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Situation Analysis Report



Cumberland County

2013

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Introduction

The Cumberland County Extension Leadership Council (ELC) revised its Situation Analysis in 2013. Local Extension personnel and each of the 13 members of the ELC participated in the implementation, collection and analysis of community data. The decision was made to utilize several avenues to collect data. A survey was created, utilizing 2008 priority issues, to determine if residents of Cumberland still felt these issues were of the same importance. The survey also endeavored to determine whether additional issues had emerged since the last situation analysis. The survey was created and shared in a wide variety of venues in an effort to get the most diverse sampling of residents. The survey was distributed both through electronic avenues and the more traditional mailing system. One-on-one interviews were also conducted with local residents. 75 postcard surveys were handed out at the Soil and Water Conservation Board's Annual Meeting to gather community input and determine local issues. In preparation for this Extension Situation Analysis, we also reviewed the Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan, which was recently completed. The PRIDE Survey (2007) was also utilized, which was compiled as a partnership with Crossroads Prevention Services and the Cumberland Public Schools.

Unit Profile

The County of Cumberland is rural in character, covering an area of roughly 296 square miles, with sparsely developed residences, community businesses and churches, interspersed in a gently rolling, central piedmont landscape. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the total population is 10,052. The County has one (1) incorporated area, the Town of Farmville, which extends into southern Cumberland County. Cumberland County is located in the Central Piedmont area of Virginia near the geographic center of the state. 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 298.5 square miles with a population of 9928. 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. Another important population characteristic is the increase that the County experienced from 2000 to 2010 for 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 450 persons, and age group 25-44 decreased by 193 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 \$45,184. This is approximately 25% below the state median income and below the national median income. Consequently, 15% of the population is below the poverty guideline. High school graduates over the age of 25 increased from 63 to 77%. Those over 25 holding a bachelor's degree remained approximately the same at 14%. According to the 2000 Census, 63.8 percent of Cumberland County's population 25 years of age and over had at least a high school diploma or GED. By 2010, that figure improved to 72.5 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. According to data provided by the Cumberland County Extension Office, agricultural revenue is generated largely from timber, poultry and beef. The latest statistics in 2007, there are 285 farms in Cumberland County. The County ranks 8th in the state in Agriculture, and is the 5th largest poultry 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 62638 to 55817. The most significant drop occurred in row crop acreage from 23206 to 17149 or 25%.

Community and Resident Perspectives

The Cumberland County Extension email distribution list, which is comprised of 489 members, with an interest in both Animal and Natural Resources and 4-H Youth Development received the survey. In addition, the Situation Analysis survey was posted on the VCE-Cumberland website and on our Facebook page. Two hundred thirty (230) Situation Analysis Surveys were sent out by the county in the monthly water bill. An article was also published in the Farmville Herald discussing on opportunity for residents to provide feedback on relevant community issues. The Cumberland Public Library allowed the Extension Office to post the Situation Analysis Survey at the registration desk and acted as a drop-off site for resident's surveys. In addition, we reviewed and utilized information from the Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan, 2013-2018. The Comprehensive Plan serves several functions. Perhaps the most fundamental function is that the Comprehensive Plan is 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. The Comprehensive Plan describes this vision through its goals and objectives for the future as well as through maps and exhibits. 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 has been identified. Review and analysis of these issues by the public, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors provided the basis for establishing planning goals and policies for this Comprehensive Plan. The major issues outlined in this Plan were identified through the following methods: public meetings and hearings, research and analysis of available technical data and survey of citizen opinion. The PRIDE Survey was facilitated by Crossroads Prevention Services and the Cumberland Public School System. "Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) schools are required to establish a Uniform Management and Information Reporting System. The collected data, from anonymous student's surveys includes incidence and prevalence, age or onset, perception of social disapproval of drug use and violence by youth in schools and communities."

In the 2005 and 2008 Situation Analysis, there were minimal agricultural issues identified as priorities. The former Analysis seemed heavily dominated by Youth Development and Family and Consumer Science related issues. The ELC and Extension Faculty felt that stronger and more direct efforts needed to be implemented to involve the Agricultural community. Since that time, an extensive email list has been compiled. The 2013 Situation Analysis reflects the increased involvement of the Agricultural community and gives a more complete snapshot of the needs in Cumberland, with the broadest possible involvement.

In reviewing the information that was contained in the Unit Profile, there were some statistics that immediately jumped out at Extension faculty. The number of children living in poverty was extremely high (27%) compared to state and national averages. The number of children that are being raised in single-parent households (39%) is also very high compared to state and national averages. The percentage of the population that has limited access to healthy foods (22%) is a very telling statistic.

The biggest issues cited by Cumberland residents in the surveys we received are limited employment opportunities within the county and the fact that Cumberland is a food market desert. The majority of the workforce (68%) works outside of the borders of this county driving in most cases into Richmond, Charlottesville, and Prince Edward for employment. There is also a "burden of the community to travel to other counties for produce and meats." The county has no full-service grocery store and Cumberland residents must travel outside of the borders of Cumberland to meet his need.

Priority Issues

Sustainable Agriculture

According to the Unit Profile, there are 139 farms between 50 and 179 acres in Cumberland. Statistics indicate that the number of farms remain the same while the total acreage continues to decline. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that acreage is being sold off to new residents who do not list their mini farms as farms under the agencies that report farming activities. A variety of Agricultural activities take place that may go undetected include small ruminants, such as sheep and goats; horticultural activities, such as berries and vegetables; and value added endeavors. The Cumberland Comprehensive Plan (Agriculture, Objective 2, Policy B) cites exploration of the “development of new agricultural product opportunities and industries supporting local farming” as a goal. 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.

Parenting Skills/Early Childhood Education (parent/child relations, discipline, pre-school care)

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.

Farming Economics

During face-to-face interviews with local farmers the message was clear; “we can raise the commodity, but we need to be able to raise it more economically to improve our bottom line. “ The Cumberland Unit Profile reported that in 2007 farm expenses per farm totaled \$96,588 with a net operating income of \$53,517 per farm. Agricultural economics is the most important issue farming producers face. 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.

Programs, after-school activities, recreational opportunities for youth and families

Twenty-two percent (22%) of residents that responded to our survey felt that out-of-school recreational opportunities represented an important community issue. 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 1k female age 15-19) is 29, which is higher than the National rate of 21. According to the Pride Survey Report (2007), which was facilitated by Cumberland County Public Schools and Crossroads Prevention Service, 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 YWCA, the Youth League, 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.

Healthy Lifestyles and Nutrition

According to the 22% of those survey felt that Healthy Lifestyles and Nutrition were an important issue. 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%). Twenty-nine percent (29%) are physically inactive, 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 and the Learning through Nature Class to education students and help provide access to healthier foods. Cumberland Extension can also partner with FNP and other community partners to offer educational programs focusing on Healthful Living.

Value Added Agriculture

Value Added Agriculture 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. Value added Agriculture seeks to capture some of the market share that is lost by sales at the livestock market or other wholesale market. 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.

Financial Management

The 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.

Aging

Survey participants (20.83%) cited aging as a critical issue. 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 service demand. 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.

Adolescent Issues (truancy, teen pregnancy, violence, drug use, suicide)

Survey participants (19.59%) cited Adolescent issues as a concern. 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.

Quality childcare (Affordable and Available)

Survey participants (17.71%) felt that Quality childcare was important. Currently, there are 597 (6.1%) young persons between the age of 0 and 4. The majority of childcare is done by individual sitter. At the time of this report, there is only one licensed day care at the Northern or Cartersville end of the county. While this issue is outside of our scope to tackle individually, it would be possible for Extension to offer babysitter courses to support individuals who might have an interest in pursuing childcare entrepreneurship.