

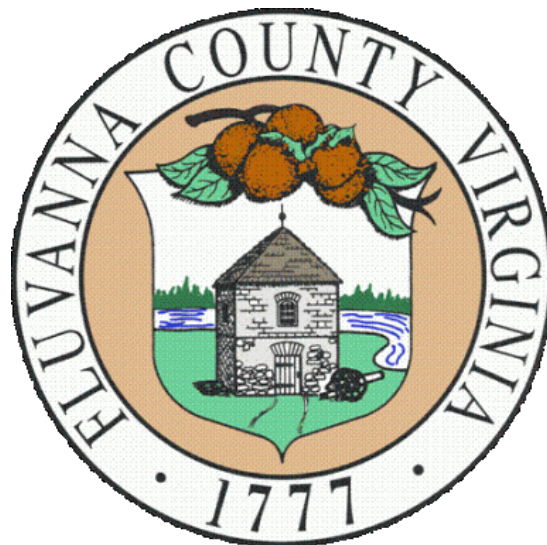


Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

www.ext.vt.edu

Situation Analysis Report



Fluvanna

2018

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Introduction

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) takes pride in the premise that vital programming is based on the issues, problems, and needs of the people. A thorough analysis of the situation provides context for understanding these problems. This is a process of determining what situations exist at local, regional, and state levels, and for determining which problems have become issues of major public concern. Situation analysis provides the foundation and rationale for deciding which problems should receive the time, energy, and resources of VCE.

Unit Profile

Fluvanna County is located in Virginia's central Piedmont region. The county is on the Interstate 64 corridor between Richmond, the state capital, and Charlottesville, home of the University of Virginia. Richmond is 54 miles east, Charlottesville is 25 miles west, and Washington D.C. is 100 miles north. The James River flows along the southern boundary of the county.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau the 2018 population estimate is 26,452. There are no incorporated towns located within county boundaries; however, just under 40% (9920) of county residents live at Lake Monticello, a gated community in the north/central part of the county. The population growth rate in Fluvanna County has increased steadily 2.8% from 2010 to 2018. The estimates indicate a population growth increased from 25,619 to 26,452. According to "United States Census Bureau 2018 data, poverty in Fluvanna County was 6.7%, lower than the state average which was 14%. The Virginia Department of Education reported from 2014 through 2018 that the dropout rate in Fluvanna (2.0%) was lower than the state (5.5%).

2018 estimated racial population of Fluvanna County (U.S. Census Bureau)

Race	Number	Percentage
White	20,726	81.4
Black	4,040	15
American Indian/Alaskan Native	73	0.4
Asian	193	0.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.1
Two or more races	441	2.4
Hispanic	489	3.4

The Virginia Employment Commission reports the unemployment rate in Fluvanna County is 3.1% in 2017. This puts Fluvanna well below both the state average of 3.8%, and the national

rate of 4.4%. According to the 2012 agriculture census, Fluvanna County ranks seventy eighth in the state in agriculture receipts (\$4,722,000) a -16% drop. Fluvanna farmers currently raise corn, soybeans, wheat and Forage. Cattle are a large enterprise, as are horses.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Agents provided current demographic updates to the unit profile. Fluvanna ELC members and unit staff members conducted key stakeholder interviews to gather input on current and future issues VCE might address. Key stakeholders included representatives from local government departments and local agencies including Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Planning Department, Child Services, Monticello Area Community Action Agency, Jefferson Area Board for Aging, Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water District, Rivanna Conservation Alliance, Farm Bureau, Animal Disaster Team, Fluvanna County Schools and Adult Education Program, Youth Advisory Council, Public Library, Emergency Planning, among many others. In addition, we incorporated information from the Fluvanna County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan serves several functions, one of which is the vision for the future of the County. The priority issues below mirror many of the implementation goals of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly with respect to the Natural Environment, Protection of Environmental Resources, and Human Services sections of the plan. Unit ELC members compiled and organized data from stakeholder interviews and summarized the priority issues below.

Priority Issues

Issue I: Engagement of Youth

Despite our largely rural County, youth are less engaged in outdoor recreation, agriculture and natural resources (ANR) than prior generations. In addition to providing exercise for our children and youth, outdoor ANR activities engender a positive mental attitude, especially toward nature and the environment. As national, state and local organizations' debates and decisions increasingly include natural resource, environmental, responsible growth, and climate aspects, it is imperative that future generations have the knowledge to make intelligent decisions. Offering engaging and informative opportunities for children and youth in agriculture and nature provides a sound basis for their future. Accordingly we have re-focused our efforts to increase our youth and children offerings as well as their access to these programs.

Since 2013, youth enrollment in extension 4-H programs has increased from 1417 to 1845, a 30% increase. We have partnered with the Fluvanna County Public schools to add our Terrific Tuesdays after school program for elementary and middle school students. Further, our

partner organizations, the local Virginia Extension Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists, have also increased their programs for youth. Examples include the annual Earth Day Field Trip for 1st and 2nd graders, where they plant trees, sow wildflower seeds and hike our trails, as well as the 4th Grade Ag Day where youth learn about Virginia agriculture.

As we look to the future, we are further increasing our programs that provide children and youth access to ANR learning and experience. We are also developing partnerships with other local organizations to further increase access to ANR education and experiential learning activities as we develop additional communication strategies, address transportation shortfalls, plan marketing strategies for our offerings and increase the use of technology. For example, we are partnering with the Fluvanna County Library to bring programs to youth and children, including home schooled students who may not have access to school based programs. Further we have developed plans to incorporate 3-D QR coding into some of our ANR offerings so that youth and children can use their technology for access.

II. Community Engagement

Connecting families and communities continues to remain a challenge for Fluvanna County residents. As a result of the rural nature of the county, a lack of public transportation repeatedly has been cited as a barrier to engaging citizens, thus preventing them from accessing available services. Additionally, in an era where information is routinely disseminated online, reliable high speed internet is not available to approximately one-third of the county. While there are services available to address concerns such as affordable health care, mental health care, and access to local employment resources, providing citizens with knowledge of the available resources continues to be identified as a priority issue.

III. WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has identified a number of streams and tributaries in Fluvanna County as being impaired. As a result, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has been placed on Cunningham Creek and its tributaries. Sediment, E. coli, are frequently identified as problems also by the Rivanna Conservation Alliance (RCA) testing. The Soil and Water Conservation District is also concerned about a need for more soil testing as well as developing a plan for impacts of climate change and invasive species. More education for farmers and homeowners to address these concerns is needed. There are resources available to address some of these issues, but frequently the stakeholders are uninformed about them. The RCA supports better stream health with its ongoing testing programs, and also is willing to cooperate with other agencies in educating farmers as well as planting riparian buffers.

IV. AGRICULTURE ENHANCEMENT

Agriculture is the number one business in Fluvanna County. Our county has been without an agricultural and natural resources agent since 2017. One problem is the lack of internet

access in the more rural parts of the county, but training in appropriate software for managing agriculture is also needed. Soil analyses, water infiltration issues, and best management practices (BMPs) need to be better communicated to farmers and homeowners. Likewise, education in integrated pest management, chemical use and disposal, as well as methods to protect streams is needed. The Soil and Water Conservation District in cooperation with the Rivanna Conservation Alliance has money for tree planting, but needs appropriate sites for planting. Local farmer education days should be reinstated, and cooperation between Virginia Cooperative Extension, SWCD and NRCS will be enhanced with the addition of a full-time agricultural agent. Currently, there is a strong agricultural training program at the High School as well as an active, award-winning FFA. The Extension organizes an Agriculture Education Day once a year for the fourth graders, and 4-H programs thrive. New wineries, orchards and vineyards have opened some seasonal employment opportunities for local youth.