also known for developing leadership skills of youth who serve as teen leaders in the community. In a qualitative 4-H camp evaluation, both youth and parents shared they value the hands-on opportunities and trainings. *Among the 176 campers in 2018 Virginia Beach 4-H Camp, 53 campers completed a post camp survey. Of those, 78% of respondents increased their ability in leadership. Twenty-nine teens from the Virginia Beach camping program completed the post camp survey. Of these respondents, 86% stated they participated in Virginia's Counselor in Training (CIT) program before becoming teen leaders at camp. This leadership program is designed to provide youth with understanding, self-confidence, knowledge, and guidance on transitioning from camper to teen. Teen counselors shared their own thoughts on the skills they learned to help assist in their future: "I am able to take charge confidently and feel that I can communicate efficiently and clearly." "This taught me how to be a leader and how to value communication, attitude, and accountability" "Leading a team and completing a common goal." Leadership development continues to be a key priority, as today's teens are tomorrow's future leaders and decision-makers.*

Other City programs are also working to meet youth development needs in the community. School programs, sports, and Parks and Recreation before and after school programs are just a few examples. There are opportunities for 4-H to partner with public and private institutions to share hands-on, research-based, positive youth development with those in the community. However, parental support of time, transportation, and other resources will remain a key element to youth participation in these programs. Focused efforts will be made to develop

more community partnerships to raise awareness, and expand accessible opportunities for development of leadership, citizenship, and life skills.

Actual priority issues for Youth Development include the following:

1. Leadership development
2. Before and after school programs
3. Skills development
4. Awareness of community resources

Youth programming utilizing national common measures would ensure Virginia Beach youth meet specific outcomes, such as impacts of science, healthy living, civic engagement, college/career readiness, and universal positive youth development.

In addition, the 4-H Agent has identified the need to develop tools and resources to support best practices for volunteer management in identifying, recruiting, training, retaining, and recognizing caring adult volunteer leaders. The adult volunteers will help in expanding before and after school programs throughout the City.