



Strategic Planning Policy Briefs

Policy Brief Teams **(in order of appearance)**

❖ Safety

- Mark Riley, Scott Fitzgerald, Tommy Roberts, Tammy Dunn, Ty Dickerson, TJ Robertson and John Smith

❖ Economy

- Gary Swink, Pat Delaney, Noah Simon, Meredith Warfield, Karen Roundy, Scott Dameron and Mike Kennedy

❖ Engagement

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❖ Health

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❖ Learning

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Economy

Economically Healthy City

Policy Brief

PURPOSE:

The Team defined its purpose as looking at means to grow and diversify the City's revenue streams and to grow the community's economy in terms of more jobs and better pay.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

The City of Lexington is an independent city and it is the county seat of Rockbridge County although the two are separate jurisdictions. Lexington has for some time been the center for various governmental, judicial, civic, educational, medical, and retail services. Currently, there are 7,045 people living in the City of Lexington. Lexington's median age of 23 makes it the youngest city in America, with 47.38% of the population between the ages 15 and 24. This age group includes the 3,494 students attending VMI and Washington & Lee. The racial makeup is predominately Caucasian followed by African American and Asian. In the city, 47% of the population has an Associate degree level education or higher. There are 1,638 households in the city and 2510 people living in military barracks, dormitories or student housing. Lexington's demographics are depicted in Appendix A. With the median income for a household in the city of \$34,017, and the per capita income is \$17,792, it must be noted that a significant portion of our population is financially stressed, particularly those individuals who are on fixed incomes. Although the poverty levels as calculated for Lexington may be artificially high due to its student population, the actual numbers of individuals using the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) program, in the FAMIS (Virginia's health care for children), and in the Medicaid program may be a greater number than is visible. Access to adequate nutrition and health care may be more reliable indicators of economic health than unemployment numbers, as evidenced by Lexington's Free Lunch program percentage increase of 3.99% from 2015 to 2016, i.e. 139 of 514 students in 2016 as seen in Appendix B. Various charitable organizations with volunteers and corporate sponsorship have assisted individuals within the region with access to health care, nutrition, clothing and housing. Some of these organizations are listed in Appendix K. The City of Lexington also has a tradition of contributing to charitable organization through financial contributions and in-kind assistance in an effort to expand their support.

EMPLOYMENT:

Lexington's top employers are in the education and healthcare fields by a considerably larger margin. Educational services has seen the most significant job increase over the last ten years, while health care and social assistance experienced the most significant job decrease. The city enjoyed sizable job growth in the professional, scientific, and technical services fields during this same ten year period. Most recent unemployment rate is 6.3%, down from a ten-year high in 2009. It is not known whether college students are included in the unemployment rate by the Virginia Employment Commission. It should also be noted that there is an uncertain concerning Lexington's overall employment percentages based on data collected by using the zip code 24450 as a Lexington City indicator since the zip code extends well beyond the city's limits. See Appendix C for Lexington's employment profile.

GENERAL FUND:

REVENUES (See Appendix D, Figures 1, 3, 4) – The City of Lexington has the highest tax exempt property percentage (total of assessed value exempted in excess of 60%) of any other jurisdiction in Virginia. With the expansion and growth of both VMI and Washington & Lee University, this percentage is likely to increase. Since Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, the City of Lexington's taxing authority is limited to those items that have been conferred to it by State law. Currently, Lexington's largest source of revenue for the General Fund are property taxes, which has grown by 14.5% over the last 5 fiscal years, a result of the steady increase of the real estate property tax rate from \$0.83 to \$1.11 over the past 5 years. The second largest source of revenue are transfers from the state which has declined over the past 5 fiscal years by 10%. On the other hand, revenues from Meals and Lodging Taxes have increased over the same period.

Revenue sharing continues to be a significant source of funds (10.2%); although it is becoming a smaller portion of the City's revenue year-by-year. The local share of School funding has decreased slightly while funding from the state has increased significantly over the last 5 fiscal years. The City currently charges various fees, and Appendix E lists the fees that are currently charged, potential new fees, and those that may be increased.

EXPENSES - Uses of the General Fund's revenues is summarized in Appendix D, Figures 1, 2 and 5. Debt service and funding for capital projects and equipment are consuming a greater portion of our budget than ten years ago. A function of government comprising a greater share of the expenditures is public safety. Judicial services accounts for a slightly greater share of the budget now. Functions of government receiving smaller portions of the budget include Public Works, education, health and welfare, general government administration, and community development. Expenses related to regional operations for police, fire and rescue, Central Dispatch (911), and the regional jail are not within our control.

UTILITY FUND:

Water and sewer rate increases over the past five years are supporting a critical need to renew aging deteriorating utility infrastructure. A *Financial Roadmap to a Successful and Sustainable Waterworks*, as noted in Appendix F, serves as the basis for financial planning and budgeting for the Utility Fund. This study indicates that inflationary rate increases will be needed to fund infrastructure improvements in the near term, barring unexpected circumstances. As a result, utility rates increased by 39.6% over the past 5 years, and will continue to increase annually by about 3% over the next several years. Over the past two fiscal years an emerging trend is a decline in retail water sales to customers, primarily in the residential class.

INFRASTRUCTURE & ECONOMIC GROWTH:

Adequate, reliable, and safe infrastructure directly impacts city economic growth and development. The condition of critical infrastructure components such as streets, sidewalks, storm water collection system, water distribution system, and wastewater collection system play a major role in attracting new and retaining current businesses. Additionally these same components dramatically affect neighborhood quality of life in residential areas. City capital budgets have increased significantly over the past five years to meet this critical need of renewing aging deteriorating infrastructure, by 300% in the general fund and by 760% in the utility fund. See Appendix G for Infrastructure & Economic Growth profile.

USE OF CITY PROPERTY:

Lexington is essentially built-out with extremely limited available land for new development. The city uses a limited amount of property to perform essential city functions and to provide desired city services. Also, the city owns a considerable amount of property that is used for other purposes. These properties fulfill needs, but do not generate any tax revenue. See Appendix H for a profile on City property use.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES:

The Team spent a considerable amount of time evaluating current and possible taxes and fees. The attached Appendix I provides an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of current and potential taxes and fees. Appendix J, produced during FY2014, describes those taxes that Lexington collects and those which are possible, but are not presently imposed. Since the document was produced, the Real Estate tax rate has increased to \$1.11, while the Meals Tax is now 6% and Transient Occupancy Tax is 8%.

It is important to note that the Team also analyzed the operational impacts and return on investment (ROI) for continuing the collection of current taxes and fees as well as potential taxes and fees. Other factors were considered during the evaluation, including short, near and long term implications, overall costs, legislative (Dillon rule), regionalism and economic development and redevelopment implications. Additionally, the Team considered the impacts on local and regional economic engines (Washington and Lee, VMI, the hospital and Horse Center) to create the matrix in Appendix I.

The imposition of taxes in Virginia are governed by the Dillon Rule, which basically says that a locality can only impose taxes when specifically given that right by the state; therefore, the City cannot impose just any tax that it wishes to.

The SWOT analysis suggests that potential taxes and fees are linked to other strategies and initiatives. For instance, to increase the Real Estate tax base, development and redevelopment of existing buildings and parcels must occur. The same is true for Sales, Meals, Transient Occupancy and Personal Property – investments (direct, indirect, property and cash) must also be made.

The review of current and potential fees suggests that the City should recover and/or offset costs where possible. Additionally, relatively new fees such as system development charges or a new fee such as a storm water fee could be implemented to offset utility infrastructure costs.

With both fees and taxes, certain political pressures will be advanced – as no individual, group or interest desires to “pay more.” Careful consideration, analysis, “big and long-term picture” must be equally and uniformly applied to find and fund new revenue streams to ensure the long-term fiscal health of the City of Lexington. It should be noted that the collection of sales tax on retail transactions is greatly impacted by e-commerce.

SUGGESTED METRICS:

The Team suggests the following metrics to track community progress:

- Percentage of properties that are exempt
- Taxable property value
- Value of annual Lexington investment measured by building permits
- Poverty rate
- Population totals and demographics as represented in Appendix A
- Employment, including unemployment rate, job creation, salaries and wages
- Business property vacancies
- City revenues and expenses, including grants and fines
- City capital investments
- City employee and teacher compensation
- Measure return on investment for City capital investment initiatives

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNINGS:

The Team makes the following observations and learnings of Lexington's economic health:

- Position Lexington to attract and retain innovators and entrepreneurs.
- The City has an opportunity to place property it owns on the tax rolls.
- The City has an opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion on taxes and fees.
- It may be beneficial to pursue regional opportunities when clearly beneficial to the City.
- Evaluate regional agreements.
- Educate the community on direct and indirect financial impacts of VMI, W&L, The Horse Center and the hospital.
- Continuously evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of City services, with City Council engagement.

Lexington Demographics

Total Population <http://demographics.coopercenter.org/population-estimates-age-sex-race-hispanic-towns/>

7,045 (2016)

Median Age by Sex

- ❖ Male 21.8 57%
- ❖ Female 31.3 43%

Population by Age

- ❖ 7.54% - 0 to 14
- ❖ 47.38% - 15 to 24
- ❖ 30.06% - 25 to 64
- ❖ 15.02% - 65 and over

Ethnicity

- ❖ 85.2% Caucasian
- ❖ 9.1% African American
- ❖ 3% Asian
- ❖ .2% Other

Educational Attainment of Adults (2015 Regional Data Center)

- ❖ 20.9% HS Graduates
- ❖ 13.3% Some College
- ❖ 2.7% Associate Degree
- ❖ 20.6% Bachelor Degree
- ❖ 23.7% Post Graduate

Per Capita Income (2016 US Census)

- ❖ Lexington \$14,792

Median Household Income

- ❖ \$34,017

Households

- ❖ 1,638

Housing Units

- ❖ 2,546 (2010)

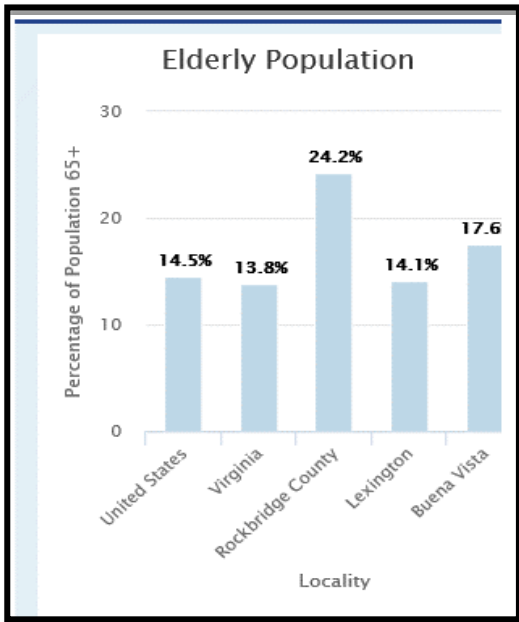
APPENDIX A

Table 5: Percent of Population by Age Cohort, 2015

2015 SVWDA Population by Age - Percentage					
Locality	0 to 19	20 to 44	45 to 64	65+	Total
Augusta County	22%	29%	30%	18%	100%
Bath County	21%	23%	33%	23%	100%
Clarke County	24%	25%	32%	19%	100%
Frederick County	26%	31%	28%	15%	100%
Highland County	16%	16%	35%	34%	100%
Page County	23%	28%	30%	19%	100%
Rockbridge County	20%	26%	31%	23%	100%
Rockingham County	26%	29%	28%	17%	100%
Shenandoah County	23%	28%	29%	20%	100%
Warren County	26%	30%	30%	14%	100%
Buena Vista	27%	34%	22%	16%	100%
Harrisonburg	30%	47%	15%	8%	100%
Lexington	31%	47%	11%	12%	100%
Staunton	22%	32%	26%	20%	100%
Waynesboro	25%	32%	25%	18%	100%
Winchester	26%	34%	26%	14%	100%
SVWDA	25%	32%	27%	16%	100%
Virginia	25%	34%	27%	13%	100%

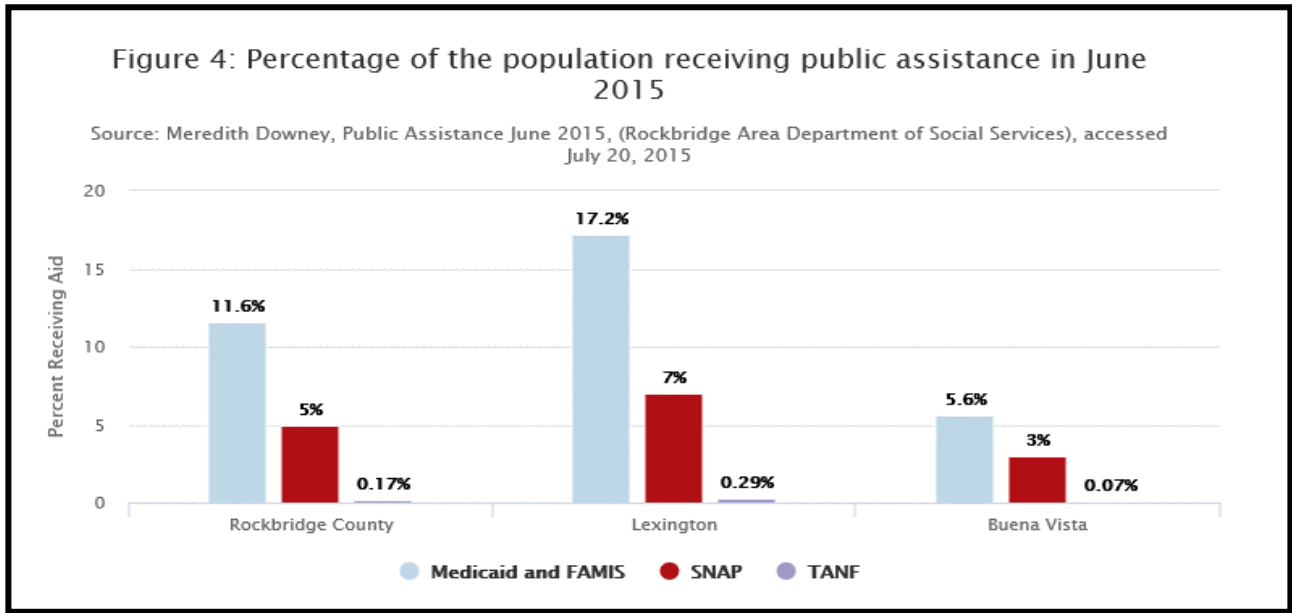
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015

APPENDIX A

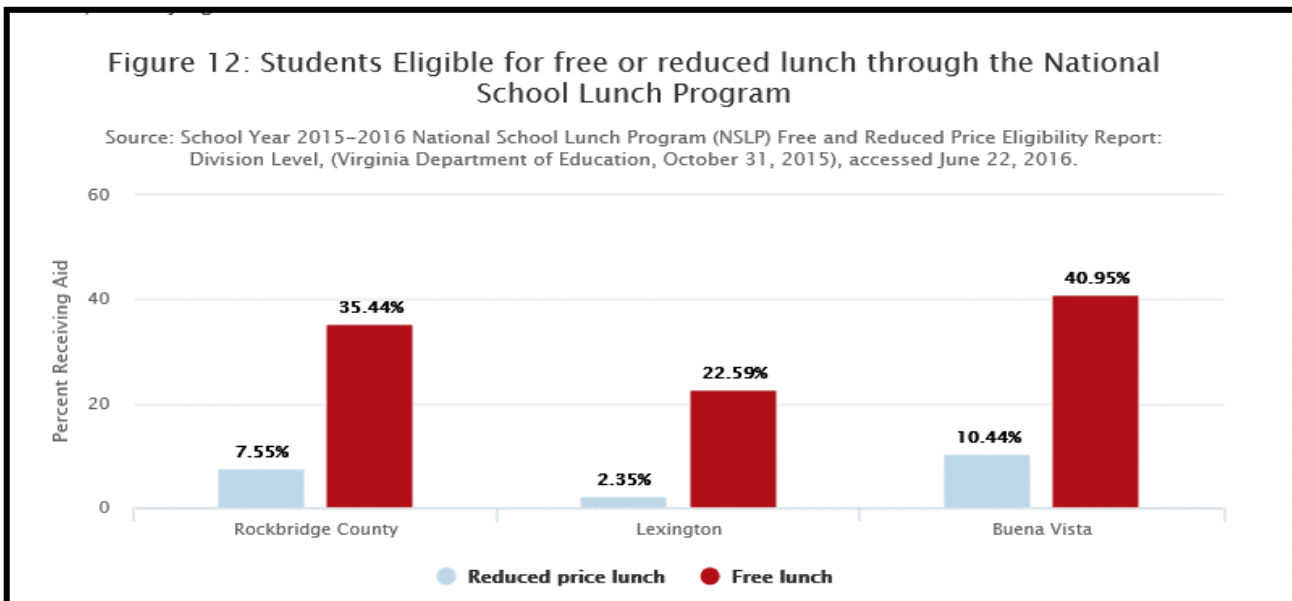


W & L Shepherd Poverty Program 2016

APPENDIX B



FAMIS - Virginia's health insurance for children.
 SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families



W & L Shepherd Poverty Program 2016

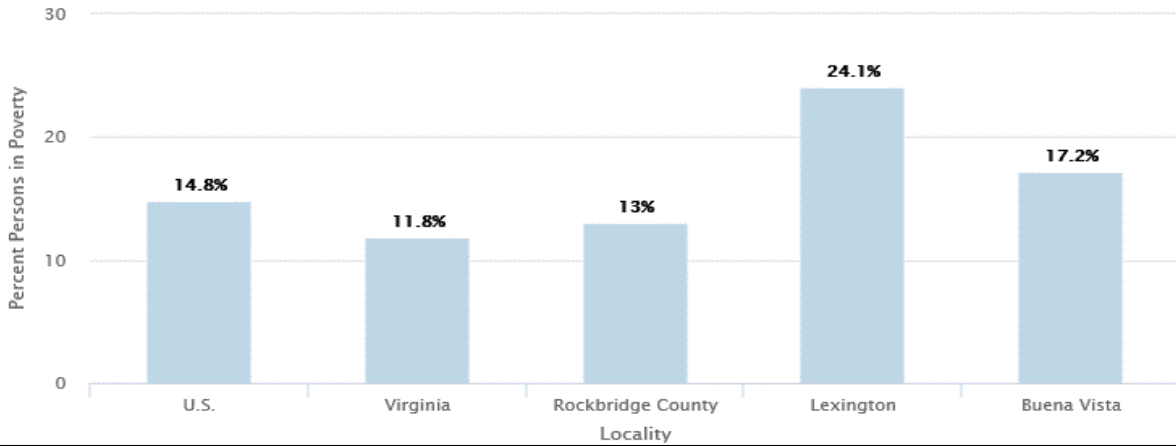
APPENDIX B

According to the 2013 U.S. Census, median household incomes in the Rockbridge area were significantly lower than the rest of Virginia (\$64,792) and the United States (\$53,482):

- Rockbridge County: \$48,550;
- Lexington City: \$36,840;
- Buena Vista City: \$32,789.*

Figure 3: Poverty Rates, 2014

Source: Income and Poverty, QuickFacts Beta, (United States Census Bureau), accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045214/00>.



APPENDIX C

September 6, 2017

Profile – EMPLOYMENT

Industry Classification	Source
<p>Growth, Top 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational Services - 486. 2. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services - 93. 3. Accommodation and Food Services - 89. 4. Government - 68. 5. Transportation and Warehousing - 38. <p>Decline, Top 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health Care and Social Assistance – (201). 2. Construction – (98). 3. Retail Trade – (82). 4. Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (58). 5. Wholesale Trade –(57). <p>Note. City realized a net growth of 200 jobs during this time period.</p>	<p><i>Region 8 Data Report, 2006 - 2016</i></p>
Gender	Source
<p>Male Population – 56%</p> <p>Female Population -44%</p>	<p><i>Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, Regional Data Center and U.S. Census 2010</i></p>
Age	Source
<p>Median Age – 23 years</p>	<p><i>Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, Regional Data Center and U.S. Census 2010</i></p>
Unemployment/Job Loss	Source
<p>Unemployment Rate – 6.3%</p> <p>Unemployment Paid – 634 weeks at cost of \$177,575</p> <p>Businesses less than 5 years old created 60 new jobs</p>	<p><i>Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Regional Data Center and U.S. Census 2016</i></p> <p><i>Virginia Employment Commission 2016</i></p> <p><i>Region 8 Data Report, 2006 - 2016</i></p>
Large Employers	Source
<p>Top 10 Employers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Washington & Lee University 2. Virginia Military Institute 3. Carillion Stonewall Jackson Hospital 4. ADP Totalsource De Iv Inc. 5. City of Lexington 6. Aramark Campus LLC 7. Kroger 8. Lexington City Schools 9. Heritage Hall -10. Virginia Military Institute Foundation <p>Four new startup firms in 2016.</p>	<p><i>Virginia Employment Commission 2016</i></p> <p><i>Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Facts & Figures</i></p>

APPENDIX C

Table 18

City of Lexington, Virginia
Principle Employers
Current Year and Ten Years Ago

Employer	Fiscal year ended June 30,2016			Fiscal year ended June 30,2006		
	Employment Range	Rank	% of Total City Employees(1)	Employment Range	Rank	% of Total City Employees
Washington & Lee University	over 1000	1	68.3%	500-999	1	19.2%
Virginia Military Institute	500-999	2	41.0%	500-999	2	12.9%
Carilion-Stonewall Jackson Hospital	100-249	3	12.2%	250-500	3	8.8%
City of Lexington	100-249	4	9.0%	100-249	6	2.6%
Aramark Campus LLC	100-249	5	5.8%			
Kroger Company	50-99	6	5.5%	50-99	8	1.6%
Lexington City School Board	50-99	7	4.3%	50-99	7	2.0%
UTP Services LLC	50-99	8	3.9%			
Heritage Hall Health Care (HCMF)	50-99	9	3.8%	50-99	9	1.4%
The VMI Foundation	50-99	10	3.5%			
Rockbridge County				100-249	4	3.4%
Virginia Department of Transportation				100-249	5	3.0%
Rockbridge Farmer's Cooperative				50-99	10	1.4%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Labor Market & Demographics Analysis

(1) Total percentage of City employees exceeds 100% due to employees commuting into the City to work.

APPENDIX D FIGURE 1

Table 5
Page 1 of 2

City of Lexington, Virginia
Changes in Fund Balances of Government Funds
Last Ten Fiscal Years
(modified accrual basis of accounting)
(amounts expressed in thousands)

	Fiscal Year									
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Revenues										
General property taxes	\$ 3,914	\$ 4,144	\$ 4,438	\$ 4,449	\$ 4,400	\$ 4,807	\$ 5,254	\$ 5,778	\$ 6,481	\$ 6,681
Other local taxes	2,914	3,078	3,061	3,000	2,688	2,792	3,121	3,145	3,601	4,211
Licenses and permits	180	108	79	100	56	94	255	187	82	62
Fines and forfeitures	104	106	124	95	100	103	108	86	82	59
Use of money & property	1,204	797	222	169	188	144	304	261	112	148
Charges for services	829	777	848	918	894	954	1,013	969	1,096	1,097
Miscellaneous	1,999	2,995	2,382	2,279	2,120	2,185	2,335	2,323	2,474	2,518
Recovered costs	208	255	180	179	155	221	235	415	433	476
Intergovernmental	2,082	2,065	1,821	2,050	2,320	2,193	2,388	3,105	2,703	2,170
Total revenues	\$ 13,434	\$ 14,325	\$ 13,155	\$ 13,239	\$ 12,921	\$ 13,493	\$ 15,013	\$ 16,269	\$ 17,064	\$ 17,422
Expenditures										
General government administration	\$ 1,025	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,175	\$ 1,204	\$ 1,168	\$ 1,364	\$ 1,258	\$ 2,096	\$ 1,296	\$ 1,200
Judicial administration	1,385	3,252	4,389	259	266	256	285	299	310	353
Public safety	2,340	2,377	2,689	2,540	2,490	2,715	3,111	3,799	3,445	3,320
Public works	2,140	2,630	3,002	2,624	2,719	2,224	2,917	3,134	3,115	2,917
Health and welfare	569	628	565	652	751	736	680	816	669	510
Education	1,893	1,484	2,553	1,873	2,858	2,379	2,711	2,215	3,012	3,033
Parks, recreation and cultural	487	1,310	1,539	533	448	508	669	474	529	594
Community development	768	757	697	711	1,194	1,100	1,579	714	721	725
Nondepartmental	36	193	95	-	-	-	(5)	20	385	459
Capital outlay (1)	2,164	4,794	-	8,437	1,164	520	843	1,388	3,623	8,786
Debt service:										
Principal	748	1,000	689	1,328	835	840	850	987	965	1,242
Interest	681	608	574	560	534	495	529	450	664	901
Bond Issuance Costs	-	-	-	115	-	-	200	130	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$ 14,236	\$ 20,174	\$ 17,967	\$ 20,836	\$ 14,427	\$ 13,137	\$ 15,627	\$ 16,522	\$ 18,734	\$ 24,040
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	\$ (802)	\$ (5,849)	\$ (4,812)	\$ (7,597)	\$ (1,506)	\$ 356	\$ (614)	\$ (253)	\$ (1,670)	\$ (6,618)

APPENDIX D FIGURE 2

Table 6

City of Lexington, Virginia
General Governmental Expenditures by Function (1)
Last Ten Fiscal Years

Fiscal Year	General Government Administration	Judicial Administration	Public Safety (2)	Public Works	Health and Welfare	Education (2)	Parks, Recreation, and Cultural(2)	Community Development(2)	Capital Outlay and Non-departmental	Debt Service(3)	Total
2015-16	\$ 1,200,460	\$ 353,210	\$ 3,319,963	\$ 2,917,207	\$ 509,789	\$ 6,323,459	\$ 594,051	\$ 724,805	\$ 9,245,806	\$ 2,142,662	\$ 27,331,412
2014-15	\$ 1,299,415	\$ 309,949	\$ 3,473,764	\$ 3,306,441	\$ 669,108	\$ 9,609,873	\$ 938,158	\$ 1,309,780	\$ 385,346	\$ 1,629,039	\$ 22,930,873
2013-14	2,095,873	298,767	4,988,524	3,291,126	815,818	6,028,885	922,446	1,366,217	346,841	1,567,448	21,721,945
2012-13	1,258,495	284,745	4,050,943	2,916,722	679,526	5,892,438	1,074,043	2,009,488	972,864	1,578,715	20,717,979
2011-12	1,368,474	255,637	3,698,111	2,527,005	736,376	5,715,144	878,752	1,540,627	131,567	1,334,738	18,186,431
2010-11	1,177,305	266,021	3,394,205	2,726,651	750,685	5,413,345	881,224	1,535,543	1,778,862	1,369,051	19,292,892
2009-10	1,204,011	258,442	3,931,851	2,652,364	652,146	5,619,260	1,263,941	1,079,782	7,638,873	2,002,705	26,303,375
2008-09	1,174,738	4,388,867	3,528,376	3,001,609	565,015	5,686,236	1,907,914	1,047,911	359,516	1,263,770	22,923,952
2007-08	1,296,758	3,230,809	3,219,052	6,496,448	628,278	5,852,973	1,698,457	1,045,409	192,983	1,607,612	25,268,779
2006-07	1,040,800	1,384,967	3,691,711	3,713,453	569,253	5,403,947	913,248	1,069,282	35,975	1,429,796	19,252,432

(1) Includes General, Capital Projects and Permanent funds of the Primary Government and its Discretely Presented Component Units.

(2) Excludes contribution from Primary Government to Discretely Presented Component Units.

(3) Includes bond issuance costs.

APPENDIX D FIGURE 3

Table 7

City of Lexington, Virginia
General Governmental Revenues by Source (1)
Last Ten Fiscal Years

Fiscal Year	General Property Taxes	Other Local Taxes	Permits, Privilege Fees Regulatory Licenses	Fines and Forfeitures	Revenue from the Use of Money and Property	Charges for Services	Miscellaneous	Recovered Costs	Inter-governmental(2)	Total
2015-16	\$ 6,680,922	\$ 4,210,771	\$ 62,288	\$ 58,464	\$ 152,567	\$ 1,314,508	\$ 2,522,014	\$ 488,995	\$ 5,347,959	\$ 20,838,488
2014-15	6,480,784	3,600,846	82,094	82,296	115,931	1,323,677	2,481,745	447,964	5,864,879	20,480,216
2013-14	5,777,828	3,145,038	186,917	86,086	264,978	1,191,714	2,326,384	427,688	5,506,545	18,913,178
2012-13	5,253,894	3,120,959	254,912	107,569	313,442	1,377,050	2,379,972	1,800,565	5,378,773	19,987,136
2011-12	4,806,977	2,792,046	94,381	102,896	149,060	1,311,018	2,344,704	1,677,147	5,477,318	18,755,547
2010-11	4,400,432	2,688,313	55,990	99,749	191,010	1,233,914	2,163,175	1,486,532	5,474,333	17,793,448
2009-10	4,448,766	2,999,761	100,173	95,052	172,102	1,269,175	2,309,581	1,525,785	6,066,781	18,987,176
2008-09	4,438,289	3,060,864	79,233	124,101	225,741	1,210,743	2,402,114	1,573,645	5,400,599	18,515,329
2007-08	4,144,128	3,078,466	108,095	106,274	803,145	1,133,526	3,022,196	1,492,906	5,514,358	19,403,094
2006-07	3,914,166	2,914,381	180,066	103,998	1,210,016	1,105,553	2,026,288	1,667,106	5,528,163	18,649,737

(1) Includes General, Capital Projects and Permanent funds of the Primary Government and its Discretely Presented Component Units.

(2) Excludes contributions from Primary Government to Discretely Presented Component Units.

APPENDIX D
Figure 4

Revenue Sources

	FY0S Budget	FY13 Budget	FY 18 Budget
Sources of Revenue- General Fund			
Property Taxes	30.2%	33.0%	37.8%
Revenues from the State	16.2%	14.4%	12.8%
Revenue Sharing	13.0%	11.3%	10.2%
Meals Taxes	4.3%	5.9%	8.7%
Sales Taxes	6.0%	5.4%	5.8%
BPOL Taxes	4.2%	3.6%	3.5%
Lodging Taxes	1.6%	1.5%	3.1%
Charges for services	5.6%	6.2%	4.8%
Subtotal	81.0%	81.4%	86.5%
Fund Balance	3.9%	9.1%	0.0%
All other sources	15.1%	9.5%	13.5%

	FY0S Budget	FY13 Budget	FY 18 Budget
Sources of Revenue- School Fund			
Local Funds	42.8%	44.6%	44.1%
State Funds	49.5%	42.9%	48.9%
Federal Funds	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%
All other Sources	3.9%	8.9%	3.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX D
Figure 5

Uses of Funds- GeneralFund

	FY08 Budget	FY13 Budget	FY 18 Budget
Public Safety	19.8%	21.3%	22.4%
Public Works	22.4%	20.0%	17.8%
Education	20.7%	17.5%	17.2%
Debt Service	8.9%	8.8%	12.0%
General Government Administration	8.9%	8.3%	7.7%
To Capital Projects	0.5%	6.7%	5.9%
Health & Welfare	6.9%	4.9%	4.2%
Community Development	5.2%	4.4%	4.4%
To Equipment Fund	1.9%	1.6%	2.6%
Leisure Services	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%
Judicial Services	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%
All other	0.0%	1.5%	0.6%

APPENDIX E

Fees Currently Charged by Lexington

- Parking permits
- Building permits
- Planning fees (site plan, CUP, **ARB**)
- Water & sewer fees
- Utility connection fees
- Utility system development fees
- Sanitation fees
- Right of Way permits
- Banner installation fees
- Cemetery fees
- Swimming pool fees
- Rescue fees

Potential New Fees

- Stormwater fees
- Special events fee
- Facility use fee (park use fee)
- Additional sanitation fees
- Parking fees
- Technology fee
- Additional franchise fees

Fees for Consideration of Increases

- Rescue fees to County
- Water & sewer rates to the PSA

APPENDIX F

WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASES :

FY14	3%
FY15	5%
FY16	15%
FY17	9%
FY18	3%

5 YEAR INCREASE OF 39.6%

WATER & SEWER REVENUE:

FY14 BUDGET - \$3,820,000

FY18 BUDGET - \$4,762,800

Source: "Financial Roadmap to a Successful and Sustainable Waterworks."
Davenport & Company Municipal and Financial Services Group. February 2016.
City of Lexington, VA.

APPENDIX G

September 21, 2017

Profile – INFRASTRUCTURE & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Fund (Capital Spending)	Fiscal Year
General	
\$231,500	2013/2014
\$703,015	2017/2018
Utility	
\$115,000	2013/2014
\$875,610	2017/2018

APPENDIX H

September 6, 2017

Profile – USE OF CITY PROPERTY

- ❖ Lexington is essentially built-out with extremely limited land available for new development.
- ❖ Presently 64% of property in city is non-taxable.
- ❖ City owns 2.4 acres of undeveloped land on Spotswood Drive.
- ❖ City owns the 10,680 square foot Piovano Building sited on 0.92 acres on Spotswood Drive and it is used by three non-profit organizations: The Food Pantry, The Community Table, and the Ladies Volunteer Firefighters Auxiliary. These organizations pay nominal or no rent for its use.
- ❖ City owns a one-story 1,664 square foot building sited on 0.50 acres on N. Main Street and it is used by the Rockbridge Area Transit System, a non-profit organization that pays nominal or no rent for its use.
- ❖ City owns a two-story 1,360 square foot building sited on 0.21 acres at Jordan's Point Park and it is used as a museum.
- ❖ City provides free vehicle parking, about 6 spaces, to the Maury Express organization in the Public Works Complex Yard.
- ❖ City owns 516 acres of undeveloped land, Brushy Hills, located in Rockbridge County.
- ❖ City owns 143 acres of undeveloped land, Moomaw Land, located in Rockbridge County.
- ❖ City owns the Moore's Creek Dam, which is sited on a 60 acre land parcel. Presently, water from the reservoir is designated for emergency backup use by agreement with Rockbridge County.

APPENDIX I

SWOT Analysis	
Current Taxes	S = Strengths, W = Weaknesses, O = Opportunities, T = Threats/Challenges
Real Estate /Personal	S = That the tax exists. W = Percentage of tax exempt properties. O = Reverse the trend of increasing tax exempt properties; redevelopment (highest and best use of land); development of city-owned property. T = Not much potential for the city to increase the real estate tax rate; can't increase personal tax rate; in general, stability is a threat.
Meals	S = Universities, events, tourists drive in revenue. W = Universities, events, tourists are somewhat seasonal. O = Could have more restaurants without oversaturating the market; student enrollment could increase. T = 1% from cap on tax rate; as revenue increases, more payout goes to tourism.
Lodging	Similar to meals; W = can't walk downtown from horse center
BPOL	S = That the tax exists. O = Property around hospital, if developed, could bring in BPOL revenue. T = BPOL is threatened legislatively every year.
Sales	S = Lexington has initiatives like MSL to create an entrepreneurial economy. W = Due to lack of options, residents shop online or go to other communities. O = Passing of the Marketplace Fairness Act. T = Growth of online market.
Bank Franchise	W = Several establishments pull deposits to the county. T = The future is unclear in banking and banking habits.
Public Service Corporations	S = Our top tax payers are public service corporations. T/O = Electric and gas revenues have increased while property has decreased.
Utility	W = This is a slowly declining tax
Communications	W = Landlines are in the decline
Potential Taxes	
Cigarette	T = Not a lot of money to collect, too much effort to implement; could be negative to businesses because consumers will buy from county
Amusement	W = Couldn't tax VMI. T = Not a lot of money to collect, manpower issue with collection; are there enough people going to the movies, etc.?
Property Reuse	O = VDOT, Spotswood, parking lots downtown, plus potential properties; evaluate highest and best use, facilitate conversations about development and redevelopment.
Fees	

APPENDIX I

Parking Permits	W = Not a lot of revenue for the work put in. O = Could charge more \$
Building Permits/ Planning Applications	W = Not enough building going on in general; VMI does not pay for building permits. O = Not charging enough to cover costs
Utility Fees	(taps turn on, connection) W = Declining consumption with rising costs; have to sell utility usage to PSA at less than cost of operation. O = Capital projects to decrease nonbillable water amounts. T = The less we use, the more we pay (bad paradigm).
System Dev. Fees (tap fees)	S = New charge. W = Not a lot of new customers; fire suppression charges are not implemented.
Sanitation	O = Fees could be added to residents or businesses for additional services (pay for two day pick up)
Right of Way	T = State legislation; state works in right of way and doesn't give much notice.
Banners	S = The fee does cover the cost. T = Liability.
Cemetery	W = Operating a cemetery is a losing opposition; current fees don't cover operation or long term maintenance. O = Could contract out once perpetual care is the only thing happening. T = We will eventually run out of spaces and have to continue perpetual care; perpetual care fund and trust is not enough to cover costs.
Pools	W = City has to subsidize heavily; public good with low public utilization. O = Through capital improvement we could increase utilization and revenue. T = Long term maintenance, capital need.
Potential/ New Fees	
Storm Water	S = Funding source for other capital projects. O = Potential new revenue stream. T = Could have possible public backlash. If W&L, VMI, hospital push back then residents will have to pay more.
Events	(fee process in the works) S = Although can't cover all costs, can offset; Lexington has a lot of events. W = Events cost money.
Facility Use	(wraps in with events) T = Enforcement
Add'l Sanitation Fees	W = Cost of implementation. O = There is opportunity to get bulk money and still save citizens' money >> 'pay as you throw'. T = Initial push back, people might try to jam everything into one can, making it harder for Public Works crew.
Parking	O = Value of downtown parking is high, we could charge using street meters or just lots. T = Maintenance and enforcement.
Technology	(payment portals user fee) O = People will pay for the convenience. T = We are on the threshold.
Franchise	W = It's a one-time fee for a long period of time. O = Increase fee and recruit. T = Local legislative pressure.
IDA	W = One-time revenue. O = If county had similar fee, W&L wouldn't go to county to avoid City. T = Money can only be used for other economic development.

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Rescue	W = Currently doesn't cover cost, especially when 60% of calls are in the County. T = Want to have a good relationship with the County; Our Fire Department is often in the County when our citizens might need them.
Water/Sewer	W = Substantially below retail rates to customers; effects economic development, capacity, etc. Does not cover cost. T = Sensistive topic; institutional push back.
Street Lights	(new installations) S = Passing on a cost
False Alarms	(in current City code) W = Very little revenue, not enough occurences.
Cost Reductions	
Outsource Services	S = City avoids competing with private sector. O = Make sure business operations are effective and efficient. T = Citizens don't historically like the idea of the city outsourcing.
Revenue Share	S = 10% of our revenue. O = Economic development, regional cooperation. T = Want to maintain good relationship with County while still meeting needs and establising fairness.
Institutions	S = Largest employers, bring people in to live, work, visit. W = Tax exempt land. O = Educate community about what the institutions do for the community; create more partnerships that complement and enhance the community; bring back more medical services, lead to an economic engine. T = The institutions continue to build on new land.
City Properties	S = Some city-owned property is used for essential City services and beneficial community purposes. W = Rental amounts charged to other entities doesn't cover the cost of operating the buildings. O = Resources provided by the potential sale of some city-owned properties (i.e. Brushy Hills and land surrounding Moore's Creek Dam) could provide funding for critical services.

Overview of Local Government Revenue Sources

(source: *Virginia Local Tax Rates 2012*)

Presently Utilized Revenue Sources

1. **Real Property Taxes**

Revenues from the taxation of real property accounted for 63% of City-County tax revenues in Virginia in FY 11, the latest year available. Lexington's comparable percentage for FY 12 was 53%. The revenue generated by this tax is a function of the statutory tax rate and the assessed value of taxable property. Lexington's statutory tax rate per \$100 of assessed value for FY 14 is 83¢. The median rate for Virginia cities is 97¢.

2. **Personal Property Taxes**

The personal property tax is the second most important source of tax revenue for cities and counties, accounting for 9.14% of tax revenue for cities in FY 11. Lexington's percentage was 7.34%. Localities are permitted to tax the tangible personal property of businesses and individuals including items such as motor vehicles, business furniture and fixtures, farming equipment, trailers, boats, recreational vehicles, and campers. The most important tangible personal property category has been motor vehicles. For valuation of automobiles, localities use the National Automobile Dealers' Association's *Official Used Car Guide*. The Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998 (PPTRA) established a system by which the state would reimburse localities for relief on the "car tax." Funding for the PPTRA was frozen in 2005. Each locality receiving a state PPTRA payment must reduce its rate on the first \$20,000 of value on non-business vehicles less than 7,500 pounds, so that the sum of local tax revenue and state reimbursements approximates what the locality would have received based on the local valuation method and the local tax rate before the car tax rebate became law. Because of differing methods of determining assessment values, (Lexington uses clean trade-in value), a comparison of tax rates across localities must be based on an adjusted effective tax rate. Even though Lexington's statutory tax

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rate was \$4.25 per \$100 value, its adjusted effective rate per \$100 was \$3.57 in 2012. The median for Virginian cities was \$3.06, while the median statutory rate was \$4.00. Lexington has been using a 60% tax relief under PPTRA.

3. Public Service Corporations Property Tax

Property owned by electric utilities, gas distribution companies, public service water companies, and telephone and telegraph companies are assessed by the State Corporation Commission rather than by localities. The locality determines the equalized assessed valuation of the corporate property by applying the local assessment ratio prevailing in the locality for other real estate. Local taxes are then assigned to real and tangible personal property at the real property tax rate current in the locality.

4. Local Sales and Use Tax

On average, the local sales tax generates 7.1% of local government tax revenues. For Lexington, this tax generates 11.1% of the local tax revenues. The local sales tax percentage is 1% of the 5% collected by the State and is returned to the localities based on a point of sale.

5. Business, Professional, and Occupational License Tax

Localities are authorized to impose a local license tax on the gross receipts of businesses, professions, and occupations operating within their jurisdictions unless they already levy a tax on merchants' capital. Lexington businesses must apply for a license annually by March 1st. The state establishes maximum rates for various types of businesses. Lexington uses these state maximum rates for purposes of taxation as do most local governments. This tax generates 7.26% of Lexington's local tax revenue, compared to a state-wide average for cities of 6.22%. Approximately half the cities in Virginia apply this tax rate only to gross receipts above a certain threshold of gross receipts. These thresholds range from \$4,000 to \$100,000.

Lexington imposes its tax on each dollar of gross receipts with a \$30 minimum tax.

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6. Meals Tax

The meals tax is a flat percentage imposed on the price of a meal. The meals tax cannot exceed 4%, in counties. Cities and towns, however, may exceed that rate and 32 of 39 cities exceed the 4% rate. Lexington's rate is 5%. We derive 9.1% of local tax revenue from this source, while the average for Virginia cities is 6.6%.

7. Transient Occupancy Tax

The lodging tax is a flat percentage imposed on the charge for the occupancy of any room or space in hotels, motels, boarding houses, travel campgrounds, and other facilities providing lodging for less than thirty (30) days. Counties may impose a tax rate of a maximum 2%, unless they have been granted an exception and the amount over 2% is used to provide tourism. The maximum for cities is 10%, the minimum is 2%, with the median rate being 6%. Lexington imposes a 6% tax. This tax generates 3.07% of Lexington local tax revenue, compared to an average of 1.88% for other Virginia cities. Two percent (2%) of Lexington's 6%, rate is contributed to the Virginia Horse Center to support their debt service.

8. Consumer Utility Tax

Localities are authorized to impose a tax on the consumers of public utilities. Residential customers of gas, water, and electric services may be taxed at a rate no higher than 20% of the first \$15 of the monthly bill. There is no statutory ceiling on the tax on commercial or industrial consumers. Lexington applies a \$100 cap on the taxes generated from an account. Lexington also only applies the tax to the gas and electric utilities. Lexington generates 4.42% of its tax revenue from this source, compared to the average for Virginia cities of 3.37%.

9. Communications Sales and Use Tax

In January 2007 the Virginia communication sales and use tax was implemented and several local taxes were eliminated, including the cable television system franchise tax, the local E-911 fees on land line phone service, the local consumer utility taxes on land and

APPENDIX J

wireless phones, and the local consumer utility tax on cable television service. These local taxes were replaced by a new local tax of 5% of the sales price of service, which is collected by the state and remitted to localities.

10. Legal Document Recordation Taxes

Localities are authorized to impose a recordation tax in an amount equal to one-third of the state recordation tax. This tax accounts for .37% of Virginia cities' local taxes and .71% of Lexington's taxes.

11. Bank Franchise Tax

This tax accounts for 1.93% of Lexington's taxes and .89% for Virginia cities. The State of Virginia levies a bank franchise tax on all banks in Virginia at a rate of \$1 on each \$100 of net capital. Cities are permitted to charge an additional franchise tax of 80% of the state rate. If a bank has branches in more than one locality, the tax is imposed in the proportion of net capital based on the deposits at the banks in the locality to the total of deposits at banks in Virginia.

Revenue Sources Not Presently Utilized

12. Machinery and Tools Tax

Lexington does not impose this tax. Statewide, 1.94% of cities' local tax revenue comes from this source. Under section 58.1-3507 of the *Code of Virginia*, certain machinery and tools are segregated as tangible personal property for local taxation. Since Lexington has no industries meeting the code, the tax has no significance for us.

13. Utility License Tax

Localities may impose a local license tax on certain types of public service corporations. A tax may be levied on telephone and water companies not to exceed one-half of 1% of the gross receipts of such companies. Twenty-eight Virginia cities impose a tax on telephone

APPENDIX J

services, while only eight tax water services. Lexington does not impose this tax.

14. Cigarette and Tobacco Tax

Cities may impose a local tax on cigarettes, in addition to the excise tax of 1.5¢ per cigarette imposed by the state. Thirty cities levy such a tax, while only two counties have been granted authority to levy this tax. Lexington does not impose this tax.

15. Admissions Tax

Events to which admissions are charged are classified into five groups under the *Code of Virginia*: 1) those events from which the gross receipts go entirely to charitable purposes; 2) admissions charged for events sponsored by public and private educational institutions; 3) admissions charged for entry into museums, botanical gardens, and zoos; 4) admissions charged for sporting events; and 5) all other admissions. Localities may tax each class with the same or different rate. Lexington does not impose this tax. The State's Attorney General has opined that state educational institutions of higher learning do not have to collect this tax.

User Fees

16. Refuse Collection Fees

Twenty-nine of the thirty-nine cities in Virginia impose a fee for residential refuse collection. Lexington is one of those who does not collect a fee. Fees vary significantly for those who impose a charge. Lexington does charge for commercial refuse collection. Fifteen Virginia cities impose a tipping fee to dump trash at landfills and waste transfer stations.

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17. Recycling Collection Fees

Of the 39 Virginia cities, 38 have some form of recycling activities. Fifteen provide the service directly, while 23 contract for the service. Nine charge a separate recycling collection fee, while six include this service in the fee charged for refuse collection. The others, including Lexington, impose no fee. For localities that charge a service fee, the amount ranges anywhere from 75¢ to \$20 per month.

18. Public Rights of Way Use Fees

Cities and towns whose public streets are not maintained by VDOT are authorized to charge rights-of-way use fees for the use of publicly owned roads and property by certified telecommunications firms. This fee is in exchange for the use of the locality's lands for electric poles or electric conduits. The fee is calculated each year by VDOT based on information about the number of access lines and footage of new installation that have occurred in the locality. In 2012, the fee was \$.91 per access line. The provider collects the use fee by adding the fee to each end-user's monthly bill.

Real Estate Tax Exemption %**FY07 48.29%****FY08 47.92%****FY09 47.68%****FY10 47.39%****FY11 51.93%****FY12 51.93%****FY13 51.85%****FY14 51.79%****FY15 64.07%****FY16 64.02%****FY17 64.07%**

APPENDIX K

LOCAL CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS:

Rockbridge Area Relief Association (RARA)

Food Pantry (RARA)

Community Table for the Rockbridge Area

Rockbridge Area Transportation System (RATS)

Rockbridge Area Habitat for Humanity

Rockbridge Area Rental Assistance

Rockbridge Area Housing Corporation

Rockbridge Area Health Center (RAHC)

Rockbridge Area Occupational Center, Inc. (RAOC)



Engagement



AN ENGAGED CITY

Authors: Scott Dameron, Ty Dickerson, Jani Hostetter, Jeff Martone, Mark Riley and Meredith Warfield

A. What is an Engaged City?

An engaged city involves the collaborative effort of government and the community in coming together for conversations to address issues of common importance, to solve shared problems, and to bring about positive change. Successful engagement requires strong interpersonal trust, communication and cooperation among all parties.

B. Purpose

The purpose of the Engagement Policy Brief is to assess current engagement efforts across all platforms and audiences in the City of Lexington, and to outline realistic, efficient and innovative strategies and tools to improve engagement practices and create a Lexington where citizens deliberate, collaborate, and connect with local government, and each other, to positively influence public policy and matters effecting their lives.

C. Current Situation

1. Audiences: Currently, there are 7,045 people living in the City of Lexington. Students at the two colleges make up nearly 50% of the population, 31% range from 26 to 64, and 15% are 65 and over. There are 1,638 households in the city and 2,510 students living in military barracks, dormitories or student housing. The racial makeup is predominately Caucasian followed by African American and Asian. There were 529 business licenses issued for the calendar year 2017, 111 of those are located in the Central Business District. This does not include outside contractors whose offices are not located in Lexington. The engagement staff team also included visitors and commuters in its policy brief evaluation. The above data can be seen in Appendix A.

2. Platforms: From flyers to Facebook, there are many platforms upon which citizens and government interact. Currently the City uses both offline and online spaces to reach its residents, commuters and visitors.

(a) Offline Tactics:

For many generations, governments at all levels have successfully used offline engagement principles to communicate with the community and encourage civic responsibility. Offline engagement promotes direct and personal discourse between and among local government and its citizenry. When employed judiciously, this method engenders greater trust in government, a heightened sense of community, greater civic involvement, and meaningful growth and learning for all involved. This art has been employed by the City of Lexington for numerous years, making it the vibrant community that it is; however, like many cities today, Lexington struggles to incorporate these doctrines into an ever computer driven world.

Presently, the City employs the following offline tactics to engage and communicate with the community:

- **Government Forums:** Public meetings are a practical way for governments to communicate with the community in an open, yet controlled, forum. Examples include City Council Meetings, Public Topic Meetings, City Boards & Commissions, and informal citizen forums such as Meet the City Manager.
- **Community Groups/ Events:** Gatherings of this nature allow government and the community to come together simply to break bread or team to address targeted issues. Often this form of engagement helps people place a face to a name, thus humanizing the government-citizen dynamic. Examples include the Community Picnic, LPD Community Watch and setting up a table at Rockbridge Community Festival.
- **Door to Door:** Although labor intensive, door to door notices are a very effective way for government to ensure delivery of important information to targeted areas. This method often allows City employees to address questions first hand. Examples include Construction Impact Notice Delivery, City Recycle Notice Distribution, and Community Watch Alerts.
- **Phone:** Phone lines are probably the most used direct engagement tool that all governments have readily available. Daily, all city departments field a large assortment of communications from the community by this mechanism. There is much to be said for hearing a human voice on the other end of the telephone line, versus reading an impersonal email. Examples include direct dialogue with citizens to answer questions and respond to complaints, personal alerts regarding water consumption, and construction impact alerts.
- **USPS:** Given the time and expense associated with this mode of engagement, its usage has languished with the advent of email. However, this method is still necessary and effective for delivering and receiving information from the community. Examples include Public Notices, Invoicing, and Community alerts.
- **Earned Media:** Earned media is defined as coverage of city news through local publications, such as The News-Gazette or The Rockbridge Report. This form of engagement is effective for reaching large audiences within and around the local area. Examples include important press releases and government announcements, and stories published through local news outlets. The challenge here is the chance of misinformation. According to an editor at The News-Gazette, there are 2,098 active subscribers to their weekly in the 24450 area code, which

- includes some areas of the county. Plus, there is an average of 1,200 copies sold in Lexington stores.
- **Flyers & Posters:** Probably the oldest form of direct engagement, this method has the distinction of connoting “small town charm” and when employed correctly allows citizenry to gather and discuss information. Examples include City Hall public notices, community announcements, and event announcements.

Although some of these methods are more direct than others, all deliver that sense of “personal touch” in the daily lives of the community; however, this personal touch comes with a price. Offline engagement requires an investment in time, personnel and money by all parties.

Typically well received by all, offline practices are thought most appealing to those of the “Baby Boomer” generation, or earlier, who have been less impacted by the revolution in communication technology. Rapid growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), while making information exchange and learning more rapid and efficient, has also made the world a smaller, busier, and more depersonalized place. As a result, nationwide civic involvement has declined. Governments are viewed more as a business today, and less as a collective and representative body of the people. Lexington is not immune to this endemic problem.

(b) Online Engagement:

Modern ICTs allow people to educate themselves and connect with others faster than ever before. Overall, online engagement is quick, nimble and can rapidly reach a large audience. Users empower themselves and “harness collective intelligence” by soaking up knowledge in an immediate, multimedia universe that invites interaction and conversation between users. Lexington’s current online engagement platforms are utilized as follows:

- **Social Media:** The City of Lexington currently supports the controlled use of social media sites - specifically Facebook, Twitter and Instagram - to enhance the presentation, access and communication of City information to its residents. Engaging with the City through social media further enables citizens to contact the City in a direct and meaningful way, in turn increasing transparency of the City as well as improving services to citizens. All official City of Lexington social media sites are considered an extension of the City’s information network. Social media information dissemination drives citizens to the website to find more in-depth knowledge on specific government topics, news and initiatives. In theory, social media invites dialogue from a more diverse sampling of the public, specifically those who may not consider attending a City meeting to voice their opinions. By being present in social media spaces, the City can separate the silos of residents and their local government. The City of Lexington has recently added Twitter and Instagram accounts and has become more active on its Facebook account. Facebook following and engagement have increased since the account became more active, as seen in Appendix B. Staff has acknowledged that there is a large potential for growth on all social media outlets. Due to its recent discovery and development, online engagement is typically embraced more by Millennials and Gen-X’ers than by older generations. However, it was noted that though the demographic of Lexington’s general Facebook followers is majority Millennials and Gen-X’ers, 40 percent of the City’s *engaged* Facebook followers were born before 1962, as seen in Appendix C. While managing and operating social media pages is essentially cost-free, it has been observed that a significant amount of staff time is required not only to implement, but to strategize and plan effectively.

- **Email:** The City currently uses email as a method of direct engagement with citizens. Staff receives emails from people who have concerns or wish to file complaints, and, on the other hand, staff disseminates information to specific individuals through email. Email, as an online platform, typically transcends several generations, encompassing a wider audience than other means of online communication. While documentation is easy to gather, it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of email communication.
- **Website:** The City's website domain is the chief working source for citizens to access information, forms and applications, as well as to receive news and keep up with important dates. It is important for staff to keep the website current in order to ensure correct information is being received. The website was revamped in March 2017, and page views have steadily risen since its inception, with a jump upwards this past summer, as shown in Appendix D.
- **Emergency Alert Program:** Digital platforms can also be used solely to disseminate information, which the region currently uses through Alert Rockbridge, sending updates and notices on a variety of topics through text, email and phone calls. Appendix E shows the demographic of Alert Rockbridge subscribers.

Online engagement platforms provide arguably the best metrics in terms of gauging the demographic of engaged vs. unengaged citizens, as well as tracking behavioral trends over time. In addition to citizen-citizen interaction, users frequently engage online by registering wants and complaints to solicit a response, advocating two-way communication between citizens and government in a virtual, public space.

D. Analysis

After conducting a thorough analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of all platforms in terms of both dissemination and gathering of information, the team concluded that the current situation suggests the following points overall. A detailed SWOT analysis is attached as Appendix F.

Strengths: Citizens who choose to be engaged are engaged. Additionally a strength, Lexington currently employs a variety of engagement efforts.

Weaknesses: There are many citizens who are not reached in the City's current engagement efforts.

Opportunities: There is much room for growth and diversification of citizen engagement on all platforms.

Threats: Time, personnel and funding is and will be a challenge in achieving citizen engagement goals. In addition, citizens often do not choose to be engaged until an issue directly affects them.

E. Suggested Metrics to Track/Measure Community Progress

1. Social Media/Website/Online Polling: Given the City's increase in social media use, it is easier to track the City's progress with community outreach. While some social media platforms track more than others, the data from these sites allow staff to see the demographic of the City's reach, the amount of people who see each post, and more. A quarterly social media report could be an easy way to track long term progress on that particular platform. Website traffic can also be tracked in a similar, in-depth fashion. A measurement strategy that perhaps hasn't been utilized sufficiently is online polls, which

could be disseminated to citizens through social media and the website to collect community consensus on specific issues or topics.

2. Meeting Attendance/Phone Calls/ABC's: The City can also track its progress in person by counting the number of attendees at City Council or Planning Commission meetings. Those numbers can help determine what the hot button issues are for our citizens, and suggest overall trends. The larger the number of citizens attending meetings, the more informed they will be, in turn creating a number of positive benefits, including a higher influx of interest in joining one of the City's authorities, boards or commissions. Our offices (outside of public safety) get a number of phone calls on a daily basis concerning a variety of topics. Staff can track what the main questions or concerns are, and with that data, pinpoint what the community feels is most important. In that same arena, staff can monitor how long it takes to resolve these requests, as well as gather feedback.

With all of the different ways to track or measure community engagement process, it all comes back to measuring how happy our citizens are and how happy our elected officials are. A happy community leads to a happy City Council.

F. Observations

Overall: As ICT mechanisms continue to strengthen and grow in popularity, the City of Lexington will need to find new ways to revitalize itself within the online citizen-citizen dynamic. Time-proven offline engagement strategies can be woven into the technology landscape. A blended strategy may be pursued that utilizes technology for improved government performance and efficiency, yet preserves the "personal touch" associated with direct engagement that fosters trust in government, community pride, and personal satisfaction. The team determined that in order to have an engaged city, Lexington may consider the following overall opportunities:

- Generate a communications policy and strategy that is nimble enough to encompass both online and offline platforms.
- Recognize the need to strategically employ specific platforms for selected audiences while maintaining consistency of the City's message between all platforms.
- Embrace diverse views and opinions, partner with collective audiences to promote mutual learning, and harness the collective intelligence of all stakeholders.
- Prepare the City and its citizens to accept, understand and utilize alternative forms of engagement.

Improving the efficiency of Lexington's current communication practices, marrying old and new-school engagement platforms, and regionalizing engagement efforts would be priorities ensuring success. These tasks may seem daunting; however, the following list provides realistic strategies, tools and mechanisms that could potentially improve engagement in the City of Lexington.

Engagement Campaign: In adopting a strategic plan for community engagement, the City may consider enacting a comprehensive engagement campaign that encompasses all aspects of City communication platforms, with particular focus on promoting citizen education/awareness, civic involvement, and personification of government.

- Engagement through Education: The City has an opportunity to educate and be transparent to the public on the ins and outs of their local government as much as possible. Forums or sessions could be provided on a variety of topics. Several localities in Virginia implement a Citizen Planning Academy, teaching citizens about city planning and thus creating an informed public truly invested in the city's future. In direct relevance to this policy brief, a session could be provided that teaches the how-to's of each communication platform (i.e. social media).
- Internal Messaging: Effective communication begins internally. Inherently, not all City employees are involved in each issue or initiative of the City; however, it is important that each staff member be thought of as an ambassador between the community and their place of work, the City. It could be beneficial to create an internal messaging process, upon which all staff would be informed of any press releases sent out by the City, and be provided with fact-sheets/answers to frequently asked questions they may receive from the community. This could ensure consistent messaging by strengthening the City's input on local word-of-mouth.
- Partnering: To conserve resources and utilize effective communication amongst local groups, the City may examine linking proposed engagement platforms with those of local community or business groups; VMI and W&L; and the surrounding area in general. Spring boarding from existing outlets and collaborating where possible will promote greater efficiency in spreading the City's message and help to strengthen relations with the local and surrounding communities. This avenue is currently utilized. For example, City staff recently met with local group 50 Ways Rockbridge and discussed ways to help educate citizens on a shared initiative.
- Social Media Strategy: While the City does currently utilize social media to engage with citizens, the opportunity for growth here is vast and could be taken advantage of with an analysis of how best to maximize the opportunity (i.e. consistency and quality of content). Staff is currently conducting some research on this topic in its effort to increase social media use.
- Streamlined Phone System: Updating the City's phone system to a directory-enhanced version would save significant time in call routing and ensure customers reach exactly the right person.
- Multi-platform 311 System: This could be in the form of an app, allowing users to report problems, send pictures, and interface with GIS mapping to pinpoint problem locations. The City could provide updates regarding the disposition of requests to encourage involvement and let users know their concerns have not gone unnoticed. Additionally, reverse look-up/call-out capabilities could be added to the City's GIS system to target select notification areas. Like social media, apps and online processes of facilitating and collecting citizen feedback are a way of gathering "grassroots" evidence that can help the City make decisions. City staff has begun looking into other jurisdictions' versions of an app or online forum in order to determine what could be best for Lexington.
- Live streaming of Council Meetings: This strategy may promote overall greater community participation. Real time remote interaction with Council, although providing a voice to many, is not without risk. This option's pros and cons should be studied further. At minimum, the City may consider placing live Council Meeting video on its website as a mechanism for involvement for those who cannot attend session.
- Weekly Newsletter: The City could provide a weekly newsletter for citizens to subscribe to via email with through email marketing platform, some of which programs are free of cost. By taking the current weekly memo and creating an aesthetically pleasing yet very informational and refreshing weekly narrative, this could consistently inform citizens of current and upcoming issues, happenings and events.

- Public Input: The City may elect to include Engagement as a Council Meeting topic item to receive public input on the subject and gauge public opinion.
- Hybrid Kiosk: An innovative idea - a digital/traditional community kiosk could be located in a central area of downtown Lexington, which would display real time information and City notices, as well as provide space for a traditional public message board, perhaps even a webcam.

Creating a meaningful multi-platform engagement strategy will not go without its challenges. The City would need to be prepared for the initial investment cost of new technologies, as well as the continued investment of time and money associated with the more labor intensive offline platforms. Keeping up with an ever evolving ICT field would require a significant commitment of resources. Providing a clear and concerted message across all platforms would also be difficult, as would educating the community and gaining the community's acceptance of the various engagement mechanisms. Earning the trust and buy-in from vested engagement partners would take time and effort. Finally, the City should be prepared for the fact that it may no longer control the message. Engagement is a two way street.

APPENDIX A

Profile - DEMOGRAPHICS

Classification	Source
<p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Total - 7,045 (2016) 7,042 (2010) .1% increase ** Median Age - 23 (2010) *** Median Age by Sex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male - 21.8 57% 2. Female - 31.3 43% *** By Generation City of Lexington <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Silent & Greatest Gen - 70 and above</u> 10.69% <u>Baby Boomers - 51 to 69</u> 15.98% <u>Gen X - 35 to 50</u> 9.47% <u>Millenials - 15 to 34</u> 56.32% <u>Gen Z - 0 to 14</u> 7.54% *** By Generation Rockbridge County <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Silent & Greatest Gen - 70 and above</u> 17.22% <u>Baby Boomers - 51 to 69</u> 31.48% <u>Gen X - 35 to 50</u> 16.75% <u>Millenials - 15 to 34</u> 20.27% <u>Gen Z - 0 to 14</u> 14.28% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * US Census Bureau www.census.gov ** Regional Data Center http://rdc.cspdc.org *** Weldon Cooper Center demographics.coopercenter.org/population-estimates-age-sex-race-hispanic-towns/

Profile - DEMOGRAPHICS

Classification	Source
<p>69% of U.S. adults use at least one social media site</p> <p>Who uses social media Nation Wide:</p> <p><u>Age</u> 86% of 18 to 29 80% of 18 49 54% of 50 to 64 34% of 65 and over</p> <p><u>Race</u> Causasian - 69% African American - 63% Hispanic - 74%</p> <p><u>Gender</u> Men - 66% Women - 72%</p> <p><u>Education</u> High school or less - 59% Some College - 73% Gollege Grad - 78%</p> <p>Which social media platforms are most popular:</p> <p>Facebook - 68% Instagram - 28% Twitter - 21%</p> <p>How often Americans use social media sites:</p> <p><u>Facebook</u> Weekly - 15% Daily - 76%</p> <p><u>Instagram</u> Weekly - 26% Daily - 51%</p> <p><u>Twitter</u> Weekly - 24% Daily - 42%</p>	<p>PEW Research Center</p> <p>http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/</p>

9/18/2017

	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
Total	68%	28%	21%
Men	67%	23%	21%
Women	69%	32%	21%
Ages 18-29	88%	59%	36%
30-49	79%	31%	22%
50-64	61%	13%	18%
65+	36%	5%	6%
High school or less	56%	19%	14%
Some college	77%	35%	24%
College graduate	77%	32%	28%
Less than \$30,000	65%	29%	18%
\$30,000-\$49,999	68%	27%	16%
\$50,000-\$74,999	70%	30%	26%
\$75,000+	76%	30%	30%

APPENDIX B

Total Page Likes as of Today: 866



Post Reach

The number of people your posts were served to.



BENCHMARK
Compare your average performance over time.

Organic

Paid

APPENDIX C

Figure 1 below is the demographic of City of Lexington Facebook followers.

Aggregated demographic data about the people who like your Page based on the age and gender information they provide in their user profiles.

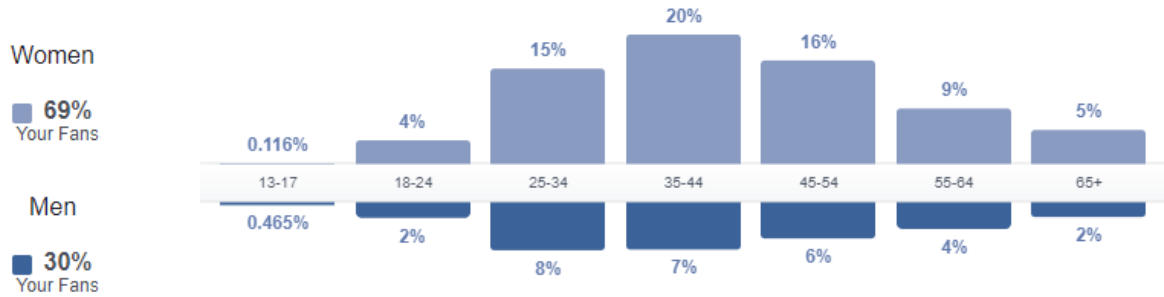


Figure 2 below is the demographic of followers who are reached by City of Lexington content.

The number of people who have seen any content associated with your Page by age and gender grouping.

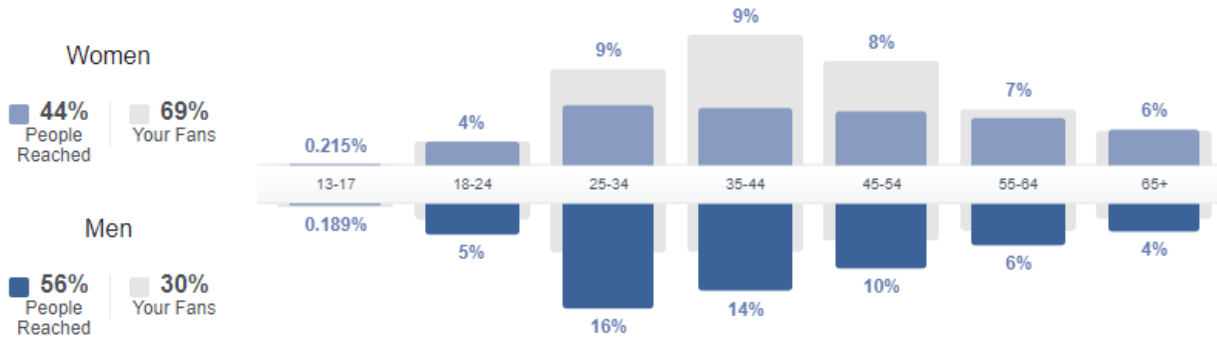
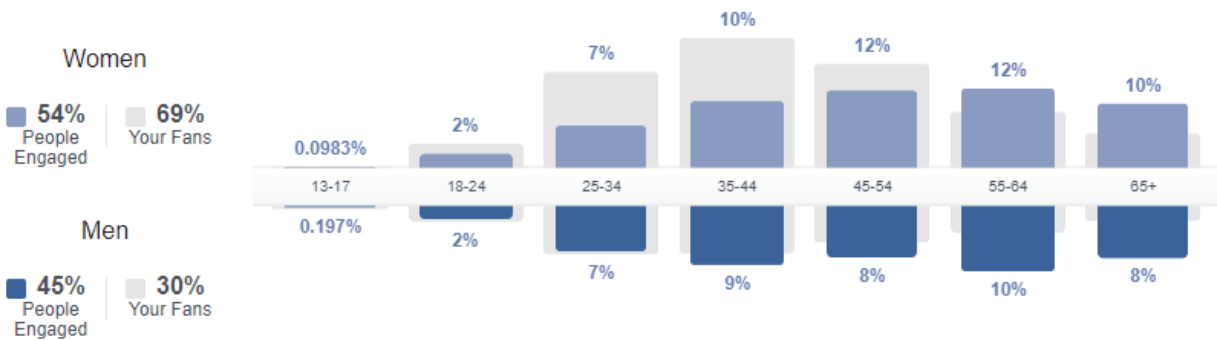


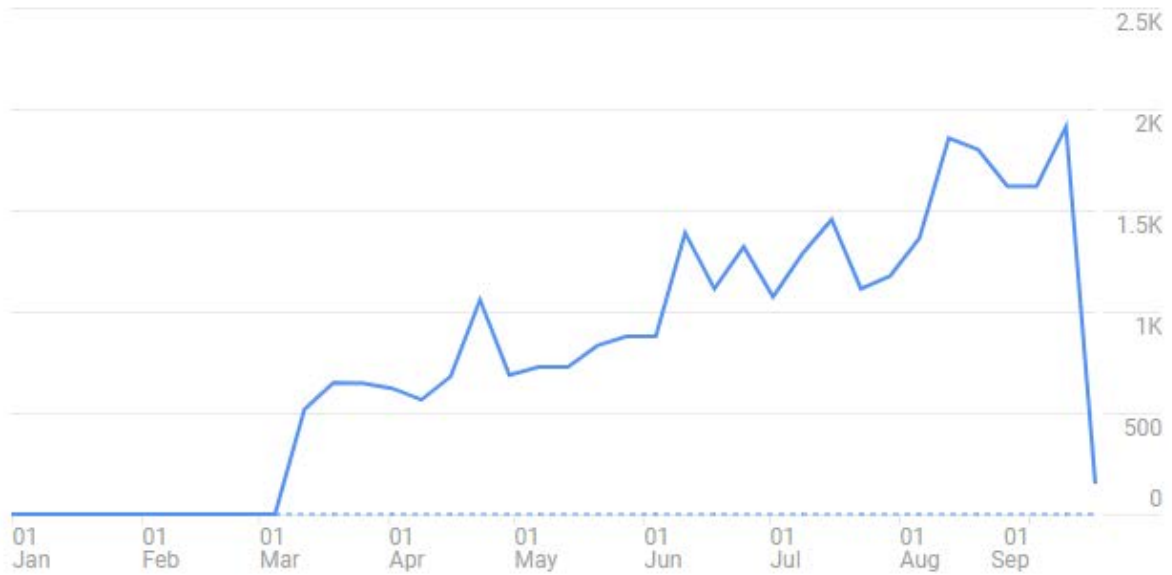
Figure 3 below is engaged demographic of City of Lexington followers.

The number of People Talking About the Page by user age and gender.



APPENDIX D

Figure 1 below illustrates lexingtonva.gov website views (all pages).



APPENDIX E

Rockbridge Alert Subscribers

Alert Group	Number of registered recipients
Lex City Residents	#2992
Lex City Pub Works	#2221
Lex City Traffic	#2212

APPENDIX F

SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis	
Platforms for Dissemination	S = Strengths, W = Weaknesses, O = Opportunities, T = Threats/Challenges
Door-to-Door	S - Face Time, 100% Coverage, Brownie Points, Personable, Inter-Generational; W - Time Consuming, Labor Intensive, Rental Home Miscommunication, Costly; O - Segway to Digital; T - City Resources
Social Media	S - Potential Reach, Timeliness, Cheap, Variety of Community Messages, Two-way Communications; W - Loss of Citizens Who Don't Utilize Social Media, Two-way Communications, Liability; O - More Utilization; T - Upkeep, Risk of Viral Negativity
Website	S - Intact, Informational, Updated by Multiple Departments, Reaches More People; W - Difficult to Navigate; O - More Efficient Way to File Complaints, Polling; T - Technology, Resources
Conventional Media	S - A lot of Readership; W - Reactionary, Limited Outlets, Metrics; O - More Press Releases=More Control Over the Media, Reach Out to School Campuses; T - Costs, More Messages=More Counter Reactions
Rockbridge Alert	S - More Reach; W - Less Coverage; O - More Efficient: Subscribe, Opt In/Out, Federal Alert System; T - Lack of Subscribers
Email	S - Specific Target, Low Cost; W - Managing Subscribers, Resources; O - E-Newsletter; T - Resources: Time and Energy, Keeping it Updated
Snail Mail	S - Direct, Official; W - Costs, Returned Letters; O - Situationally Useful, More Economical Approach, Target Audience; T - Cost, Resources
Flyers, Posters, Notices	S - Creates a Sense of Community; W - Not Used Much, Limited Receivership; O - More Distribution, Community Board; T - Cost, Vandalism
Phones	S - Efficient, Direct Target, Speed, Personable, Best Opportunity to Satisfy; W - Time Consuming, Small Rate of Coverage; O - Reverse 9-1-1, Link with Alert Rockbridge; T - Staff Time
Process of Collection of Information	S = Strengths, W = Weaknesses, O = Opportunities, T = Threats/Challenges
Phones	S - Direct, Personable impression, Control over the situation; W - No way of documenting; O - Directory; T - Time consuming
Email	S - Sending large amounts of data, Documented, Easy to redirect, Reach more people, Safer; W - Slower than person-to-person; O - Streamline; T - Resources to set up a system

Social Media	S - Documented, Audience specific, Response expectations are more manageable, Good way to gather a collective input; W - Not a large following, Risk of negative feedback, Audience specific; O - Room for audience growth, Increasing technology, Ability to hear citizens wants and needs, Cross-promotion; T - Negativity, Legality Issues, Fake news, Resources
Walk-Ins	S - Face time, Emotional recognition, Speedy; W - Time consuming, Safety, Confrontational, Less time to find a solution; O - Open-door times; T - Figuring out where to draw the line
Website Forms	S - Quick; W - Lack of confidence that form is being received; O - Room for improvement, Direct line on the homepage; T - Resources
Snail Mail	S - Can easily be redirected, Well-thought out, Time to research and respond, Direct, Official; W - Slower, Lost mail, Less practical, Costly, Returned Letters; O - Situationally Useful, More Economical Approach, Target Audience; T - Safety, On the way out, Cost, Resources
Public Hearings, Meetings, Public Comments, Forums	S - Cover more ground, Get to hear others views to help make a more educated decision, More manageable face-time, People feel like they're heard more, Allows for more interaction between government and citizens, Gauge popular opinion; W - Not always accurate sample of community, Has the possibility of getting out of control quickly; O - Safety, Revise time of City Council; T - Time of City Council meetings, No "perfect" solution
Council-Constituent	S - Citizens feel empowered; W - Miscommunication, No documentation, Potential for bias; O - Public Forums; T - Unavoidable for City Council, Small community, Safety issues
Audiences	
Citizens	S - Word of mouth spreads quickly; W - You only get the same small group of passionate people, Misinformation can spread quickly, People want face-to-face all of the time; O - Formalize engagement, Clarify messages, Dilute angry people; T - Hard to break old habits, Combatting false information
Businesses	S - Main Street Lexington is a good bridge between businesses and the City, They want to stay informed, Great network within one another, City and businesses have a great working relationship, They do a great job of not being in the limelight; W - The loss of Main Street Lexington would have a negative impact on the City; O - Improve engagement with businesses; T - Businesses are at the mercy of the economy
Commuters, Surrounding Areas	S - Surrounding areas stay informed, Surrounding areas are supportive of the City, Lexington serves as a hub for surrounding areas; W - Indifferences between City and County; O - Room to unify and strengthen relationships, Share marketing; T - Rivalry
Visitors, Tourists	S - Historically a tourist destination, Visitors and tourists bring others to the area, Cross promote on social media; W - City needs to engage more; O - Work on engagement to attract people to Lexington and keep them informed; T - History of Lexington can sometimes be a challenge, The market is saturated with tourism
VMI, W&L	S - Good relationship, Not many community problems, Strong sense of community within school; W - Students are in a bubble and are not engaged with community; O - Get more input from students, Encourage students to enjoy everything Lexington has to offer; T - Not a constant commitment from college-aged groups



Health

Resident's Level of Well-Being: Healthy & Active City

Policy Brief

Purpose: To gather data in the areas of health, wellness, and recreation of the citizens in our community and to use these findings to offer ways to maintain and improve each of these areas.

Assessment of the current situation:

Since health services and recreational activities are provided on a regional basis, the demographics reviewed by the Team were expanded to include not only those for the City of Lexington, but also those of the County of Rockbridge and Buena Vista.

CURRENT SITUATION

Demographics: The County of Rockbridge is located in the Shenandoah Valley between the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains; trisected by the interstate highways 81 and 64. The county and the two independent cities are considered to be rural, and the combined population is approximately 36,000 with a significant portion of the population elderly and financially stressed which has implications to access adequate health care, to proper diet, and to general wellness. Additionally, the statistical population for the City of Lexington includes the student populations of the Washington & Lee University and Virginia Military Institute residing within the city limits. A summary of the demographics for Lexington can be found in Appendix A.

Health Providers: Stonewall Jackson Hospital (SJH) provided regional hospital services for nearly 100 years before becoming part of the Carilion Health System in 2006. With the support of the community SJH grew to house 80 licensed acute care beds and 50 long term care beds, as well as The School of Practical Nursing. Presently, Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital is classified as a Critical Access Hospital with 25 licensed beds, and Velocity Care, an urgent care facility with limited hours. Regionally, in addition to numerous other physician and dental offices, the Rockbridge Area Health Center, the Health Department, and the Rockbridge Community Services Board provide primary health care and behavioral care. Nursing home and assisted living services are offered by Heritage Hall, Kendal at Lexington, Shenandoah Valley Health and Rehab, The Mayflower, and Havenwood. Physicians associated with Augusta Healthcare and Lewis Gale Hospital also provide medical services to area residents.

Health Indicators: In order to gather health related statistics and information, the Team used Carilion Clinic's *Rockbridge Area Community Health Needs Assessment* (RACHNA) published in 2015. The Team also used RACHNA's Strategy 2016-2018 follow up publication that outlines Carilion Clinic's long term objectives to address the top 10 issues and areas of concern are listed below in Fig.1. The complete documents are available at Carilion's website <https://www.carilionclinic.org/community-health-assessments>. (Appendix B) Regional and City of Lexington specific statistical data concerning access to healthy nutrition and health *care* was obtained from Washington & Lee University's Shepherd Poverty Program's *Rockbridge Community Profile* published in 2016. (Appendix C) Additionally, information was obtained from the Rockbridge Health Center and from the Rockbridge Area Health Department concerning health complaints and mortality data.

Need	Frequency of Need Ranked	Average Ranking	Average feasibility score	Average potential impact score
Need for urgent care services	12	3.3	2.6	1.4
Value not placed on preventive care and chronic disease management	11	5.5	2.4	1.4
High prevalence of obesity / overweight individuals	10	5	2.4	2
Lack of exercise / physical activity	10	6.4	2.5	1.4
Coordination of care	9	2.1	1.4	1
Poor eating habits / lack of nutrient dense foods in diet	9	5	2.3	1.3
Chronic disease (diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, asthma)	7	2.9	2	1.5
Stigma with mental health and substance abuse services	7	4.7	3.4	1.6
Inappropriate utilization of ED/urgent care for primary care, dental, and mental health services	7	4.9	2.7	1.3
Lack of knowledge of community resources	7	5.1	1.3	1
Access to mental health counseling / substance abuse	7	5.9	3	2

Figure 1 Carilion Clinic RACHNA 2015 Priorities

Health complaints: According to the Rockbridge Area Health Center, the most common patient health concerns or complaints are listed below in order of frequency:

1. Hypertension
2. Depression/Other Mood Disorders
3. Diabetes
4. Overweight/Obesity
5. Anxiety/PTSD
6. COPD
7. Asthma
8. Tobacco User Disorders
9. Heart Disease
10. Attention Deficit and Disruptive Behavior

These health issues are in line with those outlined in Carilion’s RACHNA findings.

Nutrition:

The City of Lexington has been a supporter of the local Farmer’s Market that brings fresh locally grown produce and meats to the city once a week. Additionally, in an effort to provide healthy eating alternatives to food stamps recipients, the Farmer’s Market participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) making the market affordable to qualifying individuals. The Farmer’s Market currently operates a half day in the City and a half day in the County. Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids is a program offered through Rockbridge Area Community Services to reduce childhood obesity. They offer several different programs including Veggie Brigade, Happy Hearts, Girls on the Run, and Cooking Matters at the Store. The Meals for Shut Ins program delivers mid-day meals to qualifying recipients who reside within the City of Lexington, and the Community Table serves hot evening meals each Monday, and lunch on Wednesday at no cost or for a donation. Rockbridge Area Relief Association also operates the food pantry and annually the Rockbridge Area Christmas Basket program distributes food baskets to the needy in the area.

Mortality:

The mortality rates for the region can be found in (Appendix D), and as of 2013, the top four causes of mortality are;

1. Cancer
2. Diseases of the heart
3. Cerebrovascular Diseases (stroke)
4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases

Fitness and Recreation:

Regionally, various fitness and recreational offerings are supported by the three jurisdictions that include walking trails, swimming, field sports, and indoor athletic programs.

- **Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization (RARO)** - Currently offers many sports activities for both males and females, including cheerleading, soccer, football, baseball, and one adult basketball program. The youth age groups start at age six and goes up to age thirteen. The largest percentage of participants resides in Rockbridge County at 62%, and the smallest percentage is from Lexington at 17.5%. See Appendix E for more detailed information.
- **Community Pool** - The swimming pool facility offers two pools. An outdoor pool for summer recreation, and an indoor facility for recreation as well as for exercise, swims meets, Aqua-Exercise, and swim lessons for children and adults. Additionally, both pools are handicapped accessible with a zero entry ramp built into one end of the outside pool; and at one end of the indoor pool, there are steps as well as a lift chair for use by anyone needing assistance entering the water. (See Appendix E)
- **Walking Trails** – There are three walking trails in or near the City of Lexington. They are the Woods Creek Trail that connects Ross Road to Jordan’s Point Park. The Chessie Trail, which meets the Woods Creek Trail at Jordan’s Point, and connects to Buena Vista. The Brushy Hills property contains a number of hiking trails on city-owned land just outside the City of Lexington. The Brushy Blue Trail is planned to connect Brushy Hills to the Woods Creek Trail, but the connection is yet to be defined. (See Appendix E for maps)
- **Sidewalks and Bikes** - The City provides numerous sidewalks, however there are gaps in the connections. While the City of Lexington has made some improvements by providing bike racks and “sharrows” (shared-lane markings) in the downtown area, facilities could be improved by adding bike lanes and separated bike trails.
- **Other Area Facilities** - Opportunities for adult fitness are offered by the YMCA and Fitness Your Way facilities. Additionally, the YMCA offers current City of Lexington employees discounted memberships.

Key Challenges:

- The Chessie Trail is currently obstructed by a property owner that has built a fence and blocked the trail and the bridge over South River has been washed out and needs replacing. The trails have limited bathroom and water facilities, the only location being at Jordan’s Point. The link between the Brushy Hills Trail and Woods Creek Trail has yet to be determined. The City of Lexington has narrow right-of-way’s which prohibit the expansion of sidewalks or the addition of bike lanes.

- While there are many RARO programs for youth, few exist for adults, and evening access to gym facilities is limited.
- Although the City of Lexington doesn't have a defined wellness program for its employees at this time, it has contracted with OneDigital to assist us with this health and wellness opportunity.
- The Farmer's Market has hours that aren't convenient for everyone and is weather permitted during the spring/summer season. Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids has the potential to lose funding. The City of Lexington currently does not have a community garden program.
- The team also noted that the issues identified regarding obesity, lack of physical activity, and chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension have implications for the City. These same issues have implications in terms of the City's own workforce and their health and wellbeing.
- Many healthcare practitioners have moved out of the City into the County. Other specialties may no longer be represented in this community. When citizens have to travel outside the community for health services, it adds to their stress, including economic stress.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats:

While the community has competing healthcare providers, which can be viewed as a strength, this can also be a weakness due to lack of a unified medical record and the related issues of coordination of care (including coordination of medications). It was noted that especially in terms of physician services this could complicate the development of a robust physician recruitment/replacement plan due to our present fragmented service delivery. The team noted that certain services which are not available in this community, such as OB services, has clear implications for the younger age cohorts who might be otherwise attracted to this community. This likely impacts the recruitment by the two universities as well as government and other professional employment opportunities. The team further noted that a number of physician specialties previously available in the community have decreased in recent years. Some specialties noted as possibly insufficient to serve the population of the area included: urology, allergist, cardiology, and radiology. Since cardiovascular disease and hypertension were identified as health issues for the community, cardiology services were viewed as particularly important. It was felt by the team that a clearer physician needs assessment should be articulated.

Suggested Metrics to track/measure community progress:

- The update to the Rockbridge Area Community Health Needs Assessment
- Number of physicians and area of specialty
- Health Department mortality rates
- Recreation and fitness participation from RARO, the community pool and gym facilities
- Sidewalk and trail connections

Key Observations and Learning's:

- The team noted that although the City was involved in the community health assessment and the subsequent strategic planning, it is not known how the City currently participates in the long range planning outlined in the subsequent publication. Going forward it would be to the City's advantage to continue its involvement in

future updates of the RACHNA and health strategic plans so that our actions will be consistent with the overall health and wellness plans for the community.

- Lexington could develop a bike/pedestrian plan, which would reflect the gaps and develop a plan of improvement. RARO should consider possible expansion of offerings for adults.
- The City of Lexington contracted with OneDigital to assist the City in developing a defined wellness program for its employees. The City does not have a Fit for Duty employee program for its emergency service personnel.
- Since health information systems often vary from network to network, having various groups of providers can have implications in terms of coordination of care.
- The City of Lexington is a very diverse community that is continually serving the needs of their residents and visitors. We as leaders in our community need to be constantly aware of our elderly citizens and those with special needs. The City needs to be very vigilant in providing ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant access to all within our jurisdiction.

Lexington Demographics

Total Population <http://demographics.coopercenter.org/population-estimates-age-sex-race-hispanic-towns/>
7,045 (2016)

Median Age by Sex

- ❖ Male 21.8 57%
- ❖ Female 31.3 43%

Population by Age

- ❖ 7.54% - 0 to 14
- ❖ 47.38 % - 15 to 24
- ❖ 30.06% - 25 to 64
- ❖ 15.02% - 65 and over

Ethnicity

- ❖ 85.2% Caucasian
- ❖ 9.1% African American
- ❖ 3% Asian
- ❖ .2% Other

Educational Attainment of Adults (2015 Regional Data Center)

- ❖ 20.9% HS Graduates
- ❖ 13.3% Some College
- ❖ 2.7% Associate Degree
- ❖ 20.6% Bachelor Degree
- ❖ 23.7% Post Graduate

Per Capita Income (2016 US Census)

- ❖ Lexington \$14,792

Median Household Income

- ❖ \$34,017

Households

- ❖ 1,638

Housing Units

- ❖ 2,546 (2010)

Website for Carilion Clinic Health Assessments:

<https://www.carilionclinic.org/community-health-assessments>

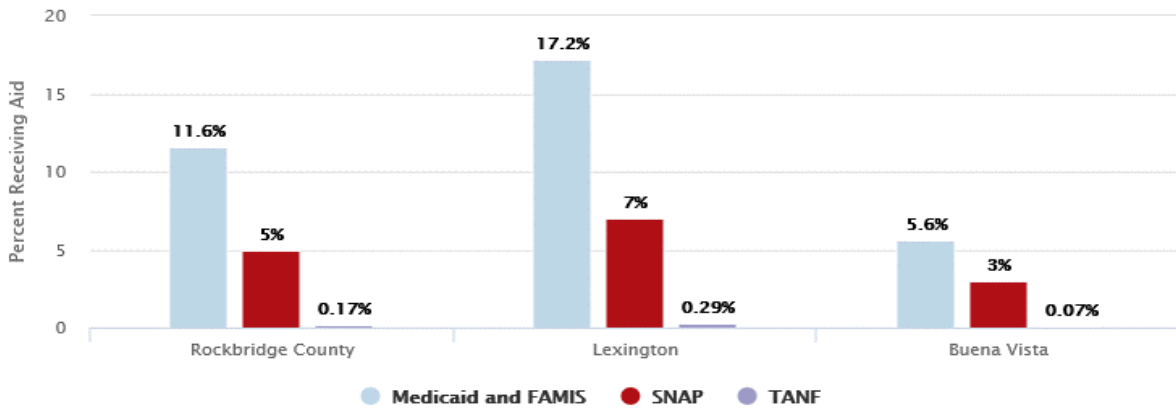
Titles -

- **CARILION CLINIC ROCKBIRDGE AREA COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**
Final Report: September 28, 2015

- **CARILION CLINIC ROCKBIRDGE AREA COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**
Health Improvement Implementation Strategy: FY 2016-2018

Figure 4: Percentage of the population receiving public assistance in June 2015

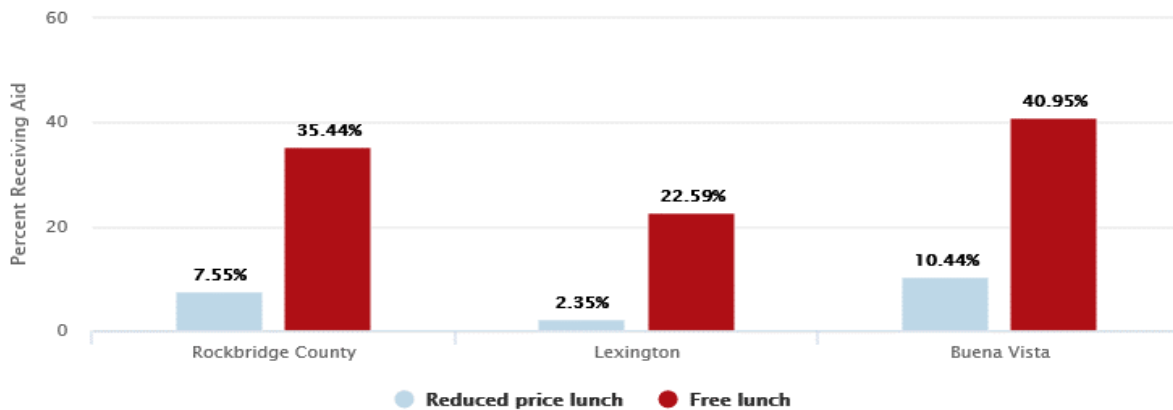
Source: Meredith Downey, Public Assistance June 2015, (Rockbridge Area Department of Social Services), accessed July 20, 2015



FAMIS - Virginia's health insurance for children.
 SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Figure 12: Students Eligible for free or reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program

Source: School Year 2015–2016 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Free and Reduced Price Eligibility Report: Division Level, (Virginia Department of Education, October 31, 2015), accessed June 22, 2016.



W & L Shepherd Poverty Program 2016

	Locality Statistics, provided by Virginia Department of Health			Total and Proportions (calculated by Stephanie Kellner, Central Shenandoah Epidemiologist)		Health District and Statewide Statistics, provided by Virginia Department of Health (Rates are useful for comparisons)	
	Buena Vista	Lexington	Rockbridge Co.	TOTAL for Buena Vista + Lexington + Rockbridge	Proportion of Deaths attributable to the cause described (Total Deaths due to Cause / Total Deaths All Ages)	Central Shenandoah (Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Lexington, Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro)	Virginia
Total Deaths All Ages	76	59	232	367		2,670	62,309
Total Deaths Rate	913.6	722.7	616.7			714.7	720.1
Malignant Neoplasms (Cancer) Deaths	23	9	61	93	25.3%	606	14,348
Malignant Neoplasms (Cancer) Rate	274.9	131.9	158.5			160.8	161.3
Diseases of Heart Deaths	16	13	49	78	21.3%	557	13,543
Diseases of Heart Rate	186.8	128.9	120.7			144.8	155.9
Cerebrovascular Diseases Deaths	3	3	15	21	5.7%	142	3,278
Cerebrovascular Diseases Rate	37.1	46.2	37.7			36	38.5
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases Deaths	3	4	16	23	6.3%	134	3,168
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases Rate	35.7	52.6	38.8			35.1	37.2
Unintentional Injury Deaths	2	3	6	11	3.0%	121	2,794
Unintentional Injury Rate	20.1	47.3	20.3			36.9	33
Alzheimer's Disease Deaths	5	3	6	14	3.8%	100	1,634
Alzheimer's Disease Rate	57.3	28.5	15.2			25.7	19.6
Diabetes Mellitus Deaths	2	1	7	10	2.7%	66	1,618
Diabetes Mellitus Rate	21.1	7.8	17.2			17.2	18.3
Nephritis and Nephrosis Deaths	1	3	7	11	3.0%	77	1,547
Nephritis and Nephrosis Rate	11.1	28.5	17.2			20.2	18
Septicemia Deaths	1	1	2	4	1.1%	45	1,464
Septicemia Rate	15	13.9	9			15.4	17.7
Influenza and Pneumonia Deaths	2	3	2	7	1.9%	55	1,430
Influenza and Pneumonia Rate	22.2	28.5	4.9			14.2	16.8
Suicide Deaths	1	1	3	5	1.4%	50	1,047
Suicide Rate	16.9	7.8	12.7			16.7	12.2
Chronic Liver Disease Deaths	2	0	3	5	1.4%	40	836
Chronic Liver Disease Rate	24.1	0	7.4			11.4	8.9
Primary Hypertension & Renal Disease Deaths	0	0	0	0	0.0%	21	629
Primary Hypertension & Renal Disease Rate	0	0	0			5.4	7.2
2013 Census Population	6,680	7,170	22,307	36,157	76.8%	291,649	8,260,405
NOTE: Death rates shown are per 100,000 persons and are age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population. See Basic Definitions in the Virginia Health Statistics Annual Report for further							
SOURCE: Virginia Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics, http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/HealthStats/stats.htm , Please see City/County Profiles under "Summary Data" (Data Year: 2013)							

The Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization(RARO) provides organized youth sport programs and recreation programs for Rockbridge County. RARO is funded by Rockbridge County and the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista under a joint-services agreement and uses recreational facilities located throughout Rockbridge County, Lexington and Buena Vista.

During the recently completed FY 2017, 1628 residents participated in RARO programs. The participation breakdown was as follows:

Rockbridge County residents: 1008 (62%)
City of Lexington residents: 285 (17.5%)
City of Buena Vista residents: 335 (20.5%)

The mission of RARO is to serve the citizens of Lexington, Rockbridge County and Buena Vista by providing community-minded offerings of wholesome recreational activities which promote the betterment of mind, body and spirit by fostering the qualities of fair play, teamwork and inclusiveness.

Although RARO recently started adult basketball this past winter by setting up an open gym at Fairfield Elementary School, its primary focus is organized youth sport programming for ages 5-13. The following is a list of RARO's comprehensive sport program offerings with ages in parentheses:

Fall activities: Flag Football(6-7) Pee-Wee Football(8), Junior League Football(9-10) Senior League Football(11-13). Intro to Soccer(5), Mighty Mite Soccer(6-7), Junior League Soccer(8-10), Senior League Soccer(11-13). Intro to Cheerleading(6-7), Junior Cheerleading(8-10), Senior Cheerleading(11-13). River Runners Fall program(6-12). RARO also organizes a Punt, Pass and Kick competition in October and the Lexington to Buena Vista 10K road race in November.

Winter activities: Mighty Mite Basketball(5-6), Junior Boys Basketball(7-8), Intermediate Girls Basketball(7-9), Intermediate Boys Basketball(9-10), Senior Girls Basketball(10-13) and Senior Boys Basketball(11-13). Youth Wrestling (5-13). RARO started an Adult Basketball program this past winter which was open to all adults ages 18 and older and was held at Fairfield Elementary School from November to April.

Spring activities: Beginning Volleyball(9-13). Tee-Ball(5-6), Rookie League Baseball(7-8), Minor League Baseball(9-10) and Cal Ripken League Baseball(11-12). Junior League Girls Softball(7-9) and Senior League Girls Softball(10-13). RARO also organizes a Youth Tennis Clinic(6-17) and a Youth Golf clinic(6-14).

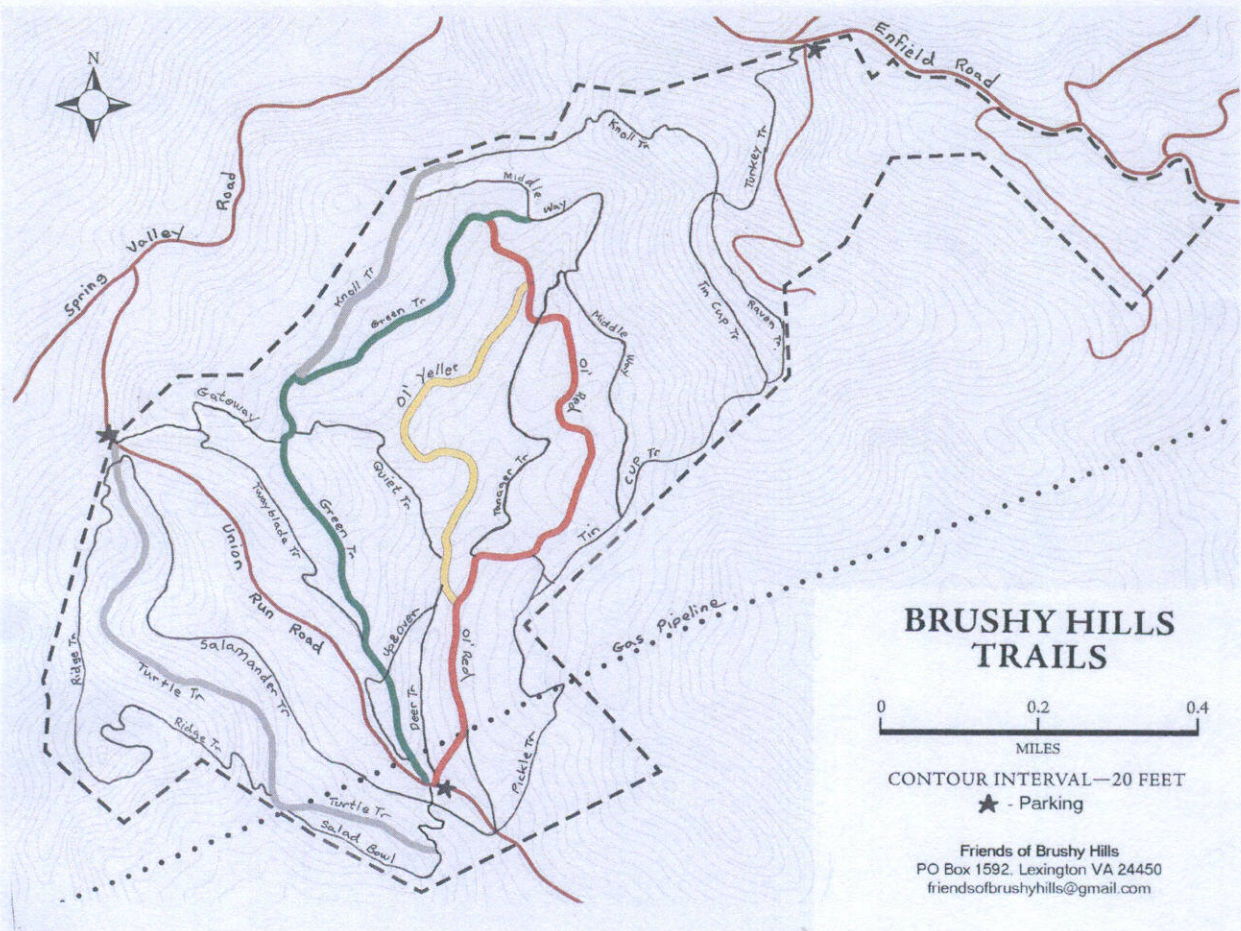
Needless to say, none of these programs would be possible without the support of the community. Upwards of 150 volunteers gave their time and talents to help with all our programs in various capacities. Although many were and are parents of our youthful participants, a significant number of our volunteer coaches are W&L undergrads. These volunteers devoted upwards of 7,000 hours during this past year which underscores RARO's vital place in the fabric of the Rockbridge County community.

The Community Pool offers the following:

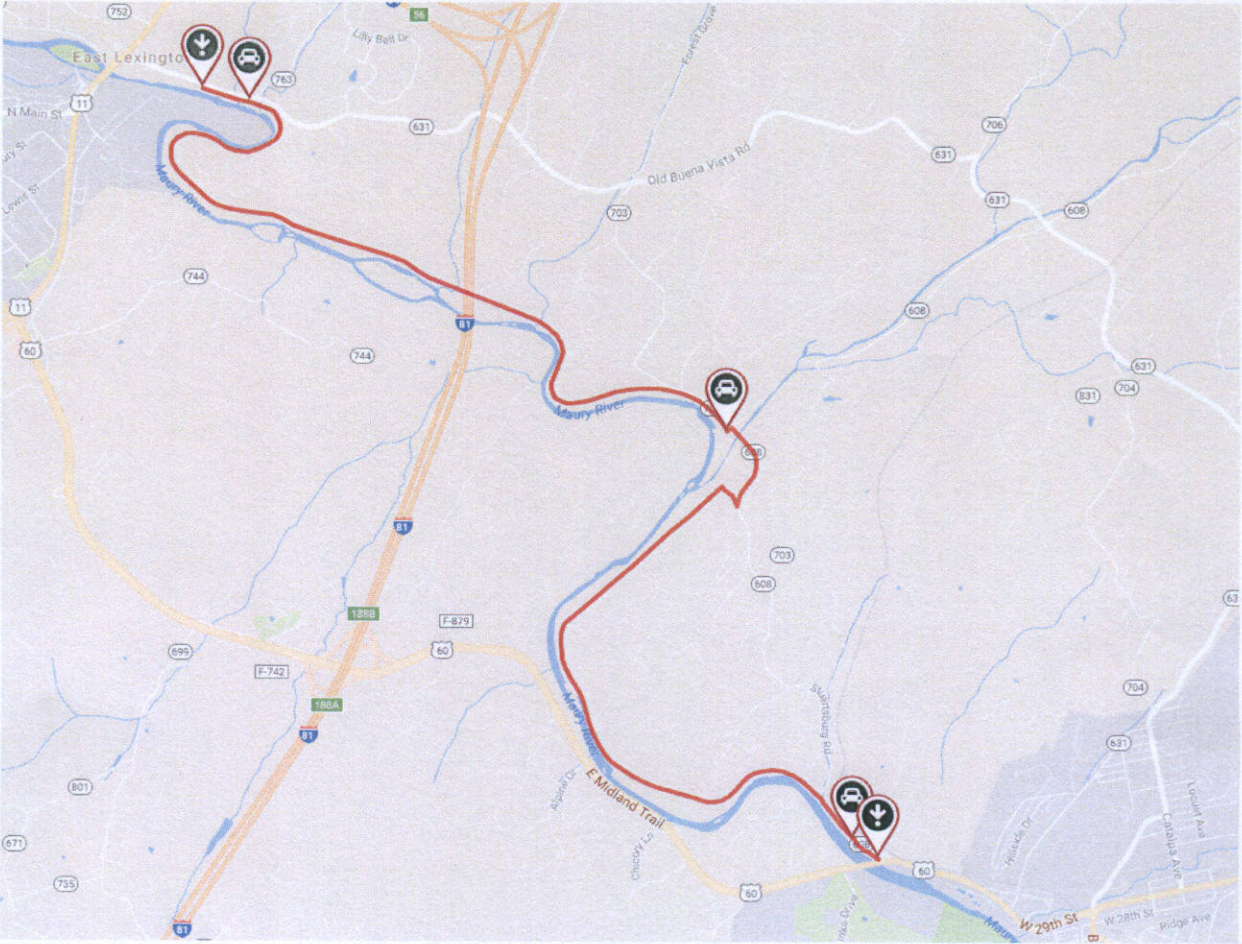
- 49 hours of weekly public and family swim
- 14.5 hours of weekly team swimming for our 100+ kids on our high school and club teams. A pre-team has been added to bridge the gap between swim lessons and swim team.
- 2 hours of weekly adult instruction/practice. Our program offers fitness and opportunities for competition. Age range for our participants is 20-70.
- 9 hours of weekly Aqua-Exercise classes targeted for the older adult. Many of our attendees cannot engage in regular land exercise due to physical limitations. Physical Therapy and Water Ballet will be added in the fall of 2017.
- Dry-land activities such as treadmill, cross country machine, weight machine and free weights are available. A commercial reclined bicycle will be added next.
- 420 children received swim lessons. 280 were through our Waddell and Maury River Make A Splash program.
- Hosted Masters, USS, High School, and Summer League Meets for a total of 7 this year.
- A scholarship program for adults that have been recommended to us by their physicians.
- Swim clinics and camps were offered for all age groups.
- Host the swim portion of VMI's Special Olympics.

This is a preliminary report. I will gather more information for your committee including demographics in the coming weeks.

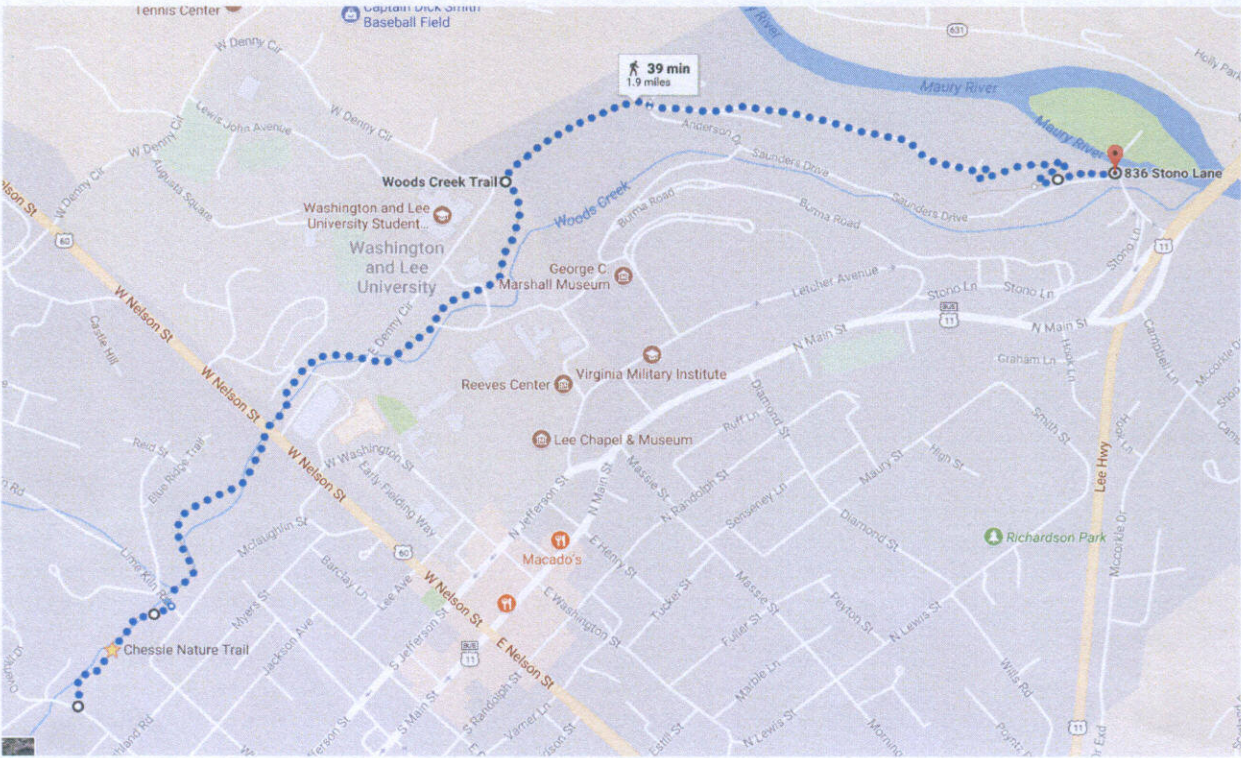
Brushy Hills Trail Map



Chessie Trail Map



Woods Creek Trail Map





Learning

Policy Brief / Learning City Team

A. A Learning City

School system metrics and adult learning activity.

B. Team Purpose

The Learning City's team purpose is to a) examine the current situation of the Lexington City School system, advanced degree options, and other adult learning opportunities, b) analyze opportunities and challenges associated with each; and c) formulate observations based on team findings.

C. Current Situation

Pre-K - 12

Early childhood programs have proven to benefit children both academically and socially, well into adulthood. The City of Lexington has many early childhood education programs that benefit the pre-k age group. There are three half-day preschools in the area, and five full day preschools (2 are Montessori). The prices range from \$250 per month to \$643 per month for a half-day program five days a week and from \$666 to \$810 per month for a full day program five days a week. Significant fees present a problem for families who need affordable full day care. Head Start is the only early childhood education program that is affordable for the average working family, but the family must qualify according to the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Early Childhood Programs struggle with creating a curriculum that provides an easy transition into kindergarten.

The City of Lexington has an excellent elementary and middle school, where students feel safe at school, and show up at school ready to learn. Both Lexington City Schools are 100% accredited through 2019, and have SOL pass rates above the state level (see chart below). Lexington City Schools continues to grow with technological advances, and 48% of the teachers have a Master's Degree.

Once the students leave Lylburn Downing Middle School, they will enter Rockbridge County High School, where Lexington City has no control and no voice concerning Lexington city students. RCHS is accredited and has a great SOL pass rate. Students attending RCHS are offered many choices post-graduation: employment, military, technical/vocational school, 2-year College for transfer to a 4-year school or to get certification leading to employment, or attend a 4-year college or university. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) program provides the students an opportunity to decide on a career if they are not interested in furthering their education. CTE offers many career paths including Agriculture, Automotive Technology, Building Trades, Collision Repair, Culinary Technology, and Family & Consumer Science. The school is in need of major renovations, which Lexington City helps fund, but the City has no voice in the day to day operations of the school.

Accreditation Rates for Lexington City Schools and Rockbridge County High School

LOCALITY	SCHOOL	STATUS	ENGLISH	BENCH-MARK	MATH	BENCH-MARK	HISTORY	BENCH-MARK	SCIENCE	BENCH-MARK	GCI
Lexington City	W.E.S.	Fully Accredited	87	75	91	70	82	70	86	70	
Lexington City	L.D.M.S.	Fully Accredited	81	75	86	70	91	70	88	70	
Rockbridge County	R.C.H.S.	Fully Accredited	92	75	90	70	81	70	88	70	92

elementary and middle schools are Fully Accredited if students achieve all of the following pass rates: English 75% or higher, Math– 70% or higher, Science – 70% or higher, History – 70% or higher; **High Schools** are Fully Accredited if: students achieve pass rates of 75% of higher in English, 70% or higher in math, science and history; attain a value of 85% or greater based on the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI)

Higher Education

The City of Lexington is fortunate to have a broad array of higher education options both within the City and in the surrounding areas. The Dabney S. Lancaster Community College (DSLCC) is a 2 year community college in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and it is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associates Degree in Arts and Sciences and the Associates Degree in Applied Sciences. The DSLCC base campus is located in the City of Clifton Forge and the satellite campus, the Rockbridge Regional Center, is located in the City of Buena Vista. DSLCC has a total enrollment of over 2000 students. Degree offerings include business administration, education, general studies and science. In total, DSLCC offers 12 different associate degrees (3 specializations) and 36 certificates and Career Studies certificates. Workforce training programs are also available and can be developed as requested.

The VCCS has system-wide priority enrollment transfer agreements with selected 4 year colleges. The aptly named “two and two” option enables eligible associates degree students to pursue 4 year degrees at a much lower out-of-pocket cost. DSLCC itself has Guaranteed Admissions Agreements with a wide variety of 4-year colleges and universities (19 listed on DSLCC website), including state colleges such as JMU and ODU. Blue Ridge Community College, located in nearby Weyers Cave, VA, is another option in the VCCS offering similar programs and degrees as DSLCC.

Within the City of Lexington are two nationally recognized 4-year institutions of higher learning, the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) and Washington and Lee University (W&L). Although vastly different in their approach, these schools produce high quality graduates, many of whom consistently return to the area to live and raise their families. These same individuals are often active in the community, serving on numerous City boards and community committees.

VMI is the nation’s oldest state supported military college. VMI offers a rigorous educational program, shrouded in a mentally and physically demanding military environment, to those 1,700 cadets enrolled annually. VMI provides a broad, four-year core curriculum with undergraduate degrees in engineering, science, liberal arts, and social sciences (17 majors and 21 minors offered). Originally recognized for engineering and sciences, VMI is now ranked as a nationwide top 5 public liberal arts college. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. VMI consistently produces first-rate citizen-soldiers with many graduates choosing to pursue careers in the military. VMI’s current annual tuition rate is \$8,800 for in-state students and \$34,500 for out-of-state students

Washington and Lee University is the 9th oldest institution of higher learning in the nation and is composed of two undergraduate divisions, the College and the Williams School of Commerce, Economics and Politics; and a graduate School of Law. W&L offers 37 undergraduate majors and 30 minors. Liberal Arts courses are augmented by offerings from the only fully accredited business school and fully accredited journalism program among the nation's private top tier liberal arts colleges. Annual enrollment is approximately 1,830 for the undergraduate programs and 318 for the law school. W&L is accredited by SACS, AACSB International, and the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. The School of Law is a member of the Association of American Law Schools and is approved by the American Bar Association while the Department of Chemistry is approved by the American Chemical Society. The undergraduate annual tuition rate for W&L is \$49,000. The law school's annual tuition rate is \$47,000.

Within a short drive from Lexington are numerous public and private advanced learning institutions offering a variety of degree programs at various tuition levels. Virginia itself has a rich history of providing quality advanced education opportunities, and as one expands their view nationally, these opportunities become boundless. With the advent of colleges offering more online programs and satellite campuses, a multitude of college programs are now more convenient and economical than ever before.

Adult Continuing Education

There are additional alternatives outside the prototypical college paradigm that are available to adults in the Lexington and Rockbridge area. For those who cannot complete high school there are two local options for obtaining a GED which are DSLCC and the Rockbridge County Schools, and online options are also available.

The Rockbridge Regional Library offers Library ESOL/Adult literacy programs which are free and conveniently located.

A unique opportunity is available through the W&L Audit Program that allow citizens to audit classes on a "no record, no fee" policy. Interested community members contact the professor of the course and ask to sit in. If there is room and the professor approves, the citizen can attend the course.

The Maury River Senior Center in Buena Vista provides low cost programs for the elderly. Programs include recreation, Medicare counseling, health and wellness.

D. Key Opportunities

Pre-K - 12

Families in the City of Lexington could benefit from more affordable, full day Pre-K/child day care programs. These programs need to be affordable for all socioeconomic groups. The City of Lexington has the ability to operate their own Pre-k/child day care program. The City of Lexington could be involved in the day to day operations and curriculum, thus providing a uniform curriculum to prepare our future students for kindergarten.

The City of Lexington has phenomenal schools, but improvements to infrastructure are needed, including sidewalks, crosswalks and streets at the potential expense to existing on-street parking. The City of Lexington has an outstanding school system, as evidenced by high test scores, the fact

that our students feel safe while at school, and both schools are fully accredited. This accomplishment can be used as a recruitment tool to entice new businesses into the area, resulting in additional revenues to the City.

The City of Lexington has no control once the students leave Lylburn Downing Middle School and attend Rockbridge County High School. The City is not represented on the Rockbridge County School Board even though the City is responsible for 16.86% of the operating and maintenance costs.

Higher Education

Dabney S. Lancaster Community College's proximity and affordability make it a great option for those students not heading directly to a 4-year college. The Virginia Community College System agreements allow a more affordable option for pursuing a 4 year degree with the transfer (2 plus 2) program. Although a variety of associates degrees and certificates are offered on campus and online, there appears to be limited trade skill offerings for municipalities. A perception however exists concerning the quality of a community college education.

VMI and W&L are nationally ranked institutions of higher learning located in Lexington. Both draw visitors to Lexington and contribute significantly to the local economy through tourism or direct contributions. The institutions also provide many employment opportunities to local residents and many employees and graduates serve on local boards and committees.

The land area of both institutions however is not taxable thereby placing a larger tax burden on the remaining City parcels. Serving the needs of both institutions stresses the City's aging infrastructure and coordinating the needs of all 3 entities can be challenging. Additionally, VMI is state owned property and cannot be regulated by local zoning ordinances.

Many 4-year institutions are located nearby with varying tuition levels and degree offerings. Yearly increases in tuition makes a college education increasingly unaffordable.

Adult Continuing Education

A variety of adult learning opportunities are presently available to City residents including General Equivalency Development or General Equivalency Diploma, commonly referred to as GED; Washington & Lee University Class Audit Program; English for Speakers of Other Languages through the Rockbridge Regional Library; and the Senior Center in Buena Vista. Publicizing available opportunities in adult learning would be beneficial, both to increase community awareness and to open communication channels to survey and evaluate needs for additional offerings. The greatest challenge to overcome, particularly with the GED, is the stigma individuals often associate with the lack of a high school diploma. Other challenges expected are the reluctance of many individuals who have basic skills deficiencies, such as reading, writing, math, and basic computer to recognize there is no shame in learning new skills that can enhance their quality of life. Lastly, if new learning needs are identified then the necessary resources, funding, instructors, and classrooms, to make them available may be a challenge.

E. Suggested metrics to track/measure community progress

Pre-K - 12

Accreditation Status
Graduation Rate from High School
Test scores
Average Daily Membership for the City of Lexington (K-8)

Higher Education

None recommended

Adult Continuing Education

Information from the sources that offer adult learning opportunities could be requested to provide participation data specific to Lexington citizens using these programs.

Concurrently, a determination could be made if current resources available are meeting the current need for these offerings.

A survey to determine new needs could be conducted working with the organizations that are presently providing these adult learning offerings.

F. Key Observation and Learnings

Pre-K - 12

There are several choices of pre-k/child day care programs within the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County. Our concern is their affordability and the need for more full-day programs, for the average working family. This is important because there may be unmet needs in the community for more affordable, full-day programs.

The students at both Waddell Elementary School and Lylburn Downing Middle School perform well in both learning and on standardized test scores. These students are very fortunate to have a very dedicated staff and administration. The students feel safe while they are at school. Both schools have earned the Distinguished Achievement Award and remain accredited. The City is in a good position with the Lexington School System and should stay the course with funding and support.

The City has no voice when it comes to Rockbridge County High School. We need to be heard to express our concerns, our accomplishments and our needs. There should be some mechanism where the City of Lexington is represented on the Rockbridge County School Board to have a say in the future of our students. We need more input at the high school level. We are capable and desire to create our own destiny.

Higher Education

Funding and promoting of DSLCC can be bolstered as can specialized training opportunities targeted to local need. DSLCC is an excellent resource that should be optimized to meet future City needs.

VMI and W&L are resources and bases of knowledge that can be utilized for City learning needs. The City should take advantage of these diverse, local resources.

Adult Continuing Education

We have a variety of adult education opportunities in the community. We should exploit these opportunities to improve the lives of our citizens. There is opportunity to track usage and identify additional learning opportunities. We may have unmet needs because people do not know about the opportunities and therefore will not utilize them.



Safety



A SAFE CITY

Policy Brief Completed By:

Tammy Dunn

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“A Safe City”

The Lexington Police Department is a professional, community oriented, and well respected agency. The department has not grown in numbers, but it has certainly flourished with the numerous community events, programs, and professionalism. The department has added several new technology based programs to assist in the services we provide. The members of the Lexington Police Department exist to serve all people within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness, and compassion. We are committed to the preservation of peace and the safeguarding of constitutional guarantees. With community service as our foundation, we are driven by goals to enhance the quality of life and fostering a sense of public trust by holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance and ethics. The Lexington Police Department is dedicated to providing a quality work environment and the development of its members through effective training and leadership.

Fire and Rescue service delivery has evolved in the past 3 decades to an “All Hazards Response” program approach, which includes, but not limited to vehicle extrication, hazardous material mitigation, water rescue, confined space rescue, collapse rescue, high angle rope rescue and many others. Workload is extremely complex and some of the demand is simply an increasing expectation of the citizens of the services that should be provided and the timeliness of the response.

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) side has advanced significantly, Fire and Rescue, once thought of as independent and almost unrelated services, are now known as Fire/Rescue and intricately intertwined. This consolidation also brings great economy of scale to a community as they utilize their most expensive resource, personnel, to perform both tasks via dual role cross trained staff. This can work as long as there are adequate staff to meet all service demands and staff is not forced to choose between providing one or the other services at any one time.

Public Works strongly supports the Fire Department, the Police Department, and our Community. Public Works provides additional manpower to community events, such as the Community Festival and the Christmas Parade. Public Works also provides manpower to all City of Lexington departments and Lexington City Schools when needed. We also provide safe roads, clear signage, safe sidewalks, a water and sewer system that meets the needs of our residents and visitors. The increase in workloads leaves other projects unfinished or increases the completion rates of projects.

Public Work’s projects have greatly increased in the past years due to the need for imminent infrastructure repairs. The current state of some areas such as water lines are in need of repairs. Some work has taken place, but there is more substantial work to be done. Also there is a need for pavement repair and replacement in the city. In addition to regular day to day maintenance and duties, Public Works finds itself in need for more staff. As it tries to maintain

the current workload, while planning for the restoration of needed large infrastructure projects, priorities must be made to ensure the best use of resources.

CURRENT SITUATION

Lexington Police Department

The City of Lexington has been rated the 4th safest city in Virginia twice in the last three years.

The Lexington Police Department has been accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Committee (VLEPSC) since 1998, with reaccreditation in 2002, 2006, 2010, and 2014. To continue to provide the City of Lexington with excellent protection, there is a need for additional staff. The police department has 17 sworn police officers, which is 4 below what is suggested, based on the population of the city. The U.S. Department of Justice-Federal Bureau of Investigations suggests cities with less than 10,000 residents have an average of 3.5 officers per 1,000 inhabitants. There are approximately 12,305 people in the City of Lexington most of the time, including but not limited to students, daytime workers, and residents. With the demand put on the Lexington Police Department (parades, TDO), and with the rise in threats of violence, the Lexington Police Department is forced to increase staff coverage to ensure the safety and the wellbeing of the community. The city is patrolled by only twelve department members for 24 hour 7 days a week coverage. This leaves the Lexington Police Department vulnerable to fatigue, stress and burnout. If there is more than one major incident in the City of Lexington, mass shooting, civil disturbance, or riot, citizens would be unprotected, which could possibly lead to many injuries and deaths. The Lexington Police Department could not handle a situation like we witnessed in Charlottesville. The department depends on other police departments, VMI, W&L, Virginia State Police, and the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Department, to help keep the city safe, but they lack resources and staff as well.

Lexington Fire Department

Current standards produced by National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Insurance Services Office (ISO) call for a city to have 4 trained and equipped firefighters arrive on the scene of a single family residence fire within 5 minutes of an alarm and a full response of 15 firefighters within 9 minutes 90% of the time. For fires in larger structures, such as the central business district, hospital, universities, and assisted living/retirement communities. The NFPA suggests a minimum of 17 firefighters arrive within 9 minutes.

Lexington currently has 4-5 career firefighters on duty and a varying number of volunteers. Lexington Fire Department has an average of 2 volunteers per night, responding to handle both fire and EMS related calls.

LFD is supplemented by surrounding volunteer agencies that have a 7-10 mile travel distance, after they assemble a crew of volunteers. Most respond from home to their fire station, which averages 8 minutes or longer. For our mutual aid partners, home response time plus travel time to the emergency scene in Lexington takes closer to 15-20 minutes, which is well over the 9 minutes recommended by NFPA and ISO.

Department of Public Works

Public Works has many job responsibilities, including but not limited to the following. Public Works makes sure the sewer and water system are working properly, because clean drinking water and clean flowing sewer system is essential. Also they make sure street lighting is adequate enough to provide safety for residents and guests in their travels both in vehicles and when walking. They makes sure the sidewalk system that are connected so that all residents and guests can walk safely to their destinations. The present system sometimes leads to nowhere and very uneven, which creates a liability for the city. Public Works makes sure clear signage and paving markings are adequate. The present system needs improvements. The clearer the signage the better for all. This will also help with enforcement when needed. In addition to the regular work load they also help in the following areas:

- (1) Helps set up for parades, festivals, and other social events

- (2) Puts up banners across downtown streets for different organizations
- (3) Maintains flowers downtown and flower beds
- (4) Put up and take down State Flags and American Flags during holidays
- (5) Assists city departments and downtown businesses as needed
- (6) Snow removal during winter storms
- (7) Trash and recycle programs
- (8) Cemetery and park maintenance

KEY CHALLENGES

Key challenges for the city will be to retain current dedicated long term employees while paying competitive salaries to attract new quality employees. This is certainly a delicate balance to maintain quality service while looking to the future to fulfill long term needs of the city. With the need for additional employees, there is the dilemma on how to pay for and sustain these employees. The challenge is to generate more tax revenue to compensate for the needed staff. This is certainly a dilemma for the city. The city has a rich tourism base due to the local civil war history which has received a great deal of negative media lately. The city must find a way to respectfully gain the tourism dollars along with generating more businesses to create a larger tax base. This is a challenge due to the lack of space in the city, which eliminates the possibility of attracting larger manufacturing businesses. The city has to look to more technology based companies that require less tangible space and will allow the continued tourism dollars to flow. The city is fortunate to have employees with a “can do” and “get it done” outlook but this can also cause fatigue, stress, and burnout. The Public Works department has a need for more training. With schedules that are stretched and the hiring of new staff, the training aspect can be very difficult. As equipment evolves, it is essential that upgrades continue for a safer and more efficient workflow. Public Works should strive to continue looking at wages to stay competitive. Multiple incidents, which drain resources, need to be addressed, such as multiple water leaks at the same time. Public Works faces a challenge of losing the seasoned employees who have a great deal of knowledge of the city’s infrastructure. This can and will be a challenge to impart and document this information.

ALTERNATIVE CHOICES

The police and fire departments both have stringent policies, certifications, and training requirements required by the state of Virginia. The possibility of contracting some work out by other departments, such as Public Works for projects, could be an alternative. This still creates a cost to the city, which could be compared side-by-side to see if it is cost effective.

As Rockbridge County and Buena Vista continue to hire staff to perform fire/rescue functions, their direct and immediate benefit to Lexington will be to reduce the amount of mutual aid responses from Lexington to calls outside of our service area. These regional improvements will provide a backup to Lexington for instances of multiple or very large emergencies. Each community should be equipped and staffed to handle their own routine volume of calls for services. If any community needs their mutual aid partners on a daily or weekly basis, there is probably a lack of adequate resources locally to provide the timely intervention.

RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONAL/COMMUNITY

Lexington Police Department

The Lexington Police Department has many relationships with organizations in the community. The Community Watch is a great partner of the department. There are monthly meetings to update the organization of the department’s activity and exchange information. The department has a foundation that works with the department

as well. The foundation consists of members from the local community. The department has a fantastic relationship with other law enforcement agencies in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Lexington Fire Department

The Lexington Fire Department has both automatic and mutual aid programs in place with all regional partners in Rockbridge County and the City of Buena Vista. In addition, we work with the Central Shenandoah EMS Council, the Virginia Office of EMS, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Dabney S Lancaster Community College, Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital, the Red Cross and many other organizations and agencies in support of the LFD mission

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works has partnerships with every department in the City of Lexington, Virginia Military Institute, Washington & Lee University and all downtown businesses. Public Works also has a great working relationship with VDOT that handles issues outside of the city but still affect the city, such as traffic issues and other shared interests.

SUGGESTED METRICS TO TRACK OR MEASURE PROGRESS

While the demand for services in the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County had increased, the level of staff has declined or remained the same. The tracking of this type of data could be very beneficial when determining the needs of the city departments. This type of tracking system is currently unavailable.

Accreditation is significant in measuring the success of the Lexington Police Department. LPD is currently accredited by the Virginia State Accreditation System, which holds the department to a much higher standard than the minimum Department of Criminal Justice standards. This program is continuous and flowing with constant policy/procedure reviews, audits, and ever-changing standards of quality control. This program demands improvements of departments and reduces liability of both the department and the city. The Lexington Police Department was the smallest accredited department for quite some time, which was a certainly a benchmark for the city.

ISO ratings are a nationally recognized standard for measuring the effectiveness of a community's fire protection capability. ISO grades community's fire protection on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the best and 10 being considered "no recognized fire protection" within the insurance industry. Lexington has been able to improve their ISO rating from a Class 5 to a Class 3 in recent years. The recent improvements in grading are entirely attributed to the increase in personnel levels. This improvement directly benefits property owners when purchasing insurance. Most insurance carriers use the ISO rating as a factor in determining insurance premiums. The theory is that the better prepared the community is to respond to a fire the less loss will be suffered that the insurer has to compensate for.

Response time's reports using the 90% benchmarks are another measure used to rate emergency services delivery. EMT's and Paramedics should arrive at most calls within 6-8 minutes of dispatch. Organ failure and brain damage begins to occur within 4-6 minutes of loss of blood and oxygen circulation.

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNINGS

The City of Lexington has caring, dedicated, and efficient staff. We must all work together to continue to work toward ensuring the safety of the community. The main observation would be that there is a need for more staff as the city services and needs increase. There needs to be a balance of staff needs with revenue and sustainability for new staff with creative ways to generate additional revenue. As violence has risen and service population as well, we must plan now for growth and future safety. Safety must be a goal of every department working together for the good of all. The city of Lexington is a safe city in comparison to most. This is not by coincidence but by the hard work and dedication to duty by every employee. We all must work together to continue to be a safe city. We must remain vigilant and continue to express needs in order to serve our community effectively. As calls for service, day-to-day work, and larger events increase, the city must look to increase staff, in anticipation of the rise in violence, drug use, and unplanned emergencies. As always, the goals are to have a safe and prepared city to maintain the safety of our community as a whole.

The Lexington Police Department exists to serve all people within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness, and compassion. We are committed to the preservation of peace and the safeguarding of constitutional guarantees. Community service is our foundation, and we are driven by goals to enhance the quality of life and foster a sense of public trust, by holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance and ethics. The Lexington Police Department is dedicated to continue to provide a quality work environment and the development of its members through effective training and leadership.

Fire and Rescue services are not measured solely by the workload. While Lexington is fortunate to have a lower than national average number of structure fires, the city must be prepared to respond to the ones that do occur on a random and unplanned nature. The Lexington Fire Department strives to maintain existing career and volunteer staffing utilizing FTE's and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention programs funded through the General Fund. We must continue to work with Rockbridge County to improve the Fire/Rescue Joint Services Agreement and work with Rockbridge County and City of Buena Vista to improve regional mutual aid capacity to explore alternate funding sources for future growth, and attain national accreditation status for LFD. A good fire department can be thought of as a good insurance policy. Something that we all have, but hope to never need.

It has been learned through past experiences that input from Public Works should be heavily considered when making major project decisions to ensure the best use of resources. All departments evolve over time. The pending retirement of the Public Works Director will lead to new leadership that may have different views on how the department should be structured or operate. One example is the significant benefit that has been gained by the addition of a City Engineer to the department and the new Director may find the need for other positions that are new to the organization. Given the longevity of many of the current Public Works employees the coming years will provide many challenges for maintaining institutional knowledge and evolving the department to meet the needs of the city both immediate and long range. Training newly hired and newly promoted staff will become a significant effort.

APPENDIX

Fire related appendixes

1. Insurance Services Office

-Public Protection Class Rating Schedule

2. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Standard #1710 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments

Standard #1720 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments

3. American Heart Association CPR Guidelines

Police related appendixes

1. Safe city rating-- <https://www.safewise.com/blog/safest-cities-virginia>

2. Virginia Accreditation Professional Standards Committee-- <http://vlepsc.org>

3. Officer per population—<http://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/police-officers-per-capita-rates-employment-for-city-departments.html>