



Situation Analysis Report

Powhatan County

2018

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Introduction

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) builds relationships within the Commonwealth's counties and cities, collaborates among partnerships, while providing education to individuals, businesses, and communities. Issues, problems and needs of the people in specific localities guide individual VCE unit programming. In an effort to identify key issues facing Powhatan County citizens, an updated Situation Analysis was necessary as the last assessment conducted locally was in 2013. Powhatan's Extension Leadership Council (ELC), which includes community volunteers and unit staff, implemented the four-step process to determine what issues or problems are major public concern.

Organizing for action was the first step in conducting a Situation Analysis and took place during the ELC meeting in December 2017. This involved an overview of the process presented by Cathy Howland, Powhatan Extension Unit Coordinator. During the March 12 ELC meeting, a sub-committee including both ELC volunteers and staff was selected to begin work on updating the analysis. Next, these individuals met on March 20 to determine a timeline and begin development of a Powhatan County Unit Profile. Existing data gathered from various national and state sources (U.S. Census, Ag Census, Virginia Labor Market, etc.) went into the Unit Profile.

After completing a Unit Profile, the sub-committee reconvened on May 30 to begin the process involved in assessing citizens' perspectives on issues and problems thought to impact their lives both positively and negatively. Various methods identified to gather data during the summer of 2018 included:

- The National Citizen Survey (The NCS) conducted by Powhatan County in an effort to gauge citizens' opinions on various community topics by the National Research Center, Inc. This survey allows for benchmarking with other localities, both regionally and nationally. Conducted among a pool of 1,600 randomly selected county residents, the survey was available through mail and electronically during the summer of 2018. The NCS data, rather than duplicating efforts using a community needs assessment, was used in Powhatan's Situation Analysis.
- Key informant interviews were conducted by the ELC sub-committee.
- An issues forum was conducted during the June 2018 ELC meeting.
- Powhatan County Board of Supervisors established four priorities of focus.

Finally, data was compiled and analyzed by the sub-committee to identify priority issues to guide Extension's educational program efforts. Data used in the Situation Analysis was obtained through our VCE resource site, Powhatan County Demographic and

Economic Profile, and Virginia Employment Commission Community Profile: Powhatan County. Other sources of data included census information and statistics from the United States Department of Agriculture and Virginia Department of Health. This report is a result of our work.

Unit Profile

Overview

In May 1777, the Virginia General Assembly created the County of Powhatan out of land from the eastern portion of Cumberland County between the Appomattox and James Rivers. In 1850, a small portion of Chesterfield County was annexed, creating what today is the 272 square mile county of Powhatan. In Virginia, there are nine counties bearing American Indian names. Only one, Powhatan, is named for an American Indian chief. "Chief Powhatan," father of the famous American Indian princess, Pocahontas, who was one of the greatest and is today one of the most well-known of the American Indian chiefs.

The 272 square mile county (174,080 acres) is located in the Central Piedmont physiographic province. The landscape features gently rolling hills with elevations ranging from 150 to 400 feet above sea level. Drainage is provided by the Appomattox and James Rivers.

Demographics

The 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimated a population of 28,601 citizens in Powhatan County, while a population of 28,062 estimated in 2010. This reflects a population increase of 1.9%, or an increase of 539 individuals, during this seven-year range. The Census Bureau only predicts a 2.52% total increase in Powhatan's population between 2010 and 2020. The population consists of 87.6% white, 9.9% African American, Hispanic/Latino 2.2%, and 0.3% in all other races.

Households

Powhatan serves as a bedroom community for the greater Richmond area. This is due to the fact the majority of citizens residing in the County commute to work outside of Powhatan. According to the Virginia Employment Commission, 11,402 Powhatan residents commute out of the community for work, while only 2,073 work and live in the County. In-County commuters, or those who live outside of Powhatan but come to work in the area, totals 4,266. Powhatan County's 2017 unemployment rate in 2017 was 3.3%. This was a decrease from 5.1% in 2013, and is slightly under the state unemployment rate of 3.8%.

As of July 2017, the total number of housing units in Powhatan was 10,898. Median owner occupied housing value for 2012-2016 is \$254,200. This indicates a decrease from \$260,160 in 2011. Of the total housing units in Powhatan from 2012 to 2016, 88.8% were owner occupied. According to Zillow.com, home values in Powhatan have increased 3.3% in the past year and predicts a 7% rise within the next year. Median gross rent from 2012-2016 is \$937. Building permits totaled 223 in 2017. From 2000 to 2008, the housing market boomed in Powhatan until the recession in 2008, which resulted in an economy that has been slowly recovering since.

Median household income in 2016 of families with children was \$85,179, compared to 2010 when it was \$84,413. An increase was observed in household incomes of \$100,000 and above during the same period. However, incomes decreased in those households making under \$49,999 during the past 10 years. The last Census projected incomes to continue this divide among lower and higher household incomes in Powhatan into 2017. This increase in the upper range of household incomes when compared to the decrease in lower range incomes led to additional questions regarding the need to support County human services. According to the Federal Poverty Level as of 2018, an individual with an income under \$16,389 qualifies for poverty level; a family would qualify with a combined income of \$22,221 or less.

The Robert Wood Foundation's 2018 county health rankings estimated 18% of children reside in single-parent households in Powhatan, compared to 14% in 2013. Thirty percent of children in Virginia currently reside in single-parent households. Data on children in poverty indicated a 4% increase, while a 7% increase was noted of children in single-parent households. The population in the age group of 25 to 44 reflected a decline of 5.1% since 2000, while the number of residents over age 45 continues to grow. This increase led to further questions about affordable housing, health care facilities and lack of transportation.

According to Virginia Department of Social Services, the number of children in Powhatan receiving childcare subsidies declined approximately 50% between 2014 and 2017. There were 69 youth in 2014 compared to 36 in 2017.

Schools

During 2017-2018, student enrollment in Powhatan County Public Schools had observed a slight increase from 4,376 compared to 4,302 in 2013. Students are enrolled in the 3 elementary, 1 middle, and 1 high school along with two regional schools, Maggie Walker Governor School in Richmond and Appomattox Governor School in Petersburg. Blessed Sacrament Huguenot is a co-ed Catholic school situated in Powhatan offering preschool through 12th grade. According to the Robert Wood Foundation, high school graduation rate in Powhatan is 90%, compared to 86% in Virginia overall. Twenty-six percent of the county's population have bachelor's degrees or higher.

Powhatan students eligible for free (17.49%) or reduced (2.93%) lunches totaled 20.42% in 2018. This was a 1.65% increase over the number of eligible students in 2013 as reported by the Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs.

Powhatan's Health

Data indicated that diabetic screenings in 2013 showed the number of screenings to be 2,340 or 10.7% of population compared to the 2010 indicators of 2,122 cases or 10.2%. Diabetes prevalence—the total number of existing cases, including new cases—among adults continues to rise. Although the prevalence of adults with diagnosed diabetes went up sharply during the 1990s, it appears to have been stabilizing since 2009.

According to the Virginia Department of Health, 15 teen pregnancies were reported in Powhatan County for 2016. Five pregnancies were noted to youth ages 15-17, and 10 to young women ages 18-19.

The number of uninsured Powhatan residents in clinical care dropped by 4% since 2010 and now falls under the state average. Uninsured Powhatan residents under age of 65 in 2016 was 9.2%, compared to all of Virginia at 10.2%.

According to Robert Wood Foundation's 2018 county health rankings, Powhatan is listed in 10th place out of 133 Virginia counties and cities. In 2013, Powhatan was ranked in 21st place. The report cited adult obesity in Powhatan as 30%, compared to Virginia at 28% of population. This indicates a slight increase in Powhatan since 2013 when the adult obesity rate was 28%.

Agriculture

The 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture for Powhatan showed an 8% increase in land in farms since the 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture, a drastic reverse from the previous five years which saw a 45% decrease. The market value of products sold has increased by 15% with over \$10 million sold in 2012. The Census also showed a shift in farm size. In 2007, farms totaling within the range of 10 to 49 acres had the highest number of farms. By 2012, Powhatan farms reflected equal amounts with the majority of farms in the 10-49 acre and 50-179 acre ranges.

There are numerous small farms currently in Powhatan, yet just as many large-scale farms within the County. This makes for a very diverse agricultural industry. There are approximately 250 farms in Powhatan County based on the 2012 Census of Agriculture data. There has been an increase in the market value of farms, as well as the market value of their equipment and machines. The 2012 Agriculture Census also showed that 196 males and 54 females engaged in production agriculture. Based on Census data for Powhatan County between 2007 and 2012, there has been a shift from 35% who indicated farming was their primary occupation to 48%.

The increased development of the equine industry generates much economic value at the local level. Powhatan has many equine operations where the owner obtains his or her main income from the business. Based on the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in 2008, almost half of Virginia's horses were used primarily for pleasure riding in 2006. The new Powhatan State Park, Powhatan Wildlife Management Area, and Belmead Stables at St. Francis/St. Emma are three great opportunities that bring in recreational horseback riders to the county. There are many lesson, training, breeding and boarding horse barns in the county as well. Based on the 2008 NASS statistics, Powhatan has somewhere between 1,000 and 2,499 horses.

Traditional agriculture operations still center on cow/calf, row crops, vegetable production and nurseries. There is limited production in dairy and poultry; however, the State Farm Department of Corrections moved their dairy herd and milking barn from Goochland across the river to Powhatan in 2015 along with the Grade A milk processing plant inside Powhatan Correctional in 2011. This facility takes in Virginia Tech's milk every other day and then ships processed milk to be used in some of Virginia Tech and Radford University's dining halls. There has also been an increase in the specialty crop area including organic, value added products, and more.

The 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture will be available in early 2019 to reflect a more accurate representation of Powhatan County's agriculture and the changes since 2012.

Community and Resident Perspectives

As indicated in the introduction, the process used to identify key issues in the community include information gathered from several sources. These sources include The National Citizen Survey (NCS) conducted by Powhatan County in 2018, the Powhatan County Board of Supervisors priorities of focus, key leader interviews and ELC subgroup discussions.

The key findings of The NCS indicated that Powhatan residents enjoy a high quality of life and plan to remain in the community. Further, residents noted that safety is a priority for Powhatan's future, as well as preserving open space and agricultural areas. With respect to housing development, the surveyed residents noted a definite divide on preferred housing types and the amount of emphasis the County should place on encouraging private sector development.

Powhatan Board of Supervisors' priorities include the following: 1) implement an economic development program; 2) expand access to broadband; 3) expand access to

quality of life services, such as fire and rescue, library and recreation; and 4) to gather data on housing in the County in order to evaluate diverse housing options in the future.

The ELC sub-committee members also interviewed several key leaders in the community, including representatives from Powhatan County Public Schools, Public Safety Department, Public Library, Chamber of Commerce and Habitat for Humanity. Specific issues identified through these interviews included access to transportation and broadband; increased multi-family housing options; need to establish school/business partnerships; increased volunteerism and the need for an additional library/community center.

Lastly, the ELC identified issues in the community not currently fully addressed. Key issues identified included increased need for youth to gain life skills/decision making opportunities; the aging population; agriculture sustainability and preservation; accessible housing, and family development. Other areas noted as important included water quality, careers, broadband and internet access, transportation, support of mental health, and business development.

Priority Issues

Issue 1: Aging Population

The percentage of residents in the 25 to 44 age range reflected a decline of 11 percent since 2000, while the number of residents over the age of 55 showing a steady increase from 18.2% in 2000; 24.4% in 2010 and 30.8% in 2016. This trend of an aging population leads to the need to address transportation, affordable and appropriate housing and health care issues. Other issues to address include those related to the aging process, such as isolation in the community, dementia, sociability, hoarding etc. The addition of a part-time Family/Consumer Sciences Extension Agent in 2015 has increased programming in support of topics of concern to seniors, such as financial education, nutrition and prominent health issues such as stress and diabetes management. Staff and the ELC will continue to collaborate with other County agencies such as Social Services, Triad, and Senior Connections to support senior citizens.

Issue 2: Agriculture Sustainability and Preservation

Although Extension continues to meet of the needs for agriculture support in Powhatan County, there are opportunities to expand agriculture programming for both adult and youth audiences. VCE and other agencies in Powhatan County continue to raise awareness of agriculture sustainability and preservation. In an effort to address this, the

position of Agriculture Extension Agent went from a part-time position to full-time in Powhatan since the 2013 Situation Analysis. Expanding this position to full-time adequately fill this need. On some levels, this issue is currently being addressed with existing unit VCE resources but additional support is needed to meet the needs. Also, volunteers are a valuable resource in helping Extension to meet educational programming needs. Increased efforts to recruit new volunteers and to tap into potential volunteers within the senior citizen community could possibly help to extend Extension's reach throughout the county, but the training and supervision of volunteers also requires staff time. Expanded efforts to reach more residents continues to be a need. Specific issues within this related area also noted in the community needs assessment included agriculture production and profitability, animals and livestock, agriculture marketing, food safety and preservation, local food systems, and public awareness of agriculture.

Issue 3: Life Skills and Decision Making

Virginia Cooperative Extension offers a wide range of programs that impact youth development through the 4-H program. While maintaining these quality programs which include equine, livestock, outdoors and shooting education 4-H clubs, Powhatan Extension has also collaborated with other Powhatan agencies; such as the Maker Fest with the Library and afterschool opportunities such as baby-sitting courses with the public schools and Farm Day with the local agriculture community. Needs were addressed to tackle more recent issues such as bullying, opioid/drug use and mass shootings. A curriculum offered through 4-H, called Health Rocks, dives into instruction targeted at middle school students to address drug and alcohol usage and techniques for youth to use to make healthy choices. Through the 4-H camping program, the teen electronic vaping epidemic is currently being addressed through increased training offered to 4-H faculty. Education in this area and others can also aid in youth dealing with peer pressure.

Issue 4: Accessible Housing

Creating new housing opportunities is not specifically within the scope of Extension's programs. However, the Census data indicated a decrease in accessible housing in the past ten years among households making less than \$49,999. Extension will continue to offer programs to assist these families on financial management, food and nutrition. Funding to create a full-time FCS Extension Agent's position would assist in addressing issues related to accessible housing by working to solve these problems within the community.

Issue 5: Family Development

With the addition of the part-time FCS agent, Extension has been able to expand its programming more into this area. Additional programs being offered [or could be offered that would] relate to mental, physical, social, financial and spiritual health. Extension continues to seek collaborations with neighboring counties, as well as Powhatan County government offices, civic organizations, businesses and individuals. Specific issues noted include financial management, parenting education, drug use, violence and health nutrition. Also, issues related to single/busy parent households and how the family dynamic is affected.

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