



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report

Cumberland County

2018

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Introduction

The Cumberland Extension Office revised our unit's Situation Analysis in 2018. Several methods of collecting data and information were utilized. Early in the process, the Extension Leadership Council was advised that 2018 would be devoted to the Situation Analysis process and the decision was made to host a Community Forum to begin a conversation about the needs within the community. This meeting was facilitated by a new ELC member, an employee of Peter Francisco Soil and Water. An on-line survey was created using Google Forms expressing issues communicated during the Community Forum Focus Group. The survey asked respondents to identify the top 5 issues within Cumberland. In addition, they were asked how they felt their top issue should be addressed. The survey also gauged familiarity with the Cumberland Extension Office.

The main avenue utilized to promote Extension programming is through email; there are 2 email distribution lists; 4-H and Youth Development and Agriculture and Natural Resources, which total 741 recipients. In addition to sending a link to the on-line survey through our Extension email list, the link was also shared by email with the Board of Supervisors, county employees and the entire public school system. The survey was posted on our VCE- Cumberland website and through social media. The Extension office partnered with the Cumberland Public Library to create a stationary display to disperse and collect surveys from library patrons. In addition, hard copies were distributed during the Peter Francisco Soil and Water Annual Meeting, during a monthly Farm Bureau meeting, during agricultural programming events, during a school-wide open house, the monthly mobile food bank and during Fall Fest; a local community event.

As mentioned earlier, the on-line survey was created using Google forms, which compiled all the survey responses. The survey listed 32 example issues, including those expressed during the Community Forum, while also giving residents the opportunity to add issues they deemed important. To complete the survey, one ranked priority issues from 1 to 5, utilizing example issues from list or self-identifying an important issue. Upon reviewing the survey results, we quickly realized that common issues could be easily grouped together. It also was possible that some issues were relevant in several different larger categories. For instance, under the category of careers, we included job training, career readiness, finances, financial management, science and technology and small business entrepreneurs. These subcategories are important to youth, parents and agriculture. The 7 major priority issues include: Youth, Agriculture, Careers, Parental Education, Aging Population, Environment, and Health and Wellness. This ranking does not include statistics from the Census and other sources. We realize that based on statistical data, #7 Overall Health and Wellness should be

higher on the list. We also thought that it would be important for respondents to tell us their ideas of how we should go about tackling these issues. Many responded they felt it was important for Extension to continue effort in partnerships with local government, school system, local businesses, and other community organizations to address these needs.

Information from the PRIDE Survey and the Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan, 2013-18 is also incorporated in the current Situation Analysis. The PRIDE Survey, facilitated by Crossroads Prevention Services and the Cumberland Public School System, collected data, from anonymous student's surveys including incidence and prevalence, age of onset, perception of social disapproval of drug use and violence by youth in schools and communities. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the official vision for the future of the County, as formulated through the collective ideas, opinions and aspirations of the many stakeholders within the County. Comprehensive Plan stakeholders include the County's political leadership, administrative personnel, planning commission, school board, other agencies and organizations with interests in the county, the farming community, the business and industry community, homeowners, property owners, and the citizens in general. Because there are many stakeholders with correspondingly different perspectives, the vision of the Comprehensive Plan is, by necessity, a compromise resulting from reasonable consensus of County stakeholders. A range of major issues facing the County now and in the future have been identified. The major issues outlined in the Comprehensive Plan were identified through public meetings and hearings, research and analysis of available technical data and survey of citizen opinion.

Unit Profile

The County of Cumberland is rural and covers an area of roughly 297 square miles, with sparsely developed residences, community businesses and churches, interspersed in a gently rolling, central piedmont landscape. The County has one (1) incorporated area, the Town of Farmville, which extends into southern Cumberland County. In approximate terms, Cumberland County measures 33 miles from the north to the south and 12 miles from the east to the west. The current boundaries defining Cumberland County include the Appomattox River on the south, separating Cumberland County from the counties of Amelia and Prince Edward. On the north, the James River separates Cumberland County from the counties of Fluvanna and Goochland. The west and east boundaries separating Cumberland County from the counties of Buckingham and Powhatan are straight surveyed lines not corresponding to physical features. These boundaries contain a land area of 298.5. This location is a strategic area accessible to metropolitan areas. To the east is Richmond, to the northwest is Charlottesville, and to the southwest is Lynchburg. Interstate systems to the north and east open the county up to markets in other areas.

Cumberland County is part of Planning District 14 which is comprised of Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward Counties. The Commonwealth Regional Council is one of 21 planning district commissions within the Commonwealth of Virginia that serves Planning District 14.

Cumberland is a sparsely populated area of 297.46 square miles with a population of 9,811 according to the 2017 U.S. Census. This averages out to be 33 people per square mile, which is an increase of 10% since 2008. Although the county grew in population, the percentages of sex and race remained approximately the same. From 2007 – 2011, Cumberland experienced a slight increase in persons between the ages of 45 and 54. This group represents an available workforce, as well as major consumers with disposable income. Further, this population segment is often pre- or early retirement, suggesting a future market for senior services. This group increased by 226 persons. Two age groups saw a decline during this period. Age group 5-14 saw a decrease of 114 persons, and age group 25-44 decreased by 140 persons. This could be caused by a number of factors, including children moving away to attend college or to find work.

Today, the majority (about 58 percent) of Cumberland's workforce works outside of Cumberland County in neighboring jurisdictions. The main work destinations include Prince Edward County (about 18 percent), Chesterfield County (about 11 percent), Henrico County (about 9 percent), the City of Richmond (about 8 percent), Goochland County (about 7 percent) and Powhatan County (about 5 percent). The median household income is \$43,020. This is approximately 25% below the state median income and below the national median income. Consequently, 15.3% of the population is below the poverty guideline.

High school graduates over the age of 25 increased from 77% (2011 census) to 81% (2017 census). Those over 25 holding a bachelor's degree also increased slightly from 14% (2011 census) to 17% (2017 census). According to the Unit Profile, 65 percent of Cumberland County's population 25 years of age and over had at least a high school diploma or GED in 2010 and by 2013, that figure improved to 86 percent. Additionally, the County also saw an improvement in the amount of residents 25 years of age and over that have at least some college education – including a substantial increase in the number of residents with an Associate or Bachelor's degree.

Farm acreage continues to decrease, even though the number of farms remains about the same. Agricultural revenue is generated largely from timber, poultry and beef. According to the 2012 statistics, there are 262 farms in Cumberland County. The County ranks 20th in the state for total value of Agricultural products sold and is the 8th largest poultry producer and 9th largest vegetable producer. Much of the county not dedicated to farming is forested land, with forests covering

approximately 62% of the county's land surface. Overall the farm acreage decreased by 11% from 62,638 to 55,817. The most significant drop occurred in row crop acreage from 23,206 to 17,149 or 25%.

Community and Resident Perspectives

In reviewing the survey data, we quickly discovered that residents had definite ideas about what should be done about the issues facing Cumberland County. For greater clarity and the purposes of this Situational Analysis overview, community and resident perspectives will be broken down by our 7 priority categories, including sub-categories.

Youth (Teen Community Involvement, Teen Leadership Skills, Decision Making for Youth, Youth Activities, Financial Management/Health, Nutrition, Obesity, Science and Technology)

There appears to be a concern in the county that not enough is being done to keep young people from leaving Cumberland. In addition, residents feel that there is a need for alternative programs to keep kids busy combined with the need of offering transportation to events and to include parents as much as possible. One respondent stated that “exposure to positive life experiences as alternative programs to offset the mounting negativity in our country and county” is necessary. Respondent felt that drug and alcohol “awareness and prevention should be offered in schools.” Another resident felt that it is important to be aware of current “trend analysis” related to youth issues.” Another person felt that teen community involvement was a priority issue and should be “dealt with by programs, outreach, and service projects.” Child development was cited as a top priority for one respondent who suggested that “a safe place be provided after-school for the children to complete their homework and get extra help if needed.” In order to combat drug use and school violence one resident suggested that Extension might “coordinate with local law enforcement, school officials and youth to formulate a strategic plan of action to reduce violence and drug/alcohol use.” Another resident stated that drug use, violence, and school drop out are major issues at school. In addition, they reported that “the children are constantly talking about all the kids that have drugs on them or participate with others that do drugs.” One survey suggested that “we can get the local law enforcement agency to become more of an advocate than just the DARE program since it doesn't include the high school.” One respondent shared insight concerning the importance of youth making healthy choices; “There are so many health problems that are a result of overeating or unhealthy eating. Our schools continue to feed us unhealthy food. We have vending machines without healthy choices. The school does offer choices, which is nice, but children are not going to choose a healthy meal over fried chicken or pizza. Just a thought, maybe our teens can visit the schools and talk about healthy meals and making better choices.” The same survey highlighted the importance of “getting the family involved with the child's obesity problem.”

Another respondent would like to see Extension “have classes and or camps for kids teaching about care for our environment and ozone layers. The 4-H program already does programming focused on the environment so this tells me that the individual is not very familiar with our efforts, which is also good information to know and speaks to our need to educate people to ensure they recognize Extension and are familiar with all we offer. One resident would like to see “more activities for the younger youth, like the cooking classes for the elementary students.” Another feels that “we should offer more programs that allow kids to be kids, because in the society of today everyone is in front of screens. Screen use usually starts at a young age because the younger kids see the older kids using devices and want to do it” as well. To encourage teen community involvement, another resident recommends the creation of “a safe space for children to go and be involved.” One community member felt that “the involvement *in 4-H* within the school tails off around middle school. Providing more opportunities for the older students (HS) to be involved or making it part of a required course.” Another felt that teaching leadership through hosting opportunities for teens to volunteer within the community, such as picking up trash, raking leaves, community gardening through partnerships with schools, churches, small businesses, etc” was important.

Agriculture (Agriculture Marketing, Profitability, Preservation, Alternative Agriculture, Livestock, Farm Transition, Aging Population, Local Food Systems, Pest and Pesticide, Awareness of Agriculture, Horticulture, Sustainability)

The survey respondents provided a lot of feedback on agriculture in Cumberland. One individual wished to receive instruction on moving “from intensive to sustainable ag practices” while another would “love to see more about organic practices and starting a small-scale farm-based business.” There is also an interest in receiving more education on “agriculture sustainability and preservation” through “workshops and field days.”

Several respondents felt that Extension does “a good job with offering workshops” there is a need for a “better schedule to fit people that work off farm full-time.” There is also an interest in learning how to handle livestock “for a profit and not ruin the environment.” Another farmer expressed an interest in “improving beef feed alternatives, baleage, education on EPDs and herd improvements.” One resident expressed an interest in learning more about “soil chemistry vs. plant response.” There is also an interest in “weed identification” and more information on “hay moisture, hay storage, government programs for hay storage.” On the theme of Ag Production and Profitability an interest was expressed in workshops being offered “on the ease of growing berries” and in “listing growers of berries with local roots for distributing/sales in the area.”

Another stakeholder was interested in attending a seminar that focused on “Science and Technology that are beneficial to Agriculture.” One respondent also expressed a concern that “there is no cohesiveness here in Cumberland with farmers, the community and Extension and in addition felt that there should be “a way for farmers to participate in the ag program at the high school.”

Careers (Job Training, Career Readiness, Small Business Entrepreneurs, Finances and Financial Management, Science and Technology)

The topic of careers were on the minds of many of our survey respondents. Many saw a need for more “job preparation skills” and assistance with “small business, entrepreneur’s education and grant information.” One resident felt that sponsoring a “career event and bringing in people involved in innovative jobs that could be done in rural areas” would be beneficial. Another say a need for “income producing jobs matched to population abilities and continued varied programs for youth to explore jobs.” The “lack of wifi in most of the county impacts citizens and more importantly potential businesses that are dissuaded from locating here because of the lack of technology.” No only is there a lack of high-speed internet, “there is no grocery store and few restaurants.” One survey stated that there is “nothing here to persuade young achievers to stay here and make Cumberland even greater.” “Recruiting businesses and industry to help the county grow” is a top concern for residents, and one survey suggested the creation of “a forum perhaps with business owner to get ideas of how to grow business and encourage entrepreneurs providing education of the history of business in the county and offering a community discussion about how the county can move forward.” One respondent felt it was important to “energize young folks” and possible offer “apprenticeships.” One resident was very concerned with the topic of economic development and felt that “large land owners need to accept change that is needed to bring in more clean industry.” Another individual felt that it was important to “work with the county government to encourage and solicit new businesses both large and small which helps with the tax base for the residents of the county.”

Parenting Education (Finances and Financial Management, Child Development, Health, Nutrition and Obesity, Housing Education)

Parents face many challenges and one is “affordable housing; people “can’t pay high *rent* with low wages.” Another respondent felt that housing or apartments should be built “on land we have and make section 8 open.” Another felt that and “index and advertisement of resources for assisting with home and housing issues” should be developed.

One resident felt that “parenting education classes should be offered once a week or as a Saturday *workshop or* conference.” One community member felt it would be worthwhile to “work with schools to help develop community support groups. Retirement planning was also a concern for some expressing the need for a “class on financial planning for retirement geared toward middle aged workers.”

Aging Population (Chronic Disease, Farm Transition, Health, Nutrition, Obesity, Dependent Care)

The aging population was also a top concern for residents and many felt that more should be done to inform seniors on available resources, for example a resource list. Another stated that there is a need for more “senior resources and activities for all, not just those on low income.”

Cumberland does not have a form of public transportation; which cause transportation to be a concern for “some seniors, those on fixed income, and persons with no driver's licenses; many have “difficulty getting to doctors, grocery stores, etc.”

Environment (Invasive Species, Horticulture, Pests and Pesticide, Water Quality and Quantity, Wildlife, Land Use, natural Resource Production and Profitability)

One resident stated that they would “love to see more about organic practices, forestry conservation (rather than just making money), biodiversity, and have experts come and layout pros and cons of each and teaching how to become more GREEN.” Another community member was concerned about educating the “public about the need to keep water clean” and educating the public about humane coexistence.” Another resident was interested in preserving endangered plants; stating that “Virginia has a long list.” They felt that a garden should be created to preserve these plants. Another thought it would be beneficial to “encourage farmers to not use chemicals and pesticides” through “seminars or training that are free for them.”

Another felt it would be beneficial to offer classes on “how and why the environment is changing, what to expect, how to prepare for changes, and what steps we take to ameliorate some of the changes.” Another respondent felt it was important to preserve Cumberland’s environment, historical landmarks, and resources.

Health and Wellness (Chronic Disease, Food Safety and Preservation, Health, Nutrition, Obesity, Local Food System)

Very few respondents identified “no grocery store” as a concern though Cumberland is still considered a Food Desert. The other thing of note is that so few viewed health and wellness as a major concern

though the statistics indicate that Cumberland is well below the average. For example, the percentage of the population that has limited access to healthy foods (22%). “With the exception of the patients who go to the local medical center, the approximately 10,000 people who live here have to go outside the county for medical care.” In addition, there is a “lack of walking and exercise trails or a recreational and exercise facilities for families.” Another respondent felt it was important to “teach locals how to grow food in a sustainable way.”

Priority Issue -- Youth (Community Involvement, Leadership Skills, Decision Making, More Activities, Financial Management, Health, Nutrition, and Obesity, Science and Technology)

Out-of-school recreational opportunities represented an important community issue to respondents to our survey. Cumberland's Unit Situation Analysis cited a "lack of services designed to help youth build on positive character traits" and the need for "more life skills and character development opportunities for youth" as a critical need. In the Cumberland Unit Profile, the teen birth rate (per 1,000 female age 15-19) is 29, which is higher than the National rate of 21. According to the Pride Survey Report, Cumberland students report the majority of their Tobacco (15.8), Alcohol (27.7), and Marijuana (9.8) use takes place on the weekend. The majority of youth programming is currently sponsored by the public school system. A limited number of youth serving agencies, the YMCA, the Youth League, the public library, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and 4-H offer out-of-school programming at this time. The Cumberland Extension Office can address this need by partnering with other youth-serving organizations to offer quality out-of-school experiences for young people and by offering 4-H clubs, short and long term camping experiences, YESS, Youth Experiencing Success through Service, which is a teen leadership program for youth between 13 and 19 years of age.

Adolescent issues was identified as a concern to survey participants. In the Cumberland Unit Profile, the teen birth rate (per 1k female age 15-19) is 29, which is higher than the National rate of 21. The PRIDE Survey, asked 6th to 12th grade students about their use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Marijuana, as well as other illicit drug use in a 30-day period. 12.8% reported tobacco use, 15.9% reported alcohol use and 8.3% reported Marijuana use. The participants reported their average age of first use as 12.4 for Tobacco, 12.3 for Alcohol, and 12.7 for Marijuana. 35.7% of these students report experiencing threatening or harmful behaviors in school. The recommendations of the PRIDE survey (4) included a “focus on character-building education in the early elementary years. Cumberland Extension can address this issue by offering character-building educational programming, such as empathy development, conflict-resolution, and anger management, through in-school programming. Utilizing Health Rock, which focusing on making healthy choices related to drug and alcohol use could also be a viable option.

Priority Issue -- Agriculture Marketing/Profitability/Preservation (Alternative Agriculture, Farm Transition, Aging Population, Local Food Systems, Pest and Pesticides, Awareness of Agriculture, Horticulture, Sustainability)

According to the Unit Profile, there were 87 farms in 2012 between 50 and 179 acres in Cumberland. Statistics indicate that the number of farms remain the same while the total acreage continues to decline. According to USDA standards, a farm is an entity that sells more than \$1,000.00 in agricultural products per year. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that acreage is being sold off to new residents who do not list their small/hobby farms as farms under the agencies that report farming activities. A variety of Agricultural activities take place that may go undetected by these agencies and may include small ruminants; greenhouse and nurseries; vegetable production, and value added endeavors. The Cumberland Comprehensive Plan 2013-18 outlines the county's goals, objectives, and policies related to Agriculture. Extension is positioned to assist the locality with several focus areas, encouraging "the preservation and expansion of the agricultural economy, strengthening agricultural education in the public schools and expanding participation in school's community garden program" as well as "promoting local agricultural products through the expansion of the county farmers' market and increased opportunities for the sale of local products within the county." Extension can partner with the school system to offer support to the Agriculture program. Extension can also partner with the county administration to help facilitate policies and other movements in support of the expansion of local agriculture. Extension can support residents and the county by offering educational programs targeting the needs of the small farm producer on topics such as forages, small ruminants, small fruit, vegetables and tree fruit. The Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan, 2013-2018, cites encouraging the preservation and expansion of the agricultural economy as an objective. Extension can address this issue by providing comprehensive, informational, and educational programs that will engage local producers and by being a supportive resource to residents and the county.

Value added Agriculture seeks to capture some of the market share that is lost by sales at the livestock market or other wholesale market and is a component within the broader topic of Sustainable Agriculture. It continues to be a lifestyle choice born in part to the uncertainty of the country's economy but is also prevalent in the concerns people have about the quality of their food source. By processing agricultural products on the farm more profit is realized. Outlets are usually limited to farmer's markets and other local producer based outlets. The Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan states that Economic Development is one of its objectives, specifically "to encourage the overall strengthening and diversification of the economic base of Cumberland County." "Cumberland County ranks 8th in the state in Agriculture and is the 5th largest poultry producer." Cumberland Extension Office can address this need by exploring, facilitating and supporting ways to open markets for limited production fresh market products. Virginia State University has led research and marketing efforts to bring this area into greater prominence. Continuing to partner with them to provide opportunities for the small producer will eventually lead to opportunities on a larger scale.

Priority Issue -- Careers (Job Training, Career Readiness, Small Business Entrepreneurs, Finances/Financial Management, Science and Technology)

One of the highest priority issues cited by Cumberland residents in the surveys we received are limited employment opportunities within the county. The majority of the workforce (58%) works outside of the borders of the county, traveling an average of 41 minutes to work one way. In most cases, these workers are driving into Richmond, Charlottesville, and Prince Edward and other areas for employment. The Virginia Economic Development Profile notes a huge decrease in Career Readiness Certifications in Cumberland; Virginia's Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) assists employers by certifying that a recipient possesses core skills in applied math, reading for information, and locating information. Cumberland Extension office can partner with residents and the school system to offer career readiness trainings, job shadowing and internship opportunities, and resume writing and interview skills training.

Priority Issue -- Parenting Education (Finances, Financial Management, Child Development, Health, Nutrition and Obesity, Housing Education)

According to the Unit Profile, 39% of children in Cumberland live in a single-parent household. This percentage is 9% higher than the Virginia average and 19% higher than the National average. Parenting skills include behavior management, positive reinforcement, setting healthy boundaries, drug education, communication skills, anger management, keeping children safe and making healthy choices. Crossroads Community Services Board offers Parenting classes for a limited number of its clients. VCE-Cumberland could partner with Family Consumer Science agents within Central District to offer parenting skills classes and early education programs to local residents. The Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan states that 9.2% of persons in our county live below the poverty level. The Cumberland Unit Profile further states that 27% of the children live in poverty, which is much higher than the Virginia (16%) or the National (14%) rate. Cumberland Extension Office can address this issue mainly through offering educational programs and resources to residents. Extension can partner with the county, financial institutions, and community organizations to offer more financial management seminars on a wide range of income levels to obtain the greatest benefit from their economic resources.

Priority Issue - Aging Population (Chronic Disease, Farm Transition, Health, Nutrition and Obesity, Dependent Care)

Aging was identified as a critical issue to 20.83% of the survey respondents. The Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan details the changes in age characteristics. "Between 2000 and 2010, there was an increase of 284 persons 60 to 64 years and an increase of 176 persons for the 65 to 74 age group. The

age brackets of 75 to 84 years and 85 years and older increased by 77 and 25 individuals, respectively. The rise in the number of people 75 and over raises their need for additional services. For example, the senior population may need additional health care, recreational facilities and low cost housing.” Cumberland Extension Office, through the Food Nutrition Program could offer educational programming to residents. In addition, Extension can partner with Family and Consumer Science and community partners to support efforts that assist the elderly.

Priority Issue -- Environment (Invasive Species, Horticulture, Pests and Pesticides, Water Quality and Quantity, Wildlife, Land Use, Natural Resource Production and Profitability)

The 2013-18 Comprehensive Plan identifies its goal related to Natural Resources as “to preserve and effectively manage the natural resources of Cumberland County for the benefit of current and future citizens. Objective 2 focuses on preserving, protecting and developing Cumberland’s ground and surface water resources for the use and enjoyment of current and future citizens. While most of the county’s focus is on enforcement and implementation of best management practices, Extension can partner by educating residents and youth on the importance of protecting and conserving our water.

Priority Issue -- Health and Wellness (Chronic Disease, Food Safety and Preservation, Health, Nutrition and Obesity, Local Food Systems)

Healthy Lifestyles and Nutrition were an important issue to 22% of the respondents. In the Cumberland Unit Summary, 22% of the population has a limited access to healthy foods, which is well above the Virginia percentage of 4% and the National average of 1%. According to the Unit Profile, 34% of the residents in Cumberland are obese, which is higher than the Virginia average (28%) and the National average (25%). Residents rating themselves as physically inactive were 29%, compared to the Virginia average (24%) and the National average (21%). The Comprehensive Plan, 2013-2018 has adopted a policy (Agriculture, Objective 2, Policies D) which states the county’s determination to “strengthen agricultural education in the public schools and expand participation in school’s community garden program. A growing body of research confirms that spending time in nature benefits everyone, particularly children. "Studies across the United States have found that children who directly experience the natural world are healthier in every major way — physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually" (Children in Nature Initiative Talking Points – March 7, 2008). Cumberland Extension Office can address this concern by continuing to partner with the Cumberland Public School System to education students and help provide access to healthier foods. Cumberland Extension can also partner with FCS, FNP (Family Nutrition Program), Cumberland County Cares, the Center for Rural Culture, and other community partners to offer educational programs focusing on Healthful Living.