

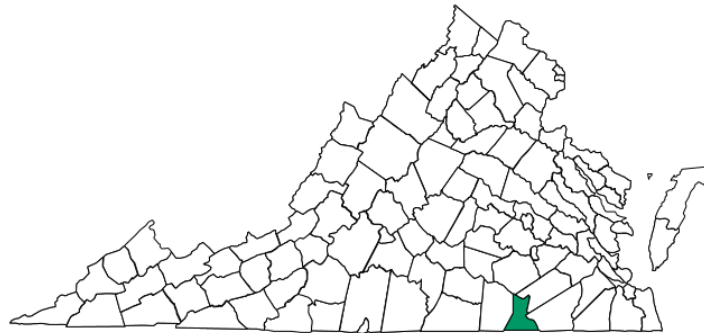


Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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Situation Analysis Report



Greensville County City of Emporia

2018

Extension Staff

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Unit Coordinator

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Introduction

The Greenville/Emporia office of Virginia Cooperative Extension conducted a comprehensive Situation Analysis from July 2018 – January 2019. The process was led by Unit Coordinator, Sara Rutherford, and supported by office faculty and staff. The result of this process included an updated unit profile with major emphasis on gaining a better understanding of our community's needs. Community and resident perspectives were an integral component used to determine the top priority issues for Greenville County and the City of Emporia.

In preparation for this task, it was decided, within the unit, that a survey instrument would be created and distributed electronically and by hard copy to residents, stakeholders and government officials. Using the survey results, the top priority issues for Greenville County and the City of Emporia were identified including those that could and should be addressed by Extension and those that were outside the scope of Extension's mission.

A focus group of 14 community members representing businesses, local government entities and the public was assembled in January 2019 to discuss the results of the community evaluation survey. All five Greenville/Emporia Extension employees were in attendance.



Unit Profile

Greenville County was formed in 1781 and is located in Virginia Cooperative Extension's Central District. The county lies approximately 65 miles south of Richmond, bordering the North Carolina state line. It is bound to the south by Northampton County, NC, to the north by Sussex and Dinwiddie Counties, to the west by Brunswick County and to the east by Southampton County. It is situated in the Piedmont and the Tidewater Regions of our Commonwealth just 80 miles west of Norfolk and the Ports of Hampton Roads on the Atlantic Coast. The Town of Emporia was chartered as a City of the Second Class by an act of the General Assembly on July 31, 1967. At this time, it became a separate political entity from Greenville County. The Town of Jarratt, located in northern Greenville County and partly located in southern Sussex County, was incorporated by order of the Circuit Court of Sussex County on June 20, 1938. Currently, there are no other incorporated communities in Greenville County.

Greenville County consists of generally flat or gently rolling land where the clay based soils of the piedmont region and the sandy soils from the tidewater region meet at the fall line running north to south through the county. Given its central location along the eastern seaboard of the United States between Raleigh, Richmond, and Hampton Roads, Greenville/Emporia is conveniently located within a day's drive of over 50 metropolitan areas and nearly two-thirds of the United States population. Being located at the crossroads of I-95 and U.S. Route 58 provides prime access to the eastern part of the United States.

Population

The population of Greensville County, according to the US Census Bureau's July 1, 2017 estimates, totaled 11,679 people. This shows a 4.6% decrease in population from the 2010 census. The racial breakdown of groups with statistical significance was 59.5% Black or African American, 38.5% White and 2.2% Hispanic or Latino. The population of the City of Emporia, according to the same estimated data, totaled 5,282 people. This shows a 10.9% decrease in population from the 2010 census. The racial breakdown of groups with statistical significance was 64% Black or African American, 32.1% White and 3.3% Hispanic or Latino.

Employment

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, the top five employers in Greensville County are Boar's Head Provisions, Greensville Correctional Center, Greensville County Schools, Beach Mold and Tool Company of Virginia and Jackson-Feild Episcopal Home. SteelFab, Inc. and Dominion Virginia Power are other notable employers. The top five employers in the City of Emporia are Georgia Pacific Wood Products, Southside Virginia Regional Medical Center, Wal-Mart, City of Emporia and Cracker Barrel Old Country Store. The unemployment rate for Greensville County as of May 2018 was 3.9% and 4.4% for the City of Emporia according to the Virginia Employment Commission. The unemployment rate in Virginia was 3.1% as of July 2018 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Schools

Greensville County Public Schools consist of one high school, one middle school, one fifth grade elementary school and one pre-K through fourth grade elementary school. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 76.5% of City residents 25 years of age and older have a high school diploma compared to 75.3% of adults age 25 and older in the County. Also, 15.3% of adults age 25 and older in the City have attained a bachelor's degree or higher form of education compared to 7.5% of County residents of the same age. This is a good place to note that some Greensville/Emporia families send their children to private schools outside of the county as an alternative to the public school system.

Community Health

According to the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute's School of Medicine and Public Health's website: countyhealthrankings.org, 23% of Greensville and 29% of Emporia residents have poor to fair health compared to 16% of Virginians in 2018. In health behaviors such as smoking, obesity, access to exercise opportunities, and physical inactivity, Greensville ranks 127th and Emporia 132nd of 133 counties and cities; one being the highest ranking, 133rd being the lowest. Additionally, 27% of Greensville and 39% of Emporia children are living in poverty compared to 14% in Virginia. The ratio of primary care physicians is 1,980 residents to 1 physician. The overall health ranking for Greensville is 121 and Emporia 131 of 133 counties and cities across Virginia. These statistics are staggering, to say the least.

Community and Resident Perspectives

The following groups were targeted through a community evaluation survey to gain perspectives on current issues and concerns: The Greenville County Government Center, Offices of the City of Emporia, Greenville-Emporia Master Gardener Association, The Family YMCA of Emporia, Greenville/Emporia 4-H Teen Club and Family Nutrition Program participants. City and county residents, outside of these groups, also participated by completing the survey.



The 4-H Teen Club identified issues and provided possible solutions as perceived by younger residents. Eight teens provided input via the printed community evaluation survey. Issues of the greatest concern centered on financial resources, lack of education, violence/gangs and transportation. Comments regarding possible solutions to these issues included availability of more jobs, improved educational experiences; i.e.: tutoring, more positive programming for youth and teens; i.e. more programs and the addition of weekend programs. The teens also stated possible solutions were expressing positivity, stopping crime, staying positive and preventing conflict to combat these issues.

Priority Issues

Based on the unit profile and community evaluation survey, the following priority issues were identified for Greenville County and the City of Emporia:

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| 1. Employment/Job opportunities | 7. Lack of constructive outlets for youth |
| 2. Public education system | 8. Crime/Violence |
| 3. Lack of skilled/qualified employees | 9. Water quality |
| 4. Health of residents | 10. Transportation |
| 5. Poverty levels | 11. Communication* |
| 6. Economic opportunity | |

* Added January 9, 2019

Community Discussion Group Results

After discussing the mission of Virginia Cooperative Extension, the community focus group identified which issues the Greenville/Emporia Extension Office can and should address and which issues we cannot and/or should not address.

First, the group advised “Communication” be added as a priority issue. It was felt the lack of communication across certain demographic and geographical areas in the city and county are problematic. Again, this priority issue cannot be directly addressed by programmatic efforts of the Greenville/Emporia Extension office, but steps can be made to increase communication about Extension programming through more efficient communication methods.

Second, it was determined the Greenville/Emporia Extension Office can address all of the priority issues stated on page four, even if only in a small way. For example, issue eight. Programming efforts will not focus on reducing crime or violence, but through 4-H youth development programs, conflict resolution, character development and good citizenship will be addressed.

Finally, there were no priority issues the discussion group felt the Greenville/Emporia Extension Office should not devote resources to. It was discussed, at length, that the Greenville Emporia Extension Office can partly address these priority issues by incorporating educational information into present and future programming to help improve the conditions contributing to these issues.

Community Discussion Group Participants- January 9, 2019

Melissa Delbridge
Ricky Pinksaw
LaVelle Hill
Solomon Hill
Brenda Parson
Katherine Howerton
Nancy Grove

Harvey Baker
Jennifer Grubb
William Johnson, III
Kristin Taylor
Larry Walczykoski
John Holtkamp
Markia Powell

Faculty and Staff Present

Sara Rutherford
Tia Powell
Hannah Parker
Regan Cifers
Sammi Kent

Appendices

I. Greensville/Emporia Community Evaluation Survey

Dear community members,

Please join the Greensville/Emporia Extension Office in developing our 2018 Situation Analysis Report, which will highlight the key needs of our community and guide the direction of our work and service in the coming years as resources enable. The survey consists of three questions. You may complete any or all responses as you see fit in brief or with commentary. Your feedback is very valuable to us.

1- What is the most critical issue, challenge or obstacle facing you/your household now in Greensville County or the City of Emporia?

* What do you see as a possible solution to this issue, challenge or obstacle?

2- What is the most critical issue, challenge or obstacle facing businesses now in Greensville County and/or the City of Emporia?

* What do you see as a possible solution to this issue, challenge or obstacle?

3- What is the most critical issue, challenge or obstacle facing the community at large now in Greensville County and/or the City of Emporia?

* What do you see as a possible solution to this issue, challenge or obstacle?

Please return this document to the Extension Office in person or by mail to the address listed above no later than July 27, 2018. Thank you in advance for your time.