



Franklin County

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

AGENDA

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014

- 1:30 P.M. Call To Order, Chairman David Cundiff
- 1:31 Invocation, Supervisor Bobby Thompson
- 1:32 Pledge of Allegiance, Supervisor Bobby Thompson
- 1:33 Resolutions of Appreciation
- ✦ Mrs. Doris LeGault
 - ✦ Chief Slim Crawford
- 1:37 Introduction of New Employees
- ❖ Pat Regan - Emergency Services Communications Coordinator
 - ❖ David Bowles - Fire Marshal
- 1:40 Public Comment
-
- 1:43 CONSENT AGENDA (**REQUIRES ACTION**)
- REF: 1. Approval of Accounts Payable Listing, Appropriations, and Minutes for April 15 & 22, 2014
-
2. Solid Waste Collection Truck Award (**See Attachment #9**)
3. Request to Authorize for Public Hearing Chapter 7 Planning Fees Amendment (**See Attachment #8**)
4. Virginia Retirement System Contribution Rate Election (**See Attachment #3**)
5. Application for Enterprise Zone Designation (**See Attachment #4**)
6. 2014-2015 Tourism MicroGrant Awards (**See Attachment #5**)
- 1:44 *Vincent Copenhaver, Director of Finance*
- REF: 1. Monthly Finance Report
- 1:50 *Roger Elmore, Executive Director*
- REF: 1. Update on Skelton 4-H Center (**See Attachment #7**)

RICHARD E. HUFF II
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
1255 FRANKLIN ST., SUITE 112
ROCKY MOUNT, VIRGINIA 24151
(540) 483-3030
www.franklincountyva.org

2:05 *Mike Burnette, Director of Economic Development*
REF: 1. Presentation of Agriculture Development Strategic Plan
(See Attachment #6)

2:25 *Richard E. Huff, II, County Administrator*
REF: 1. Other Matters

2:35 *Other Matters by Supervisors*

David Cundiff, Union Hall District
+ Feed Lots

2:45 Request for Closed Meeting in Accordance with 2.2-3711, a-1, Personnel, a-3, Acquisition of Land, of the Code of Virginia, as Amended.a-5, Discussion of a Prospective New Business or Industry, and a-7, Consult with Legal Counsel, of the Code of Virginia, as amended.

Certification of Closed Meeting in Accordance with 2.2-3712 (d), of the Code of Virginia, as Amended.

APPOINTMENTS:

✓ **(See Attachment #1)**

Recess for Dinner

6:00 Call To Order, Chairman David Cundiff

6:01 Recess for Previously Advertised Public Hearings as Follows:

SML GOOD NEIGHBORS, INC. WITHDRAWN (See Attachment #11)

PETITION FOR REZONE – Petition of **Gregory Davis/Petitioner and Wendell Kevin Scott & Lisa Ferguson Scott/Owners** requesting a rezone for a +/- 9.313 acre parcel from B-2, Business District General to A-1, Agricultural. The subject property is located at 2121 Old Franklin Turnpike (SR 40) in the Union Hall District of Franklin County; and is further identified as Tax Map # 54 Parcel # 94. The petitioner is now seeking to rezone to allow for the construction of a single-family detached dwelling. (Case # REZO-4-14-12838) **(See Attachment #10)**

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance to Section 33.1-70.01 of the Code of Virginia, Franklin County Board of Supervisors and the Virginia Department of Transportation have jointly formulated a budget for the expenditure of improvement funds for the next fiscal year as well as to

update the current Six-Year Secondary Roads Improvement Program based on projected allocation of funding.

In accordance with this section of the Code of Virginia, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors has established a time of **6:00 P.M., on Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room in the Franklin County Government Center, 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 104, Rocky Mount, Virginia to allow for public comment. A copy of the proposed Six-Year Plan and priority listing for the upcoming fiscal year is available for review in (1) the Office of Finance at 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 111, Rocky Mount, Virginia, and at (2) www.franklincountyva.gov, under "In the Spotlight." **(See Attachment #2)**

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing at approximately **6:00 P.M., on Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room in the Franklin County Government Center, 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 104, Rocky Mount, Virginia to consider proposed amendments generally referencing and updating County Code Article III– Section 20-60. Exemptions from personal property tax and real property to correlate to existing State Code Sections 58.1-3504 and 58.1-3505

Adjournment Thereafter

RISE & SHINE GUESTS FOR MAY ARE BOBBY THOMPSON & RICK

60 DAY NOTICE FOR TERMS EXPIRING PER BOARD POLICY

STEP, INC.	Florella Johnson	25 Bernard Road Rocky Mount, VA 24151		3-Year	6/30/2014
STEP, INC.	Cynthia Treadway	30 East Church Street Rocky Mount, VA 24151		3-Year	6/30/2014
STEP, INC.	Charles Wagner	330 Riverview Rocky Mount, VA 24151		3-Year	6/30/2014
RECREATION COMMISSION	Reba Dillon	6051 Burnt Chimney Rd. Wirtz, VA 24184	Gills Creek	3-Year	6/30/2014
RECREATION COMMISSION	William Maxwell	3629 Dry Hill Road Ferrum, VA 24088	Blue Ridge	3-Year	6/30/2014
RECREATION COMMISSION	Kay Saleeby	85 Forest Hill Road Rocky Mount, VA 24151	Rocky Mount	3-Year	6/30/2014
RO. VALLEY JUV. DETENTION CENTER	Christopher Whitlow Vincent Copenhaver	1255 Franklin Street Rocky Mount, VA 24151			6/30/2014
LIBRARY BOARD	Molly A. Bratton- Jones	831 Coles Creek Road Rocky Mount, VA 24151	Blackwater	4-Year	6/30/2014
PATRICK HENRY COMM. COLLEGE	Mike Carter	210 Maple Avenue Rocky Mount, VA 24151	Citizen Appt.	4-Year	6/30/2014
SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD	Benson Beck	520 Waverly Lane Moneta, VA 24121	Gills Creek	4-Year	6/30/2014
SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD	Wendie W. Dungan	217 Dudley Road Union Hall, VA 24176	Union Hall	4-Year	6/30/2014
WESTERN VA. WATER AUTHORITY	Shirley B. Holland	161 Lila Lane Boones Mill, VA 24065		4-Year	6/30/2014

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FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors



Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<p><u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> FY2015-2020 Secondary Six Year Plan (SSYP)</p> <p><u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:</u> Secondary System Construction Program for Secondary County Roads.</p> <p><u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u></p> <p><u>Action Strategy:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u> Planning and VDOT staffs</p>	<p><u>AGENDA DATE:</u> May 20, 2014</p> <p><u>ITEM NUMBER:</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Yes</p> <p><u>INFORMATION:</u></p> <p><u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> <u>INFORMATION:</u></p> <p><u>ATTACHMENTS:</u> Yes</p> <p><u>REVIEWED BY:</u> RCH</p>
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BACKGROUND:

The State of Virginia requires the Board of Supervisors to review and adopt by resolution the Secondary Six Year Plan (SSYP) annually.

On March 18, 2014, VDOT staff held a work session with the Board of Supervisors to discuss the 2015-2020 Secondary Six Year Plan. VDOT staff stated the financial outlook has been updated as part of the annual development of the Governor’s Budget Bill and the Transportation’s Six Year Financial Plan. The State transportation revenue forecast for major sources is down by \$795.6 million from \$20.286 billion to \$19.533 billion. The impact of this decrease in forecast revenue, to the SSYP for Franklin County, is detailed in the table entitled “SSYP Allocation Comparison-FY 2014-2019 – vs – FY 2015-2020 Plan”. Although the FY 2015-2020 SSYP reflects a reduction in allocation, the overall SSYP allocation exceeds the allocations we were programming prior to HB 2313 which was signed into law in May 2013.

DISCUSSION:

Approximately \$403,554 of the previous funding on the RTE 634, Hardy Road, bridge approach project will be transferred to the RTE 936 (Greenhouse Road) Rural Rustic project in FY 2015. There will be \$195,955 in federal funds remaining on this project. These federal funds will be removed from the project and the project will be removed from the SSYP. These transfers were planned for this SSYP revision; however, system issues would not allow the transfers to be completed prior to adoption of the FY 2015-2020 SSYP. The RTE 634, Hardy Road, bridge approach project is no longer necessary because the entire project to construct a new RTE 634 Bridge over the Roanoke River, including necessary approach work, will be funded through the Salem District Bridge Section. This bridge replacement is tentatively scheduled for advertisement in July 2016.

As a result of the allocation reductions the following projects **have been removed** from the FY 2015-2020 SSYP.

- **RTE 659, Bar Ridge Road, Rural Rustic**
- **RTE 657, Red Valley Road, Rural Rustic**
- **RTE 672, Inglewood Road, Rural Rustic**
- **RTE 634, Harmony School Road, Intersection Improvements**

RTE 659 (Bar Ridge Road), RTE 657 (Red Valley Road), and RTE 672 (Inglewood Road) were priority 16, 17, and 18 on the FY 2014-2019 SSYP. The reduced funding for unpaved roads resulted in the removal of these three routes from the proposed SSYP.

The Harmony School Road Intersection Improvement project was positioned to receive Formula-Secondary funding beginning in FY 2017. All Formula-Secondary funding has been removed from the FY 2015-2020 SSYP.

Many of the estimates for the rural rustic unpaved road projects have increased due to continually rising material and labor costs. Potential storm water management implications have driven estimates upward as well. These increased estimates have affected the timing of the majority of the projects. The revised advertisement dates are indicated in the updated plan. The goal of the Residency will be to accelerate any rural rustic project that we can move forward as funding allows.

The funding for the Countywide Cost Centers on page four of the plan is consistent with previous years. Please disregard the estimated cost, ad date, previous funding and additional funding required data for all four of the Countywide Cost Centers. Our project management system requires that we enter this data for all projects; however, this information presents an inaccurate picture for these line items.

Approximately \$75,771 of funding for Rural Additions will remain in the proposed FY 2015-2020 SSYP. This funding is used to fund work on qualifying roads so they could become eligible for acceptance into the state-maintained secondary system. This funding is not applicable to roads that are already included in the secondary system.

The RTE 687, Alean Road, bridge replacement project and the RTE 927, Iron Bridge Road, bridge replacement project both remain on the proposed plan. These projects are complete and awaiting financial closure. Once processed, they will be removed from the SSYP.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors to adopt by resolution the FY2015-2020 Secondary Six Year Plan (SSYP).

SSYP ALLOCATION COMPARISON
FY 2014-2019 PLAN -VS- FY 2015-2020 PLAN

FY 14 - 19						
CODE	FUND	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
3001500	CTB Formula - Unpaved	\$ 166,674	\$ 252,521	\$ 289,421	\$ 289,421	\$ 289,421
6030601	Formula Secondary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 255,356	\$ 318,957	\$ 385,775
6030605	Secondary Unpaved	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 42,634	\$ 53,253	\$ 64,409
6030606	TeleFee	\$ 157,476	\$ 157,476	\$ 157,476	\$ 157,476	\$ 157,476

FY 15 - 20							
CODE	FUND	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
3001500	CTB Formula - Unpaved	\$ 47,784	\$ 89,401	\$ 130,677	\$ 132,450	\$ 142,423	\$ 137,823
6030601	Formula Secondary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
6030605	Secondary Unpaved	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
6030606	TeleFee	\$ 152,256	\$ 152,256	\$ 152,256	\$ 152,256	\$ 152,256	\$ 152,256

DIFFERENCE							
CODE	FUND	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
3001500	CTB Formula - Unpaved	\$ (118,890)	\$ (163,120)	\$ (158,744)	\$ (156,971)	\$ (146,998)	\$ 137,823
6030601	Formula Secondary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (255,356)	\$ (318,957)	\$ (385,775)	\$ -
6030605	Secondary Unpaved	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (42,634)	\$ (53,253)	\$ (64,409)	\$ -
6030606	TeleFee	\$ (5,220)	\$ (5,220)	\$ (5,220)	\$ (5,220)	\$ (5,220)	\$ 152,256

TOTAL CHANGE FY 15 - FY 19		
3001500	CTB Formula - Unpaved	\$ (744,723)
6030601	Formula Secondary	\$ (960,088)
6030605	Secondary Unpaved	\$ (160,296)
6030606	TeleFee	\$ (26,100)
		\$ (1,891,207)

NOTE- FY 14 Funding information removed - No FY 20 funding in FY14 - FY 19 Allocations.

Secondary System
Franklin County
Construction Program
Estimated Allocations

Fund	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	Total
CTB Formula - Unpaved State	\$47,784	\$89,401	\$130,677	\$132,450	\$142,423	\$137,823	\$680,558
Secondary Unpaved Roads	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TeleFee	\$152,256	\$152,256	\$152,256	\$152,256	\$152,256	\$152,256	\$913,536
Residue Parcels	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
STP Converted from IM	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal STP - Bond Match	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Formula STP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
MG Formula	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
BR Formula	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other State Match	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal STP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$200,040	\$241,657	\$282,933	\$284,706	\$294,679	\$290,079	\$1,594,094

Board Approval Date:

Residency Administrator

Date

County Administrator

Date

District: Salem
 County: Franklin County

SECONDARY SYSTEM CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM (in dollars)

Board Approval Date:

2015-16 through 2019-20

Route PPMS ID Accomplishment Type of Funds Type of Project Priority #	Road Name Project # Description FROM TO Length	Estimated Cost Ad Date	Previous Funding SSYP Funding Other Funding Total	Additional Funding Required	PROJECTED FISCAL YEAR ALLOCATIONS						Balance to complete	Traffic Count Scope of Work FHWA # Comments
					2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20		
0718	COLONIAL TURNPKE	PE \$716,950										601
55471	0718033334	RW \$120,363	\$1,624,142		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Bridge Replacement w/o Added
RAAP CONTRACT	RTE 718 - BRIDGE	CON \$4,164,251	\$365,956		\$0	\$0	\$1,192,166	\$0	\$0	\$0		14011
BR/STP,STP	REPLACEMENT	Total \$5,001,564	\$1,990,098	\$3,011,466	\$0	\$0	\$1,192,166	\$0	\$0	\$0		Slate funds - AC for future federal
MIN PLAN,FED- AID,SECONDARY 0001.00	APPROACHES & BRIDGE OVER PIGG RIVER											conversion. Revised schedule required.
	0.4	11/10/2020										
0634	HARDY FORD BRDG	PE \$448										4100
58890	0634033349	RW \$0	\$457,492		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Bridge Replacement w/o Added
RAAP CONTRACT	RTE 634 - FRANKLIN CO.	CON \$0	\$142,057		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Capacity
STP	APPROACH TO HARDY FORD	Total \$448	\$599,549	(\$599,101)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		14011
SECONDARY - ONE HEARING DESIGN 0002.00	AT SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE (GOES W/ID 58885 & 62650; ACTIVITIES ON 62650)											Bridge and approach allocations are
	0.1	9/8/2020										funded 50 / 50 % with Bedford County.
0687	ALEAN ROAD	PE \$332,725										290
84934	0687033701	RW \$0	\$126,941		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Bridge Replacement w/o Added
RAAP CONTRACT	RTE 687 - REPLACE EXISTING	CON \$795,667	\$1,305,571		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Capacity
BROS	ONE-LANE BRIDGE	Total \$1,128,392	\$1,432,512	(\$304,120)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		16011
Minimum Plan 0003.00	0.01 MI. NORTH ROUTE 691											
	0.70 MI. SOUTH ROUTE 689	4/10/2012										
0616	Scruggs Road	PE \$242,547										8800
93277	0616033727	RW \$154,093	\$711,061		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		Reconstruction w/ Added Capacity
RAAP CONTRACT	RTE. 616 - CONSTRUCT RIGHT	CON \$382,047	\$67,626		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		24003
STP	TURN LANE AT INT. RTE. 122	Total \$778,687	\$778,687	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Minimum Plan 0004.00	Intersection of Route 122											
	0.12 miles south of intersection of Route 122	7/7/2017										
0839	Greenhouse Road	PE \$100,142										Resurfacing
98432	0839033742	RW \$0	\$438,100		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		16005
SAAP CONTRACT	RTE 839 -SURFACE TREAT NON-	CON \$328,100	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
S	HARDSURFACED ROAD	Total \$428,242	\$438,100	(\$9,858)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
No Plan 0005.00	Intersection of Rte 671											
	0.312 Miles North of Rte 671	5/28/2013										
	0.3											

Route PPMS ID Accomplishment Type of Funds Type of Project Priority #	Road Name Project # Description FROM TO Length	Estimated Cost Ad Date	Previous Funding SSYP Funding Other Funding Total	Additional Funding Required	PROJECTED FISCAL YEAR ALLOCATIONS						Balance to complete	Traffic Count Scope of Work FHWA # Comments	
					2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20			
0744	Webster Corner Road	PE \$60,796											
98459	0744033744	RW \$0	\$434,877		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
STATE FORCES/HIRED S	RTE 744 - RURAL RUSTIC, SURF TRT NON-HARDSURF RD RTE 643	CON \$374,081	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			Resurfacing 16005
		Total \$434,877	\$434,877	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
No Plan 0006.00	0.7 MI N RTE 643 0.7	2/20/2015											
0748	Ferrum School Road	PE \$8,509											
98460	0748033745	RW \$0	\$230,467		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
SAAP CONTRACT S	Rural Rustic - Grade drain & surface treat Intersection Route 40	CON \$233,344	\$55,049		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			Resurfacing 16005
		Total \$241,853	\$285,516	(\$43,663)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
No Plan 0007.00	0.63 mile S Route 40 0.6	1/28/2014											
0927	Iron Bridge Road	PE \$404,387											
90089	0927033708	RW \$39,723	\$24,735		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
RAAP CONTRACT BROS	RTE. 927 - BRIDGE REPLACEMENT (STR. 6358) Intersection of Route 864	CON \$1,734,038	\$2,153,413		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			Bridge Replacement w/o Added 16011
		Total \$2,178,148	\$2,178,148	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Single Hearing 0008.00	Intersection of Route 40 0.0	10/9/2012											
0936	GREENHOUSE RD	PE \$50,000											
-14251	0936033785	RW \$30,000	\$19,909		\$132,727	\$116,403	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			286 Resurfacing 16005
SAAP CONTRACT	RTE 936 GREENHOUSE ROAD - RURAL RUSTIC 0.19 MI N RTE 839	CON \$600,000	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
		Total \$680,000	\$19,909	\$660,091	\$132,727	\$116,403	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$410,961		
No Plan 0009.00	END STATE MAINTENANCE 0.6	12/31/2017											
0929	BRIAR MOUNTAIN RD	PE \$25,000											
-14257	0929033786	RW \$20,000	\$0		\$0	\$85,254	\$242,933	\$30,134	\$0	\$0			282 Resurfacing 16005
STATE FORCES/HIRED EQUIPMENT	RTE 929 BRIAR MOUNTAIN RD - RURAL RUSTIC END STATE MAINTENANCE	CON \$313,321	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
		Total \$358,321	\$0	\$358,321	\$0	\$85,254	\$242,933	\$30,134	\$0	\$0			
No Plan 0010.00	0.63 MI E OF END STATE MAINTENANCE 0.6	12/31/2018											

Route PPMS ID Accomplishment Type of Funds Type of Project Priority #	Road Name Project # Description FROM TO Length	Estimated Cost Ad Date	Previous Funding SSYP Funding Other Funding Total	Additional Funding Required	PROJECTED FISCAL YEAR ALLOCATIONS						Balance to complete	Traffic Count Scope of Work FHWA # Comments
					2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20		
0981 -14258 STATE FORCES/HIRED EQUIPMENT	EDWARDS ROAD 0981033787 RTE 981 EDWARDS RD - RURAL RUSTIC END STATE MAINTENANCE RTE 660 - MORGANS FORK RD	PE \$25,000 RW \$15,000 CON \$212,145 Total \$252,145	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$252,145	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$212,072 \$0 \$212,072	\$40,073 \$0 \$40,073	\$0 \$0 \$0	229 Resurfacing 16005	
No Plan 0011.00	0.6	12/31/2019										
0891 -14280 STATE FORCES/HIRED EQUIPMENT	BONBROOK RD 0891033788 RTE 691 BONBBROOK RD RURAL RUSTIC 0.90 MI E RTE 635 BONBROOK MILL RD RTE 687 ALEAN RD	PE \$25,000 RW \$15,000 CON \$281,989 Total \$321,989	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$321,989	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$212,106	\$212,106 \$0 \$109,883	\$109,883 \$0 \$109,883	200 Resurfacing 16005	
No Plan 0012.00	0.6	12/1/2020										
0719 105188 SAAP CONTRACT	FAWNDALE RD 0719033789 RTE 719 FAWNDALE RD RURAL RUSTIC 0.02 MI E OF RTE 609	PE \$10,000 RW \$0 CON \$185,178 Total \$195,178	\$165,000 \$74,853	(\$44,675)	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	58 Resurfacing 16005	
No Plan 0013.00	0.5	1/28/2014										
0683 105189 STATE FORCES/HIRED EQUIPMENT	OLD BROOK RD 0683033790 RTE 683 OLD BROOK RD RURAL RUSTIC RTE 634 HARMONY SCHOOL RD	PE \$5,000 RW \$5,000 CON \$32,000 Total \$42,000	\$14,687 \$0	\$27,313	\$27,313 \$0	\$0 \$0	\$0 \$0	\$0 \$0	\$0 \$0	\$0 \$0	69 Resurfacing 16005	
No Plan 0014.00	0.1	4/29/2016										
0865 -14263 SAAP CONTRACT	TIMBERLINE RD 0865033791 RTE 865 TIMBERLINE RD RURAL RUSTIC RTE 778 0.35 MI E OF RTE 781	PE \$120,463 RW \$15,000 CON \$612,054 Total \$747,517	\$2,407 \$0	\$745,110	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$0 \$0 \$0	\$137,696 \$0 \$137,696	67 Resurfacing 16005	
No Plan 0015.00	1.7	12/31/2023								\$607,414		

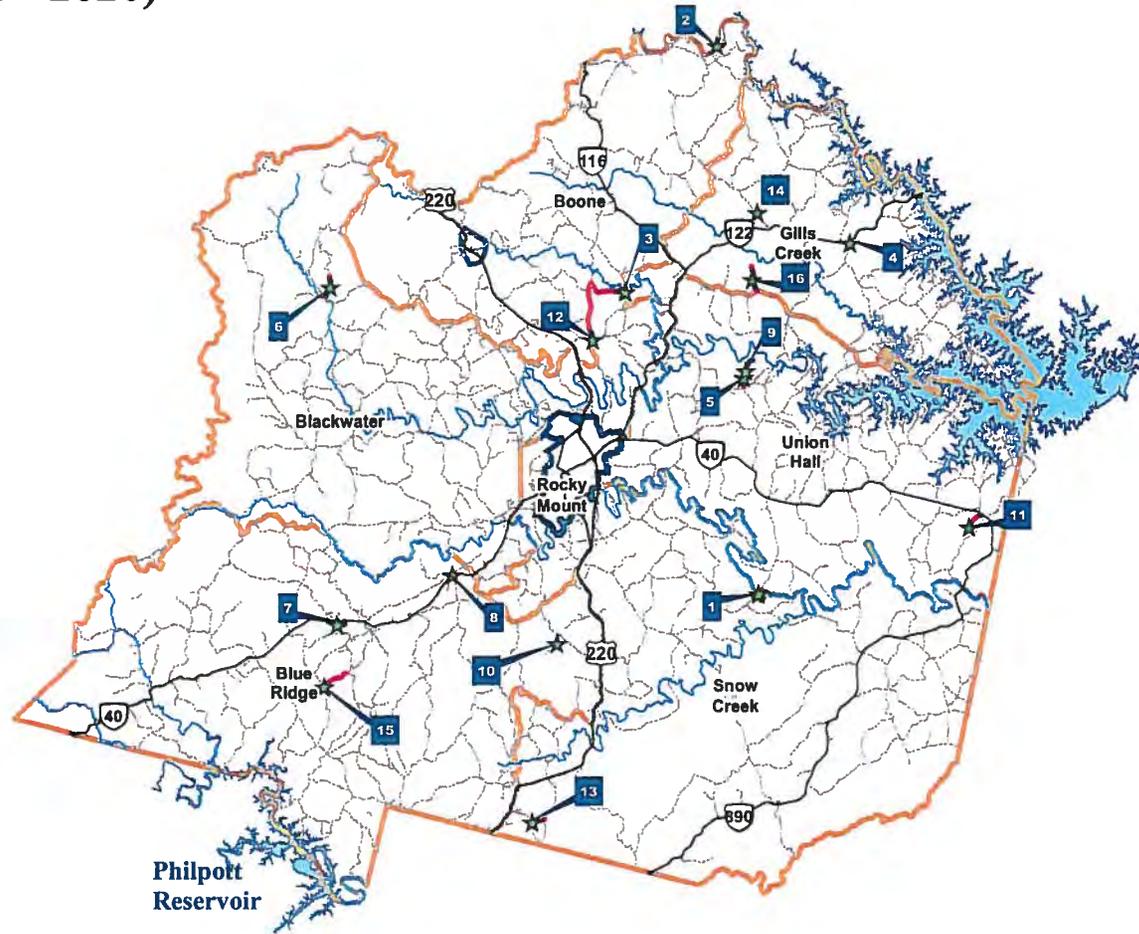
Route PPMS ID Accomplishment Type of Funds Type of Project Priority #	Road Name Project # Description FROM TO Length	Estimated Cost Ad Date	Previous Funding SSYP Funding Other Funding Total	Additional Funding Required	PROJECTED FISCAL YEAR ALLOCATIONS						Balance to complete	Traffic Count Scope of Work FHWA # Comments
					2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20		
100097 S	1204003 COUNTYWIDE RURAL ADDITIONS VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN COUNTY	PE \$0 RW \$0 CON \$250,000 Total \$250,000	\$75,771 \$0 \$75,771	\$174,229	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0 Reconstruction w/o Added Capacity 16004 RURAL ADDITIONS - SECTION 33.1- 72.1. ROLLOVER OF FUNDS CAN BE FOR FIVE YEARS.	
100107 S	1204007 COUNTYWIDE TRAFFIC SERVICES VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN COUNTY	PE \$0 RW \$0 CON \$250,000 Total \$250,000	\$406,984 \$0 \$406,984	(\$156,984)	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	0 Safety 16021 TRAFFIC SERVICES INCLUDE NEW SECONDARY SIGNS	
100176 S	1204005 COUNTYWIDE ENGINEERING & SURVEY VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN COUNTY	PE \$0 RW \$0 CON \$250,000 Total \$250,000	\$32,587 \$0 \$32,587	\$217,413	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	0 Preliminary Engineering 16015 MINOR SURVEY & PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING FOR BUDGET ITEMS AND INCIDENTAL TYPE WORK.	
100343 S	1204008 COUNTYWIDE RIGHT OF WAY ENGR. VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN COUNTY	PE \$0 RW \$250,000 CON \$0 Total \$250,000	\$25,000 \$0 \$25,000	\$225,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	0 Right of Way 16016 USE WHEN IMPRACTICAL TO OPEN A PROJECT: ATTORNEY FEES and ACQUISITION COST.	

Franklin County Six Year Secondary Construction Plan (FY 2015 - 2020)

Smith Mountain
Lake

Legend

- ★ VDOT6YearPlanPoints
- Main Roads
- 6 Year Plan Road Improvements
- Streams Major
- ▭ Town Centers
- ▭ Election Districts
- ▭ Lakes
- 13 Priority



Philpott
Reservoir



Updated: 05/09/14

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance to Section 33.1-70.01 of the Code of Virginia, Franklin County Board of Supervisors and the Virginia Department of Transportation have jointly formulated a budget for the expenditure of improvement funds for the next fiscal year as well as to update the current Six-Year Secondary Roads Improvement Program based on projected allocation of funding.

In accordance with this section of the Code of Virginia, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors has established a time of **6:00 P.M., on Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room in the Franklin County Government Center, 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 104, Rocky Mount, Virginia to allow for public comment. A copy of the proposed Six-Year Plan and priority listing for the upcoming fiscal year is available for review in (1) the Office of Finance at 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 111, Rocky Mount, Virginia, and at (2) www.franklincountyva.gov, under "In the Spotlight."

"ALL REQUESTS FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO A DISABILITY SHOULD BE MADE TO SHARON K. TUDOR WITH AT LEAST A 48 HOUR NOTICE."

Sharon K. Tudor, MMC, Clerk
Franklin County Board of Supervisors

FRANKLIN NEWS POST:
Please publish in your Friday, editions.

CATHY THURMAN: Please place on the County's web page under In the Spotlight!!!!!!!

THANKS SO MUCH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors



Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> <i>Virginia Retirement System Contribution Rate Election</i>	<u>AGENDA DATE:</u>	<u>ITEM NUMBER:</u>
<u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST</u>	<i>MAY 20, 2014</i>	
<i>Consideration of the attached Virginia Retirement System Resolution Electing the County's Contribution Rate for FY14-15 and FY15-16</i>	<u>ACTION:</u>	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u>	<u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u> YES	
<u>Goal #</u>	<u>ACTION:</u> YES	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>Action Strategy:</u>		
<u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u>	<u>ATTACHMENTS:</u> YES	
<i>Messrs. Huff, Copenhaver, Mrs. Scott</i>	<u>REVIEWED BY:</u> <i>REH</i>	

BACKGROUND:

Recent legislation calls for localities to make an election concerning our Virginia Retirement System contribution rate by July 1, 2014.

DISCUSSION:

The attached resolution will approve the employer contribution rate for the next biennium. Staff recommends the Board adopt the certified employer rate of 11.48% instead of the alternate rate of 9.18% for the following reasons:

- Reduced contributions to the County's employer account and the investment earnings they would have generated will mean fewer assets available for future benefits.
- Results in a lower funded ratio when the next actuarial valuation is performed resulting in a higher calculated future contribution rate.
- Requires that the County disclose the Net Pension Obligation in the notes to our financial statements.

The County currently has the 11.48% employer contribution rate budgeted for next fiscal year (14-15).

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully requests the Board's approval of the attached resolution.

Employer Contribution Rates for Counties, Cities,
Towns, School Divisions and Other Political Subdivisions
(In accordance with the 2014 Appropriation Act Item 468(H))

Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that Franklin County (Employer Code 55133) does hereby acknowledge that its contribution rates effective July 1, 2014 shall be based on the higher of a) the contribution rate in effect for FY 2014, or b) eighty percent of the results of the June 30, 2013 actuarial valuation of assets and liabilities as approved by the Virginia Retirement System Board of Trustees for the 2014-16 biennium (the "Alternate Rate") provided that, at its option, the contribution rate may be based on the employer contribution rates certified by the Virginia Retirement System Board of Trustees pursuant to Virginia Code § 51.1-145(I) resulting from the June 30, 2013 actuarial value of assets and liabilities (the "Certified Rate"); and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that Franklin County (Employer Code 55133) does hereby certify to the Virginia Retirement System Board of Trustees that it elects to pay the following contribution rate effective July 1, 2014:

(Check only one box)

The Certified Rate of 11.48% The Alternate Rate of ____%; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that Franklin County (Employer Code 55133) does hereby certify to the Virginia Retirement System Board of Trustees that it has reviewed and understands the information provided by the Virginia Retirement System outlining the potential future fiscal implications of any election made under the provisions of this resolution; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the officers of Franklin County (Employer Code 55133) are hereby authorized and directed in the name of Franklin County to carry out the provisions of this resolution, and said officers of Franklin County are authorized and directed to pay over to the Treasurer of Virginia from time to time such sums as are due to be paid by Franklin County for this purpose.

Governing Body Chairman

CERTIFICATE

I, _____, Clerk of Franklin County, Virginia, certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed at a lawfully organized meeting of Franklin County held at _____, Virginia at _____ o'clock on _____, 2014. Given under my hand and seal of Franklin County this _____ day of _____, 2014.

Clerk

**This resolution must be passed prior to July 1, 2014 and
received by VRS no later than July 10, 2014.**

FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

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Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> Application for Franklin County-Rocky Mount Enterprise Zone Designation	<u>AGENDA DATE:</u> May 20, 2014	<u>ITEM NUMBER:</u>
<u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST</u> Review potential Enterprise Zone designation and setting of public hearing	<u>ACTION:</u>	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u> <u>Goal #</u> <u>Action Strategy:</u>	<u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u> X <u>ACTION:</u>	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u> Messrs. Huff, Burnette	<u>ATTACHMENTS:</u>	
	<u>REVIEWED BY:</u> <i>RET</i>	

BACKGROUND:

The Virginia Enterprise Zone (VEZ) program is a partnership between state and local government that encourages job creation and private investment. VEZ accomplishes this by designating Enterprise Zones throughout the state and providing two grant-based incentives, the Job Creation Grant (JCG) and the Real Property Investment Grant (RPIG), to qualified investors and job creators within those zones, while the locality provides local incentives. Franklin County has never had a VEZ designated area while the Town of Rocky Mount had a Zone that expired on December 31, 2013. In response to this lack of a zone, the County applied unsuccessfully in 2013 for a new zone designation.

DISCUSSION:

Designation as a VEZ has been a boon for numerous communities within the state for decades. Having a Zone means that a business locating or expanding in a Zone can receive substantial state and local incentives that they cannot receive in a non-VEZ area. For larger projects, this can mean hundreds of thousands of dollars and can be the deciding factor when two communities are in close competition. A County zone, if approved, would be in place for twenty years with the opportunity to apply for renewal. The total acreage such a zone could include is 3,840 acres which encompasses both the County and Town of Rocky Mount areas. Enterprise Zone designations are awarded after a lengthy application process and only a select few become available each year as older zones reach the end of their twenty-year life. The designation and the application are geared towards areas of economic hardship, such as communities with high unemployment rates. Franklin County's distress score is extremely low due to the low unemployment and higher incomes found in the area. For this reason, successfully obtaining one of the five available zones this year will be difficult. However, if unsuccessful this year, the County can continue to

reapply as more Zones become available in the coming years.

The area within the Town of Rocky Mount initially selected for designation as a Zone includes generally the same parcels that were previously within the Town's now-expired VEZ. The area in Town is approximately 900 acres in total. The proposed County Zone stretches generally along U.S. 220 from the Franklin County Commerce Center to an area between Rocky Mount and Boones Mill. It also takes in the Route 40 West area between the Town limits at the former 84 Lumber Building and Six Mile Post Road. Properties in these sections were identified due to the fact that they already housed businesses, were zoned business/commercial, were in the Route 220 Overlay, or had above average potential to one day be attractive business property. The County portion of the acreage would be approximately 2,400 acres. Taken together, the Town and County acreage would equal about 3,300 acres, leaving approximately 540 acres for future designation in other areas of the community. These are preliminary estimates and may change as the final maps are prepared.

The application for designation must be submitted by June 30, 2014. County and Town staff have been working to complete the application and mapping for review by the Town Council and Board of Supervisors. Prior to submittal, a public hearing must be held to allow the community to comment on the application and the parcels designated to be part of the Enterprise Zone. Staff recommends, if the Board would like to submit an application for a Zone this year, that a public hearing be scheduled for the June 17, 2014 Board meeting to hear public comment and to provide final approval to submit a designation application.

RECOMMENDATION:

County staff respectfully asks for Board guidance on the submission of a designation application and, if positive, to schedule a public hearing for this purpose on June 17, 2013 at the Board's regular monthly meeting.

FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

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Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> 2014-2015 Tourism MicroGrant Awards – Round 1	<u>AGENDA DATE:</u> May 20, 2014	<u>ITEM NUMBER:</u>
<u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST</u> The Franklin County Board of Supervisors annually awards small grants to organizations within the community for promotional expenses related to local tourism-related projects and events.	<u>ACTION:</u>	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u> <u>Goal #</u> <u>Action Strategy:</u>	<u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u> X <u>ACTION:</u>	<u>INFORMATION:</u>
<u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u> Huff, Burnette, Holland	<u>ATTACHMENTS:</u>	
	<u>REVIEWED BY:</u> <i>REL</i>	

BACKGROUND:

Annually, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors awards small grants to organizations within the community to assist with promotional and operational expenses of local tourism-related projects and events. These funds help with the marketing of those events and/or programs, while at the same time further allowing the county tourism office to promote Franklin County to potential visitors. For the 2014-2015 fiscal year, \$20,000 has been set aside within the Franklin County Tourism budget for these awards.

DISCUSSION:

A total of five (5) applications were received from four (4) different organizations by the application deadline on April 18, reflecting a total of \$13,600 in requested funds.

Funding for the Tourism MicroGrant Program is generated by the transient occupancy, or lodging tax, applied to the motels, hotels and bed & breakfast properties in the County. The purpose of this MicroGrant program is to increase the local tourism industry thus creating new jobs, attracting new tourists, spawning new hospitality-related investments and improving the quality of life for Franklin County residents. It is recognized that the County cannot, and should not, be the only provider of tourism events for our community. We should instead assist other organizations in the creation of events and marketing campaigns that can leverage the community's limited resources. We must leverage our limited dollars to support interesting, dynamic and creative special events and marketing campaigns that set Franklin County apart from competitors throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

Tourism MicroGrants exist to support events and activities that a) encourage tourists from outside the region to enjoy our community and make use of our hospitality industry, and b) provide an opportunity to expand the awareness and visibility of the community throughout the region. In reviewing the five (5) submitted applications, staff evaluated each applicant on a number of different factors, including, but not limited to, the amount of funds leveraging involved; marketing plan and scope; perceived economic impact; financial need; partnership opportunities; and past performance. Based on all criteria and available data, staff has made the following recommendations for this year's Tourism MicroGrant Program awards:

APPLICANT	PURPOSE	AMOUNT SOUGHT	STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS
Community Partnership for Revitalization	Come Home to a Franklin County Christmas	\$1,600.00	\$1,600.00
Blue Ridge Institute & Farm Museum	Blue Ridge Folklife Festival	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Franklin County Civil War 150 Committee	Franklin County Civil War Days	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce	SML Wine Festival	\$3,700.00	\$3,700.00
	SML Chili Fest	\$300.00	\$300.00
		TOTAL SOUGHT \$13,600.00	TOTAL RECOMMENDED \$13,600.00

While recommendations were made for a number of high-caliber projects, a remaining microgrant fund balance of \$6,400 will allow Franklin County Tourism to accept additional applications during a second Tourism MicroGrant Program cycle for the upcoming fiscal year.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board approve the staff recommendations for first round Tourism MicroGrant Program awards from the Franklin County Tourism budget. Recommendations for award of approximately \$6,400 in second round grants will be made to the Board at its June meeting.

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MEMO

May 14, 2014

To: Franklin County Board of Supervisors

From: Michael Burnette, Economic Development Director

RE: 2014 Franklin County Agribusiness Development Strategic Plan

Please find enclosed a copy of the recently completed Agribusiness Development Strategic Plan and Study. This study was performed by Matson Consulting during the latter half of 2013 and has been edited and revised by the Franklin County Agribusiness Development Committee over the past few months. This report provides an in-depth review of the state of the County's agriculture industry and provides a road map for developing this vital sector over both the short and long term. A number of recommendations have been made that will give the Board and the Committee a plan to follow in an attempt to protect and grow agriculture in the community.

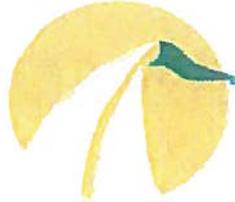
Members of the Agribusiness Development Committee will submit this plan for the Board's review at the May 20, 2014 meeting and will provide an overview of the plan, as well as recommendations for short-term action items, at the same time.

If you have any questions related to the document, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Michael Burnette, Director
Office of Economic Development
1255 Franklin Street - Suite 112
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-3030
Fax: 540-483-3035

Agricultural Development Strategic Plan

For



Franklin County, VA

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

Prepared By:

Matson Consulting
PO Box 661
Aiken SC 29802
Phone: 803-233-7134
Fax: 803-233-7938
www.Matsonconsult.com



December 2013



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INTRODUCTION

Franklin County possesses a viable agricultural economy. Due to the widespread effects of the local foods movement, new opportunities are emerging for small farms to sell food and services in the local marketplace, yet agricultural operations require a stable land base to innovate and make new investments. The county is seeking to promote its farms and protect its agricultural resources in the face of dramatic changes in the farm economy and increasing growth pressure from residential development.

With an increasingly global marketplace and a plentiful year-round supply of food, some may feel that local agriculture is not as important as it once was. However, farms today provide much more than cheap food to their communities. Well-managed farms bring a range of benefits that all citizens can enjoy at no cost:

- **Economic:** Agriculture contributes to the local economy directly through sales, job creation, support services and businesses, and also by providing entrepreneurial opportunities in secondary markets such as food processing and catering. Farming and forestry are significant economic activities in Franklin County. According to 2007 Census of Agriculture data, Franklin County contained more than 1,000 farms and a market value for products sold of almost \$54 million. The Virginia Department of Forestry reports the Average Annual Harvest Value (1986-2001) for the county at more than \$2.6 million.
- **Environmental:** Working farms and forests supply important environmental amenities, providing food and cover for wildlife, helping to control flooding, protecting wetlands and watersheds, and maintaining air quality. Franklin County's farmers manage more than 166,000 acres according to the USDA. In Franklin County, the Forest Service reports commercial forests encompass about 60 percent of the total land area for the county for a total of over 266,000 acres in commercial forests.¹ All citizens depend on farmers to be stewards of our natural resources, providing clean water and wildlife habitat across the state.
- **Rural Heritage:** Agriculture is a major part of our cultural heritage, with farm families anchoring rural communities and providing an important piece of Franklin County's unique historical character. Today, farm families are cornerstones to rural churches, fire departments, schools, and other community institutions.
- **Open Space:** Farms and forests provide wildlife habitat, green space and beautiful views, important for scenic beauty for everyone and attracting tourist dollars from across the country and world. Privately owned and managed farms are an important and cost-effective element of the county's open space strategy.
- **Tax Savings:** Privately owned working lands provide fiscal benefits, helping keep property taxes low due to their minimal need of public services. As an example, a 2005 Cost of Community Services (COCS) study prepared by American Farmland Trust for neighboring Bedford County, VA shows that for every \$1 of revenue provided by residential properties, the county spent \$1.07 to provide services to these same area; in contrast, for every \$1 of revenue provided by agricultural land use, the county spent \$.25 to provide services. Thus, residential properties actually cost counties more in needed services than they provide in revenue, while farm and forestland owners pay more than their fair share of taxes. There is a

¹ Cooper, J.; Johnson, T.; & Becker, C. (2011). "Virginia's Timber Industry-An Assessment of Timber Product Output and Use, 2009." USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station.



simple explanation for this surprising result: farms do not require as much from their counties, while new housing developments spread out across the countryside require a great deal of public funds for new infrastructure and services.

Findings of COCS studies have important implications for policymakers charting a future course for their communities. They suggest not that communities should pursue a single type of land use for fiscal health, but that they should consider balancing various community goals that include a range of housing and employment options, as well as open space and working lands. With good planning, these goals can be balanced for the benefit of all citizens.

- **Local Food:** Farms are increasingly valued as a source of fresh, safe and healthy food. The growth of farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, and direct marketing to restaurants and universities points to strong consumer demand for locally grown fruits, vegetables, wines, meats, and dairy products.

Aware of these benefits, and as part of a proactive effort to support the development of the agricultural industry in the county, the County of Franklin and the Franklin County Agriculture Development Board supported development of this Agricultural Development Strategic Plan, which is intended to coordinate future efforts to sustain local agriculture.



METHODOLOGY

The objectives of this planning process which were identified to help the county reach its agricultural development goals are:

- Evaluate the existing agricultural industries/ entities and determine their success and viability.
- Identify alternative agricultural entities and market options available to Franklin County that will enhance current agricultural industry operations and increase economic development.
- Determine estimated prospective revenues for potential alternative agricultural operations.
- Identify regional partnership opportunities in agricultural development.
- Identify national, state, or local regulations and policies that would inhibit agricultural development in Franklin County.
- Develop an implementation strategy and projected personnel work load.
- Provide examples of successful food to table programs in the Southeast region. Evaluate a potential Franklin County food to table program and include action steps into the overall strategy.

To achieve these objectives, the consultant hired by the county to develop this plan took the following steps, beginning in September 2013:

- Visits were made to the client. These visits included strategic information sessions, conference calls, and roundtable meetings with various key representatives to clarify information.
- Existing Franklin County Literature was provided by Sean Duff to serve as a source for the historical and agricultural context of the plan. Information utilized from these documents has been included and cited throughout the document.
- A literature and database search were completed, results reviewed, and conclusions drawn. The results of the literature search are provided throughout the document.
- Members of the Virginia Agriculture Development Officers group (VADO) were surveyed, based on recommendations from Stephen Versen, Project Manager for the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Interviews were conducted with county officials and leaders of the farm, tourism, and business sectors. Information was gathered from people within the region who are knowledgeable of the industry from roundtable discussions organized by Sean Duff. Details of the information collected, and the conclusions, are included.
- Based on the information gathered from all sources, assumptions of input, output, and pricing were made and financial models were prepared.
- Determinations were made regarding infrastructure needs and marketing opportunities for increased profitability and long-term viability of the agricultural community.
- A local agricultural development plan was constructed, identifying threats and opportunities, organizing recommendations, and outlining action steps, priorities, and overall implementation.
- Incorporation of feedback from partners, local leaders, and stakeholders to revise and refine the plan.
- Presentation of the final plan to Commissioners for adoption as official county policy.



DESCRIPTION

Virginia Agriculture

Agriculture is Virginia's largest and oldest industry; it has been the backbone of the state economy for almost four centuries. It generates approximately \$36 billion annually, utilizes about 34 percent of the land in the state, and accounts for about 12 percent of all sales in the state. About 18 percent of these sales are associated with red meat (cattle, calves, hogs, sheep and lambs). More than 98 percent of Virginia's farms are family owned and operated, and about 20 out of every 100 jobs in Virginia are in agriculture.

Franklin County Profile

The historical and descriptive sections that follow were sourced largely from existing Franklin County Literature; a list of these sources has been included in the bibliography section of the plan. These documents provide greater detail regarding the existing state of the county, and should be referenced where necessary for more in-depth information; any additional sources have been cited where appropriate. All maps, unless otherwise noted, have been provided via Google maps.

History

Franklin County's history began even before the legal formation of the county and has helped develop the area into a flourishing community. Pioneers traveled from Eastern Virginia and Maryland in the 1740s to help settle the land before it became known as Franklin County. These families were mainly of Scottish, Irish, and German descent. In 1786, the county was legally formed from the surrounding Bedford and Henry counties through an act by the General Assembly. Many of the early residents of the county came from Pennsylvania, where at that time Benjamin Franklin was governor. Officials decided to name the county after the influential public figure.

The county has a rich cultural history as many citizens of the county have served in U.S. wars, which produced hometown heroes. One notable resident of the county was Booker T. Washington, who was born in the county. To celebrate his connection to the area, his birthplace became a national monument.



Booker T. Washington Monument

As Franklin County has grown over time the major industries have changed. In the county's early history, even up to around the 1950s, agriculture was the main industry, providing the most jobs for residents in the county. Tobacco production was the main crop for these farmers, and agriculture helped to support a growing community. As times changed, manufacturing took over as the leading industry and now accounts for over 17 percent of the jobs in the county. Although tobacco was still a major part of the county's economy during this step away from agriculture, fewer farms were growing tobacco, and more factories made their way into the county.



Also in the 1950s, Smith Mountain Lake and Philpott Lake were developed and Franklin County began to grow as a vacation destination. The county became known as the “Land between the Lakes and the Blue Ridge Mountain,” adding to the sense of uniqueness.²

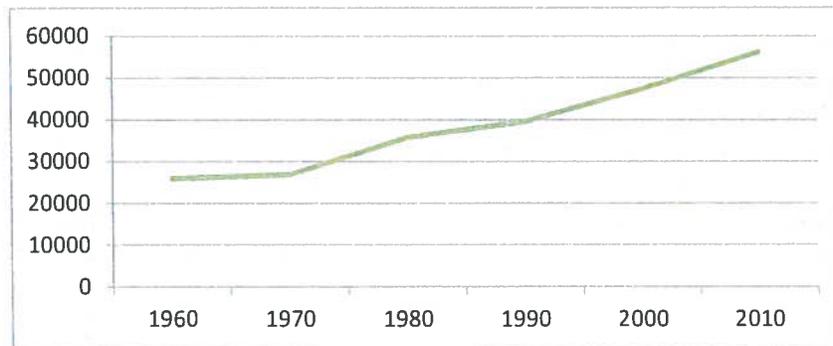
Population

The population of Franklin County is diverse, varying, and has experienced many changes over time. Understanding the different characteristics about the county’s population and demographics will help give a more complete idea of the motivations within the county.

Franklin County’s population in 2010 was 56,159 people, representing almost a 19 percent increase from 2000. The estimated population for 2012 is 56,411, a .4 percent increase since 2010. Trends in the population for Franklin County have increased overall, with the largest population growth occurring within the last 20 years. Since 1960, the population has increased by 54 percent and is anticipated to continue rising over the next 10 to 20 years; the population is estimated to be over 62,000 by 2020.³ The following figure shows the increase in population for Franklin County between 1960 and 2010.



Figure 1: Franklin County Population, 1960-2010⁴



According to the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan, the age range of the population within the county is varied, but the age group with the highest population is the 50 to 54 years group, which had just over 4,500 people. The most populated age group for Virginia is the 45 to 49 years group, which is also the same for the United States. The 45 to 49 years age group is the second largest for the county, with over 4,300 people. Franklin County’s smallest age group includes residents 85 years or older. This age group contains about 950 people for the county and is also the smallest for Virginia and the United States.

Municipalities

Boones Mill and Rocky Mount are the only two incorporated towns located within Franklin County. Unincorporated communities found in the county include Bent Mountain, Callaway,

² Franklin County (2013). “Historical Sketch of the County.” County of Franklin Website.

³ (2007). “Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan.” Franklin County Board of Supervisors.

⁴ Forstall, Richard (1995). “Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990.” U.S. Bureau of the Census Population Division.



Ferrum, Glade Hill, Hale's Ford, North Shore, Penhook, Redwood, Snow Creek, Union Hall, and Westlake Corner. The following county highlights were gathered from the most recent census data and can be found on City-Data.com, a comprehensive site listing census information for each county.

Rocky Mount, VA

Rocky Mount was incorporated as a town in 1873 and is the county seat. Located along the Pigg River and in the hills of the western Blue Ridge Mountains, the town has a land area of 4.6 miles. Major infrastructure within Rocky Mount includes U.S. Route 220, which runs through the town.

The population in Rocky Mount is estimated to be over 4,800 for 2012 and is part of the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, the fourth largest statistical area in Virginia. The Roanoke MSA had a population of over 308,000 in 2010 and was estimated to be slightly lower in 2012. The median resident age for the population is 44 years old. The population is also almost split between males and females, with females representing about 54 percent of the population in Rocky Mount.

The estimated median household income for 2011 was \$34,335, almost a \$5,000 increase from 2000. This is relatively low when compared to the median household income for Virginia, which is \$61,882.

Figure 2: Map of Rocky Mount

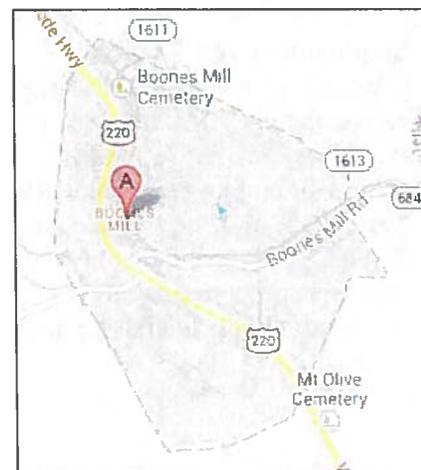


Boones Mill, VA

Boones Mill was incorporated in 1927 and is located about 11 miles from Rocky Mount, Virginia. Situated along the Virgil H. Goode Highway, this town is relatively smaller than Rocky Mount and has a total area of less than one square mile. The estimated population in 2012 for Boones Mill was 239 people and has dropped 16 percent since 2000. This town is also a part of the Roanoke MSA.

The median resident age for the population is 44 years old, and the population is divided with over 51 percent females. The median household income in 2011 for the residents of Boones Mills was over \$58,000, which is about \$20,000 higher than the median household median income of residents in 2000.

Figure 3: Map of Boones Mill





Nearby Municipalities

Roanoke, VA

Roanoke is the tenth largest city in the state of Virginia and is located in Roanoke County, 25 miles north of Rocky Mount. The city is considered a cultural hub for the surrounding areas of Virginia. The estimated population for the city in 2012 was almost 97,500, which represents about a three percent change since 2000. The median resident age for the city is about 38 years old, and females are the largest group, commanding over 52 percent of the town's population. The median household income for 2011 was just over \$39,000, slightly lower than the income for 2000. The per capita income for residents in Roanoke was about \$22,500 for the same year.

Greensboro, NC

Greensboro is the third most populated city in North Carolina and is the largest city in Guilford County. It is located 75 miles south of Rocky Mount. The estimated population in 2012 for Greensboro was just over 277,000 people and increased about 23 percent since 2000. The population is split with females representing about 53 percent of the population. The median age of residents within the county is about 33 years of age. Located in the Piedmont Region of the state, the city contains the intersection of Interstate 80 and Interstate 40. The estimated median household income in 2011 was over \$39,600 and has remained about the same since 2000. The estimated per capita income for 2011 was about \$24,000.

Winston-Salem, NC

Winston-Salem is the county seat of Forsyth County and the fifth largest city in North Carolina. It is located 80 miles south of Rocky Mount. The estimated population for the city in 2012 was 234,000 and has increased 26 percent since 2000. The majority of the population for Winston-Salem is female; only 47 percent are male. The median age for residents living in the city was almost 35 year old, which is slightly lower than the median resident age for North Carolina of almost 42 years. The 2011 estimated median household income in Winston-Salem was \$37,500 and has increased about \$500 since 2000. The estimated per capita income for the same year was just under \$23,500.

Employment and Economy

Franklin County is the fifth largest county in Western Virginia by population, and contains approximately 1,320 industry establishments with average employment of 13,531 and a weekly average wage of \$571, which is about 56% of the national average of \$1,028.⁵ Top industries by number of employees include Manufacturing (2,440) and Government (2,421), while Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting employs approximately 201. Employment projections through 2020 for the region of Western Virginia indicate that annual employment for all industries is approximately 1.29%, slightly below Franklin County's annual growth rate of 1.9%; the county is considered Western Virginia's fastest growing county.⁶

⁵ Virginia Bureau of Labor Statistics: Industry Area Summary. Retrieved 9-25-13.

⁶ Franklin County Budget FY 2013-2014; Demographics.



Figure 4: Franklin County Unemployment Rate July 2012-July 2013⁷



Top 10 Employers in the County

1. Franklin County School Board
2. M.W. Manufacturers
3. County of Franklin
4. Ferrum College
5. Trinity Packaging Corporation
6. Franklin Memorial Hospital
7. Kroger
8. Wal-Mart
9. Ronile
10. McAirloads Inc

Unemployment figures have held relatively steady over the last year, mirroring the overall average statistics for the state. The largest growth in employment by industry is expected to come from Healthcare and Social Assistance in both short (2014) and long term (2020) projections provided by the Virginia Employment Commission. The cost of living index according to city-data.com is 16.2 percent below the national average.

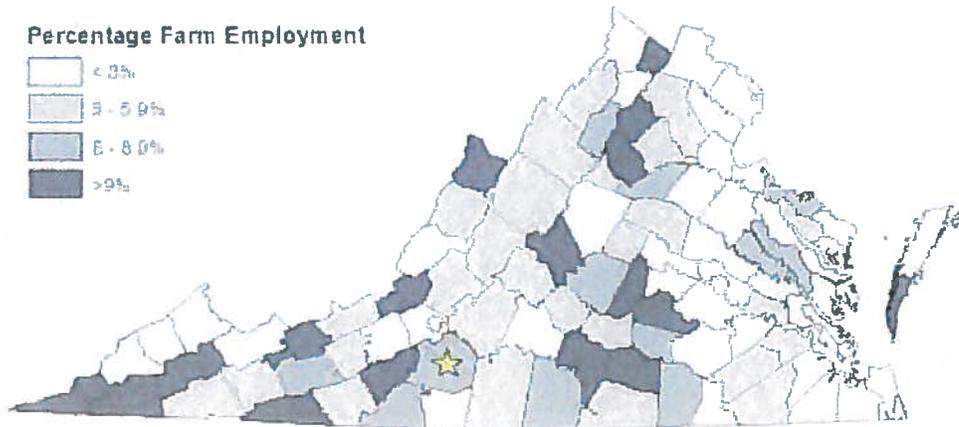
Located in Rocky Mount, the Franklin Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise serves the county as an employment, training, and educational services center whose goal is to provide opportunities for citizens to advance their employment and educational goals.

The following figure highlights the percentage of farm employment as a percentage of total employment in the county as excerpted from the “Economic Impacts of Agriculture and Forest Industries in Virginia” by Terance J. Rephann, Ph.D. As indicated by the yellow star, Franklin County’s farm employment is between six and 8.9 percent, while four out of the six neighboring counties have a farm employment percentage of less than six percent. Floyd County is the only county near Franklin with farm employment above nine percent.

⁷ Virginia Bureau of Labor Statistics: Labor Market Information. Retrieved 9-25-13.



Figure 5: Percentage of Farm Employment by County



Education

As outlined in the Franklin County Comprehensive plan, the County maintains one of the top 15 divisions in the state in test scores and academic performance. A comprehensive comparison of testing scores for the county is available in the Virginia Employment Commission's Franklin County Community Profile and the Franklin County Prosperity Indicators Report. Examples of educational entities both within the county and located in surrounding counties include:

- Franklin County Public Schools
- Ferrum College
- Franklin Center for Advanced Learning
- Patrick Henry Community College
- Virginia Western Community College

Many of these entities maintain programs to help promote agriculture in Franklin County, and many also provide resources for agricultural ventures. Education is a vital component of the continued growth of the agricultural industry within the county. Below are examples of agriculture education activities organized by education institutions in the state:

Ferrum College English Biomass Energy & Research Complex

Ferrum College's new research complex will be the only on-campus biomass research facility located in Virginia. The complex will contain a biomass boiler that will provide low-cost, green energy to the campus.



Ferrum College Titmus Agricultural Center



The college's agricultural center was created to provide students with the opportunity to incorporate real-world and hands-on experience to complement their classroom education. The center contains a barn to house sheep, cattle, and horses on the college's existing farm. The center is also home to a greenhouse and organic garden where students can enhance their knowledge of crop studies and grow produce for consumption at the campus dining hall.



Patrick Henry Community College

This community college does provide some educational courses for those looking to enrich their knowledge of agriculture in the community. They offer dual enrollment classes, which allows them to receive college credit for the courses taken.



4-H Program



Franklin County contains the W. E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center that helps serve the surrounding counties and cities. Located along Smith Mountain Lake, this conference center strives to provide “dynamic, research-based, hands-on learning experiences for 4-H youth, other youth, and adults that will enable them to become self-directed, contributing, and productive members of society.”⁸

The 4-H Program’s Horse Club is active and growing within the county and other sectors of the program continue to expand as the 4-H Dairy Club has now grown into the 4-H Livestock Club. Additional efforts are being made to expand the impact of the program in the county. According to the Tourism Director for Franklin County, Tara Holland, the county fair is working to provide a venue for residents to become more involved with agriculture through 4-H exhibits and livestock showings, which will bring more attention to the program and agriculture in the county.

Transportation

The state of Virginia possesses an extensive interstate system as well as multiple commercial and local transportation services. Franklin County lacks some major modes of transportation, but they do have access to these services within surrounding counties. Commercial transportation around and within the county consists of airports, railways, and major highways. This type of infrastructure for the county is important to understand as it can help reveal areas of higher traffic and opportunities to capture the growing tourism community.

Franklin County does not have any commercial airports within county lines, but there are airports in the surrounding areas that help serve the Franklin County community. Roanoke Regional Airport is located just outside the county on the northern side of Roanoke. It serves a large part of the Western Virginia area and utilizes major airlines: Allegiant, Delta, United Airlines, and U.S. Airways. They have round trip flights to at least nine major cities and the full size jets with frequent trips to Florida.⁹

Other surrounding airports that help serve Franklin County are Blue Ridge Regional Airport, Lynchburg Regional Airport, Piedmont Triad International Airport, Greenbrier Valley Airport, and Mercer County Airport. These airports are all located at least 20 miles from Franklin County. The only general aviation service in the area is the Smith Mountain Lake Airport, which has flights to the immediate surrounding area. The airport is located in Bedford County and Moneta, Virginia, just outside of Franklin County.

⁸ W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Center. “About Us,” <http://retreatatsmithmountainlake.com/aboutUs.html>

⁹ Roanoke Regional Airport Homepage. <http://www.roanokeairport.com/>



Another commercial transportation service offered in the area surrounding Franklin County is railway station. Roanoke and Henry counties contain some of the closest railway stations for Franklin County. These service providers include Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Amtrak.¹⁰

Major highways also run through the county, allowing for adequate transportation with the county and to surrounding areas. U.S. Route 220, also known as Virgil H. Goode Highway, runs through the middle of county, connecting Franklin to Henry County to the south and Roanoke County to the north. This route also provides access to other major interstates located in the surrounding area, including I-81, I-581, I-40, and I-85. Routes 116, 122, 48, and 40 also help connect different parts of the county together.¹¹

Local transportation services in Franklin County work to help provide residents with alternatives to commercial or costly transportation. These services include RIDE Solutions which offer carpooling services to those within the region. This grant-funded program works with individuals, as well as employers, to help find alternative transportation programs. Ferrum Express is another local transportation service; it offers a regular bus service to the Ferrum College students, faculty, staff, and the general community to help connect Rocky Mount with surrounding areas, including Roanoke. The Department of Aging Services also offers local transportation services to senior citizens, specialized transportation for disabled individuals, and medical transportation for Medicaid recipients.¹²

Natural Resources

Natural resources for Franklin County include water and soil. Understanding the characteristics of these two resources will help give a better idea of the county's land and usage opportunities and how well new projects will be supported by these resources. The following information has been extracted from the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan.

Soil

Franklin County contains about 455,000 acres of soil. According to the United States Natural Resource Conservation Service, Franklin County's soil is divided up into 73 different soil types, each with general characteristics relating to different conditions, including depth of soil, surface and subsoil texture, available moisture capacity, and topography. These soil types can range from sandy, stony, complex, and loam, to very rocky and with varying percentages of slope. The predominant soil type, covering almost half of the county, is Clifford fine sandy loam. The Clifford soil series is well drained and suited to a variety of crops and uses; those areas of small to moderate slope are considered prime farmland. A full list of soils found within Franklin County, along with their slope, type, and amount of acres is included in Franklin County Comprehensive Plan.¹³ More detailed information on the suitability of various soil classes can be found on the USDA's Web Soil Survey site.¹⁴

¹⁰ Franklin County, (2013). "Commercial Transportation." County of Franklin Website.

¹¹ "Franklin County Community Profile." Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

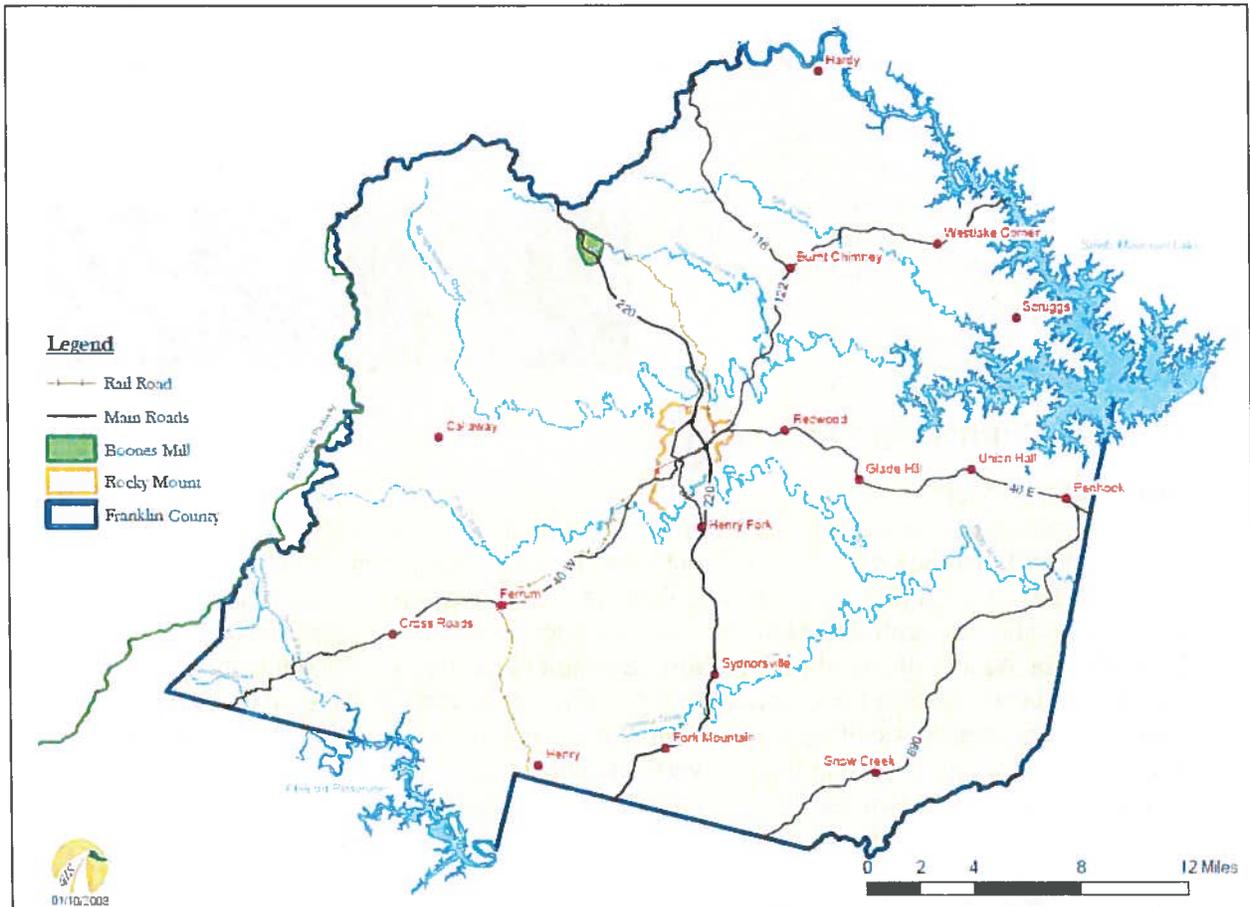
¹² Franklin County, (2013). "Finding Local Transportation." County of Franklin Website.

¹³ <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/images/planning/cpnatcond.pdf>

¹⁴ http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/virginia/franklinVA2009/Franklin_VA.pdf



Figure 6: Franklin County Map



In areas where there is little to no slope, the county generally contains very fertile soil and prime farmland, which is an important factor for the agricultural landscape. The areas of steep slope are mostly covered by forests, making these areas poor locations for agricultural projects.

According to the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan, a large portion of the county does not have access to public sewer lines. Because prime farmland is also most suitable for the creation of septic systems, development pressure will be placed on the most productive agricultural lands.

Water

The entire county is part of the Roanoke River Basin. Franklin County is bordered by two bodies of water, giving it the nickname of “The Land between the Lakes and the Blue Ridge Mountains.” Smith Mountain Lake is located on the Northeastern border of the county, while Philpott Lake sits on the Southwest edge of the county; these two bodies are primarily utilized for hydroelectric uses, flood control, recreation, and tourism.

Other surface water supplies exist within the county in various rivers and creeks. The main stem of the Roanoke River forms the northern boundary, flowing into Smith Mountain Reservoir. Two



major tributaries from Smith Mountain Lake are Blackwater and Pigg rivers. Other water sources in the county include Gills Creek, Maggodee Creek, Chestnut Creek, and Snow Creek. The United States Geological Survey gauges the water flow of the different water sources that flow through the county. They maintain stations all over Franklin County and surrounding counties.

With the varied topography, development and land disturbance that can lead to soil erosion can pose a threat to the water quality for all residents. Particular concern must be paid to the Blackwater River watershed as it flows into Smith Mountain Lake. The prevalence of the local livestock industry means that farmers will be impacted by changes in water quality, which may occur due to non-agricultural activities.



Franklin County Agriculture

Historical Overview

When the county was formed in 1756 from the surrounding counties of Bedford and Henry, it was discovered that the area was previously home to Native Americans, and relics from their agricultural history could be found around the land. Franklin County was settled mainly by Scotch-Irish and German families and was named after Benjamin Franklin, the then governor of Pennsylvania. As an influential public figure, Benjamin Franklin was a strong advocate for agriculture; he worked hard to ensure the people of his state, and the eventual residents, understood the importance of agriculture within the community. Franklin believed the only honest way for a nation to obtain wealth was with agriculture, “wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of God in his favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry.”¹⁵

Until the 1950s, agriculture was one of the highest areas of occupation for residents in the county and has played a vital role in shaping the county’s economy. With an increase in industrialization, Franklin County’s economy was soon centered on the ever-growing railroad and textile-based industries. Although the main lifestyle in Franklin County was changing, certain crops, specifically tobacco, still played a major role in the county and helped to keep the agricultural way of life alive.¹⁶

Today, Franklin County holds over 1,000 farms and almost 40 percent of the land is used for agriculture.¹⁷ Agriculture has been a prominent industry in the county’s history and continues to be a part of Franklin’s identity. Agriculture in Franklin County not only provides jobs and food for families, but it also adds to the county’s community and value. The security of Franklin County’s agricultural industry is essential to ensuring the longevity of this lifestyle and community.

¹⁵ Benjamin Franklin, *The Works of Benjamin Franklin, including the Private as well as the Official and Scientific Correspondence*, compiled and edited by John Bigelow (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1904). The Federal Edition in 12 volumes. Vol. V (Letters and Misc. Writings 1768-1772). Chapter: *ccclvi: positions to be examined, concerning national wealth*

¹⁶ Franklin County (2013). “Historical Sketch of the County.” County of Franklin Website.

¹⁷ (2007). “Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan.” Franklin County Board of Supervisors.



Surrounding Counties

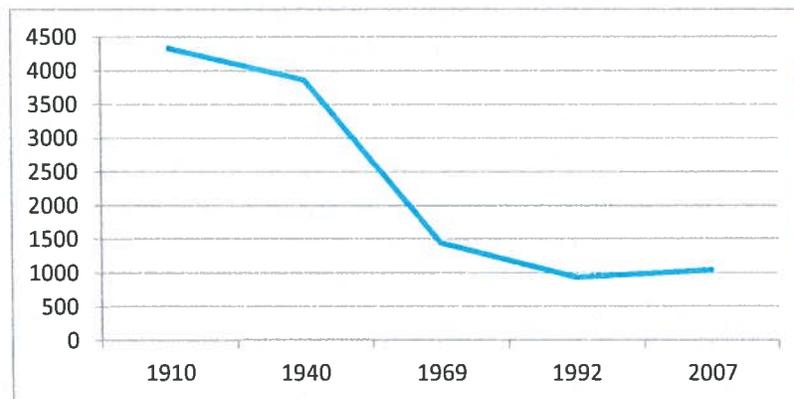
According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Franklin County contained over 1,000 farms and a market value for products sold of almost \$54 million. Franklin County's eastern neighbor, Pittsylvania County, contains about 300 more farms and had a market value for products sold of nearly \$8 million more during the same year. The other surrounding counties do not have the same levels of agricultural sales. Out of the six counties surrounding Franklin County, Bedford County has the most farms, but the market value of their agricultural products is about \$30 million less than the value of Franklin County's products.

Long Term Changes

As the emphasis on different industries has changed over time, it is important to understand the long-term changes that have taken place in Franklin County's agricultural industry. This study examined Census of Agriculture data from 1910, 1940, 1969, 1992, and 2007 to gain an encompassing appreciation for the long-term changes in the Franklin County farm landscape. The U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts this Census every five years, offering a snapshot of land use, production, and economic impact of the local agricultural sector.

The following graphs indicate how both the land in farms and the number of farms have declined dramatically over the past century, yet both have seen a slight uptick in the past 20 years. This indicates the relative stability of the agricultural land base in recent years, even while the composition of agricultural sales continues to evolve.

Figure 7: Number of Franklin County Farms 1910-2007



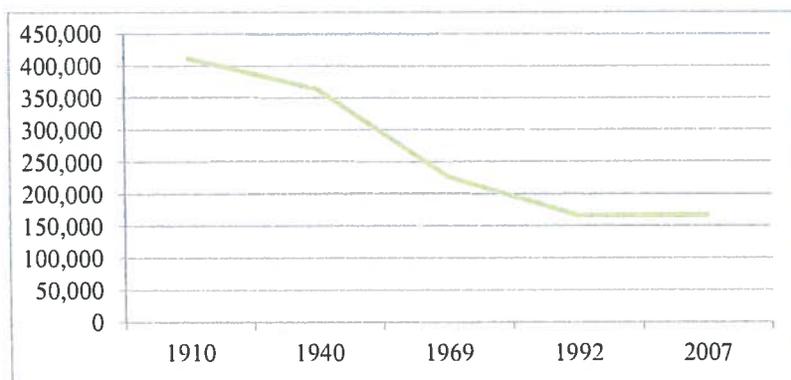
Based on the figures represented above, the number of farms in the county during this time period saw an overall decrease of about 76 percent. The 1910 Census of Agriculture indicated that over 4,300 farms were reported in Franklin County during this time. By 1940, these numbers had dropped to about 3,800 farms; the largest drop in farms for the county took place between the 1940 and 1969 data, which showed a decrease of just over 2,400 farms, bringing to the number of farms in the county during 1969 to 1,400. Since 1992, the number of farms in the county has been increasing; Franklin County saw an increase in farms of 11 percent between 1992 and 2007. Preliminary estimates for the number of farms and acreage in 2010 have been



released, but only on a statewide level. If the county trend follows that of the state, the number of farms and the amount of farm land in Franklin County will have decreased in 2010.

Along with a decrease in farms, the county experienced an overall decrease in land in farms between the five censuses. This category did see a slight increase of 115 acres between 1992 and 2007, but overall, the amount of acres of farmland decreased by almost 245,000 acres, or 60 percent, between 1910 and 2007.

Figure 8: Acres of Farmland for Franklin County 1910-2007



Although the number of farms and the acres of farm land within the county have both experienced an overall decline, the average size of farms have fluctuated, but mostly increased over time. The average farm size for 2007 is about 160 acres, but in 1910, the average farm size was only about 95 acres. This increase in farm size shows the overall trend of larger farms within the county. With larger farms comes the increased need to assist smaller producers to ensure their economic stability.

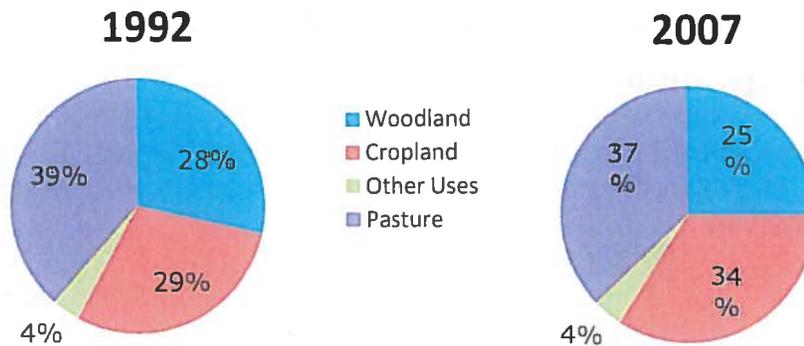
What we see most clearly over the past decade is the decline of mid-sized farms. From 2002-07, the number of farms below 50 acres has increased from 126 to 172, as specialty and hobby operations increase. Although these small farms are important to the agricultural sector as they tend to have stronger direct connections to consumers, they don't contribute as much to the county in terms of income and input purchases, as they are often supported primarily by an off-farm source of income. What the county is losing most clearly are the midsized family farms. The number of farms between 100 and 500 acres declined from 412 to 354 over this same five year period. These midsized farms are important for supporting agricultural financing and the local service sector. The loss of agriculture of the middle is a nationwide trend that threatens many rural economies.¹⁸

Agricultural land use on Franklin County is also slowly changing and farmland currently accounts for 39 percent of land in the county. There is a mixture of geography within Franklin County which makes it more favorable to forestland. According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Franklin County contains about 167,000 acres in farmland. The following two figures show the amount of farmland use across different types for 1992 and 2007.

¹⁸ <http://www.agofthemiddle.org/>

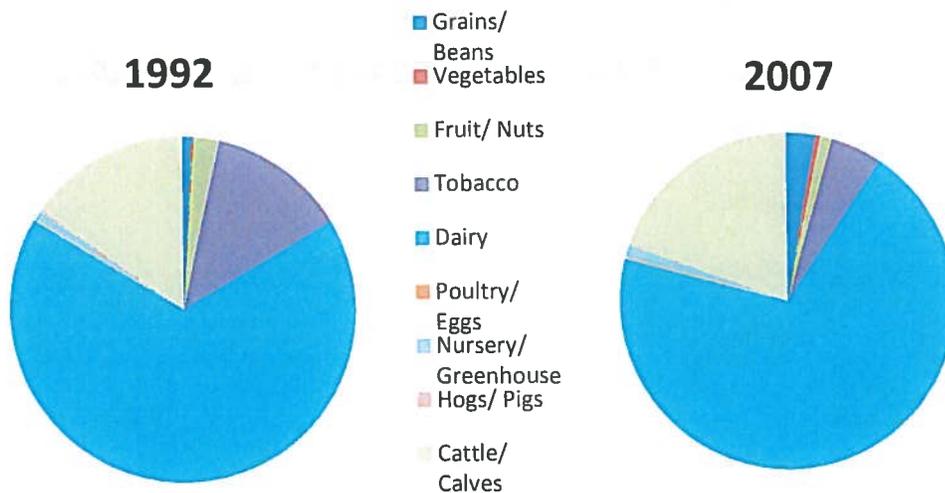


Figures 9 & 10: Franklin County Farmland Use, 1992 and 2007



As shown in the figures above, the type of land in farms has not changed much in the 15 years between 1992 and 2007. Pastureland accounts for the largest amount of land usage for farms, and since the county is one of the largest dairy farming counties in the state, much of the pastureland is used for grazing and forage production for dairy farms. The area with the biggest change is in cropland which saw a five percent increase in 2007. The following figures show the amount of agricultural sales by category for 1992 and 2007.

Figures 11 & 12: Franklin County Agricultural Sales, 1992 and 2007



Dairy has continued to dominate agricultural sales through 2007 and saw an increase of three percent since 1992. The dairy industry accounted for 70 percent of agricultural sales in Franklin County for 2007, which represents over \$36 million in sales. The second largest sector for agricultural sales is cattle and calves, which brought in over \$10 million; this sector represented 19 percent in total agricultural sales for the state. Tobacco saw the largest drop in sales between 1992 and 2007 of about eight percent when it went from \$5.1 million to \$2.6 million in sales.



A comparison of land usage and agricultural sales figures shows that an increase or decrease in the amount of land farmed does not always correspond with a fluctuation in the amount of agricultural sales. For example, cropland usage increased between 1992 and 2007, but the county’s largest cash crop, tobacco, decreased dramatically during this same period.

Commercial Agriculture

This section presents a brief overview of selected agricultural industries within Franklin County, and presents some challenges that various sectors of commercial Franklin County agriculture are facing. It reflects the multiple economic, production, and demographic elements that impact future farm profitability.

\$36 million



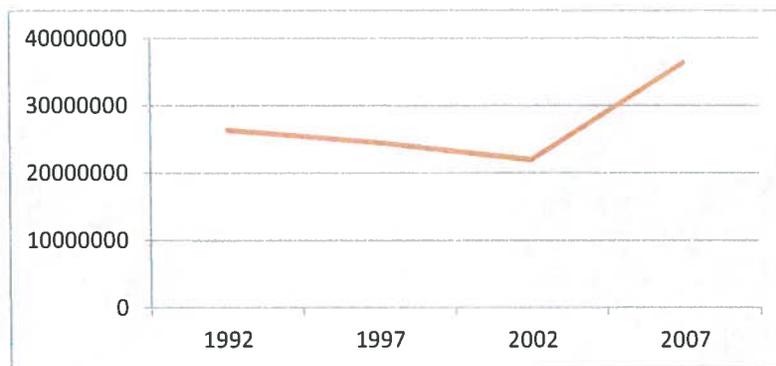
Dairy

The dairy industry has been an important part of Franklin County’s agriculture for years and, along with tobacco, was the driving force in the economy of the county. Today, the dairy industry in Franklin County is by far the largest producer of agricultural sales across all industries. Milk and other dairy products from cows brought in over \$36 million for the county, representing 70 percent of agricultural

sales in 2007. For the same year, the county contained 70 cow dairy farms, in addition to 7 milk goat farms, with a total of 45 lactating goats.

Even as the number of dairy farms declines, total dairy sales continue to grow. According to the 1992 Census of Agriculture, dairy sales totaled about \$26.4 million, but in 2002, dairy sales only accounted for \$21.9 million. The following chart shows the fluctuation in dairy sales for the county between the 1992 and 2007 Censuses of Agriculture.

Figure 13: Franklin County Dairy Sales, 1992-2007



As shown in the graph above, the latest dairy sales numbers are the highest they have been for the county in 15 years. Projected estimates for Virginia’s dairy value have been released for 2010; if Franklin County follows the trend of the state, their dairy sales will have decreased between 2007 and 2010. The fluctuations in dairy income, based largely on current milk prices have serious implications for local purchases and economic activity. Five milk cooperatives and two milk haulers are active in the county; a significant amount of economic activity is generated by the dairy sector beyond the individual farms, so a further decline in the number of farms and cows would be detrimental to a much broader slice of the agricultural and general economy.



According to the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, the county possessed one of the eight operational milk processing plants in Virginia. This well-known creamery in the county is Homestead Creamery, located in Wirtz.

\$10 million

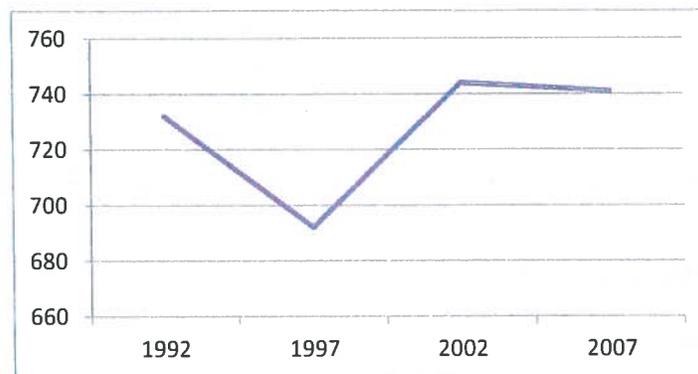


Cattle and Calves

The cattle and calves sector of the agricultural industry within Franklin County saw the second highest amount of sales in 2007, just under dairy sales. Although the inventory numbers have decreased, the amount of agricultural sales has increased between 1992 and 2007 from \$5.9 million to \$10 million.

According to the latest census data, Franklin County contains 741 cattle farms; Virginia as a whole has almost 26,000 cattle farms in the same census. Overall, inventory numbers for cattle and calves have decreased over time, falling from over one million in 1969 to under 48,000 in 2007. Franklin County is now ranked seventh in the state for total cattle numbers. The amount of cattle and calf farms has fluctuated between increases and decreases since 1992. The following chart provides cattle figures for Franklin County from 1992 to 2007.

Figure 14: Franklin County Cattle Farms, 1992-2007



The county contained the lowest amount of cattle farms during 1997, when they totaled 692 and contained over 45,500 animals. This industry saw a spike in farms during 2002, with a total of 744 farms. Although the county had the most cattle farms during 2002, those farms had the lowest levels of inventory during the 15 year time span.

The county also lacks a slaughter facility that is inspected by the USDA. The closest facilities at present are in Lynchburg or Hillsville (90 minutes away). With one trip to the plant needed to deliver live animals and a second to pick up finished product, the travel time becomes cost-prohibitive. Local meat processor J&P Meats is inspected only for home consumption, and USDA inspection level is needed to sell to institutions or retailers. The NC Choices program in North Carolina has demonstrated a good example of providing assistance to small meat processors on how to offer additional services to customers to modernize and expand their base.¹⁹

¹⁹News Center (2012). "NC Choices receives Rural Center grant." NC State University www.cals.ncsu.edu/agcomm/news-center/media-releases/nc-choices-receives-rural-center-grant/



Dairy Cows

The 2007 Census of Agriculture shows the county had 77 dairy farms and 11,300

milk cows across all dairy farms, ranking Franklin County as the second largest holder of milk cows in the state. The number of farms with dairy cattle has decreased since 2002, but only by about five farms. The number of dairy cows in the county, however, has increased since 2002 by about 1,500 cows. The following chart shows the change in dairy cows for the county between 1992 and 2007.

Dairy Cows

11,300

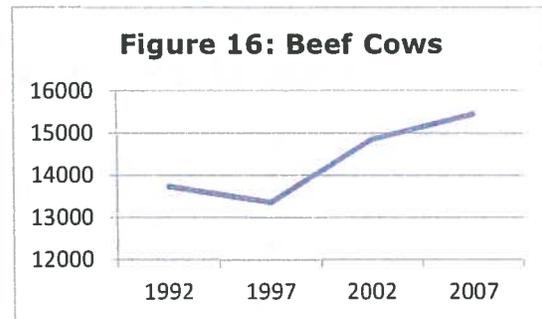
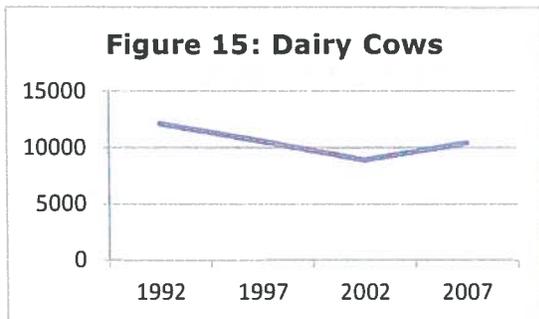
Beef Cows

15,400

Beef Cattle

According to the latest Census of Agriculture, Franklin County has 622 beef cow farms, which is only slightly

higher than the amount of beef farms in the county for 2002. The same census also shows that those beef cow farms contained over 15,400 cows; in 2002, Franklin County had just over 14,800 beef cows. The amount of beef cows in the county has increased by 12 percent since 1992. The following chart shows the changes in beef cow numbers between 1992 and 2007.



Cattle Slaughter and Processing

J&P Meat Processing is located in the town of Wirtz and is a state inspected meat processing facility. There are no federally inspected plants in Franklin County. In order to access federally inspected beef slaughter and processing facilities, cattle must be transported to nearby locations. Examples of these include EcoFriendly Foods, LLC located in Moneta, Virginia, which is part of Bedford County; Matkins Meat Processors located across the North Carolina border in Caswell County; and Mays Meats in Taylorsville, NC.

\$2.6 million



Tobacco

The end of the Federal Tobacco Support Program in 2004 has brought tremendous changes in the location of tobacco growing in the U.S., moving the majority of production from traditional areas determined by historical patterns to lower cost, higher yielding locales, generally in the eastern and flatter parts of the southeast.

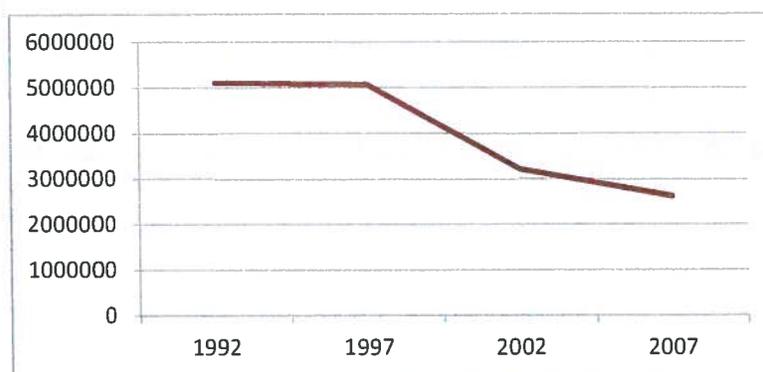
According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, tobacco farmers in Franklin County harvested over 1.6 million pounds of tobacco from 785 acres. Out of these totals, flue-cured tobacco accounted for about one million pounds from about 640 acres of land. The tobacco industry overall in the county has been in decline for years. Franklin County has seen drops in the amount of farms producing tobacco, crop acreage, amounts harvested, and agricultural value.



In 1992, Franklin County contained 136 tobacco farms, sitting on over 1,400 acres. By 2007, those numbers had dwindled to only 25 tobacco farms with 785 acres. Although current Census of Agriculture data won't be available until 2014, local farmers estimate that there are only about 10 remaining tobacco producers in the county. The amount of harvested tobacco has decreased by 47 percent since 1992; it dropped from over 3.1 million pounds to 1.6 million pounds over the 15 year time span.

Although the industry has been in decline, tobacco is still the third largest generator of agricultural sales for the county, bringing in about \$2.6 million in sales. Tobacco sales in the county have decreased by 49 percent since 1992, when the value was over \$5.1 million. The following chart shows the change in sales between 1992 and 2007.

Figure 17: Franklin County Tobacco Sales, 1992-2007



A significant implication of the end of the federal program was the participation of quota-holding landowners in the tobacco economy. Tobacco growers leased the majority of acreage from individuals who owned the right to market the crop under the federal program. These landowners supported the political and economic needs of leaf growers, and local farmers in general, as part of their participation in the tobacco economy. With the end of the program in 2004, quota owner's livelihoods are no longer tied to that of the farmers growing the crop. In addition, with the end of buyout payments in 2014, these landowners may be looking for an additional source of regular income; this could make them more amenable to considering offers to buy their land and convert to non-agricultural uses.

Another appealing aspect of tobacco production under the federal quota program was the autonomy and independence it gave the grower. Leaf was sold through an auction system, with multiple buyers bidding on each pile of tobacco based on quality. If no bidders offered a minimum price, the tobacco would be purchased by a farmer-owned cooperative for storage and sale to another buyer later. Individual farmers felt they had bargaining power and would be rewarded for their attention to detail in producing a quality crop. The current system of contract production with a single buyer leaves farmers feeling vulnerable to the fortunes and whims of a large corporate entity. This follows the model of poultry and pork production, in which the majority of commercial sales require a contract with an integrator who sets specifications for all aspects of production and marketing. After a century of being "the golden leaf," tobacco today is becoming just another crop.



However, the reopening of a tobacco auction house in Danville in 2012 provides a new outlet for independent farmers and production over contracted amounts. Local farmers are cautiously optimistic about this additional marketing option, which sets a good example of regional infrastructure that can benefit Franklin County farmers.

\$1.5 million



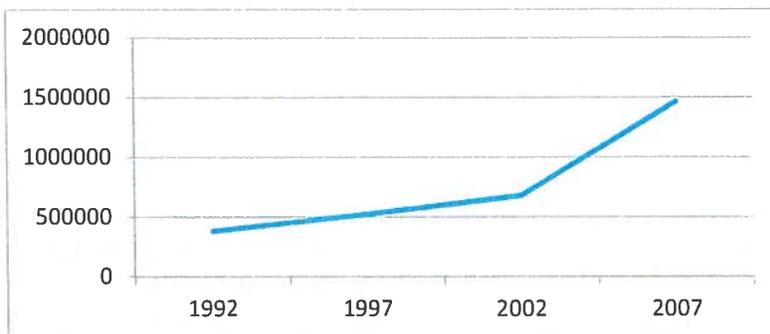
Grains and Beans

This category brought in almost \$1.5 million in sales for the county in 2007 and captured the fourth largest amount of sales. These sales numbers have dramatically increased over time; the value of grains and beans increased by 114% between 2002 and 2007 and over 78% between 1992 and

2002. This industry has experienced an increase in sales throughout the last 15 years of agricultural censuses and is projected to continue to grow. The following graph shows the increase in sales for grains and beans in Franklin County between 1992 and 2007.



Figure 18: Franklin County Grains and Beans Sales, 1992-2007



Within this industry, corn for silage was the top crop item in terms of land use with over 12,000 acres used. Franklin County was ranked second in corn silage production within Virginia. Although this product had the most devoted acreage, it had the second largest amount of bushels harvested, which totaled over 155,000 bushels. Corn for grain followed with the second highest amount of acres with almost 3,000 acres. Corn for grain had over 290,000 bushels harvested from their acres in 2007 giving this product the most harvested bushels for the year. Wheat for grain made up almost 1,500 acres for the county and barley encompassed about 400 acres.

Some markets do exist in Franklin County for grains such as corn, which is sold locally at Exchange Milling, but in limited quantities. Exchange Milling, located on Hale Street in downtown Rocky Mount, has supplied feed to county dairy farmers since 1940.

\$605,000



Nursery and Greenhouse

Nursery and green house sales accounted for just over one percent of agricultural sales for Franklin County in 2007. Sales equaled about \$605,000, which represents an increase in sales since 1992 of 65 percent. The majority of this comes from the eight operations raising bedding



plants, with sales of \$520,962, the fourth largest county in the state for this segment of the industry. With growing residential development in Smith Mountain Lake and Roanoke, Franklin County is uniquely situated to fill this need amongst homeowners.

\$600,000

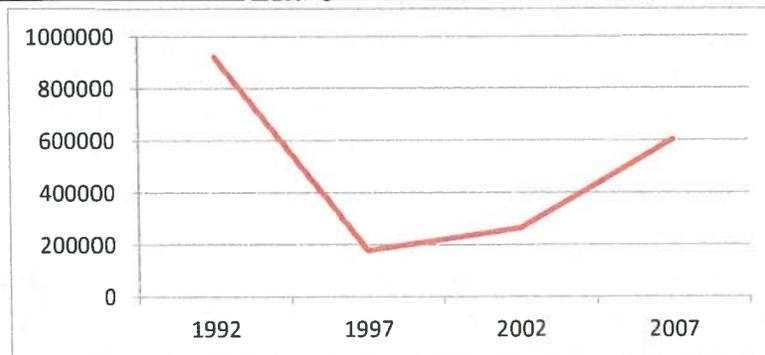


Fruits and Nuts

In 2007, Franklin County had 29 fruit and nut farms, which had 166 bearing age acres and 210 acres of orchards. Fruits and nuts accounted for over \$600,000 in agricultural sales for the county during the last census, making this category the fifth largest procurer of sales. The amount of fruit and nut farms has fluctuated between 1992 and 2007; farm number decreased through 1997, then increased through 2007. Overall, the amount of farms has decreased by 26 percent since 1992.

Along with a decrease in farms producing fruits and nuts, the amount of sales has also decreased overall. The industry did experience an increase of 129 percent between the last two censuses, but overall sales have declined by almost \$320,000, or 35 percent. The following chart shows the trends in sales for fruits and nuts in Franklin County between 1992 and 2007.

Figure 19: Franklin County Fruit and Nut Sales, 1992-2007



\$238,000



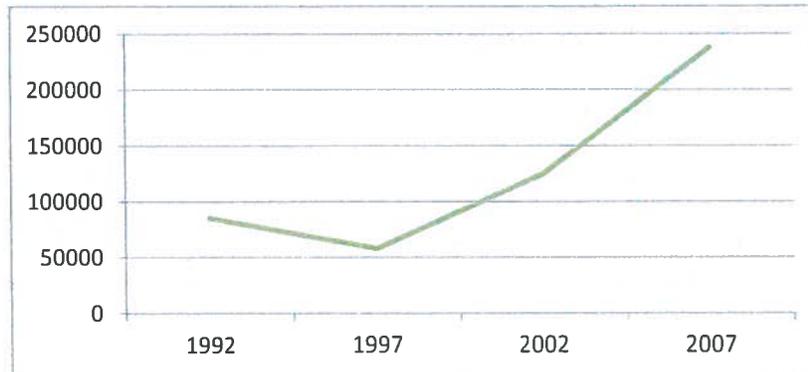
Vegetables

Franklin County vegetable farmers harvested 55 acres of produce across 29 farms in 2007. This category brought in about \$238,000 in agricultural sales for the county during the same year. The amount of farms producing vegetables for sale is the highest it has been during the 15 year period between 1992 and 2007. This increase in vegetable farms can be partially attributed to the increase in the local foods movement and the increase in agencies looking to help small farmers. The once abundant tobacco fields are also being increasingly used to grow vegetables, as it offers farmers a way to maintain the quality of the field soil and gives them an alternative supply of income. Overall vegetable farms have increased by 81 percent since 1992.

Along with the increase in the amount of farms producing vegetables, Franklin County has also seen an increase in vegetable sales since 1992. Although sales decreased between 1992 and 1997, they have increased overall by 64 percent. The following chart shows the increase in vegetable sales in Franklin County between 1992 and 2007.



Figure 20: Franklin County Vegetable Sales, 1992-2007



Forestry

Timber

The forestry industry for the total state of Virginia has experienced a decline over the past few years. The amount of timber product output from roundwood²⁰ in the state of Virginia declined by 13 percent between 2007 and 2009. This decrease brought the total amount of production for 2009 to 402.5 million cubic feet. The most produced products for 2009 were saw logs and pulpwood, which had a combined output of 333.1 million cubic feet, or 83 percent of the state's total roundwood production. The state exported 86.6 million cubic feet of roundwood to other states and only imported 82.1 million cubic feet. Pittsylvania, one of Franklin County's neighbors, was one of eight counties with the highest output of timber products.²¹

In Franklin County, commercial forests encompass about 60 percent of the total land area for the county, totaling over 266,000 acres in commercial forests. Only about two percent of the commercial forests in the county are owned by the forest industry; the remaining forest is owned mostly by corporations (89 percent) and individual private owners (9 percent). The county contains a large portion of forest due to its mountainous and rugged terrain; most of the forest area is located in the southeastern, western, and northwestern area of the county. The following map shows the percentage of forest for each county as compared to the rest of the state.

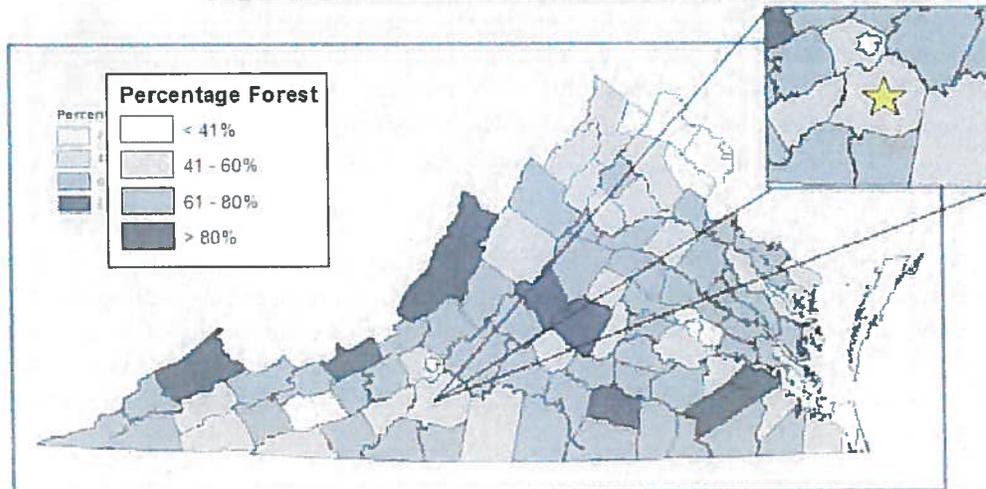
 **60%**
Commercial Forest

²⁰ Roundwood is defined as, "Logs, bolts, or other round sections cut from trees for industrial manufacture or consumer uses."

²¹ Cooper, J.; Johnson, T.; & Becker, C. (2011). "Virginia's Timber Industry-An Assessment of Timber Product Output and Use, 2009." USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station.



Figure 21: Forest Land Percentages, 2008-11²²



Franklin County, as indicated by the yellow star, falls into the category of having between 41 and 60 percent of forestland, similar to Floyd, Roanoke, and Pittsylvania counties; neighboring counties of Bedford, Henry, and Patrick contain between 61 and 80 percent of forest land.

Christmas Trees

According to the United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistic Service's (USDA NASS) Census of Horticulture, the amount of Christmas tree sales within Virginia between 2002 and 2007 have increased by 11 percent. Although the data for the next Census of Agriculture has not yet been released, the Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association (VCTGA) estimates that annual sales of Christmas trees in Virginia have grown by four to eight times since the last census. This information indicates that the Virginia Christmas tree industry is worth \$20-40 million each year.

According to the Census of Agriculture, Franklin County had six Christmas tree farms in 2007 that had a total of over 130 acres of production. For the same year, the county had over 8,000 trees cut for all farms. Sales from these farms rose to over \$167,000 for 2007, which is a tremendous increase from 2002 of 1185 percent. Although the amount of Christmas tree sales increased by over \$150,000, the amount of farms in the county only increased by one since 2002.



The VCTGA lists 88 Christmas tree producers in Virginia, but the association spans from Florida to West Virginia. Their member farms are of a variety of size and service. Some work strictly with wholesaling, while others offer a variety of services and products to the direct consumer. Franklin County's neighbor, Floyd County, contains a large Christmas tree industry; there are over 31 Christmas tree farms in the county, and in 2007, they collectively cut almost 60,000 trees.

²² U.S. Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Forestry Inventory Analysis System



Alcohol

According to the Virginia Wine Board's Economic Impact Study of 2010, Virginia has a significant and established wine industry. In 2010, the overall retail value of Virginia wine was roughly \$73 million of revenue, with direct sales accounting for \$30 million of this figure. As a whole, the Virginia Wine Industry (including wine and grapes) contributed over \$747 million to the state economy.



In 2000, there were 64 registered wineries; by 2005, the number grew to 129 and in 2010, it went up to 193 wineries with more predicted to open in the near future, representing a 200 percent increase from 2000 to 2010. Overall, 95 percent of Virginia wineries can be classified as small producers (which is defined as those producing less than 10,000 cases annually). This growth in the amount of wineries has resulted in Virginia ranking 5th in the U.S. in quantity of wineries located in the state.

Institutions and Leadership

Franklin County does contain some available resources to help promote agriculture in the area. These resources include:

Agriculture Development Board

The Agriculture Development Board, which is taking the lead role in the creation and implementation of this plan, was established in 2007 to:

- Promote and enhance the economic viability of production agriculture, forestry, and agribusiness.
- Represent the agriculture community's position on policy issues at the local, state, and federal level.
- Provide advice and counsel to the Franklin County Board of Supervisors on policies relating to viability and sustainability of agriculture.
- Partner with other organizations to increase public understanding and awareness of state-of-the-art agricultural practices.
- Expand agricultural educational programming and workforce development.
- Advocate and coordinate agricultural economic development, investment, marketing, and promotion activities.
- Establish a network of agricultural producers and suppliers to encourage diversification and strengthen the agricultural infrastructure.
- Promote agritourism.²³

Cooperative Extension System

The USDA Cooperative Extension System is nationwide and includes a state office at a land-grant university and a network of local or regional officers in each U.S. state and territory. The intent of these offices is to provide useful, practical, and research-based information to agricultural producers, small business owners, youth, consumers, and others in rural areas and communities of all sizes.²⁴

²³ <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/departments/a-g/agriculture/development-board>

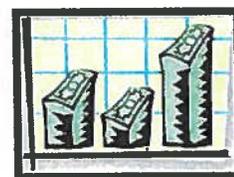
²⁴ National Institute of Food and Agriculture (2013). "Cooperative Extension System Offices." USDA www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/



- **Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District**
According to their website, “The Mission of the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District is to promote conservation of our natural resources.” The Conservation District is responsible for maintaining the most effective use of technical assistance and funding for the conservation of natural resources.²⁵ The Soil and Water Conservation District provides technical assistance and cost-share funding for a range of agricultural programs and practices that protect and enhance the natural resource base for farming.
- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
The NRCS is tasked with being a conservation leader for all natural resources, ensuring private lands are conserved, restored, and more resilient to environmental challenges.²⁶ The NRCS works through the Soil and Water Conservation Districts to promote and administer federal programs that help landowners achieve soil and water conservation objectives on their farms.
- **Virginia Farm Bureau**
The Virginia Farm Bureau has nearly 150,000 members in 88 counties across Virginia. It is Virginia’s largest farmers’ advocacy group, and it works to promote the agricultural industry within the state.²⁷

Farm Supply and Finance

Although the county has experienced a shift away from agriculture and a movement toward manufacturing within the last 50 years, the area still contains adequate equipment dealers to fill the needs of county farmers. The following list contains the current farm suppliers used by county farmers:



- Foothills Farm Supply
- Southern States (Wirtz, VA)
- Lakewood Farm Supply
- Tractor Supply Co.
- Blue Ridge Dairy Supply
- BFG-Harrisonburg
- Griffin-Richmond

Along with local suppliers, county agriculture is also dependent on financiers in the area. Farm Credit and Carter Bank & Trust of Rocky Mount are the main financial institutions for farmers in the county.

²⁵ Blue Ridge Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District (2012). “Annual Report.” http://gaswcc.georgia.gov/sites/gaswcc.georgia.gov/files/Blue_Ridge_Mountain_Annual_Report_FY2012.pdf

²⁶ USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. <http://nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/about/>

²⁷ Virginia Farm Bureau. <https://vafarmbureau.org/default.aspx>

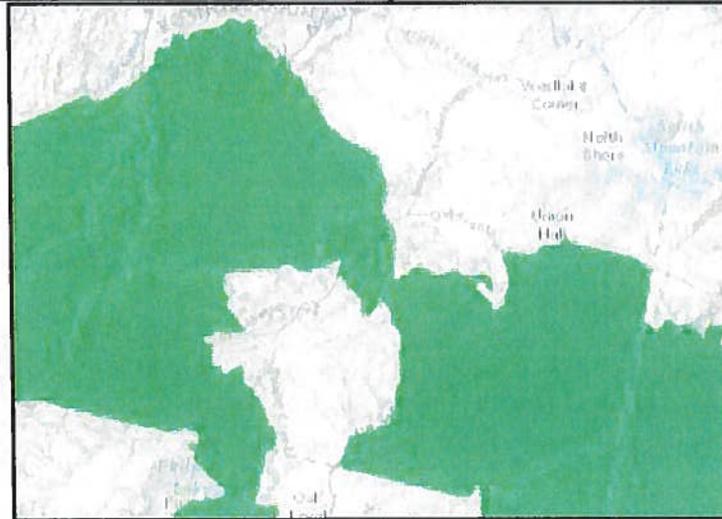


Food Security

Food Deserts have been defined by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as “communities, particularly low-income areas, in which residents do not live in close proximity to affordable and healthy food retailers. Healthy food options in these communities are hard to find or are unaffordable.”

There are large sections of Franklin County that fall under the Low Income and Low Access (LI/LA) regions, identifying food desert areas based on the USDA ERS Food Access Research Atlas online tool²⁸.

Figure 22: LI/LA “Food Desert” Regions Located in Franklin County



Tourism

According to the 2012 report *The Economic Impact of Domestic Travel on Virginia Counties*, Franklin County ranks 43rd among Virginia counties in terms of tourism expenditures. Arlington ranked the highest at \$2.8 billion, while Franklin County saw \$94.9 million in expenditures for the same year. These expenditures include how much money domestic travelers spent on transportation, lodging, food, amusement, recreation, and retail shopping. In 2012, the industry employed about 1,170 people in Franklin County and brought in about \$2.7 million in local taxes.

Agritourism

According to the latest Census of Agriculture, agritourism and other recreational farm services brought in over \$12.9 million to Virginia, which is over a \$10 million increase since 2002. Although the value of agritourism related ventures rose between 2002 and 2007, the number of farms engaged in agritourism has declined from 610 farms to 476 farms.²⁹

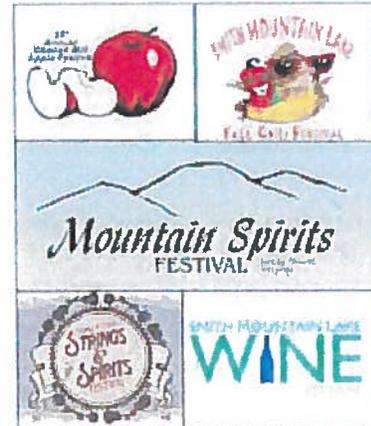
²⁸ <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas.aspx>

²⁹ (2007) “Income from Farm-Related Sources: 2007 and 2002.” USDA Census of Agriculture.



Examples of Agritourism

- Boones Mill Apple Festival
- Smith Mountain Lake Antique and Classic Boat Festival and Show
- Annual Spring/Fall Southwest Virginia Antique Flea Market and Swap Meet
- Mountain Spirits Festival
- String and Spirits Festival
- Farmers Appreciation Day
- Smith Mountain Lake Fall Chili and Craft Festival
- Southwest Virginia Antique Farm Days
- Smith Mountain Lake 25th Anniversary Wine Festival

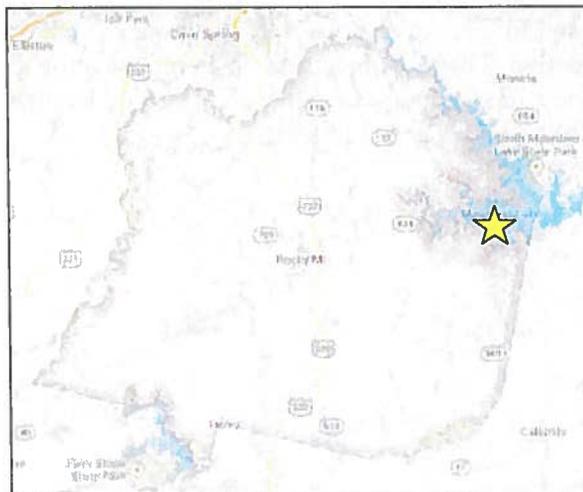


Smith Mountain Lake

Smith Mountain Lake was created in the 1960s after the damming of the Blackwater and Roanoke Rivers. Today this site has become a popular vacation and recreational fishing location for Virginians. Most of the shore is located in Franklin County, and a small portion, including access to the Smith Mountain Dam, is located in the neighboring Pittsylvania County.

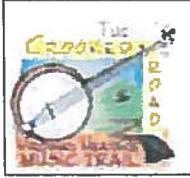
There are several restaurants, retail shops, and attractions in the Smith Mountain Lake tourist area that help draw in locals and tourists all year. Hotels and rental properties also help make Smith Mountain Lake a vacation destination. The annual Smith Mountain Lake Wine Festival is held at this location each year and attracts people from all over the state and nation who are looking to enjoy some of Virginia’s local wines. The festival usually involves a number of wineries from all over Virginia.

Figure 23: Smith Mountain Lake within Franklin County





The Crooked Road: Virginia's Music Heritage Trail



The Crooked Road was implemented in 2003 as a way to help promote tourism and economic development in southwestern Virginia. The idea behind The Crooked Road focuses on the region's musical heritage, scenic terrain, and cultural activities. The road includes ten counties, three cities, and ten towns; it encompasses Franklin, Floyd, Patrick, Carroll, Grayson, Washington, Scott, Lee, and Wise counties, ending in Dickenson County. The trail begins in Franklin County's Rocky Mount, which is also the county seat.

The area is known for its connection to bluegrass music and often holds music festivals throughout the year. The Crooked Road opens up many agritourism opportunities for Franklin County. Although the trail is mainly centered on the area's passion for music, there may be possibilities of incorporating local foods and farmers to help further promote the county's agricultural industry.

Figure 24: The Crooked Road Map



Booker T. Washington Memorial

The Booker T. Washington Memorial is a national monument located within Franklin County. It marks the birthplace and first home of Booker T. Washington, who was born into slavery on a Franklin County plantation. The monument sits on a preserved tobacco farm and provides Washington's biography and summary of achievements. The monument is open to visitors year-round, except on major holidays, and is free to visit.



ANALYSIS

The purpose of the following sections is to present and further describe the specific advantages and resources, as well as declining and underdeveloped agricultural areas that are exhibited within Franklin County. This information is based on comments and concerns as expressed through in-person interviews, roundtable discussions, meeting with community leaders, producers, and individuals involved in agricultural development positions throughout the state. The analysis portion of this plan will also seek to present logical conclusions that will lead to more concrete recommendations contained later in this document. In some areas, examples have been drawn from within the county, as well as from other counties within the state of Virginia.

Agriculture and Education

As was previously mentioned in the descriptive portion of the document, Franklin County possesses a well-regarded school and education system that includes institutions at each level of education.



Ferrum College



In speaking with numerous individuals within the community during the course of the consultant's interview activities, Ferrum College was often listed as a significant county education resource that is active in trying to positively affect the community. Ferrum College currently conducts numerous activities that affect the agriculture industry and the county in general.

- **Influence through Education (connecting agriculture and the classroom)**

Ferrum College Titmus Agricultural Center

The agricultural program at Ferrum College has the opportunity to expand their reach within the agricultural community by partnering students with local farmers. Through this type of program, students would be able to further develop their education. The college's leadership has stated that they are actively seeking ways to expand Ferrum's Agriculture Program by increasing the connections between their classes and students with local farms. Sean Duff, Acting Unit Coordinator Extension Agent-Crop and Soils Virginia Cooperative Extension and alumnus of the college, has stated a focus to help facilitate the connection between students and the community through classes, hands on labs, and test plot research.

- **Influence in Industry**

Ferrum College English Biomass Energy & Research Complex

The biomass energy project undertaken by the college has proven to be a model for other large institutions in the area that are interested in utilizing alternative energy sources to help heat large facilities during colder months. The operation of the unit will continue to require materials for burning, and while the amount required for the individual unit at the college may not impact the biomass industry in the county on its own, replication of such infrastructure could make use of the county's significant forestry industry and offer opportunities for capitalization.



- **Influence in Local Foods**

Ferrum College currently attempts to source nearly 30 percent of their foodservice from local producers. They actively seek partnerships with local farms, including Homestead Creamery, local beef and chicken producers, and several produce farms that provide fresh fruits and vegetables.

The Franklin County School system has set a terrific example for the purchase of local farm products, demonstrating excellent flexibility to work with farmers' production and delivery schedules, as well as pricing needs. County staff has indicated strong interest in continuing to expand those relationships.

The climate is favorable, and having at least two larger institutions committed to sourcing food locally could provide an opportunity for local producers. Identification of particular items of need from local schools, coupled with coordination of planting and harvest to spread out the supply across the seasons, could facilitate significant increases in utilization of locally grown products in local schools.

Making the connections between schools and local farms doesn't need to wait until the high school or college level. There are excellent curriculum examples that use local food and farmers to teach a variety of subjects from the preschool level through the elementary level. The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's Growing Minds³⁰ program connects food, local farms, school gardens, and cooking in a way that starts healthy education at an early age, preparing a new generation of farmers and fighting the epidemic of childhood obesity.

Franklin County High School (FCHS)

The high school has active agricultural education and FFA programs, with significant demand from the student population for agricultural classes. For the 2013-2014 school year, the FCHS Agriculture Department is teaching approximately 380 students, and turning away approximately 100 others. An expansion of the program, possibly to include additional teachers to handle extra students, could provide the extra capacity needed to accommodate the students interested in agriculture classes; any expansion will necessarily need to be balanced with school system budgeting priorities.



In addition to course curriculum that covers such topics as dairy, beef, and small ruminant production, business management, mechanics, and workforce development, Franklin County High School has several programs and partnerships that further strengthen the impact of their agricultural education system:

³⁰ <http://asapconnections.org/growing-minds-farm-to-school/>



- Patrick Henry Community College provides dual enrollment for all Agriculture Department courses tuition free.
- Students can obtain numerous certifications through coursework. These include:
 - NOCTI Natural Resource Systems, Red Cross Pet CPR and First Aid, Cornell Small Animal Care Systems, Youth Meat Quality Assurance Certification (beef, pork, sheep, and goat), Cornell Equine Systems, VA Pesticide Applicators License, and Greenhouse Operators Certification.
- Food for America Program, where 4th graders explore various facets of agriculture.
- PALS Program, where high school students coordinate with local elementary school students to learn about agriculture.
- Giving Garden at the Booker T. Washington Monument grounds.
- FCHS Agriculture Advisory Committee.
- FFA Alumni Officers Group with significant alumni involvement.
- Partnerships with agricultural businesses, institutions, and entities to conduct field trips and provide farm experiences.

Despite a well-rounded program and wide community support for the curriculum, the general perception, reported to the consultants, from members of the farming community seems to be that school programs emphasize landscaping, horticulture, and public speaking skills, rather than production agriculture. Perhaps continued communication with the community about the content of the school's curriculum and programs available can help shift this perception about the program emphasis.

A generation ago, teenagers could be expected to learn their agricultural skills from jobs on neighborhood farms. Now, however, with fewer farms and agricultural jobs suitable for students available throughout the county, there is a greater need for an educational curriculum more focused on production agriculture. The revival of the 4-H livestock program is a good start at a younger age, but Franklin County High School could create an enhanced educational program designed to create a new generation of farmers. Franklin County Schools could become the gold standard for agricultural education across the state of Virginia.

Discussions have been held with the Agriculture Development Board regarding the facilitation of an avenue for FCHS, as well as Ferrum students, to be better connected with farmers looking for employment. The possibility of an online portal has also been discussed. Some teachers have suggested that students lack a direct connection to the farm, and they are often seeking other forms of employment.

As a particular example of addressing this lack of connection, the Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation, Roanoke City Public Schools, and the City of Roanoke have partnered to create Food for Thought, a program whose focus is on "sustainable gardening, green lifestyle choices, the use of urban land for small scale vegetable gardening, and careers in related fields."³¹ The program includes curriculum for use in schools that introduces students to food and its sources, and attempts to strengthen the connection between individuals and agriculture by introducing topics such as local foods, food sustainability, and making healthy food choices to

³¹ "About Us." Food for Thought: An Edible Education Partnership. www.foodforthoughtva.org.



students at a young age. This appears to be an opportunity to solve both the problem expressed by farmers to access a labor pool, as well as provide for a more direct connection that could possibly attract a new generation of farmers and agricultural workers.

Agricultural Market Opportunities

Different agricultural market opportunities have been identified in Franklin County that warrant further exploration.

Mid-Sized Family Farms

The beginning of this report has shown that the amount of mid-sized farms operating within the county has declined over the past decade. The mid-sized farm is the most vulnerable and important segment of the farm economy.



The biggest barrier identified by midsized farms has been the access to a consistent supply of labor across crops. Without the economies of scale to utilize a full crew of H2A laborers across the seasons, these farms are at a disadvantage relative to their larger counterparts. In addition, the H2A program does not help those farms that want to create full-time, year-round positions; it is targeted at single crop seasonal laborers. These mid-sized family farms tend to be most dependent on farm generated income, and any new opportunities must fit a large enough scale to allow them to generate adequate cash flow to meet their debt servicing needs.

With the decline of the mid-sized farmers, the concern becomes focused on the ability of equipment suppliers and local farm financiers to maintain adequate levels of sales to allow for mid-sized farms to remain in business. In addition to the focus on adequate sales levels with the declining impact of mid-sized farms within the market, the pressure also switches to smaller farms to help supply the county's demand for local foods. Smaller specialty or hobby farms are becoming more prevalent, and although small farms are still key players in the industry, they are unable to provide a large portion of county income and input purchases.

In spite of their decline, mid-sized farms have a significant influence in their industry by adding to the overall agricultural impact of the county and helping maintain supply sources and financiers. Mid-sized farms add to the local foods market by offering a more consistent supply and larger quantities than smaller producers. These farms can help supply farmers' markets and other fresh produce outlets and thus improve the access to local foods within Franklin County.

Both small and mid-sized farms in other areas of Virginia have benefited from the formation of CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) and Food Hub initiatives. These entities provide a large scale market that may not be accessible to individual producers and allow institutional and wholesale consumers to source a more consistent and varied supply of fresh produce.

Franklin County's small and mid-sized farms could benefit from CSA and Food Hubs, but only if there is a critical mass of producers willing to participate in the formation of such entities.



Dairy

The dairy industry is the largest sector in Franklin County's agriculture. Dairy farmers have expressed concerns about stagnating milk prices, amidst rising grain and fuel costs, in addition to the challenges of finding experienced and committed labor.



Dairy farmers' biggest concern is that the loss of just a few more dairy farms will bring a decline in the critical mass of dairies needed to keep equipment dealers, equipment service personnel, and feed suppliers available on the local level. They do not see any newcomers entering the dairy business due to these challenges. The county could develop a program to recruit experienced dairy farmers to relocate from other parts of the state or country to Franklin County, with the promise of good soils and climate, relatively affordable land, nearly year-round grazing, and a cooperative and supportive dairy sector.

Ferrum College and Franklin County High School both have programs finding internships for students on local farms, and the dairy sector creates a prime opportunity to focus these efforts. With the dominance of the dairy sector in local agriculture, the shortage of labor mentioned by local farmers, and the need to cultivate a new generation of dairy farmers, local dairies could work closely with these school programs to increase placements of students on active dairies.

The Franklin County Dairy Club was a source of exchange and collaboration amongst dairy farmers in the past, but has been dormant for the past 15 years. This might be a good forum for the exchange of concerns and the development of new ideas that run across generations and non-traditional partners with an interest in the future of local dairying.

With the increasing fluctuations in feed costs, due in large part to the interrelationship between world grain production, use of corn and soybeans in biofuels, and energy costs, local dairy farmers will find themselves in an increasingly volatile position, as both feed and milk prices become unpredictable. What Franklin County has in abundance, however, is a long growing season capable of supporting a wide diversity of forages that can provide excellent nutrition for ruminant cattle, sheep, and goats. To reduce the uncertainty surrounding feed costs, Franklin County dairy and beef farmers could seek to maximize the efficiency of their grazing practices. Researchers at Virginia Tech, as well as those in neighboring states, are doing excellent research on best practices for intensive grazing and creating a year-round forage rotation. A local grazing club that organizes educational meetings, pasture walks, and information exchange between farmers are the best ways to develop localized solutions that maximize the use of the county's unique soil and climate.

Dairy plays a large role in local foods; dairy farms and creameries within the county not only provide consumers with sources of local dairy products, but also with agritourism opportunities. Homestead Creamery is one example of success for a dairy farm and creamery within the county, and their story shows how a venture such as this one can positively impact a community. Homestead Creamery shows how small businesses within Franklin County have the ability to flourish into a successful operation.





Homestead Creamery

Homestead Creamery is a dairy and processing facility located in Burnt Chimney, Franklin County, Virginia near Smith Mountain Lake, and is one of the leading self-processing milk producers in the state. The creamery was founded by Donnie Montgomery and David Bower and has been in operations since 2001. Goldenview Farm, owned by David Bower, and Storybrook Farms, owned by Donnie Montgomery, produce all of the approximately 615,000 gallons of milk that is processed through the creamery each year.

At the dairy's on-farm shop, products including milk, ice cream, and sandwiches are offered for sale. As described on their Whole Foods Market profile page "All the milk at Homestead Creamery comes from two local farms, both in their third and fourth generations of family ownership. The milk is free of all hormones and antibiotics, and because the milk is sold in recycled glass bottles, it tastes fresher longer and is more environmentally friendly."

Milk and dairy products produced by the dairy and creamery are sold directly to customers through the store and home delivery, to grocery and specialty stores such as Kroger, Whole Foods, and Earth Fare, and to several college dining facilities (including Ferrum College). As of 2013, the creamery bottles between 120,000 and 145,000 pounds of milk per week, and their on-site store offers their own dairy products, as well as numerous other Virginia Grown products.

According to a Governor's press release³², Homestead Creamery was awarded a grant from the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund to assist in a \$1.1 million dollar business expansion. The funds will be focused on increasing the creameries processing capacity, along with expanding its product lines to include cheese, yogurt, and sour cream items.

The expansion is expected to double their current labor force, adding 20 full-time workers over the three year project, increase their purchase of Virginia agriculture products by nearly \$1.5 million, and increase their production capacity through upgraded equipment.

Not only has Homestead Creamery impacted the local foods market, but also the agritourism industry. Their annual "Farm Days" in the fall attracts around 8,000 people to their farm where the creamery has the opportunity to educate consumers on their dairy products and the importance of supporting businesses and food. They are a representative example of a business successfully implementing agritourism activities on their farm. Homestead Creamery shows how small businesses within Franklin County have the ability to flourish into a successful operation.

³² "Governor McDonnell Announces Homestead Creamery Expansion in Franklin County." December 17, 2012. Retrieved from www.governor.virginia.gov/news/viewRelease.cfm?id=1560.



Cattle

Beef cattle farms have enjoyed relatively strong demand and prices for their animals for the past few years, as high grain prices have driven land out of pasture and into row crops nationwide. With the bulk of feed grains being grown in the Midwest, the high cost of transportation has affected the ability of Franklin County to be a lowest cost producer of grain-fed beef, and the distance to densely populated urban markets presents challenges on the sales and marketing side.

A number of farms in the western Virginia region have found success lowering their cost of production through intensive rotational grazing, and an edge in the marketplace distinguishing their product as grass-fed beef. With a relatively long grazing season and the capacity to create a diverse year-round pasture rotation of annuals and perennials, there is still opportunity for improvement in the cattle business.



Beef farmers also expressed interest in other joint efforts to improve their marketing capacity; these include local registered beef sales, feeder cattle sales, or collaborations to put together tractor-trailer loads of similar animals for sale.

The county also lacks a slaughter facility that is inspected by the USDA. Several beef farmers have sold meat to the Franklin County School system and Ferrum College. Buyers for each of these school systems have expressed a clear interest in sourcing more local beef. However, they are required to use meat from a slaughterhouse inspected by the USDA.

Farmers are looking for a local slaughter facility that can help them develop specialized products that can tap into niche markets. The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network is one organization that can provide ideas and examples of other small slaughter facilities that have been able to expand their services at modest cost to serve the unique needs of local farmers.³³ Franklin County could consider this organization as an information resource for improving their cattle industry.

Aquaculture

Although Franklin County does not possess any commercial aquaculture ventures, this industry is one that warrants further exploration. According to the National Aquaculture Association, "Aquaculture is the production of marine and freshwater organisms under controlled conditions. This includes fish and shellfish for human consumption, sport fishing, backyard ponds, and release to enhance wild populations. Other farms produce aquatic plants for food, garden ponds, aquarium, and even fuel and medicine."

Currently, expansion of the aquaculture industry in Virginia is hindered by a lack of volume of locally produced, value-added products in the marketplace, coupled with minimal processing capabilities. Production levels have therefore been limited to amounts that can be sold directly to local groups in small quantities for activities, such as fund-raising and community events.

³³ <http://www.nichemeatprocessing.org/>



Small producers cannot compete in many markets, such as the live stocking of Federally-managed lakes and rivers, where large out-of-state entities have been dominant due to high production capabilities and associated economies of scale. Another challenge is that small independent producers necessarily have minimal facilities and resources for processing and/or hauling fish. Finally, even if production can be expanded, it would be necessary to define appropriate markets based on production capabilities and estimates and then develop practical strategies and tactics to attain significant market penetration. Simply, producers must understand who wants their products, in what volume, in what form, and at what price. Further, producers must define how the products might be delivered, and how they might implement strategies, actions and tactics intended to penetrate identified markets.³⁴

Grains and Beans

Marketing options for grains and beans were identified as a top priority for local farmers at public outreach meetings conducted during the creation of this plan. Some corn is sold locally to Exchange Milling. To sell other row crops, however, growers must truck their soybeans to Winston-Salem or Raleigh and their wheat to Roanoke (and even that is not a certain option). Dairy and beef farmers buy a significant amount of grains and beans as part of their feeding rations, and most of this supply currently comes from outside of the county. Farmers also mentioned a lack of testing capacity for toxins occurring in grains, increasing the liability concerns for the mill and local farmers.



Stopping this leakage of supply and demand presents a major opportunity to benefit the local farm economy and the opportunity to impact the industry. As with all new economic development initiatives, the most cost effective approach to consider is how to work with local infrastructure and key individuals to see if support can be provided to expand and modernize existing institutions, rather than starting anew and competing with long-held local businesses.

Any grain marketing facilities need rail access, good trucking, and adequate storage space. Farmers have expressed interest in receiving marketing assistance, which could take the form of new storage facilities, new testing, cooperative marketing, and training in better utilizing futures marketing. There has been additional interest in new grain crops, including canola, sunflowers, grain sorghum, and non-GMO or certified organic production.

Although Franklin County contains some grain markets, these existing operations are hindered by lack of infrastructure and expansion opportunities. One example is found at Exchange Milling, which has limited processing and storage facilities. The mill owner has expressed an interest in growing the business so that he may buy more local grains in providing feed mixes for local dairy and beef farmers, but has determined that local acreage wouldn't justify the additional investment that would be necessary to put in a new rail siding, storage bins, and roasting facility. These numbers indicate the potential advantages of taking a regional approach, in which acreage from surrounding counties might justify the additional \$1.75 million investment to create a full-service grain mill in Rocky Mount.

³⁴ Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (2000). "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture." FAO



Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables

Interviews with local fruit producers indicated that they are caught in the midsized farm dilemma previously discussed. Most large-scale produce operations in the United States rely on immigrant farm labor obtained through the H2A program, which arranges contract labor based on strictly defined federal standards and wages. Commercial scale Franklin County fruit farms are too small to justify H2A employees. H2A workers in Virginia are arranged by the Virginia Growers Association in South Boston. This program can work well for individual crops on individual farms, but the complexity of contracting requirements prevents farms from sharing labor across crops at different farms. Labor must be arranged for a single crop on an individual farm, which does not allow collaborations and economies of scale for local farms.



Farmers have been frustrated by their inability to find local labor willing to endure the challenging physical work over prolonged periods to harvest fruit. One local fruit grower observed at a public meeting, “Marketing is no problem, between Franklin and Roanoke County markets. We just can’t find the labor needed to expand our production.” Once again, this presents an opportunity for better coordination between Franklin High School’s co-op program, Ferrum College’s job placement program, and local farmers.

Similarly, a central coordination service could provide additional opportunities for coordinating supply with demand for local foods. As an example, Hefley Farm in Callaway has provided apples to the school system, which has been very well-received by students and food service personnel. The schools have adequate storage to expand the supply of locally grown fruit purchased, as long as farmers can produce the right items for the school system’s specifications.

Another example is that vegetable growers have seen adequate market opportunities in Roanoke and Franklin Counties. Farmers’ Markets, roadside stands, Community Supported Agriculture, and restaurant outlets are all growing and looking for more local produce. Ferrum College and the county school system are also interested in expanding the amount of vegetables grown locally.

Forestry

There is an adequate availability of loggers, sawmills and marketing options around the region to serve moderate harvest and sale needs. County forestry personnel see room for improvement in the management of individual timber stands. Relatively few landowners have a long-term forest management plan, resulting in the growth of less desirable species and haphazard harvests which do not maximize the value of the forest. Landowners have multiple options: private forest consultants or the county forester will complete these plans for a modest fee. These plans are entirely voluntary, serving an advisory role to give the landowner a full range of options. Educational outreach should seek to find forest landowners without a plan to explain the value of carrying out long-term management and carefully timed harvests. Halifax County has been noted as a model in their forestry outreach programs for landowners. This is an area where regional collaboration would be an efficient way to deliver services.





If Franklin County truly wants to encourage landowners to take advantage of these free services, one option is to require landowners to have a forest management plan in place to remain eligible for forestry land use taxation. For this reduced property tax rate, Virginia state law requires forest landowners either to sign a commitment to keep land in forest or have a management plan in place. Franklin County could require an active forest management plan to receive land use taxation, because this would be a win-win for the county and landowners in maximizing the financial, environmental, and scenic benefits of productive forest land. This requirement would be particularly timely with the large amount of land expected to change hands in the next twenty years, providing an added incentive for heirs and absentee owners to plan for the long-term productivity of their land.

BioFuels

Because of Franklin County's forest resources, there is the possibility of a wood-based biofuel industry. Biofuel processing facilities in Covington, Hurt, and Altavista offer additional market outlets for wood chips, bark, and small diameter trees. The Mead Westvaco mill in Covington is a driver for the Franklin County timber economy. New technology for specialized uses is also emerging in the region; for example, the Swedwood facility in Danville is laminating a compressed sawdust product for IKEA furniture.

According to summary document SP702-A, published by the University of Tennessee Extension, there are numerous forms and possibilities for the production of woody biofuels. The Virginia Department of Forestry outlines numerous benefits for both individuals and businesses from the expansion of the biomass fuel industry:

- Provides new markets for waste wood, manufacturing residues, and materials from forest management activities.
- Provides new markets for agricultural wastes and potential for developing energy crops for farmers.
- Reduces material going to landfills, being dumped or open burned, such as woody debris and other wood waste.
- Reduces site preparation costs for artificial regeneration.
- Reduces pollution compared to using fossil fuels.
- Provides additional jobs and revenues to local economies, especially in rural areas.
- Reduces dependency on foreign fuel sources.
- Energy deregulation can provide opportunities for "green energy providers."
- Increased demand for "green energy."
- Federal programs provide technical and financial support to expand renewable energy capacity.
- New technologies provide biomass power plants available for individual operations to supply the energy needs of entire cities.
- Increased interest in better utilization of natural resources.³⁵

³⁵ Virginia Department of Forestry, "Bioenergy and Biofuel Resources." Accessed 10-1-13. www.dof.virginia.gov/energy/bioenergy.htm



One Franklin County example of the biofuel's industry and its effects can be seen in the recent completion of a green energy project on the campus of Ferrum College. Ferrum College began operating two biomass boilers in the spring of 2013 that use waste products from the regional timber industry to supply the majority of the campus' energy needs.

Conversations with Virginia Cooperative Extension staff indicate that the biofuel's market in Virginia is currently concentrated in the Piedmont region. Typically, this type of industry affects the surrounding 75 miles, simply because the cost of fuel for hauling becomes prohibitive beyond this range. Having facilities located in Franklin County exhibiting demand for such biofuel inputs may provide an opportunity to spur the expansion of the market into the region.

Other sources of biofuel include plantings of canola or rapeseed for biodiesel production. One such company located near the County is Red Birch Energy, headquartered in Bassett, VA.

Spirits/Hard Cider

Virginia is one of two states in the nation that allows farm distilleries. To qualify as a farm distillery, at least 51 percent of the ingredients must be grown on the owners land, and at least 75 percent of the ingredients used in making the product must be Virginia grown. Distillers must obtain state and federal permits, as well as approval from the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



Micro-distilleries, similar to micro-breweries in size and intent, are becoming more common in the state of Virginia. These business models allow smaller producers to enter into the spirits market by capitalizing on the overall local food trend without large-scale investment in equipment and labor.

The production and sale of alcohol within Virginia has been a part of the state's history and culture for many years. Franklin County was once considered the moonshine capital of the world, and the neighboring Floyd County is also known for its high moonshine production. The area still maintains a rich cultural connection to the industry, which has become a part of the state's agricultural history. Although Franklin County has a heritage as a traditional producer of spirits, this foundation does not seem to have lead to any significant expansion of alcoholic beverage production.

An emerging opportunity in the southern Appalachians is the cider business, both hard and non-alcoholic.³⁶ This traditional craft is being revived by culinary entrepreneurs, and producers are well-organized in their outreach and advertising. With Franklin County's apple orchards and tradition, cider-making presents an additional opportunity for apple utilization and value-added agriculture. This can be particularly beneficial for apples that don't meet size or cosmetic standards of the fresh eating market.

The growing hard cider industry has provided an additional market for local apple growers, and cideries located within Virginia have the advantage of a significant history of apple growing to

³⁶ <http://ciderweekva.com/hard-cider/>



draw from as a source for a ready supply of apples. According to the “Local Foods and Direct Marketing in Virginia” published by the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural sustainability (VA FAIRS), “Consumers are interested in higher quality ciders with unique regional flavors, so small scale cideries can focus on filling such markets with artisan cider.”

The need for both commercial and heirloom apple varieties in hard cider production has resulted in additional revenue channels becoming available to local apple growers; farmers of less commercial apple varieties have found it increasingly profitable to capitalize on their niche varieties. Reports and feasibility studies funded by Nelson County Economic Development Office provide more information regarding the feasibility of such ventures, as well as survey data regarding producer disposition. These resources are available at the Virginia Tech website under the Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center section³⁷.

While the proliferation of new cideries nationally, as well as within the state of Virginia, means that a profitable market for cider products exists, comparing this fledgling market to more mature cider markets in other countries, such as the United Kingdom, indicates that the U.S. hard cider market may also have a bright future. Activities related to hard cider production could also tie directly into existing agritourism activities, such as the Boones Mill Apple Festival.

Bedford County has demonstrated an excellent example of the economic development possibilities around wineries with their Bedford Wine Trail.³⁸ In addition to a central information portal of five county wineries, this project has partnered with local providers of lodging, pottery, gifts, and baked goods to expand the options available as a tourist destination.

A potential constraint with county support of expansion of the alcohol industry, and a possible explanation for the lack of a significant production industry, may be due to the possibility of opposition within the community. Traditional culture in the region may prove to be an obstacle to the establishment of a large alcohol industry due to religious mores. While this obstacle may preclude involvement on the county level, private industry could likely explore opportunities in this arena.

Each of the following examples has been provided to illustrate the potential opportunities available to Franklin County producers.

³⁷ www.arec.vaes.vt.edu

³⁸ <http://bedfordwinetrail.com/>





Brooks Mill Winery

Brooks Mill Winery is one industry example of one successful winery in the county. Brooks Mill Winery in Wirtz is the only winery listed in the Franklin County Fresh Foods Directory. Brooks Mill Winery not only produces their wine in the county, but they also grow and maintain grapevines on their land. Each year, Smith Mountain Lake hosts the Smith Mountain Lake Wine Festival, which invites a multitude of wineries to participate in the two day festival. This agritourism venture helps residents and visitors further explore their county, as well as local wines.



According to their site, Brooks Mill Winery is a family owned and operated winery near Smith Mountain Lake in Wirtz, Franklin County, Virginia. Operated by H.T. and Rhonda Page, the winery has been producing wines for sale since 2008, and focuses mostly on producing a range of fruit wines. Three of their products, the Pear desert wine, Blackberry Wine, and the Blueberry wine, won awards at the Fingerlakes Wine Competition in 2010; the Blackberry won Bronze, and the Blueberry won Gold, and the Pear won Bronze as well. The winery began with 5 acres of cultivated fruits, and currently offer 8 fruit wine flavors.

Sunken City Brewing Company



Located in the Hardy, Virginia area, bordering both Franklin and Bedford Counties, Sunken City Brewing Company is a craft brewery currently producing three main lines of beer, as well as various weekly batches on a limited basis. Their site mentions that they intend to host internships in coordination with Ferrum College to provide students with the opportunity to explore agriculture and beer-making.

Chateau Morrisette

Located in Floyd County, Virginia, Chateau Morrisette Winery and Restaurant creates Virginia wines and is a part of both the Mountain Road Wine Trail and Virginia's Crooked Road Music Heritage Trail. The winery, in collaboration with other Virginia wineries, hosts the Black Dog Rhythm and Vine Festival, which focuses on bringing together food, artists, and craftsmen as an agritourism event.





Institutions and Leadership

The importance of the agricultural institutions and leadership entities available in Franklin County should not be understated. Some counties within Virginia lack the leadership that comes from an established Agriculture Development Board. Having such an entity that is interested and engaged promoting agriculture in the county is a significant asset, and can prove to be a definite advantage in moving agriculture forward in Franklin County.



On a regional level, other entities are available that may provide insight into activities and opportunities available to Franklin County personnel. The Virginia Agricultural Development Officers (VADO) was established in 2010 to promote the growth and vitality of agriculture in the state through networking, information sharing, and learning about development efforts being undertaken throughout Virginia.

Reaching out, rather than isolation, can often maximize the effectiveness of programs, either through learning best practices, or through gaining insight into opportunities that have been previously undiscovered within the county but are having a significant impact in other areas of the state.

Multi-Use Agricultural Center

Institutions such as multi use agriculture centers can also play a role in enhancing the promotion of agricultural industries in a region. There are examples of counties and local organizations taking it upon themselves to promote the success of locally produced agriculture by providing infrastructure and support. These entities often take the form of partnerships to produce facilities for processing, space for direct marketing activities such as farmers' markets, or a designation area for agritourism or related agricultural events. Facilities may also include arenas, education centers, and other related forms of promotion. These types of entities are often formed through a collaborative process of multiple counties or agencies seeking to promote the agriculture industry of a region. Selected examples within the state include:

Appalachian Agriculture Exposition Center, Wytheville, VA

Appalachian Agricultural Exposition Center is dedicated to area agricultural development and with the support of the local community, provides a facility that could be used for multiple purposes. The center is primarily used for farmers' markets, community center, and agricultural organization offices. The center is located in Wytheville, Virginia at the junction of Interstate 81 and 77, giving it adequate access to the surrounding area.



The Highland Center, Monterrey, VA

The Highland Center is organized as a non-profit organization, and now houses 13 tenants, including a mix of small businesses, individual artists, and non-profit organizations. When the center was formed, four issues were identified by county residents as the most important for the center to address. In response to these issues, The Highland Center created a business incubation, farmers' market, and commercial kitchen program.

Recently, the Highland Center was instrumental in the start-up of the Alleghany Highlands Agricultural Center, now operating as Alleghany Meats, a USDA-inspected slaughter and educational facility focused on providing local producers customized slaughter and processing services. They continue to help other areas within and around Virginia, including counties in West Virginia.³⁹

Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation, Chatham, VA

Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation is an entity, located in Southside Virginia, that was formed by a group of local farmers with the purpose of supporting local agriculture in the area. It is supported by the Pittsylvania County Farm Bureau and is situated about 39 miles from Franklin County's Rocky Mount. The Board of Directors for the foundation consists of 20 members from different counties including Bedford, Campbell, Franklin, Halifax, Henry, and Pittsylvania counties. Their mission is to "promote and support local agriculture while offering a community based facility to educate and entertain."⁴⁰

The agricultural complex run by the foundation is a multi-purpose facility used to house business and government offices. The complex includes an education and conference center, a farmers' market, and an arena that can be used for concerts, shows, equestrian events, and cattle sales.

³⁹ (2013). "About Us." The Highland Center. thehighlandcenter.org

⁴⁰ (2011). "About Us." Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation. theodac.com



Canneries

Canneries have the specific function of helping local farmers add value to their fruits and vegetables that typically have short shelf lives. Most community canneries were started during World War II and have since strived to stay active entities within the farming community. Canneries help rural farmers ensure the quality of their food, while also helping to lower food costs. According to the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia contains 12 canneries, scattered across the state. Only two of these canneries are inspected and approved by the Virginia Department of Agriculture as open for production of commercial resale items. Franklin County has two known canneries that are still in service: Calloway Cannery⁴¹ and Glade Hill Cannery.

The Calloway Cannery

Calloway Cannery is located within Franklin County, about 11 miles from Rocky Mount, the county seat. It has been in operation since the 1940s, and has operated as a way for local farmers to preserve their fruits and vegetables for later use. This cannery is housed in a simple, cinderblock structure that sits along Green's Creek in the Blue Ridge Mountain valley. Calloway Cannery is run by Doug Minnix and is supported by the Franklin County board of supervisors and school board. The cannery is only open between July and December and helps serve about 100 family farmers from all over the area, including Roanoke and Floyd counties.

Glade Hill Community Cannery

Glade Hill Community Cannery is located about nine miles away from Rocky Mount, and is just off Smith Mountain Lake in the unincorporated town of Glade Hill, Virginia. It is open to the public during the week between Monday and Thursday throughout the year, and is directed by Steve Oaks. The cannery is situated just off of Virginia State Route 40 and helps serve the community in Glade Hill and other surrounding areas, such as Bedford and Pittsylvania counties.

These two canneries could allow Franklin County producers to bring additional value to their produce. While the canneries have existed for some time, they do not possess commercial kitchen certifications, and producers utilizing their services are not able to conduct retail sales with the resulting products.

Until this issue is addressed, producers may be able to find similar services regionally. Some examples of similar entities in nearby counties include the New London Community Cannery located in Bedford, Virginia, as well as other canneries located in Russell County, Carroll County, and Montgomery County.⁴²

⁴¹ Shockley Linda (2007). "Putting Food by at the Calloway Cannery." Grit, Rural American Know-How www.grit.com/farm-and-garden/putting-food-by-at-the-calloway-cannery.

⁴² Virginia Food Processor Technical Assistance Program (2013). "Community Canneries." Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Science.



Supply and Finance

With the increase in internet sales and internet-based retailers like Amazon.com, farmers may find other equipment supplies to fill their farm's needs. Steps should be taken to help support the longevity of equipment dealers within the county. As the amount of larger farms decreases within the county, these dealers may not have the necessary market to maintain their business. Farmers are still able to find most inputs available locally, but there is great concern that the county is approaching a tipping point in the loss of dairies that would begin an inevitable decline of services. The one area where this has already occurred is in *irrigation*, where no equipment is available locally.



Farmers are also concerned about the lack of understanding of agricultural issues amongst local banks. Although Farm Credit and Carter Bank and Trust continue to provide important financial support for farming, there is worry about the impact that the loss of a couple of key individuals with knowledge of local farming could have on the availability of agricultural finance.

Promotion of the local foods market may not only lead to the increase in farms engaged in local foods activities, but also an increase in equipment dealers and farm financiers. The local foods trend is continuing to grow, and farmers must also grow to meet this demand. Having adequate suppliers within the county will ensure that farmers will have access to the necessary supplies and equipment as their business grows.

Food Security

A large portion of Franklin County is designated as a Low-Income/Low-Access Food Desert in regards to the availability of healthy food. The Community Food Security Coalition, the national leader in advocating for the food needs of the low-income population, defines a secure food system as one in which "all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice."



The most secure food system is the one in which a large portion of the population is able to feed themselves, either through growing their own food or having convenient access to fresh and affordable locally produced food. Food security is a partnership of growers, consumers, processors, buyers, regulators, and transporters. All the pieces of this puzzle exist in the County, and a concerted effort to help all understand the importance of their roles could strengthen the entire community.

Heavenly Manna Food Bank has been operated by volunteer labor since 1991 to provide food to the county's hungry citizens. They distribute food gathered from a variety of sources, including locally grown fruits and vegetables. With no large scale vegetable operations currently existing in the county, there are no organized gleaning efforts to gather off-size produce from farm fields.

Efforts have been made by residents in the county to help alleviate hunger and improve nutrition in the Smith Mountain Lake area. Within this region, approximately 3,700 children are on free or reduced lunch. Local organizations such as Lake Christian Ministries are working to help



provide food, crisis financial aid, clothing, and other essential household items to low income families and individuals who are experiencing unemployment, illness, family disruptions, or other unexpected occurrences. They help distribute aid to more than 420 families in the area once per month.⁴³

Despite these grass-roots initiatives to deal with the issue of food security, there does not appear to be any large-scale focus on addressing the county's food desert status. Promoting agriculture, and the direct marketing of locally produced foods in particular, can positively impact such regions by providing more accessible sources of fresh produce; the source of fresh healthy food becomes the producers that are located in a given community.

Tourism Opportunities

The County Office of Economic Development understands the importance of the agricultural heritage to the county's appeal to tourists. In conducting conversations with Tarah Holland, the County's Tourism Development Manager, the county appears to be moving forward several initiatives to promote and expand the visibility of local farms:



- The Franklin County Fair, which has been dormant since the 1970s, is being revived and will begin again at the Franklin County Recreation Park on Sontag Road, in either 2014 or 2015.
- Local farm events, such as the Fall for Alpacas days at Smith Mountain Lake Alpaca Farm and the SWVA Antique Farm Days, are promoted on the county website.

In addition, the resources of Smith Mountain Lake, The Crooked Road heritage music trail, and the Booker T. Washington Memorial offer opportunities for increased promotion of tourism in general, as well as agritourism events.

Coordination with existing entities, or discovering opportunities by examining successful entities in the region and the state, may provide ideas for additional expansion and initiatives that could be promoted.

⁴³ Lake Christian Ministries (2013). "Our Mission." www.lakechristianministries.org/



Regionalism

Many opportunities for growth identified in Franklin County, such as meat or dairy processing facilities, carry high fixed asset costs that require high volumes of production or processing in order to be viable. These types of institutions and entities work best on a regional level that allow them to draw sufficient volume from a larger area than a single county.

Franklin could consider the possibility of working with surrounding counties to pool resources for the establishment or expansion of facilities or infrastructure components that can work to everyone's advantage.

A number of regional initiatives are already underway that can support Franklin County farmers. The West Piedmont Planning District has produced an interactive guide to local foods⁴⁴ and is working on an area agritourism guide. Given the shrinking number of farms in the county, any new initiative may require a regional scope to assure that there is adequate supply and demand to justify new investment in growth and infrastructure development.

Farmland Preservation

From 1982 to 2007, Virginia saw 462,300 acres of productive farmland converted to developed uses, ranking the state 21st in the country (and 14th in the percentage of agricultural land converted). The conversion of farms to other uses puts pressures on remaining farms and the entire agricultural sector. Often, the highest quality farmlands are the most likely to be lost to development, as the land that grows the best crops also builds the best houses – flat, well-drained, and easily accessible by road. This is particularly alarming in Virginia, which ranked 9th in the country in the percentage of **prime** agricultural land converted to development most recently (from 2002-2007), when 1.29% of the best lands for crops and livestock were lost.



In turn, farmers are pressured to match yields on less productive and often environmentally fragile lands, and there is increased competition for remaining farmlands, spurring a bidding war for leased lands, as many farmers need to maintain acreage and gross income to generate cash flow to cover debt. As farms sell out and disappear, neighbors may stop reinvesting in their operation and facilities. Service providers suffer because there are fewer farms and acreage, and larger farms may seek volume discounts outside of the county, rather than working with local dealers.

Fortunately, the state of Virginia has a strong program of state support to help counties and landowners slow down this trend. The Office of Farmland Preservation, located within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services,⁴⁵ was established in 2001, and uses a 5-pronged approach to stem the loss of farmland in the state:

⁴⁴ http://www.wppdc.org/Web_Data/WPPD/Newsletters/Fall%202013%20WPPDC%20Newsletter.pdf

⁴⁵ <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/index.shtml>



- To work with other governmental and private organizations to help establish local purchase of development rights (PDR) programs by creating model policies and practices, establishing criteria to certify programs as eligible to receive funds from public sources, and determining methods and sources of funding for localities to purchase agricultural conservation easements.
- To create programs to educate the public about the importance of farmland preservation.
- To help farmers with farmland preservation efforts.
- To assist local governments in developing additional farmland preservation policies and programs.
- To administer the Virginia Farm Link program.
- Purchase of Development Rights Programs (PDR's) pay landowners to place permanent restrictions on future development of their farm's land, assuring that this land availability for agriculture. These programs rely on a combination of local, state, and federal government funding and tax advantages, along with private financial and technical support, to compensate landowners for the reduction of equity value of their properties.

Under the guidelines of the Virginia state program, Franklin County has established a PDR program and protected two farms, using a \$50,000 allocation from VDACS in 2012.

PDR programs can help land remain affordable for farming, by removing the development value from the cost of purchase. They also allow landowners to recover cash liquidity to help with settling estate planning issues for non-farming heirs, or to invest in new value-added enterprises or updating aging facilities. Most importantly, these programs create stable parcels of land, which can become the cornerstone of future farming communities.

The Virginia Farm Link program also provides a valuable set of services, which can assist landowners in the transition of their land to the next generation.⁴⁶ The program conducts workshops and has compiled a set of educational resources to help landowners understand key issues and options. In conjunction with the Virginia Farm Bureau, the Farm Link program has established a Farm Seeker Certification program centered on a curriculum for farming newcomers to assure that they have adequate on-farm experience and a viable business plan to launch a profitable agricultural enterprise.

These Certified Farm Seekers can then tap into the Virginia Farm Link database to find landowners with either available farms for lease or purchase, or even existing farm operations seeking someone to take over and carry them on. The Office of Farmland Preservation helps connect both sides of this transaction and provides services and professional referrals that can help negotiate this complex landscape. With so many prospective farmers in current times emerging from non-farm backgrounds, these new connections could offer important promise for creating a new generation to tend the land for Franklin County.

⁴⁶ <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/preservation/program.shtml>



Barriers to Growth and Diversification

Through interviews with farmers, staff, and the public, a number of concerns surfaced which merit future concern:

Agricultural Zoning

There is no specific agricultural zoning category, as distinct from rural residential. Farms may have unique needs for accessory buildings, farm workers housing, advertising, public parking and facilities.

Regulatory Complexity

Citizens interested in developing new agricultural enterprises (especially value-added and agritourism) must negotiate a maze of regulatory and permitting issues. To facilitate the process, the county could consider designating an agricultural liaison to provide guidance on procedures and timeframe for creating new farm-related enterprises.

Food Safety

Safety certification is becoming more important in all areas of agricultural production. The rise of popularity of locally produced foods, along with numerous food safety scares, has made food safety of paramount importance to producers, as well as buyers and consumers. While not necessarily a requirement, safety certifications can pose an obstacle, especially for smaller producers who wish to access larger institutional purchasers, but who are unable to bear the expense associated with auditing and certification to meet the requirements of these types of customers.

- **GAP and GMP**

Over time, guides such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) have become more and more important to the food industry, beginning with growers providing large scale quantities of commercially grown produce and working its way to smaller and smaller producers. Laws associated with the safety of the nation's food supply include the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 and the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010, the latter of which shifted the focus of food safety from response to prevention.

- **Third Party Certification**

Many foodservice companies work with suppliers to meet company mandated food safety and quality certification standards that are often more stringent than government mandated standards. The requirements vary by company.



FARM TO TABLE ANALYSIS

Local food is defined by the U.S. Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill as food that is transported less than 400 miles from its origin or within the state in which it was produced. Involvement with healthier foods in the U.S. has been drastically increasing over the past decade. Along with organic foods, it is estimated that local food sales increased from \$4.8 billion to \$7 billion from 2008 to 2011.

In 2008, direct marketing of local foods gathered \$877 million in sales; farms that engaged in direct and indirect marketing accounted for \$1.2 billion in sales, while indirect marketing farms, or farms which sold to institutions, made up for \$2.7 billion of sales (56 percent of local food sales). Because those farms that sold directly to consumers or a combination tend to be smaller farms, the combined \$2.1 billion in sales are split by 93,800 farms compared to the 13,400 farms that accounted for the \$2.7 billion from selling to institutions only. This may indicate that a large size operation is necessary to accommodate institutions' needs.

<u>\$2.1 billion</u>	vs.	<u>\$2.7 billion</u>
93,800 farms		13, 200 farms

“Farm to table,” also referred to as direct marketing, typically refers to the portion of the local foods movement that seeks to shorten the distance between food harvested at a local level and food served, both in a commercial environment such as a restaurant, as well as on an individual consumer level at the dinner table. Farm to table movements seek to connect more closely producers of fresh produce and locally produced food products with end consumers, rather than providing through the typical commodity food chain of aggregation and distribution.

Farm to table can encompass many different venues and sales channels. Farm stands, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), agricultural cooperatives, and food hubs can all be classified as “farm to table” ventures that promote direct marketing activities.

Local food and “farm to table” opportunities continue to grow. Several local farms are selling to “farm-to-table” restaurants in Roanoke. While the Rocky Mount Farmers' Market has growth potential, it also does not appear that farmers have fully tapped the market for Community Supported Agriculture and local institutional sales. These are all avenues that can have a direct impact, both on a community level, as well as an individual farmer level. As evidenced by other examples in the state and region, successful local food outlets can have a significant impact on agricultural income.

The county is currently working to help further establish farm-to-table projects within the area. Ferrum College has been working hard on agriculture-related projects, specifically a Farm to Table initiative and a bio-mass boiler project. The intent of this program is to encourage more use by local residents and businesses of locally-grown foods.



Bobby Thompson, Special Assistant to the President for Special Projects at Ferrum College, notes that more than 30 percent of the food used by Ferrum College comes from local suppliers. The creation of a food hub would give the county the advantage of having centralized distribution of local farm products. Preliminary steps have been taken in the creation of this project, including the creation of a committee with the purpose of locating a facility to use and funding opportunities.

Direct Marketing Possibilities

As reported in the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability's "Local Foods and the Value of Direct Marketing in Virginia," "The new opportunity for agricultural producers to reach the customers directly is critical for the viability of small-scale, local farms in today's competitive environment. Small agricultural producers can now supersede the established system and change their statuses as price takers by selling directly to consumers, retailers, and other outlets."

Direct Marketing/Food Hub Issues and Potential Barriers

- Market Channel Access
- Quality of Supply
- Seasonality
- Human Resource Capabilities
- Food Safety Certification

Farm Stands

Farm stands can be very advantageous to the small farmer, creating great competitive advantages over indirect marketing. They allow a customer to obtain seasonal foods and other farm products at peak condition with a home grown flavor. According to the "Local Foods and Direct Marketing in Virginia" published by the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural sustainability (VA FAIRS), "From the operator's point of view, this interaction [between the consumer and farmer] provides an opportunity to create a more educated consumer. Growers can educate consumers about foods they may not have tried before, as well as tips on determining freshness and preparation methods." As customers have become much more interested in the origin of food and methods used to produce it, farm stands have benefited from the local foods and "locavore" trends.



Farm stands directly affect many communities by generating revenue that remains in local communities, supporting local neighborhoods, and helping create jobs. The Franklin County area Land Between the Lakes Local Food and Gardening Guide lists six farm stand and U-Pick operations in 2013. These farms sell a variety of items including vegetables, honey, meats, eggs, berries, tree fruits, and plants. Some of these farm stand operations even host u-pick options, which allow the farmers to increase their agritourism and connection to the community.

Franklin County can seek to optimize this basic level of direct marketing by utilizing educational resources and helping educate farmers on the validity of operating such a venture. Ventures beginning at this basic level can then grow and expand, possibly to permanent structures, or



through collaboration with other farmers to form other levels of direct marketing, such as CSA's or farmers' markets.

Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets offer additional outlets to small producers looking for an entry into the marketplace. Bringing together multiple producers in one area allows each to benefit from the additional customer flow, resulting from the availability of multiple products and vendors. Because farmers' markets are such an important part of the connection between the farms and the end consumer, they have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to the demand for fresh produce and goods.



Small-scale producers are often more flexible than large-scale farming operations. This natural advantage allows a small-scale producer to customize production to meet new customer demands. Large-scale producers are typically locked into their product mix due to limited ability to sell the large volumes of product through channels other than commodity scale outlets. Sales at farmers' markets are still a small proportion of all sales, but farmers' markets offer an opportunity to access the target consumer, especially if they have well-chosen strategic locations.

There are many ways Franklin County can help in the expansion of direct marketing options for farmers, including implementing more area farmers' markets. The county only contains one major farmers' market, although there are multiple located just outside the county. Farmers' markets listed with USDA AMS within 20 miles of Rocky Mount include the following entities located both in and near to Franklin County:

Entity	Location
Rocky Mount Farmers' Market	Rocky Mount
Westlake Farmers' Market	Moneta
Grandin Village Community Market	Roanoke
The Historic Roanoke City Market	Roanoke
Vinton Farmers' Market	Vinton



Rocky Mount Farmers' Market

"The Farmers' Market at Citizen Square is at the heart of historic downtown Rocky Mount and the gateway to the Crooked Road, Virginia's Heritage Music Trail. The market is surrounded by unique shops, Franklin County's main library and an abundance of Rocky Mount history. The market is a focal point of relaxation, recreation, celebration and commerce for Rocky Mount and Franklin County. The market, located at 435 Franklin Street, is open Monday through Saturday from 6 AM to 5 PM and features a variety of fresh produce, home baked goods, arts, crafts, plants, fresh cut flowers, honey, greenery, jams, jellies and a variety of other seasonal items. The market is fully handicapped accessible and features restrooms that are open during the regular hours of operation and a concession stand that is used during special events. The Farmers' Market is also used for special events and many of the festivals and events held in Rocky Mount are at the Farmers' Market. Space is available on a daily, monthly or yearly basis."⁴⁷

Conversations with community leadership indicate that the Rocky Mount Farmers' Market doesn't currently provide a strong market outlet for the commercially oriented farm. Some producers are more inclined to take their products to the nearby Roanoke area rather than remaining in Franklin County. There are concerns about the location, the extensive hours (which fail to create a critical mass of consumers at any time), and the lack of market governance and enforceable rules to assure that products are locally grown by the vendors who are selling them. A review of successful farmers' markets across the Southeast emphasizes the importance of a strong governing body and clear set of guidelines to attract a large number of customers willing to pay a higher price for a premium product, given the "inconvenience" of farmers' market shopping, compared to the enormous selection available at today's supermarket.

The county is seeing relatively high levels of market value for their agricultural products; Franklin County has the second highest market value for their agricultural products out of the six surrounding counties in the area. By organizing more farmers' markets and providing more opportunities for farmers to market their products directly to the consumer, the county may continue to see a rise in the value of their agricultural products and add to the overall economic value of the county.

⁴⁷ Information sourced from the Town of Rocky Mount Website:
www.rockymountva.org/index.cfm/go/content.dspcontent/Page_Name/Farmers--Market.html



Southwest Virginia Farmers' Market

In conversations conducted with community leaders in Franklin County, the Southwest Virginia Farmers' Market was mentioned as a possible role model for expansion of a local foods outlet in Franklin County. Located in Hillsville, VA, the Market offers both wholesale and retail purchasing options for its wide array of products, including fresh produce and seasonal plants, as well as local arts and crafts. The market's wholesale activities include a warehouse that is open year round, and provides cooling, packing, and grading facilities, as well as hydro-coolers, forced-air coolers, and ice machines.

The market maintains an attractive and functional website, with information regarding their year round vendors, hours of operation, contact information, and links to agricultural and community attractions and events. The wholesale portion of the site indicates that the warehouse is GAP certified and works with local producers to address GAP and other food safety issues.

A similar entity in Franklin may provide increased awareness about local foods among the local population and also serve as a larger scale outlet, similar to a food hub, to provide the opportunity for local wholesale activities.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

CSAs, also known as "subscription farming," originated during the 1960's in Japan and Switzerland as a method for consumers to ensure the health and sustainability of agricultural producers. The idea of communities' direct support of local producers has steadily gained momentum since their introduction in the U.S. in the 1980's, and has seen a somewhat rapid rise in recent years corresponding with revived interest in local foods.

CSAs remain an important form of direct marketing for local farmers seeking a more direct connection with customers and an ability to charge retail pricing for their products. As stated in the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture and Rural Sustainability's "Local Foods and the Value of Direct Marketing in Virginia," "A CSA can be as varied as the community it is located in and the producers who participate. While it is typically based around fruit and vegetable production, CSAs often incorporate an array of farm based produce, from vegetables, fruits, eggs, and meat, to more processed items such as jellies and jams." LocalHarvest.org lists over 4,000 individual CSAs in their directory, as well as 9 farms offering CSA's within the nearby region of Franklin County, but none of these farms are actually located in Franklin

The actual structure of CSAs and how they choose to operate is also variable, with some representing multiple farms, while others represent just individual farms offering a program. "Although CSAs take many forms, all have at their center a shared commitment to building a more local and equitable agricultural system, one that allows growers to focus on land stewardship and still maintain productive and profitable small farms."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ National Agriculture Library: 1993 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide. <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/at93-02.shtml>



Agricultural Cooperatives

An agricultural cooperative provides an opportunity for more effective forms of coordination that improve performance of the marketing system through unification and exertion of power to raise total returns to agricultural producers. System rewards from improved coordination have been most visible through efforts of farm input cooperatives at the regional and inter-regional levels in the plant food, crop protectant, petroleum, farm credit, and energy sectors.



Statistics from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative Programs in 2010 show that there were just over 2,300 agricultural cooperatives in existence in the United States.

Producer-owned, value-added cooperatives can provide producers with the options and tools to capitalize on increasing consumer demand. At the same time, domestic consumer-purchasing habits have become more discriminating as consumers express their individual tastes, demanding an increase in variety, convenience, nutritional value and food safety.

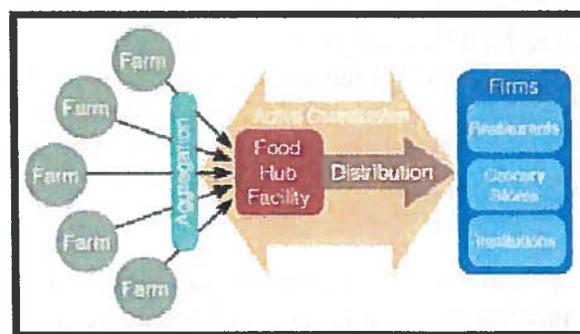
Some producers have responded to market issues by seeking to implement a supply chain management strategy through a cooperative. Cooperatives are an alternative market mechanism with the potential to dilute the effects of concentration and integration and provide independent producers with opportunities to add much needed value beyond the farm gate.

Food Hubs

The function envisioned for a food hub is one that provides opportunities for local growers to access midscale buyers such as local grocery chains, restaurants, and institutions through aggregation, limited processing, and sales of their agricultural and value-added products.

The current USDA definition states that a food hub is “a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand.”⁵⁰ Food hubs function as a link in the logistical chain to help convey products to buyers who then provide the product for sale to the end consumer.

Figure 25: Food Hub Key Components⁴⁹



⁴⁹ Gaskin, Julia W. et al. (January 2013). “Is There Farmer Interest in Food Hubs in Georgia? A Needs Assessment Survey.” Georgia Sustainable Agriculture Consortium.

⁵⁰ Barham, et al. USDA AMS Regional Food Hub Resource Guide. April 2012.



The main function of a food hub is to enable consumers to access local foods that would either be hard or impossible to access on their own. They also help with information flow and sharing as they can educate buyers and sellers and often help negotiate better prices. Food hubs can become price-setters, while individual farmers often suffer from being price-takers. Food hubs also handle the distribution or delivery of products and they can serve as an outlet to connect farmers with businesses that fill specific needs. Food hubs have a better ability to extend the season of products by coordinating between farmers and investing in greenhouses to guarantee a more consistent supply of products.

Economic Impact

The economic impact of an industry, particularly agriculture related industries, can be difficult to ascertain. The June 2013 update to the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia study “The Economic Impacts of Agriculture and Forest Industries in Virginia” by Terance J. Rephann, Ph.D. concluded that “Every job created in agriculture and forestry-related industries results in another 1.6 jobs in the Virginia economy. Every dollar generated in value-added results in another \$1.63 value-added in the Virginia economy.”

However, measuring the success of an agriculture venture or program solely in terms of the dollars or jobs created in the economy does not accurately capture the other effects produced by agriculture ventures. It does not take into account the jobs that have been saved, or the number of producers who are able to remain in farming because of a new program or new agricultural sales outlets, or the new markets that have been created and are now available to other producers.

For example, starting a new venture, such as a food hub, would likely only provide 6-10 new jobs for an average size food hub. These jobs, while impacting the immediate community to a small degree, can have a multiplier effect even beyond economic figures. The establishment of a venture such as a food hub would also provide numerous ancillary benefits to the greater community. It would be difficult to capture in dollars or jobs the ways the new food hub could affect both the producers who supply the hub, as well as end customers who are able to access a fresh local supply of produce.

The food hub, and the six or ten new positions it represents, also means a new and consistent sales channel for numerous local producers. These producers in turn are able to grow in sales volume along with the food hub, increasing the diversity of their crop offerings and the amount of their production. Producers who are interested in beginning production, or producers considering another profession, may be able to enter the market place because of the new channel opportunities that are created.

As stated in the Economic Impact report, “agriculture and forestry stimulate large public and private services responses through the effects of industry purchases and subsequent rounds of indirect and induced spending. Through these cumulative effects, agriculture and forestry-related industries affect every sector.”



POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS



Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID)

This funding program awards grants to eligible applicants who are looking create or expand a facility used to add value to Virginia grown agriculture or forestry items. The grant awards a maximum amount of \$250,000, or 25 percent of qualified capital investment. The funding program does stipulate that at least 30 percent of the agricultural or forestry product used to make an end value-added product must come from Virginia.

West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC)

The Commonwealth of Virginia is currently divided into 21 planning districts in order to assist with the needs of local and state governments within its jurisdiction. The WPPD includes Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania Counties, as well as Danville, Martinsville, and Rocky Mount. The WPPDC is conducting a local foods survey to produce a local foods guide in the future, as part of their mission to foster both transportation and economic development programs.

Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation, and Rural Sustainability (VA FAIRS)

According to their website, VA FAIRS is "a not for profit foundation based in Richmond, Virginia, with the mission of assisting rural agricultural enterprises." The Foundation offers technical and cooperative assistance that involves strategic planning, feasibility analysis, workshops and training, finance assistance, and assists with the creation of business documents in order to help producers and communities in "developing and advancing their agricultural, economic and social interests to enhance their quality of life."



Virginia Tech and Virginia State University Cooperative Extension⁵¹

The Virginia Cooperative Extension helps to link the resources of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University to individuals within the state. Working through collaborations between the Universities and other organizations, the Cooperative Extension program provides services through "107 county and city offices, 11 agricultural research and Extension centers, and six 4-H educational centers."

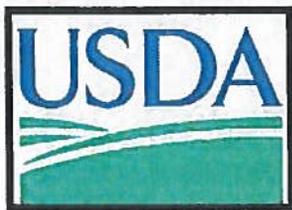
Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP)

Community Food Projects are designed to meet the food needs of low-income people, increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs, promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues, meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agriculture needs for infrastructure improvement and development, planning for long-term solutions, the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

⁵¹ www.ext.vt.edu/about/index.html



Federal State Marketing Improvement Program Funds (FSMIP)



The program provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture, State agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring: new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system, and address barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transporting, and distributing U.S. food and agricultural products domestically and internationally.

National Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP)

The program assists eligible entities in promoting the domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. Additionally, all projects should support agricultural marketing enterprises where farmers or vendors sell their own products directly to consumers.

Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG)

The program is solely designed to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)." Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops.

The program seeks to increase child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops, improve efficiency and reduce cost of distribution systems, assist all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing "Good Agricultural Practices," "Good Handling Practices," "Good Manufacturing Practices," and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers and processors, as well as other objectives.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

The Rural Energy for America Program helps provide agricultural producers and rural businesses with loan and grant options to help fund their eligible bio-energy projects. The program is made up of three areas: The Renewable Energy System and Energy Efficiency Improvement Loan and Grant Program, The Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grant Program, and The Feasibility Studies Grant Program. This program is open to applicants located in an eligible rural area, which is defined by the USDA as an area outside of cities with a population of 50,000 or more.

Bio-refinery Assistance Program

This assistance program is administered through the USDA's Rural Development program and provides loans to those looking to develop, construct, and retrofit commercial-scale bio-refineries. They also help provide grants to help pay for the development and construction costs of demonstration-scale bio-refineries.

Community Facilities Program

Community Facilities Programs provide loans, grants, and loan guarantees for essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities, such as municipalities, counties, parishes, boroughs,



and special-purpose districts, as well as to non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Priority is given to health care, education and public safety projects.

Typical projects are hospitals, health clinics, schools, fire houses, community centers and many other community based initiatives. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants.

Business and Industry Guarantee Loan Program

The purpose of the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. This purpose is achieved by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans, which will provide lasting community benefits. It is not intended that the guarantee authority will be used for marginal or substandard loans or for relief of lenders having such loans.

Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG)

The program is designed to assist producers and associations that engage in value-added activities to develop strategies and create marketing opportunities for their value-added agriculture products, and/or for marketing or processing activities that add value to the commodities they raise, or for on-farm renewable energy generation projects. The goal of the program is to expand market opportunities for producers and increase the producer's share of revenue from their commodities.

Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)

The purpose of the RMAP program is to support the development and ongoing success of rural micro-entrepreneurs and microenterprises. Direct loans and grants are made to select Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs) for the benefit of rural micro-entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises. RMAP funding may be used to provide fixed interest rate microloans or to provide eligible MDOs with micro-lender technical assistance grants to provide technical assistance and training to micro-entrepreneurs that have received or are seeking a microloan under RMAP.

Individual citizens, micro-entrepreneurs, or micro-enterprises, as defined by the program and who are in need of business based technical assistance and training, are generally eligible to apply for loans from MDOs, provided they owe no delinquent debt to the Federal Government.

Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG)

The REDLG program provides funding to rural projects through local utility organizations. Under the REDL program, the USDA provides zero interest loans to local utilities, which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. The ultimate recipients repay the lending utility directly. The utility is responsible for repayment to the Agency.

Farm Ownership Loans (FO)

Farm Ownership Loans are issued through the USDA Farm Service Agency and is specifically intended to help improve a farm overall. It can be used for purchasing farmland, constructing or

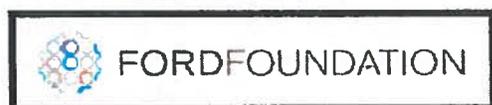


repairing buildings, and to promote water and soil conservation. The current maximum amount this loan will pay out is \$300,000.

Farm Operating Loans (OL)

This loan is also offered through the USDA Farm Service Agency. It is meant to help improve the operations of a farm; it can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and other operating expenses. This loan can also be used to pay for minor improvements to buildings, land and water development, family subsistence, and to refinance debts. This loan's current maximum amount is \$300,000.

Ford Foundation



Each year the Ford Foundation receives about 40,000 proposals and makes about 1,400 grants. Requests range from a few thousand to millions of dollars and are accepted in categories such as project planning

and support, general support, and endowments. Types of grants include general/core support, project, planning, competition, matching, recoverable, individual, endowment, and foundation-administered project.

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE)



SARE covers numerous aspects related to research and education in agriculturally related fields. Since 1988, the SARE grants and education program has advanced agricultural innovation that promotes profitability, stewardship of the land, air and water, and quality of life for farmers, ranchers and their communities. SARE grants fund research and education projects exploring areas such as:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| On-farm renewable energy | Marketing |
| Pest and weed management | Sustainable communities |
| Pastured livestock & rotational grazing | Systems research |
| No-till and conservation tillage | Crop and livestock diversity |
| Nutrient management | and others |
| Agro-forestry | |

Since 1988, SARE has funded more than 5,000 projects with grants for farmers, ranchers, extension agents and educators, researchers, nonprofits, students, communities and others.

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation categorizes grants by size and type of use. Priorities are given to requests within our stated focus areas; however, the Foundation also wishes to serve as a catalyst for new practices and ideas and respond to challenges and/or opportunities that are unique to North Carolina. For these reasons, the Foundation reserves the right to remain flexible in its grant-making policies. The Foundation is also interested in building the capacity of nonprofit organizations and the nonprofit sector. Focus areas include community economic development, environment, public education, social justice and equity, and strengthening democracy. Applicants are encouraged to review focus area priorities to better understand how their organization's work or project fits within the priorities of the Foundation.



Other Notable Programs

Healthy Food in Healthcare



The Healthy Food in Health Care program harnesses the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system. Through advocacy and education, we motivate facilities to implement programs that explicitly connect all aspects of the food system with health. We catalyze sustainable procurement efforts, create clinician advocates, and inspire health care institutions to

become leaders in shaping a food system that supports prevention-based health care.

USDA's WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program & Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
 The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC. The WIC Program provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education at no cost to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, as well as to infants and children up to 5 years of age, who are found to be at nutritional risk.

The WIC FMNP was established by Congress in 1992, to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants and to expand the awareness, use of, and sales at farmers' markets. Individuals that have been certified to receive WIC program benefits or who are on a waiting list for WIC certification are eligible to participate. A variety of fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs may be purchased with FMNP coupons.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) awards grants to States, U.S. Territories, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs) at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs. The SFMNP is administered by State agencies such as your State Department of Agriculture or Agency on Aging.



RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is intended for the use of the Franklin County Agriculture Development Board to develop a successful plan for agricultural profitability and growth within the County. It is recommended that County leadership view this report as a tool that summarizes the past and lays out a range of options for the development of new activities. This section provides specific recommendations.

For several years, Franklin County has been without a unified agenda to promote the long-term growth of agriculture. This resulted in limited economic development, and agriculture no longer maintains a priority position in County planning activities. In order to affect any large-scale advancement of the agricultural sector as a whole, county leadership and the farming community must agree on priorities and embark on specific steps to achieve long-term goals.

A long term strategic view of agricultural development will allow time for the development of a solid agricultural base, and then transition to utilizing this base to significantly increase the role of agriculture in the county's economic development, strengthening the long-term sustainability of agriculture in Franklin County.

The completion of the tasks and recommendations in this section will require strong leadership and collaboration amongst a variety of partners within the county. In order to be accomplished successfully, activities will require coordination and direction from a centralized source committed to long-term agricultural economic development. Budgeting for such a leadership role and centralized coordination will likely require a commitment on the part of Franklin County's leadership of \$750,000 over a five year period. Based on the multiplier discussed previously in the document, the money spent on such a long-term strategic plan can have even greater positive impact on Franklin County's overall economy.

The recommendations below were developed by the authors based on current and historical data, interviews, and comparison with farms and counties around the region. They vary widely in terms of cost, length of scope, and specificity. It will not be feasible to implement all of these within a realistic time frame or budget; it will be the task of the Agriculture Development Board and county leadership to prioritize these options and determine which offer the most cost effective return for the future of Franklin County farming.

The recommendations are organized into themes that emerged through research in the county. Although these themes may cut across implementing entities, it will be essential for non-traditional partners to come together in addressing these complex issues.



County Government

A number of Franklin County government agencies can play a leading role in the advancement of agriculture. For those areas that are not currently being filled, it is up to the Board of Supervisors to determine the best way to assign those roles, either by extending the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors or Agriculture Development Board to cover certain necessary functions, or possibly through the creation of a new agriculture development position within the County.

Board of Supervisors

The ultimate responsibility for the promotion of agriculture lies within the governing body of Franklin County. The following tasks would be delegated to the appropriate county staff members for implementation.

- **Include agriculture as a primary focus area in the County's long term strategic plan.** A review of Franklin County's Strategic Plan, adopted August 30, 2013, reveals virtually no mention of agriculture in the County's long-term strategic horizon.
- **Consult with local farms in addressing water protection needs.** Assure that all plans and rules surrounding water protection emphasize the needs and importance of local farms. Franklin County's water resources, specifically Smith Mountain Lake, are shared by other counties and will be under statewide jurisdiction. The County Board of Supervisors should allow the farm community to take an active role in setting land use rules as they affect drinking water and recreational priorities for other counties.
- **Focus farmland preservation funding priorities to preserve agricultural communities.** As indicated in the Franklin County Strategic Plan, the long term growth of the population will make it necessary to address farmland preservation policies. Projects should place a priority on those farms that are profitable and have a plan for farming in the next generation.
- **Decide whether to create an Agriculture Development Director position.** This position would focus on the support of agricultural industry, production, and agricultural economic development opportunities, and could be jointly housed in existing government offices such as Cooperative Extension and Economic Development.

Agriculture Development Board

The decision of the Agriculture Development Board (ADB) to create this plan, along with the fundraising and collaboration needed to carry it out, indicate the seriousness of this organization in leading the long-term growth of agriculture. A review of meeting minutes captured by the board reveal that their focus over the past several years has been on short term implementation of activities rather than long-term strategic planning. With these recommendations as a guide, the ADB can take a more active and comprehensive leadership role in economic development by leading longer term initiatives and working closely with public and private partners in the county to assure that they are carrying out their roles in the process.

The ADB should not hesitate to be creative and forward-thinking in fulfilling its mission. A broad mandate can confer great responsibility and opportunity on such a board by the citizens of the county; this responsibility includes challenging the farming community, general public, and county leadership to enhance the transition of Franklin agriculture to the next generation.



- **Use key recommendations from this plan to develop a long-term work plan for the ADB.** Use the tasks assigned by the Board of Supervisors to develop a work-plan for the ADB and keep a scorecard to assess progress annually. This plan should include budget, responsible parties, and specific goals and timelines for implementation.
- **Advocate on behalf of agriculture.** The ADB should continue to reach out to non-traditional partners to gather their views and educate them about the needs, opportunities, and unique assets that agriculture brings to the overall quality of life in the county.
- **Keep a current inventory of agricultural supply providers.** Owners of these businesses should be included in agricultural leadership roles, as they can see trends among a changing customer base, and their survival is crucial to farms' profitability.
- **Develop a formal farmer recruiting program.** This program would focus on attracting experienced farmers to relocate to the county. Activities may include creating a recruiting packet and program for farmers considering relocating to Franklin County, or creating an agricultural "welcome wagon" packet highlighting the mild climate, long growing season and fertile soils, strong school system, affordable land, and access to markets. This crucial role of traditional economic development agencies to make new businesses feel welcome needs to be extended to the agricultural sector so any potential opportunities are not missed.

Agriculture Development Director

This position does not currently exist within Franklin County; however, several community leaders have expressed the need for such a role. Many of the tasks outlined in this document could be assigned to an Agriculture Development Director position as a potential development strategy. Should Franklin County choose this method, the following are recommendations on creating such a position.

- **Create a funding strategy for a new staff position (If the Board of Supervisors chooses to create such a position).**
 - **Allocate sufficient funding.** To attract leadership will need to procure multi-year funding for the position to allow time for long-term development and continuity. Seek possible state, federal, and private foundation funding sources to defray the cost of the position. As budgets are tight, it might be worth exploring whether this position could be shared with a neighboring county (see Regionalism section).
- **Craft work plan.** This should include responsibilities, tasks, and expected deliverables with an accompanying time-frame. The position should use the key priorities and tasks identified for implementation to create a position description and to make a strong case for the need for this position in Franklin County.
 - **Clearly define the position roles.** These should be appropriate for the staffing level and should be designed for a qualified, mid-career professional with experience in production agriculture and economic development.
 - **Prioritize existing agricultural industries.** Identify which industries require minimal investment to promote, and focus on adding value and selling to local markets first.
 - **Promote and assist in the development of funding sources.** This may include grant and outside funding both for the county, as well as individual projects.



Extensive resources are available; see the list of potential funding sources included in this strategic plan.

- **Consider an appropriate time horizon for the position.** The position will need at least a 5 year time horizon to create lasting economic results.
- **Provide a simple and clear chain of command.** While the position may be housed within multiple departments, numerous development personnel have stressed the importance of reporting to 1-2 key staffers, rather than trying to please multiple boards.
- **Include a focus on regional activities.** These activities that can benefit the County, as well as those within the County's borders, may include identifying regional resources and partners, and coordinating the flow of information to producers or industries in need of these services.

Education

Franklin County has the advantage of enthusiastic educational institutions interested in sharing the concerns of local agriculture with students. Local farmers are also eager to learn more about production and marketing innovations, as well as receiving professional assistance on how to pass their farms along to the next generation.

Farm Transition

- **Strengthen the link between prospective new farmers and landowners.** This will help those who would like to see their farms better utilized to establish relationships with beginning farmers who can begin farming at an affordable cost. These links tend to work best through individual connections rather than a centralized electronic link. It should be a priority to reach out to neighbors and figure out who might be open to a newcomer on their land and what it would take to make them successful.

Public Schools

- **Further support and promote the 4-H and FFA programs.** Financial and technical assistance are a worthy investment in the next generation of farmers and a stronger urban understanding of rural communities.
- **Further expand agricultural education in the schools.** The strong demand for the agriculture education program and the willingness and interest exhibited by school personnel reveal the necessity of expanding agricultural education. Efforts could include incorporating forestry education into environmental science classes and creating the leading secondary level dairy science program in the Southeast.
- **Expand internship and placement programs.** Labor availability was frequently mentioned as a barrier amongst farmers, and programs such as these can help to expand entrepreneurial capacity and long term industry growth, as well as supplement labor shortages. In particular, the high school agriculture co-op program should include more on-farm work.
- **Build strong links between retiring rural farmers and the next generation of horticultural enthusiasts.** This would include Ferrum College graduates, as well as Franklin County middle and elementary school students. Youth activities of all kinds are crucial to cultivate that next generation of farmers. Agricultural classes and FFA are bursting at the seams with interested high-school students.



Ferrum College

Ferrum College has proven to be a leader in agricultural development activities. The College's efforts to source local foods, promote agricultural education, and utilize bio-fuels and green energy indicate that they are committed to an innovative role in the farm sector.

- **Expand placement of students from Ferrum.** The college should expand its role in placing qualified university trained individuals in key positions on farms and in agricultural industries. This can be accomplished with both post-baccalaureate and internship positions.
- **Expand the student farm.** This could provide significant production for food service, as well as research for biology, environmental science, and marketing classes.
- **Assist in fundraising and recruiting for infrastructure development.** These funds could be used to benefit local farms, and fund such infrastructures as refrigeration, processing, or food hub style consolidation and distribution. There is a strong interest in a food distribution hub amongst the leadership of the college dining services, and a public-private partnership could attract a broad range of funding interests.
- **Promote the biofuels and green energy initiatives of the college.** Consider how these might be spread to other school levels and as a draw to new entrepreneurial efforts.
- **Consider establishing a business development center focused on agricultural businesses.** The College should seek to provide leadership and encourage agricultural entrepreneurship by establishing a business development center to develop and implement initiatives designed to promote both agricultural and energy industry entrepreneurship.
- **Continue the agriculture curriculum focus.** The College should seek to strengthen curriculum especially in core agricultural areas, such as dairy management and veterinary services.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

- **Assist landowning families with planning for the future of their farms.** Local agricultural and conservation agencies and employees know the landowning community very well, and they should not hesitate to find ways to engage landowners in a discussion about the future of their land. *Planning the Future of Your Farm*,⁵² an excellent guide to the tools and techniques guiding this discussion, should be readily available to rural families.
- **Provide education for professionals.** Attorneys, accountants, and financial advisors will be providing important guidance to families making difficult long-term decisions, and ensuring that they have proper knowledge of agricultural issues, particularly the needs and opportunities associated with the ownership of rural land, offers the best hope that families utilize all available incentives to keep their land in farm use. The Virginia Farm Bureau is another organization that may help with continuing education courses.
- **Hold a regional agricultural marketing conference.** The conference would serve to highlight successful examples from around the Southeast. This could include a promotional effort with area restaurants that highlight which of their products are from local farms and challenge restaurants to source more of their product locally.

⁵² http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/446/446-610/446-610_pdf.pdf



Local Foods

Franklin is proud of its agricultural heritage. Local citizens support the farms, and the farms support the residents. Franklin's farmers are small enough in numbers that they need the understanding and purchasing power of new arrivals and vacationers, while these new residents, particularly near Smith Mountain Lake, depend on the fresh food, water quality protection, open space, and fiscal savings that the farms bring.

- **Highlight the successes of direct marketing entities.** Expanding activities with local restaurants, schools, markets, and community groups will grow the “buzz” surrounding local foods, increase the potential customer base, and ultimately involve more local farmers. The booming growth of local foods is in the middle of a golden age. Now, it just needs more farmers who target their output to local audiences and who can tell the story of local agriculture to citizens and media.
- **Support expanded urban agriculture opportunities.** Community gardening offers a wonderful venue for fresh food, entrepreneurial training, and brightening up neighborhoods. Will Allen's Growing Power program is the premier example of integrated urban farming that also promotes small business development through youth entrepreneurship.⁵³
- **Coordinate scheduling and planning of producer planting and purchases.** The Franklin County School system and Ferrum College would like to see a wider variety of local produce spread out more evenly over the growing season, including some expansion of the seasons using high tunnels or other methods of season extension.
- **Integrate supply and demand among food entrepreneurs.** This can include area breweries, wineries, and entities. Local grains could be grown and sold for the specific needs of the brewery, and farmers could use the spent grains as a livestock feed. Joint promotional efforts will also serve to bring additional attention to tourism amenities and attract new spending within the region.
- **Encourage existing producers to utilize regionally available resources.** Because the County lacks a critical mass of local producers interested in large-scale direct marketing activities, existing producers should be informed of opportunities that are available nearby. As the number of Franklin County producers grows, initiatives can be enacted that establish such entities within the County.
- **Encourage the establishment of Community Supported Agriculture.** These could be cooperative ventures utilizing the output of a wide range of farms: produce, meat, honey, fiber, baked goods, etc. Community centers, churches, and hospitals could serve as advertising locations and drop-off points for farms looking for a convenient and consistent customer base. These small scale activities will eventually provide a base of supply and demand that can facilitate the expansion of agriculture in the County well into the future.
- **Re-think the Franklin County Farmers' Market.** Research for this project revealed lukewarm support for this market amongst both farmers and consumers. The formation of a task force to study successful market structures in the region and consider a change in market hours, rules, and governance should be considered. Farmers' markets are at their

⁵³ <http://www.growingpower.org/>



peak of popularity nationwide and can be an entry point for newcomers into farming or traditional farmers testing an expansion into more direct-to-consumer enterprises.

- **Further develop locally grown meats.** There is enormous demand for grass-fed, natural, and organic beef, lamb, goat, pork, and chicken, for health and quality conscious consumers. Conversations with Franklin County School and Ferrum College personnel also indicate a demand for local meat products. Pastured livestock operations lend themselves well to moderate-sized acreage and can fit in with rapidly developing areas, as they don't require huge equipment investments or intensive use of inputs.

Public Awareness & Agritourism

With the growing awareness of locally grown and marketed food products, opportunity awaits the entrepreneurially minded farmer.

Public Awareness

- **Actively promote local farms as an important part of community character.** Farm tours modeled after the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's annual spring tours⁵⁴, maps of local pick-your-own and agritourism operations, and joint promotional efforts with local tourism will all raise public awareness of the diversity of local farms and create new loyal customers. A farm appreciation day featuring such a tour could conclude with a meal and musical event to highlight issues of concern to local farms and raise awareness of the importance of buying local foods.
- **Further publicize the range of conservation funding options available.** With the frequently changing government funding landscape, farmers often lose track of program changes, eligibility, and deadlines. Rotational grazing, cover-cropping for fertility, and season extension tools increase both protection of natural resources and on-farm profitability.

Agritourism

- **Support the expansion of agritourism opportunities.** Particularly as they create linkages and partnerships with other businesses in the county, agritourism activities can significantly affect economic growth.
- **Continue efforts to revive the Franklin County Fair.** The Fair, which has been dormant since the 1970's, is being revived and will begin again at the Franklin County Recreation Park on Sontag Road, in either 2014 or 2015.
- **Continue to promote local farm events.** Currently, events such as the Fall for Alpacas days at Smith Mountain Lake Alpaca Farm and the SWVA Antique Farm Days are promoted on the county website.
- **Expand the Local Foods Directory to include more agritourism opportunities.** This could also include regional coordination with neighboring counties to include more integrated agritourism possibilities that could attract larger crowds. This could involve the creation of a central calendar of tourism related events to avoid conflicts and dilution of potential attendees, as well as partnerships between farms and other local businesses (inns, crafts, restaurants) for joint promotional efforts.

⁵⁴ <http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/farmtours/>



- **Network with agritourism organizations around the region.** This will allow for new and innovative ideas, attending workshops, and gathering information from existing newsletters. Good ideas used elsewhere to attract tourists, such as cross promotions with hotels and restaurants, can be easily adapted in Franklin, as well as innovative ideas, attending workshops and reading newsletters.
- **Increase the focus of tourism on local heritage attributes.** The Crooked Road, the County's history of moonshine and liquor production, and the Booker T. Washington Memorial are all historical and heritage based advantages that could be further utilized by the County.

Regionalism

Franklin County farmers face the challenge of strong competition from farmers in other counties, but lack the critical mass of acreage and inputs to support new processing or aggregation facilities and capacity. This type of infrastructure will need to be expanded in the future, but will take several years to develop, and will require a dedicated producer base in order to grow. In the meantime, producers seeking specific services will be better served by utilizing existing facilities and resources available nearby.

While development focus is often placed on internal resources, the judicious use of external resources also strengthens agriculture in the county by providing for the long term sustainability of farmers and producers. A regional approach to agricultural development will help the County be more efficient in the short term with less financial burden.

- **Educate farmers on the realities of critical mass for new facilities.** Farmers must be willing to travel to use value-added facilities. Although there is an understandable desire among farmers to have their own facilities closer to home, Franklin alone may not have the critical mass of farmers to support a full range of their own processing businesses.
- **Share knowledge of specific resources located both inside and outside the county.** Agricultural support personnel should be familiar with the range of services available for new farmers in surrounding counties and be able to refer new growers. Examples of such resources include the Tobacco Auction house or the Virdia Biofuels facility in Danville.
- **Coordinate the accessibility of resources through awareness and facilitation.** This can be accomplished through various means, but one example would be the establishment of a list or guide to local agriculture resources, from canneries, meat processing, or local food sales locations, to funding and equipment providers.
- **Remain aware of infrastructure tipping points.** When growth produces the critical mass necessary to support the construction of specific infrastructural components, initiatives should be funded to provide these services and components. For example, Franklin County could eventually create a regional distribution facility to consolidate the production of the many small farmers in the area.
- **Increase collaboration with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission.** They are currently working on a local foods guide and interactive agritourism map covering the broader region, which encompasses Franklin County.
- **Facilitate regional knowledge and information sharing.** Franklin County leadership should strongly consider placing an individual in the membership VADO, the Virginia Agricultural Development Officers organization, to gain access to the experience and



information available. North Carolina also has valuable experience in such groups as the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project and the NC Agritourism Networking Association.

Infrastructure & Development

Several subsectors in agriculture were identified as presenting opportunities to capture more of the final consumer dollar locally, as well as ways to control the leakage of farm spending outside the county, if there were adequate processing and handling facilities available. Grain and feed sales, as well as meat processing, were two areas mentioned continually as lacking the facilities to support more local sales, although customers were eager to expand their purchases.

Though some of these expansions may not be achievable in the short term, the long term goal should be the increase of infrastructure that promotes the agriculture industry in the county. Most of these processing enterprises will require a critical mass of business to be successful, and business owners generally felt that there wasn't enough to make new investment cost-effective; some of these areas may also demand a regional approach, in which resources from neighboring counties would be needed to make the expanded enterprise successful.

- **Assist existing private businesses to expand services to farmers.** This could include helping farmers access additional marketing. The public sector may have access to grant or loan funds for capital investment or technical assistance; they should encourage and support local entrepreneurs to expand their capacity and range of services.
- **Assist the local meat processor in exploring USDA certification.** Travel distances to current USDA-inspected processors have made costs prohibitive. USDA inspection would allow sales to consumers, restaurants, and schools which have all expressed an interest in locally grown meats. Although this would take significant investment and pledges of increased business from local producers, there are sources of state, federal, and private funding which would be interested in this type of project.
- **Assist local canneries in upgrading to *commercial kitchen status*.**⁵⁵ Entities to target include Glade Hill and/or Callaway to allow preservation of local farm products for later sales, as well as creating opportunities for entrepreneurs to develop new products and catering businesses.
- **Promote the expansion of locally grown grains.** Work with existing entrepreneurs such as Exchange Milling to buy and sell more grain. Assistance with planning, financing, and permitting could encourage this privately owned enterprise to expand their range of services to local farmers and reduce the financial linkages that increased transport costs both sellers (crop farmers) and buyers (livestock growers) experience cutting into their profitability.
- **Encourage the establishment of a produce packing house.** This could be a longer term initiative to work with a local entrepreneur to set up a packing house for the vegetable industry.
- **Encourage farmers to consider local egg or poultry businesses.** There are local markets that are eager for more local production, and this demand represents an opportunity for entrepreneurial farmers.

⁵⁵ http://co.prince-edward.va.us/cannery_index.shtml



- **Attract local equipment establishments.** Producers need sources of irrigation equipment and bulk commodities for crop production, pasture development, and livestock feed.

Core Agriculture Activities

Though Franklin County has numerous agricultural activities and sub-industries, there are currently three primary production areas that should be focused on for support and growth. By concentrating on core activities, the County can use existing resources to provide a base for diversification in the future.

Dairy

- **Revive the Franklin County Dairy Club.** Having such an organization can help to lead innovations in this sector.
- **Create a model dairy science curriculum at the high school level.** Make it known all over the Southeast that Franklin County farmers of all generations are fully committed to the future of the dairy industry. Even if the program inspires one student per year to become a dairy farmer, this can go a long way towards sustaining the local sector.
- **Disseminate grazing production information.** The moderate climate enables dairy producers to utilize grass-feeding rather than more commodity-oriented feeding techniques. Seminars, pasture walks, and grazing groups will encourage exchange of information amongst farmers, as well as attract outside experts to share their experience.
- **Work with Extension or other groups to improve dairy genetics and stock.** This can be done by seeking private vendors for sponsorship and development of educational activities.
- **Encourage consideration of value-added opportunities.** There are several Virginia dairies that have used value-added opportunities to receive a higher pay price for their products. Among others, examples include Homestead Creamery's local ice cream and bottled milk, certified organic producers in the Shenandoah Valley, and other dairies producing and selling products such as cheese, butter, or yogurt.
- **Work to inform producers of the opportunities provided by direct marketing.** Due to a national focus on sourcing foods locally, this presents an expanding market opportunity for Franklin County's existing dairy industry.
- **Recruit dairy farmers and the next generation of dairy producers to the County.** Dairy Farmers are concerned with the decline of dairy farms in the county. Efforts to attract and actively recruit experienced dairy farmers to the County should be considered as an avenue to foster growth in this sector.



Beef

- **Continue initial efforts to coordinate marketing activities among beef producers.** Initial efforts have begun to coordinate the marketing and sales of beef cattle from the county. The County should continue to promote this for the purpose of joint marketing of beef, lot size coordination, and transportation to sales and processing facilities. Shenandoah Valley Beef Cooperative and Grayson Natural Farms were formed to perform similar functions for their members, and through their efforts they have sold to additional markets.
- **Promote certified grass-fed programs.** These will increase value for individual producers.
- **Work with Extension, Virginia Cattlemen's Association, and others to improve genetics and stock.** Similar to the recommendation made in the dairy section above, this same activity can be performed in relation to the beef industry by seeking private vendors for sponsorship and development of educational activities.
- **Determine activities to promote the long-term growth of the beef industry.** Beef producers, the most plentiful group of producers in the county, are interested in a range of improvements to make their operations more profitable and efficient: drill rentals, custom hauling, cattle-working equipment, local registered beef sales, and feeder calf sales. Consulting with cattle growers can identify the best activities to achieve this objective.
- **Expand industry knowledge.** This includes making information available on grazing, forages, fencing, and innovations in ruminant nutrition and health care.

Timber

- **Include timber considerations in the long-term strategy for the County.** Long term plans should address the role of timber in the future of Franklin County agriculture. Though timber has a lower turnover rate than traditional produce crops, any increase in the overall productivity of timber will have a significant impact on the economy of the county because of its relative industry size in the County.
- **Educate landowners about government forestry services that are available.** Forest practices in the county face the challenge of small lots, which are difficult for management and attracting timber harvest. The county agriculture agencies should incorporate expanded forest management education as part of existing landowner outreach and support the development of timber management cooperatives.
- **Encourage landowner consultation with government or private forestry services.** Educating landowners on the value of seeking advice and education prior to large-scale clear-cutting or other significant changes to the timber landscape of individual properties can alleviate the crisis management that can result from these changes if done incorrectly. The Virginia Department of Forestry has significant experience in this area.
- **Investigate requiring Forest Management and Pre-Harvest Plans for landowners.** Other counties have adopted such policies, and Franklin County should further investigate if these policies should be enacted in the County. At the present time, there is insufficient information to determine if such policies should be enacted.
- **Encourage the development of biofuel production and supply.** With the focus on biofuels and energy production, especially given the example of Ferrum College's boiler system, small timber mills may benefit from awareness of the increasing demand for woodchips and other woody-based biofuels in the future.



APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Sample Implementation Matrix

The following implementation matrix outlines the consultant's suggestion for addressing the recommendations provided. Each line item contained in the matrix is a summary of a recommendation provided in the document. The matrix is intended as a guide, and organizes the implementation of recommendations by category, with suggested partners and priority levels representing the timeframe within which the task could be completed.

Collaborating Organization Key

The primary parties responsible for the activities covered in the recommendation section are presented below. The anticipated lead partner for each activity has been **bolded** for emphasis. The recommendations will likely need to include the involvement of other entities not listed here to be successfully implemented.

- Agriculture Development Board (ADB)
- Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWDC)
- Department of Tourism (DT)
- Ferrum College (FC)
- Franklin County Board of Supervisors (BOS)
- Franklin County School System (FCS)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VDF)
- Virginia Farm Bureau (VFB)
- West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC)

Should additional entities be established subsequent to the consideration of this strategic plan, those entities should be considered for inclusion in the implementation of activities as well.

Priority Ratings

The priority rankings are based on the timeframe in which a recommendation could be completed and not ranked by their order of importance. The following is the detail of the three tiered priority rating.

- 1** - Can be accomplished within the next 18 months. Significant partners ready to collaborate or infrastructure already available, either internally or on a regional basis.
- 2** - Can be achieved within 2-3 years. Requires a longer time frame, organizational commitment on a broader scale, and the possibility of outside funding.
- 3** - Long-term goal over the next 4-5 years. Requires significant relationship-building, development of grassroots support, outside funding, and possibly additional infrastructure.



Franklin County leadership will need to determine the order and priority level for actual implementation that best suits the County's current and future goals. A similar tool should be utilized as part of an overall development work-plan that includes budget, target milestones and level of commitment.

Category	Recommendation	Partner	Priority
County Government			
Board of Supervisors			
	Include agriculture as a primary focus area in the County's long term strategic plan.	BOS	1
	Consult with local farms in addressing water protection needs.	BOS, SWCD, VFB	2
	Focus farmland preservation funding priorities to preserve agricultural communities.	BOS, ADB, VCE, BRSWCD	3
	Decide whether to install an Agriculture Development Director position.	BOS, ADB	1
Agriculture Development Board			
	Use key recommendations of this plan to develop a long term work plan for the ADB.	ADB	1
	Advocate on behalf of agriculture.	ADB, VFB	1
	Keep a current inventory of agricultural supply providers.	ADB, VCE, VFB	1
	Develop a formal farmer recruiting program.	ADB	2
Agriculture Development Director			
	Create a funding strategy and work plan. (If BOS chooses to create such a position)	BOS, ADB	1
	Hire individual to staff position (If BOS chooses to create such a position)	BOS, ADB	1



Category	Recommendation	Partner	Priority
Education			
Farm Transition			
	Strengthen the link between prospective new farmers and landowners.	BOS, ADB, VCE, VFB	3
Public Schools			
	Further support and promote the 4-H and FFA programs.	FCS, VCE	1
	Further expand agricultural education in the schools.	FCS, VCE	2
	Expand internship and placement programs.	FCS, VCE	1
	Build strong links between retiring rural farmers and the next generation of horticultural enthusiasts.	VCE, FCS, FC	2
Ferrum College			
	Expand placement of students from Ferrum.	FC, ADB	1
	Expand the student farm.	FC, VCE	2
	Assist in fundraising and recruiting for infrastructure development.	FC, ADB	2
	Promote the biofuels and green energy initiatives of the college.	FC, VCE	1
	Consider establishing a business development center focused on agricultural businesses.	FC, VCE	3
	Continue the agriculture curriculum focus.	FC	1
Virginia Cooperative Extension			
	Assist landowning families with planning for the future of their farms.	VCE, VFB, ADB	2
	Provide education for professionals.	VCE, FC	2
	Hold a regional agricultural marketing conference.	VCE, ADB	2



Category	Recommendation	Partner	Priority
Local Foods			
	Highlight the successes of direct marketing entities.	ADB	1
	Support expanded urban agriculture opportunities.	VCE, BOS, ADB	2
	Coordinate scheduling and planning of producer planting and purchases.	ADB, VCE, FCS, FC	1
	Integrate supply and demand among food entrepreneurs.	ADB, VCE	1
	Encourage existing producers to utilize regionally available resources.	ADB, VCE	1
	Encourage the establishment of Community Supported Agriculture.	ADB, VCE	1
	Re-think the Franklin County Farmers' Market.	BOS, ADB, VCE	1
	Further develop locally grown meats.	ADB, VCE, FC, FCS	2
Public Awareness & Agritourism			
Public Awareness			
	Actively promote local farms as an important part of community character.	ADB, BOS, VCE, VFB	1
	Further publicize the range of conservation funding options available.	ADB, VCE, NRCS, SWCD	1
Agritourism			
	Support the expansion of agritourism opportunities.	DT, BOS, ADB,	1
	Continue efforts to revive the Franklin County Fair.	DT, ADB, BOS, VCE, FCS	1
	Continue to promote local farm events.	DT, ADB, VCE	1
	Expand the Local Foods Directory to include more agritourism opportunities.	WPPDC, BOS, ADB, VCE, DT	1
	Network with agritourism organizations around the region.	VCE, ADB, DT	1
	Increase the focus of tourism on local heritage attributes.	DT, BOS	2



Category	Recommendation	Partner	Priority
Regionalism			
	Educate farmers on the realities of critical mass for new facilities.	ADB, VCE	1
	Share knowledge of specific resources located both inside and outside the county.	ADB, VCE	1
	Coordinate the accessibility of resources through awareness and facilitation.	ADB, VCE	1
	Remain aware of infrastructure tipping points.	ADB, BOS	3
	Increase collaboration with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission.	ADB, WPPDC	1
	Facilitate regional knowledge and information sharing.	ADB, VCE	1
Infrastructure & Development			
	Assist existing private businesses to expand services to farmers.	BOS, ADB, VCE	2
	Assist the local meat processor in exploring USDA certification.	ADB, VCE	2
	Assist local canneries in upgrading to <i>commercial kitchen</i> status	ADB, VCE, BOS	2
	Promote the expansion of locally grown grains.	ADB, VCE, VFB	2
	Encourage the establishment of a produce packing house.	ADB, VCE	3
	Encourage farmers to consider local egg or poultry businesses.	ADB, VCE	2
	Attract local equipment establishments.	ADB, BOS	2



Category	Recommendation	Partner	Priority
Core Agriculture Activities			
Dairy			
	Revive the Franklin County Dairy Club.	VCE	1
	Create a model dairy science curriculum at the high school level.	FCS, VCE, FC,	2
	Disseminate grazing production information.	VCE, ADB	1
	Work with Extension or other groups to improve dairy genetics and stock.	VCE, ADB	2
	Encourage consideration of value-added opportunities.	VCE, ADB	1
	Work to inform producers of the opportunities provided by direct marketing.	VCE, ADB	1
	Recruit dairy farmers and the next generation of dairy producers to the County.	VCE, BOS, ADB	2
Beef			
	Continue initial efforts to coordinate marketing activities among beef producers.	ADB, VCE	1
	Promote certified grass-fed programs.	ADB	1
	Work with Extension, Virginia Cattlemen's Association, and others to improve genetics and stock.	VCE, ADB	2
	Determine activities to promote the long-term growth of the beef industry.	ADB, VCE	3
	Expand industry knowledge.	VCE, ADB	1
Timber			
	Include timber considerations in the long-term strategy for the County.	BOS, VDF, ADB	3
	Educate landowners about government forestry services that are available.	VDF, ADB, VCE, VFB	1
	Encourage landowner consultation with government or private forestry services.	ADB, VCE, VFB, VDF	1
	Investigate requiring Forest Management and Pre-Harvest Plans for landowners.	VDF, BOS, ADB	2
	Encourage the development of biofuel production and supply.	ADB, FC, VCE, VDF	2



Appendix 2: Agriculture Development Director

Background

As part of the creation of the Agricultural Development Strategic Plan for Franklin County, Matson Consulting staff felt that it was important to contact the counties in the state that presently have a designated Agriculture Development Director position. The goal of this interaction was to gain insight into key roles, best practices, and roadblocks to avoid for any potential Agriculture Development Director position that Franklin County may decide to create.

Staff coordinated with Stephen Versen of the Virginia Department of Agriculture to have a brief survey presented to all the current members of the Virginia Agricultural Development Officers Professional Organization at their November 2013 meeting. Additionally, we also interviewed individuals from several other counties that have economic development roles with a significant agricultural focus.

This section presents the consultants synthesis of the informal survey work, multiple conversations and interviews with key community leaders, the consultants own experience in the agriculture industry, and other sources of information regarding an Agriculture Development Director position. Key facts and important findings gleaned from these surveys and contacts are presented below.

General Information

There are 5 counties in Virginia that have a position that is specifically referred to as an agricultural development Official. At least another 10 counties have specific agricultural development roles under their offices of Economic Development. In a few other places this basic role is mainly fulfilled by someone from a University or non-profit entity.

As may be expected given the great range of agencies that sponsor this position, the survey answers received by the consultants indicate no consistent way the agricultural development director position is funded, overseen, or even empowered. Counties and governing bodies throughout Virginia have adapted the position to suit their needs.

Some counties have found success with installing a dedicated full-time position focused on coordinating efforts to promote agriculture in the county. The establishment of such a position has often resulted from the board of supervisors seeing its necessity. In other localities, county positions were created at the request of concerned citizens who requested it from county officials.

Funding is sourced through various means. Some counties have installed the position as a county staff position or affiliated with the economic development entity in the county, and provide these directors and additional staff with an annual operating budget. Other counties have funded the position through a combination of county budgets and real estate taxes collected from a Purchase of Development Rights program. Several localities utilize grant sources to bolster the core funding provided by other methods.



The funding level for agricultural development was also found to be extremely varied. It was reported that one position was minimally funded with only \$65,000 per year for salaries and operations. Other localities have up to 5 (full and part-time) staff members with primary duties that include agricultural development.

It is important to note that the position should be thought of as long-term with no less than a five year commitment. Because of the multi-year cycles inherent in the core agricultural industries in Franklin County, a shorter focus for the position would likely result in limited effectiveness. Similarly, because the role will require a large degree of networking, building contacts, and strengthening relationships in order to be successful, leadership should prevent the position from becoming a “revolving door.”

Job Responsibilities and Roles

In the area of job responsibilities there was much more unanimity in the response of those questioned. Job responsibilities often include oversight of county agriculture programs, such as Farmland Preservation and Purchase of Development Rights programs, or agricultural business development in general. The position often entails a significant amount of information facilitation focused on enhancing communication between the board of supervisors and agricultural entities in the county. Another major role that many of the surveyed individuals identified was the promotion of agricultural industries in general.

The table below includes some of the key job duties that overlap many of the Agricultural Development Directors Contacted in Virginia:

Table of Major Responsibilities for a County Agricultural Development Directory

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, present and maintain an agriculture development plan. • Farmland preservation plan development. • Advise the Agricultural Development Board. • Prepare research reports concerning agricultural activities in the county. • Coordinate with agricultural service agencies such as Farm Service, Agricultural Soil and Conservation Service, the Dairy Commission and other Federal and State agencies. • Establish certification or licensing for agricultural products in the county. • Represent the County at agricultural conferences and meetings. • Liaison between Federal, State and local agencies in the development of agricultural products and agricultural activities on behalf of the county. • Prepare grant applications. |
|---|



Recommendations and Suggestions from Discussions and Surveys

The following points were some of those expressed by those surveyed and interviewed when asked to provide lessons learned from their experiences.

Numerous of those questioned responded **with issues of structure and clarity of roles**. Several identified that lack of clarity in this area had hampered their effectiveness.

- Care should be taken to avoid politicizing the position, as this can also lead to ineffective leadership and lack of accomplishment. The chain of command for such a position should be clear and direct, and allow the individual to report to select key personnel rather than multiple boards.
- In order to be successful, it is essential that the position be given clearly defined responsibilities, tasks, and expected deliverables with an accompanying time-frame.
- As taken from discussions with various individuals involved in agricultural development roles in the state, it was clear that the success or failure of such a position is often directly related to clear expectations and well defined tasks and requirements.

Insufficient funding levels and having funding tied to a political agenda was another area that the respondents recommend that Franklin County avoid if possible.

(Direct comments have been reserved here to preserve the possible identity of those who responded)

Another clear theme that emerged from the survey was that the **position must engage in strong partnering** among numerous county and state agencies to succeed.

- A primary goal of such a position should include forming strong partnerships within the county. The position should be heavily networked with economic development staff, which can ensure the efficient transfer of information between entities. This can serve to tie the two functions for mutual benefit.
- It was mentioned that in the past some of the Ag Development Directors had “tried to build a kingdom” and were not generally inclusive. Although other entities within the county came to the table, their resources were essentially ignored. In these cases, the directors were not very effective.

The ability to **function on a regional and state wide level** was also strongly recommended in the surveys:

- While it is anticipated that such a position would be directly responsible to county staff, latitude should be given that would allow the director to work on projects that would benefit, rather than be directly located in the county. This will allow the role to be less concerned about divisional county lines and more focused on bringing benefits to the county.
- This role could also be done through coordinating and overseeing regional initiatives and resources, creating awareness through promotion, or interacting with other counties to encourage the regional development of programs or businesses that will also benefit the county.



- While individual counties may not have enough inputs to draw from within their county borders alone, a regional approach can facilitate the establishment of such a business that mutually benefits multiple surrounding counties, regardless of its physical location.

Many of those survey-provided suggestions for the type of person that should be hired for an Agricultural Development Director include:

- The individual should have a strong previous knowledge in both county economic development structure and the role that Extension plays in agricultural development.
- They should have at least a master's degree in an agricultural field.
- They should be a mid career individual to have the stature and experience to complete the job successfully.
- They should be able to travel to attend both day and evening meetings.

**Survey Created for Virginia Agricultural Development Directors Survey**

Matson Consulting is currently working on a project for Franklin County, Virginia in which we are trying to codify some of the responsibilities, duties and tasks that may fall under the purvey of a county agriculture development role. In addition, we see the value of developing a codified understanding of this role's function in agriculture within the state.

Please provide insight into your current role by answering the following questions:

Name: _____

County: _____

Formal Position Title: _____

- **How is your position currently funded?**

- **At what monetary level is it funded?**

- **What are your major responsibilities?**

- **Who do you report to?**

- **What program(s) have you seen in your county that has/have had the greatest impact in promoting agricultural development?**

- **What lessons have you learned or what suggestions might you offer to someone thinking of creating a position like yours?**



Appendix 3: Surrounding Counties & Resources

Pittsylvania County

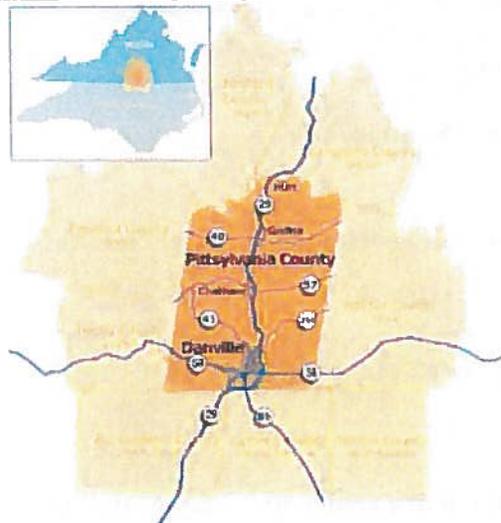
As the largest county in Virginia, Pittsylvania County consists of over 980 square miles. Situated in the south-central Piedmont plateau region, the land is rolling to hilly with elevations averaging from 400 to 800 feet above sea level. The highest point in the county is Smith Mountain which is 2,043 feet high. The county borders North Carolina as well as five other Virginia counties. Chatham, the county seat, is nearly 40 miles from Rocky Mount in Franklin County.

Figure 26: Pittsylvania County Map

Highway 29 bisects Pittsylvania County from the north to the south. Similarly, Highway 58 crosses the counties southern portion from the east to the west. The county is served by rail service and has a regional airport located in the outskirts of the city of Danville, VA.

Pittsylvania is Virginia's top flue-cured tobacco producing county. Tobacco production totaled more than 6,200 acres in 2002, with sales totaling \$26.3 million. A decline in tobacco dollars has impacted not only the counties but the regions agricultural base.

There are 1,304 farms in Pittsylvania County, most of which grow tobacco, as well as corn, wheat and soybeans. In addition, there are a handful of orchards. The county's average farm size increased 12 percent between 1997 and 2002, from 198 acres to 221 acres. There are 43,300 head of cattle in the county, most of which are for beef production. Hogs, sheep and poultry are raised at several farms.



Floyd County



Floyd County is located in the southwestern Virginia, specifically in the Blue Ridge Mountain region. The county was created in 1831 from their northern neighbor, Montgomery County. The estimated population in 2012 was over 15,390 people, which is nearly one percent higher than the population in 2010. The change in the amount of people in the county changed over ten percent between 2000 and 2010.

The county occupies a land area of over 380 square miles and in 2010, the county contained about 40 people per square mile. Between 2007 and 2011, the area contained over 6,000 household with a median household income of almost \$41,000.

Floyd County hosts a multitude of hiking and nature trails, including trails along the Blue Ridge Parkway. The area is known for its mountainous regions and the highest point in the county is Buffalo Mountain, which is almost 4,000 feet high.

**Wise County, VA**

Wise County is in the heart of the coal producing area of Southwest Virginia. With both the Crooked Road and the Coal Heritage Trail coming through Wise County, county leaders are realizing that tourism is a very real possible source of income. The economic impact caused by tourism will be more significant in counties such as Wise because of a depressed and limited scope economy.

Local key people in Wise County met with representatives of the Virginia Tourism Corporation in 2007 and developed *The Tourism Summit and Strategic Analysis* for Wise County. The following is quoted from the summary.

“The Tourism Summit and Strategic Analysis revealed a disconnect between the tourism industry leaders, and managers (hotels, restaurants attractions) and the tourism leadership (Tourism Board Members, government officials) who make decisions on the tourism program, marketing and development. There are several entities within Wise County making efforts to grow and market tourism assets. However, when attempting to do this individually, the attractions and services have a weak presence in the marketplace. Secondly, there is no clear communication or network between the tourism board and the business managers/leaders of the tourism industry that have direct contact with the visitors and tourists themselves.”



Appendix 4: Cooperatives

Cooperative Definition

According to the USDA Rural Development site, there is no universally accepted definition of a cooperative. In general, a cooperative is a business owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services and whose benefits are derived and distributed equitably on the basis of use. The user-owners are called members.

Benefits to Producers

The benefits of a cooperative structure to independent producers are to maintain or increase market access, reduce risk, and generate greater net returns. A cooperative's strategies would allow independent producers to have access to pricing and marketing opportunities that otherwise may not have been available. Independent producers may not be aware of various marketing opportunities because of prohibitive information costs. Even if aware, they may not have been able to access them because of size requirements or high fixed costs of implementation.

The goal of increased producer returns can be achieved through both improved prices and patronage refunds to producers. Producers gain through reduced market risk, assured market access, participation in margins generated at successive levels of the marketing chain, producing branded, value-added wines that directly fulfill consumer demand, and supplying profitable market segments and niche markets.

The alternative of a marketing agency-in-common allows members to retain ownership of their individual assets while the common agency provides various services and product selling coordination (Reynolds, 1994). Successful applications in over order pricing of fluid milk, international marketing of cotton, marketing of refined sugar and sugar by-products, cottonseed oil, dried fruits and nuts, as well as coordinating co-packing arrangements for fruit juice cooperatives; have all demonstrated the strength of this approach.

Cooperative Principles

The USDA lists three principles as being widely recognized and practiced for cooperatives:

The User-Benefits Principle

Allows members to get services otherwise not available, get quality supplies at the right time, to have access to markets, or for other mutually beneficial reasons.

The User-Owner Principle The people who use a cooperative own it. As they own the assets, the members have the obligation to provide financing in accordance with use to keep the cooperative in business and permit it to grow.

The User-Control Principle As owners, a cooperative's members control its activities. This control is exercised through voting at annual and other membership meetings, and indirectly through those members elected to the board of directors. Members, in most instances, have one vote regardless of the amount of equity they own or how much they patronize the organization.



Cooperative Structure

Cooperatives have a unique form of organization with distinct characteristics, strengths, and difficulties. A cooperative is organized and incorporated under applicable state laws. To qualify as a cooperative, attributes include:

- Management controlled by a board of directors elected by the members. One unique feature of a cooperative is that all or most of the directors must be members of the cooperative. Thus, the leaders are regular users of the firm's products or services.
- Equity mainly comes from the members, rather than outside investors, although cooperatives are allowed to raise equity from outside sources. Equity is obtained by direct contributions through membership fees or sale of stock, by agreement with members to withhold a portion of net income based on patronage, or through retention of a portion of sales proceeds for each unit of product marketed. If a cooperative fails, the liability of each member is limited to the amount he/she has invested.
- Earnings/losses on business conducted on a cooperative basis, often called net margins, are allocated to the members on the basis of the use they made of the cooperative during the year, not on the basis of equity held. The allocations may be distributed in cash or retained in members' accounts in the cooperative, and distributed at a later time. Members usually receive a combination of cash and an allocation of equity.

Types of Cooperatives

Cooperatives are divided into many different types. Structurally, cooperatives vary as much as the products or services they provide. Because of the variety of structures and functions, classification is not standardized across all cooperative ventures. Below are several short descriptions of selected cooperative structures.

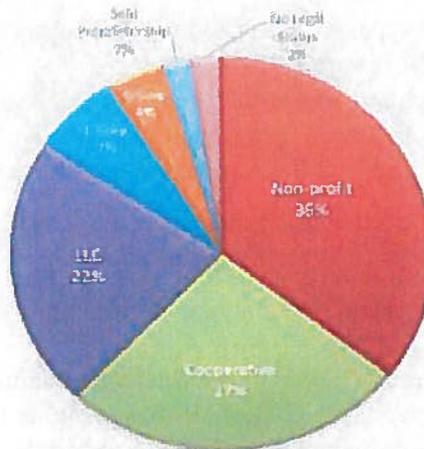
- Marketing Cooperatives: Found in every region of the United States, marketing cooperatives handle most types of farm product. The importance of these cooperatives to particular commodity sectors varies.
- Niche-Market Cooperatives: A subset of Marketing Cooperatives, some local cooperatives are seeking to serve a specialized clientele. These cooperatives do not strive to become large because their small customer base wants specialized products and/or services.
- Marketing Agencies-in-Common (MACs): MACs are a strategic alliance among marketing cooperatives that join to market under a common agreement. MACs serve as marketing agents for their members to achieve economies of size in marketing like or complementary products.
- Supply Cooperatives: Supply Cooperatives, the largest number of agricultural cooperatives by type, derive most of their business volume from the sale of production supplies, machinery and equipment, and building materials. Many also handle farm, ranch, and home items, such as heating oil, lawn and garden supplies and equipment, and food.
- Service Cooperatives: Service Cooperatives provide specialized services related to the business operations of farmers, ranchers, or cooperatives, such as trucking, storing, drying. These cooperatives provide services to their members lowering their costs.



- **Joint Ventures:** As shown in a USDA Agricultural Cooperative Service Research Report⁵⁶ “A joint venture is a business entity, created and supported by other businesses, that has a limited objective related to solving a problem facing each of its owners.” Cooperatives are, in this sense, a joint venture.
- **New Generation Cooperative:** New Generation Cooperatives, which are actually a complex legal structure rather than a type, are often formed by producers who perceive the best opportunity for continued economic success hinges on their ability to retain more of the value-added dollars generated from their production, and are not legal in all states. Distinguishing features include:
 - Limited and defined membership
 - Delivery rights and obligations that have specified quantity and quality
 - Substantial up-front producer equity
 - Tradable equity shares that can fluctuate in value

Food hubs utilize one of three market models. A food hub either sells exclusively to businesses (farm to business market model), sells to consumers (farm to consumer market model), or sells to businesses and consumers (hybrid market model). They can have a large variety in their legal structure. The term “food hub” exists more as a description of functions than as a defined business structure. It can be privately held or publically held, a nonprofit or for profit, and ownership can be divided into sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, or LLCs. The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has surveyed known food hubs as of 2011 and Figure 27 shows how their legal structures are distributed.

Figure 27: Legal Status of Food Hubs



⁵⁶ Frederick, D.A. (1987). *Successful Joint Ventures Among Farmer Cooperatives*, USDA, ACS Research Report No. 62.



Appendix 5: Food Hub Structures and Organization

The Facility

A good location is essential to establishing a successful food hub. Immediate access to roads that facilitate efficient movement of product is vital and the facility should ideally be located near major roadways. Accessibility to high traffic routes will help ensure easy product delivery both to the facility and to end customers.

And ideal building for a food hub would include paved areas for receiving and cooling, outside storage, parking, ramps, and a covered dock space. All of these components help ensure the facility has adequate space to store the required pieces of equipment, as well as sufficient space for product movement and personnel.

Using a facility that can grow along with the business's growth is an important factor to consider in the initial phases of the food hub. The facility should contain storage for perishable produce and light processed goods, and should include freezer and cooler storage areas as well as the equipment necessary for processing and preservation.

Requirements for the warehouse space will include food safety considerations as well as separation of warehouse and fulfillment spaces. Logistical considerations for the space will include load bearing requirements, climate control, and storage and packaging space requirements. The facility should be chosen with the mitigation of contamination risks in mind.

Typical Facility Spaces

- Office space
- General space
- Dry Storage
- Cold and freezer room divided among 4-5 compartments:
 - Cooling Tunnel Area
 - Cooler Units
 - Wet cold room
 - Dry cold room
 - Dry warm room
- Freezer space
- Retail Space
- Bathrooms, break rooms, and other needs.

Human Resources

For the efficient operation of a food hub, numerous employees will be necessary. In many cases multiple roles can be fulfilled by one individual employee, and where possible, individuals may be shared for several roles within the food hub.

Typical staffing roles that are identified are as follows:

- Production management
- Line and general labor management
- Drivers
- Sales and customer service management
- General management and operational oversight
- Bookkeeping management

Staff levels typically ranges from four to eight persons, including some seasonal and part time employment. Many start-up operations may have utilized some volunteer staffing assistance.



Operations

In general, the hardest part of operating a food hub is not distribution or the aggregation, but identifying potential funding sources. A venture that does not plan to begin with a minimal scale operation will need to procure a large amount of starting revenue in order to remain viable. If not fully funded, a significant portion of time will be necessary to regularly obtain capital and sustain operations. It is often difficult for producers to accept a price low enough, and customers to accept a price high enough, to enable a medium to large-scale infrastructure venture to be financially viable without some sort of outside funding or partnership.

Generally, food hubs are originally founded to serve at least some form of social or community need. Often, food hubs measure their success by the ability to return benefits to stakeholders, increase the scale of operations, and thus provide an ever increasing range of services. These services help to fulfill the food hub's mission in a manner that creates viability for the venture.

For food hubs that have a non-profit organizational model, their strategic goals typically include attracting grants, donations, partnerships, and other forms of community support that allow them to continue to expand their operations to levels that may not be "profitable" in the short run, but permit them to remain viable as a mission driven organization. For the ventures that have adopted a for-profit model, it largely remains to be seen whether their path will result in long-term independent sustainability. Because of the newness of this type of organization, and the extreme variations seen in business structure, there are few examples of food hub entities that have been around for more than a few years.

Smaller, more nascent ventures characteristically utilize strategic partnerships or grant and foundation funds as a path to long term sustainability rather than operational profits. In part, these partnerships function as an end unto themselves by more closely knitting the substantive commodity food infrastructure that already exists with the social mission of local foods.

Entities operating at the larger end of the scale often utilize outside sources to remain viable as well, though they may have been able to achieve profitability by remaining at a smaller scale. Instead, the social mission of these organizations have dictated that they continue to grow beyond existing capabilities in an attempt to spread the benefits of the organization to as broad a segment of the community and producers as possible. These organizations eschew profitability in favor of accomplishing outsized goals for the size of their operation.

Roadmap for Food Hub Development

The development and evolution of food hubs are highly localized and dependent on several factors. Some lessons can be applied from reviewing examples from across the country. Some factors appear to contribute to the success of food hubs more than others, including:

- Having a strategic plan with clear goals and vision, which helps ensure that the hub's original intents are maintained (e.g. fair prices for farmers)
- Getting stakeholders engaged early in the process and defining their interests and areas of expertise. This involves:
- A management or oversight team that is inclusive and hears farmers' concerns, as well as those of other businesses and investors.
- A team with individualized skills and proven experience in food hub operations.



- Parties that are well matched in size and scale, and have similar goals and values.
- Producers/ members with experience growing and supplying food for local markets.
- Understanding the location of different direct markets and how to access them.
- How will transportation occur and how can product prices cover those costs?
- Is backhauling feasible to generate revenue on an otherwise empty return load?
- Is the customer base familiar with purchasing and preparing fresh foods?
- Providing an educational program that may help further hub development. This may include:
 - Partnering with an outreach entity (University Extension Service or non-profit).
 - Training producers on post-farm business practices, packaging and delivery, and common production practices or season-extension techniques.
- Reducing risk on the buyers' side to access markets. HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control points) are mandated by law for certain products and typically preferred by many end users. GAP (good agricultural practices) are also often required prior to consumers purchasing products. Providing affordable product liability insurance for vendors to purchase through the hub may be necessary as certain requirements for accessing a direct market can cause some business owners to withdraw from the supply pool.
- Providing capital for infrastructure, such as vehicles, storage facilities, and retail locations. A certain level and type of infrastructure is necessary to operate a food hub, including:
 - Technical infrastructure (billing protocols, Internet management systems and payment processes)
 - Physical infrastructure (product warehousing)
 - Distribution infrastructure
- Exploring a variety of business structures. Whatever the structure, it must be one that helps the stakeholders meet their goals for financial, marketing and production planning, and growth. The management team should identify the point at which a particular business structure constrains further investment. An alternative structure (such as incorporating one business function or outsourcing distribution) may sometimes be the only way the hub can maintain its market share or expand into new markets.
- Identifying all sources of technical and financial support, including:
 - Emerging areas of public and private financial support, such as micro-lenders, private investors, economic development entities and nonprofit organizations.
- Businesses with technical expertise in processing, distribution or transportation to help execute some of the more complex or cost-prohibitive areas of direct marketing.
- Donated or shared equipment and facilities.
- Members/producers/owners who have a capital stake in the success of the venture.
- Managing information efficiently.
- Information flow between producers and consumers helps minimize or avoid risks.
- Information management impacts the hub's ability to manage orders accurately, monitor product quality, and convey product attributes to consumers.
- Information is needed to remain in compliance with certain federal, state and local food safety regulations, and to maintain transparent working relationships across multiple partners in a value chain.



Appendix 6: Selected Contacts

The following is a list of selected contacts that were made and/or interviewed during the creation of this document.

Stephen Versen Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Dave Trimmer Virginia Beach
Freddie Wydner Pittsylvania County	Kellie Boles Loudoun County
Martha Walker Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialist, Community Viability	Ray Pickering Fauquier County
Leah Brown Halifax County	Rachel Chieppa Isle of Wight
The Members of the Virginia Agricultural Development Officers (VADO)	Chris Cook Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation, and Rural Sustainability (VAFAIRS)
Bobby Thompson Ferrum College and Franklin County BOS	Chuck Hutto Franklin County Schools Food Service Director
Michael Martin Ferrum College Director of Dining Services	Mike Ferguson Ferrum College Asst. Director of Dining Services
Travis Rivers Franklin County Area Forester	Jason Fisher Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources
Tarah Holland Franklin County Department of Tourism	Matthew D. Rowe Charles City County Planning/Economic Development Director



Franklin County Agriculture Development Board

Beverly Cox	Michael Burnette
Charlie Brown	David Cundiff
Cynthia Martel	Debbie Shelton
Donnie Montgomery	Eddie Shelton
Fred Wydner	Gordon Washburn
Jason Thurman	Katherine Adams
Lynn Satalino	Mark Woods
P.W. Morgan	Sean Duff
Sherrard Holland	Shirley Holland
Stephen Bray	

Franklin County Board of Supervisors

Rocky Mount District Mr. Charles Wagner	Gills Creek District Mr. Bob Camicia
Boone District Mr. Ronnie Thompson	Blackwater District Mr. E. Cline Brubaker, Vice Chairman
Snow Creek District Mr. W. Leland Mitchell	Blue Ridge District Mr. Bobby W. Thompson
Richard E. Huff, II County Administrator	Union Hall District Mr. David R. Cundiff, Chairman
Christopher L. Whitlow Assistant County Administrator	



Appendix 7: Attendees of October 2013 Franklin County VA Agriculture Roundtable Forum

(taken from meeting attendance sheet)

Aaron Burdick	West Piedmont Planning District Commission
Andy Beckner	Beckner's Produce
Billy Peters	J&P Meat Processing
Bobby Thompson	Franklin County Board of Supervisors/Ferrum College
David Cundiff	Farm Bureau
Ethan Cundiff (son)	
Diane Cannaday	FCHS Agriculture Department
Gerry Cohn	Matson Consulting
Harmon Beckner	Beckner's Produce
Jason Thurman	Agriculture Development Board
Jean Capps	FCHS Agriculture Department
Lynn Flora	Teel Creek Farm
Margaret Torrence	Franklin County Commissioner of Revenue
Mark Woods	Woods Farms
Michael Burnette	Franklin County Economic Development
Michael Tabor	Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District
Nancy Brubaker	Ferrum College
Sean Duff	Franklin County
Sherrard Holland	Holland Game Preserve
Shirley Holland	Carilion Clinic
Stephen Bray	Bray Family Farms
Tarah Holland	Franklin County Tourism
Terry Peters	J&P Meat Processing
Tim Durham	Ferrum College

Appendix 8: Matson Consulting Background



Since its inception in 2001, Matson Consulting has adhered to its mission of applying state-of-the-art methodologies and innovative approaches to help agricultural clients succeed.

We are a recognized expert in the creation of high quality feasibility studies and business plans for agricultural value added and local food ventures. We have successfully partnered with our clients to secure millions of dollars in grants and other funding. We specialize in USDA Rural Development programs with a proven record of success.

Products

- Business Plans
- Grant Applications
- Feasibility Studies
- Strategic Agricultural Development Plans
- Marketing Plans
- Survey Design and Implementation
- Strategic Planning and Analysis

We maintain a network of expert consultants across government agencies, businesses and academia that provide the information necessary to help businesses succeed. Our experts are of the highest caliber and typically have more than twenty years of practical experience.

We have helped a diverse clientele across a wide range of agricultural initiatives. Based on these professional experiences, Matson Consulting seeks to form an invaluable business relationship with new clients.

Industry Segments

- Dairy
- Wine, Vineyard, Hard Cider
- Farmers Markets
- Farm Expansion
- Value-added Vegetable Production
- Bio-Fuels & Bio-Gas
- Energy-Efficient Construction
- Pasture Raised, Organic, and Natural Livestock including Pork Beef, Poultry, & Sheep

Business Planning

Developing written business plans. Designing organizational structure, Creating successful business strategies. Initiating New Generation Cooperatives. Limited Liability Companies, S-Corporations, and Partnerships. Identifying potential capital and financial resources

Grant Facilitation

Identifying sources for grants. Writing and reviewing grant proposals. Recommending providers of professional services. Managing grant application through closeout. Evaluating progress and effectiveness

Board Training

Training for Boards of Directors and shareholders. Facilitating strategic planning workshops. Developing and conducting employee training programs, Creating programs to foster teamwork and productivity

Market Identification

Creating marketing plans to guide business initiatives, Developing surveys, Conducting market research, Preparing new products for market entry, Identifying marketing strategies, Analyzing competitor's market position

Financial Analysis

Determining project equity requirements. Conducting sensitivity, risk, and cash-flow analyses, Preparing financial business models, Calculating economic returns, Present business projections to financial institutions

Technical Assistance

We help you prevent and overcome difficulties you encounter throughout development stages

Survey Preparation

We design, execute, compile and analyze membership and marketing surveys for your organization



Qualifications of Selected Key Staff

JAMES MATSON

James Matson serves as a business advisor with expertise in feasibility, marketing and business organization, primarily with rural businesses to increase their management capacity. Mr. Matson has nearly twenty five years marketing, developing, researching, writing, and teaching experience in management for private, government, and non-profit organizations. He has owned a consulting firm since 2001. His experience includes working on projects in more than 25 U.S. states and 20 foreign countries. He holds a M.S. in Agricultural Economics.

Education

M.S., Agricultural Economics, University of California, Davis
B.S., Agricultural Business Management, International, North Carolina State University
B.A., Spanish Language and Literature, North Carolina State University
B.A., Economics, Honors Program, North Carolina State University
Graduate Institute of Cooperative Leadership, University of Missouri

Professional Experience

Founder and Principal, Matson Consulting, Aiken, SC: (2001-Present) Created and managed a business consulting firm specializing in value added agricultural and biomass energy enterprises. Responsible for all aspects of business including project bidding, staff and sub-contractor management, economic research, authoring publications, public presentations, client contacts, and finance.

Primary project areas are feasibility studies, business plans, capital planning, and strategic plans for rural based businesses. Other practice areas include business structure design and securing USDA grants and business financing (both equity and loans) for clients. His experience has also included teaching presentations at seminars, workshops, and conferences. The business has assisted more than 400 clients, which range from newly formed Limited Liability Companies to non-profit foundations to farm based anaerobic methane digesters. The firm aided (helped) clients to obtain more than \$25 million in grants and several hundred million dollars of loans. Matson Consulting has participated in more than 125 feasibility studies and similar numbers of business plans on clients behalf's.

Mr. Matson founded this company with the belief that when one door closes, another opens. The firm aims to provide its clients with more than just a yes or no answer. It offers alternatives to negative responses, while providing valuable, independent, and objective feedback and guidance every step of the way.

Other Professional Experience

- Adjunct Professor of Economics, Aiken Technical College, Graniteville, SC (2010-Present)
- Partner, Heatherwood Consulting Group LLC, Aiken, SC (2002-2011)
- Senior Consultant, Community College Workforce Alliance, VA (2004-2006)
- Agribusiness Specialist, Development Alternatives, Inc. Bethesda, MD – Bolivia (2000-2001)



- Agricultural Marketing Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Rural Business-Cooperative Service. Washington, D.C. (1998-2000)
- Interim Project Director, TechnoServe, Inc. Lima, Peru (1997-1998)
- Agribusiness Advisor, U. S. Peace Corps. Las Piedras, Uruguay (1995-1997)

GERRY COHN

While working as the Project Field Coordinator with Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA, Cohn supported farmers and communities developing new agricultural enterprises in tobacco dependent rural areas.

As the Southeast States Director with American Farmland Trust from 2000-2008, Cohn worked with communities across North Carolina to develop strategies that keep land in agricultural production and support viable farm businesses. As part of this national non-profit organization, he worked with a regional and nationwide network of professionals available to assist in understanding emerging agricultural issues, identifying relevant case studies and developing effective solutions.

While Southeast Regional Pool Manager with CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley from 2008-2013, Cohn recruited farmers to join a national marketing cooperative and provided technical assistance in all aspects of crop and livestock production to enhance the use of local resources and increase farm profitability.

As a private consultant, Cohn has developed County Agricultural Development Plans, business plans for individual farms, production budgets, supply and demand analyses, and local food enhancement strategies, working with a wide range of experts in the public, private, non-profit, and university sectors.

Education

M.S., Agricultural Economics, University of California, Davis

M.A., Development Studies, University of Dar Es Salaam – Tanzania. Rotary Scholar.

B.A., Peace War & Defense, University of North Carolina. Morehead Scholar.

Ag Biz Planner Course, Farm Credit University

Other Professional Experience

- Project manager, strategy development, farmer and community outreach, draft and final plan development.
- Southeast Pool Coordinator with Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative.
- Past Southeast Region Director with American Farmland Trust and Tobacco Communities Project Field Coordinator with Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA.
- Charter member of North Carolina Department of Agriculture Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee and Black Family Land Trust.
- Authored *Planning for an Agricultural Future: A Guide for North Carolina Farmers and Local Governments*.
- Wrote or co-wrote agricultural development plans in seven North Carolina counties: Alamance, Buncombe, Caswell, Durham, Franklin, Guilford, and Wake.

Presentation Franklin County Board of Supervisors May 20, 2014



“One of the Nations Leading 4-H Centers”

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100th Anniversary Cooperative Extension





How it all began...



*J. H. Moore
General Chairman*



*T. J. Lennon
Vice Chairman*



*J. B. Flora
Secretary*



*W. H. Armstrong
Chairman,
Finance Committee*



*P. J. Soarce
Chairman, Site and
Facilities Committee*

These citizens have faith in us--the 4-H'ers in West Central--and are giving their time and leadership toward making our dream come true we are grateful to them--and to you--for support.

WE HAVE THE YOUNG PEOPLE, THE TEACHING STAFF, A QUALITY PROGRAM BUT

WE HAVE NO FACILITIES

"We might say that camp is a 'place.' We would covet for every camper green woods, lakes, bird calls, quiet sunsets--that his young heart may be warmly aware of a creator who has made 'all things beautiful in their time.' But camp is more than a place . . .

"We might say that camp is a plan. We would covet for every camper a program which . . . at every step, fits his interest and abilities, which is not too crowded for comfort, yet which abounds in opportunities for zestful endeavor all through each day. Yet camp is more than a plan . . .

"Camp is what happens to campers--what they take home with them in their memories, in their new purposes, in their improved or newly acquired skills, in their friendships, in their appreciations, in their awareness of God and His way for the world. That's what camp is."

What is the Timetable for Our Dream?

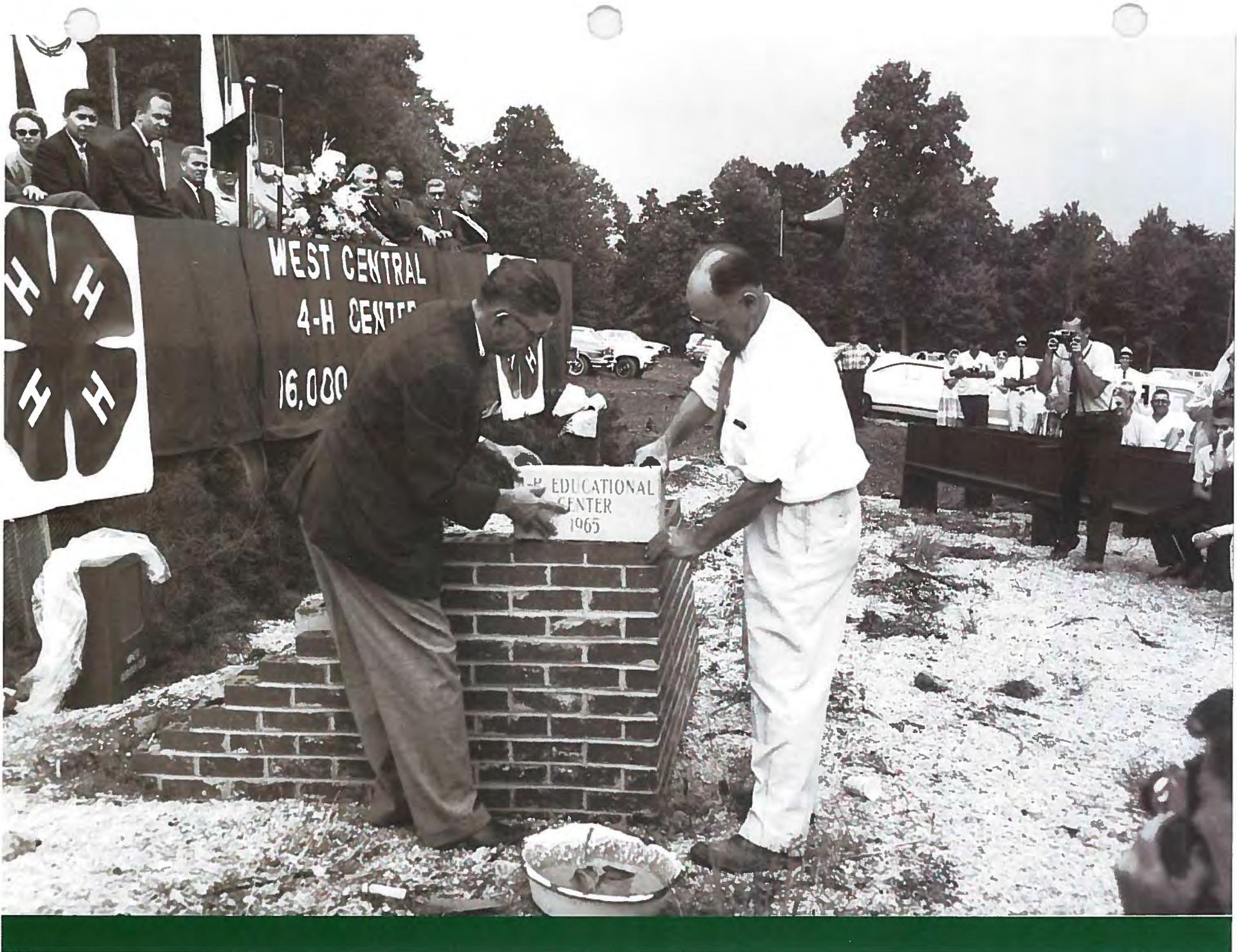
1964	1965	1966
WE RAISE THE MONEY	WE BUILD THE CAMP	WE CAMP





4-H Rally Day September 11, 1965



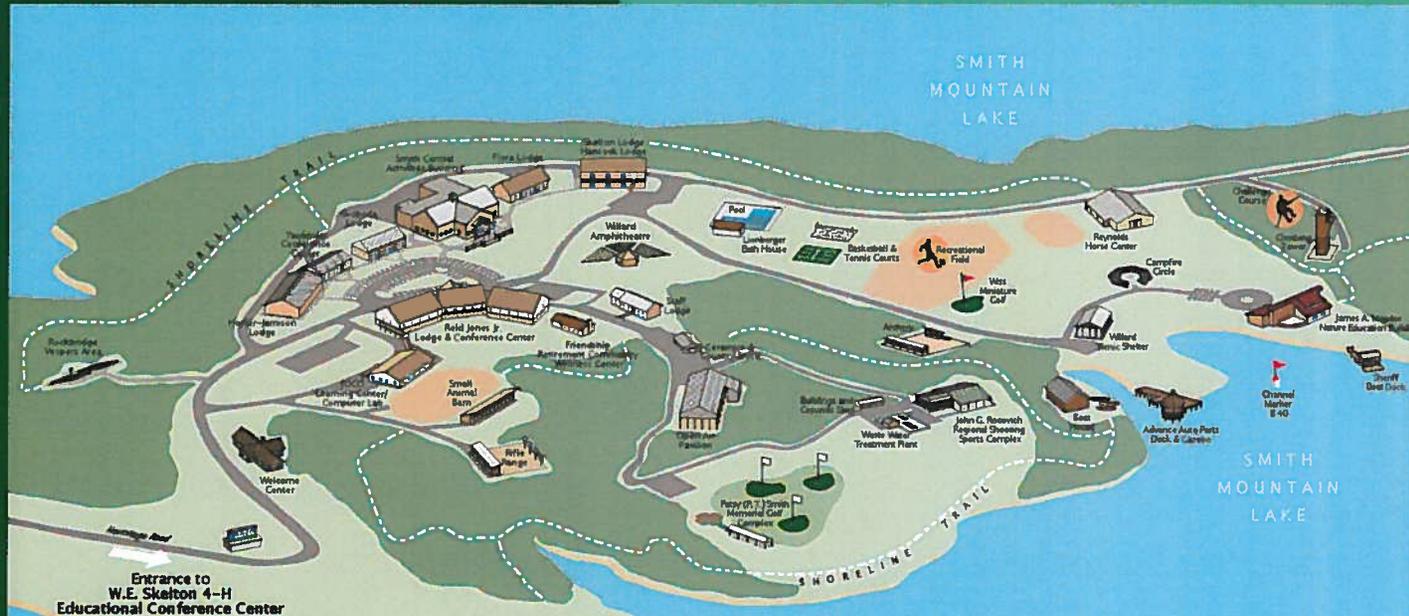




Today's Campus



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
775 Hermitage Road
Wirtz, Virginia 24184
(540) 721-2759
www.skelton4Hcenter.org



Franklin County
A Land of Learning and Opportunity



Junior 4-H Camp

A residential summer camp
for ALL youth!



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
www.skelton4Hcenter.org - 540.721.2759





Served 155,000 4-H youth and
over 250,000 other youth and
adult users





4-H Classes offered each summer



- Archery
- Basic Horsemanship
- Canoeing
- Computer Science
- Fishing
- Golf
- Kayaking
- Low Ropes
- Multimedia
- Outdoor Adventure
- Performing Arts
- Riflery
- Robotics
- Small Animals
- Beginning and Advanced Swimming



Portable STEM Lab





ENGINEERING

SCIENCE

TECHNOLOGY

Science
+ Engineering
= INNOVATION

An investment
in our nation's
future that empowers

Lego Robotics Lab (2005)





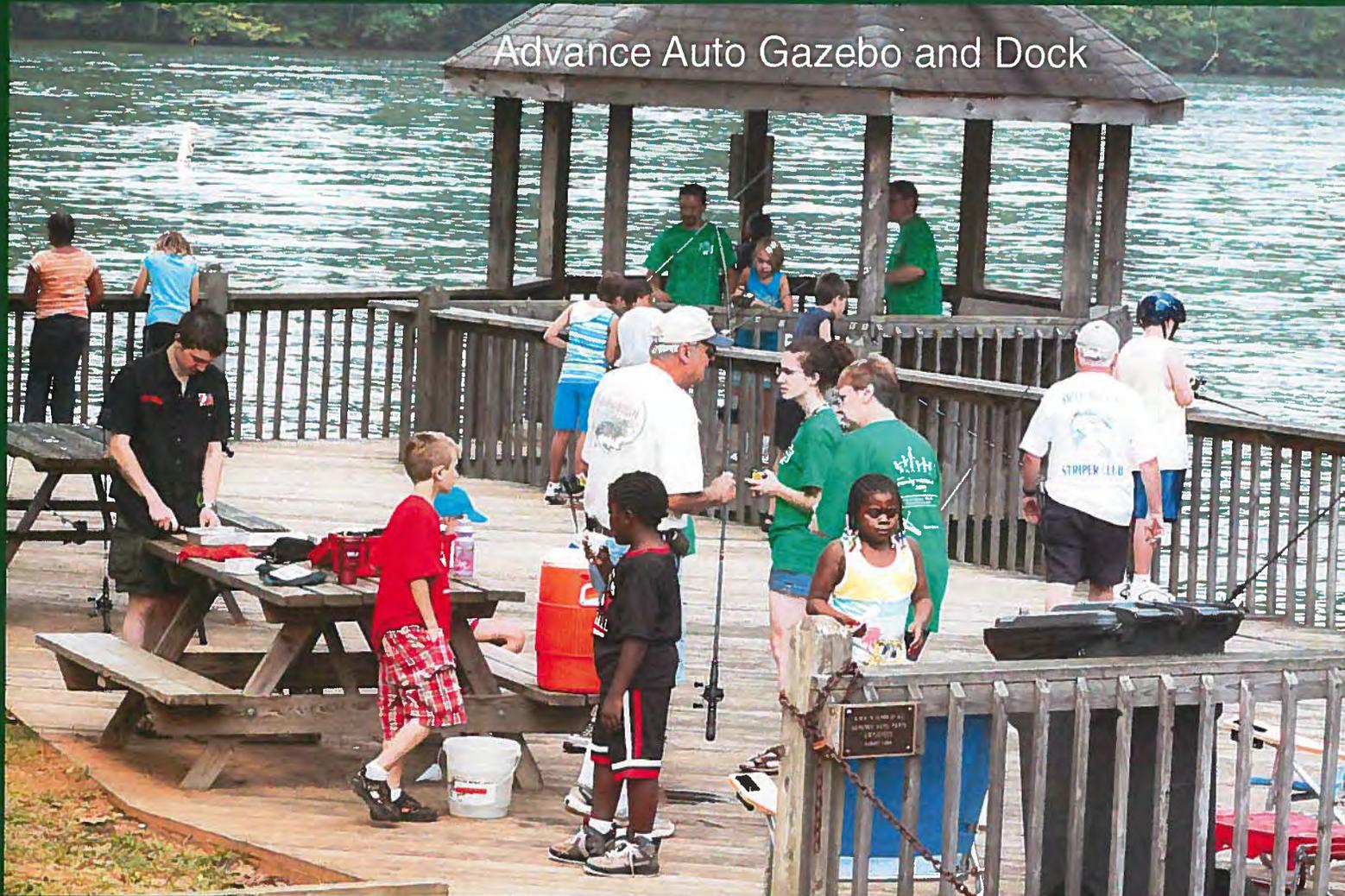


National Guard High Ropes Class





4-H Camp Striper Club Fishing Class





Please join us for Franklin County 4-H Week July 14-18



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
www.skelton4Hcenter.org - 540.721.2759





Skelton 4-H Center serves MDA Camp, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Carilion Camp for Chronic and Terminally Ill and many others.



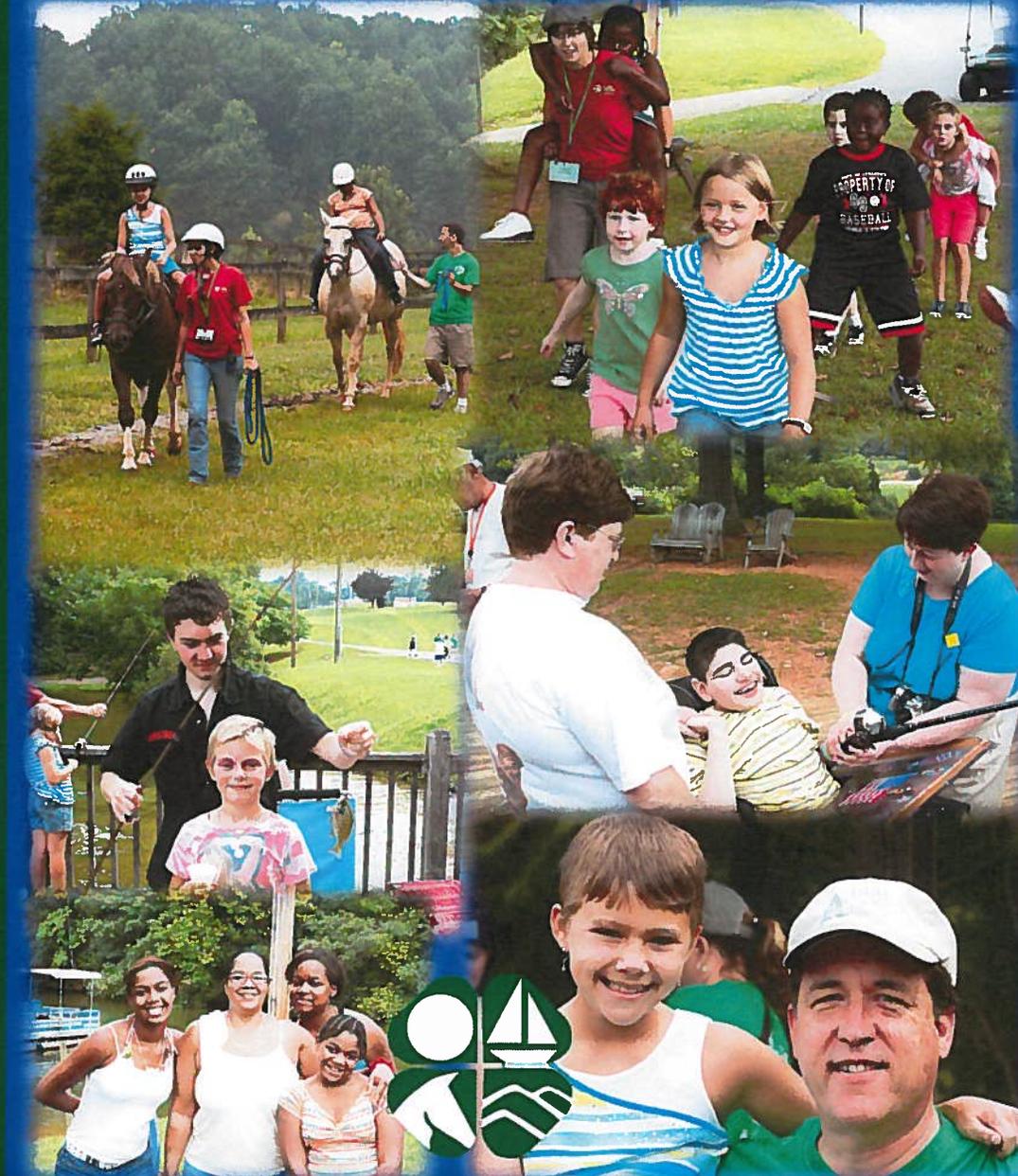


- “The week at 4-H Camp is the best week in our kids lives. It provides the ability for these children to use all the facilities to explore the mental, social, physical, and spiritual parts of our program. This is the only time and place that many of these children get for a vacation because of their circumstances. It might be economic, family situations or their conditions that make them uncomfortable. The 4-H Center and their time at camp provide them with an opportunity to connect with others in their situation, and fit in. The Center is a great asset to the community and we are thankful that it is available for our use.”

Tamlyn Disher Muscular Dystrophy Association

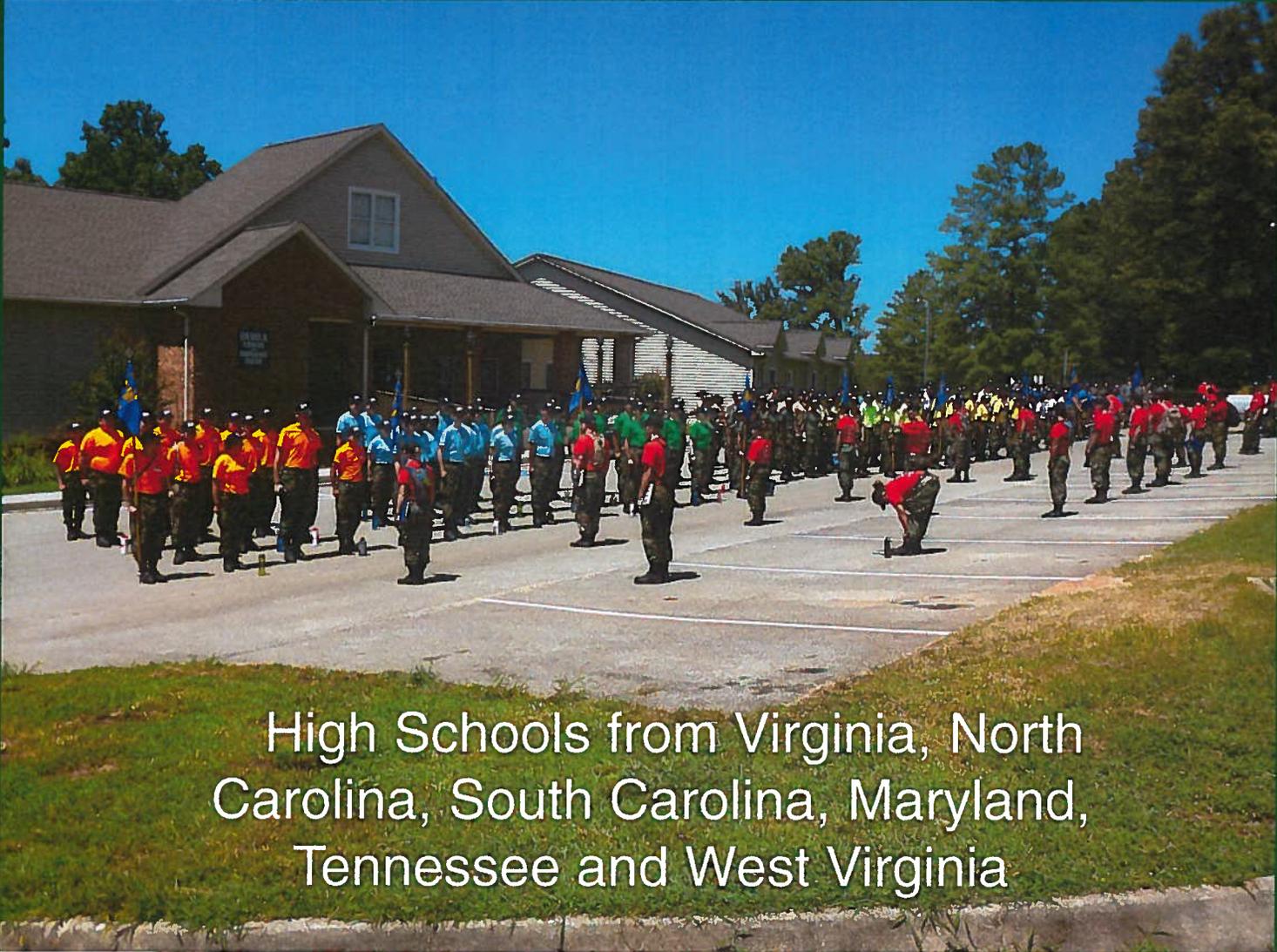


Carilion Family Camp 2009





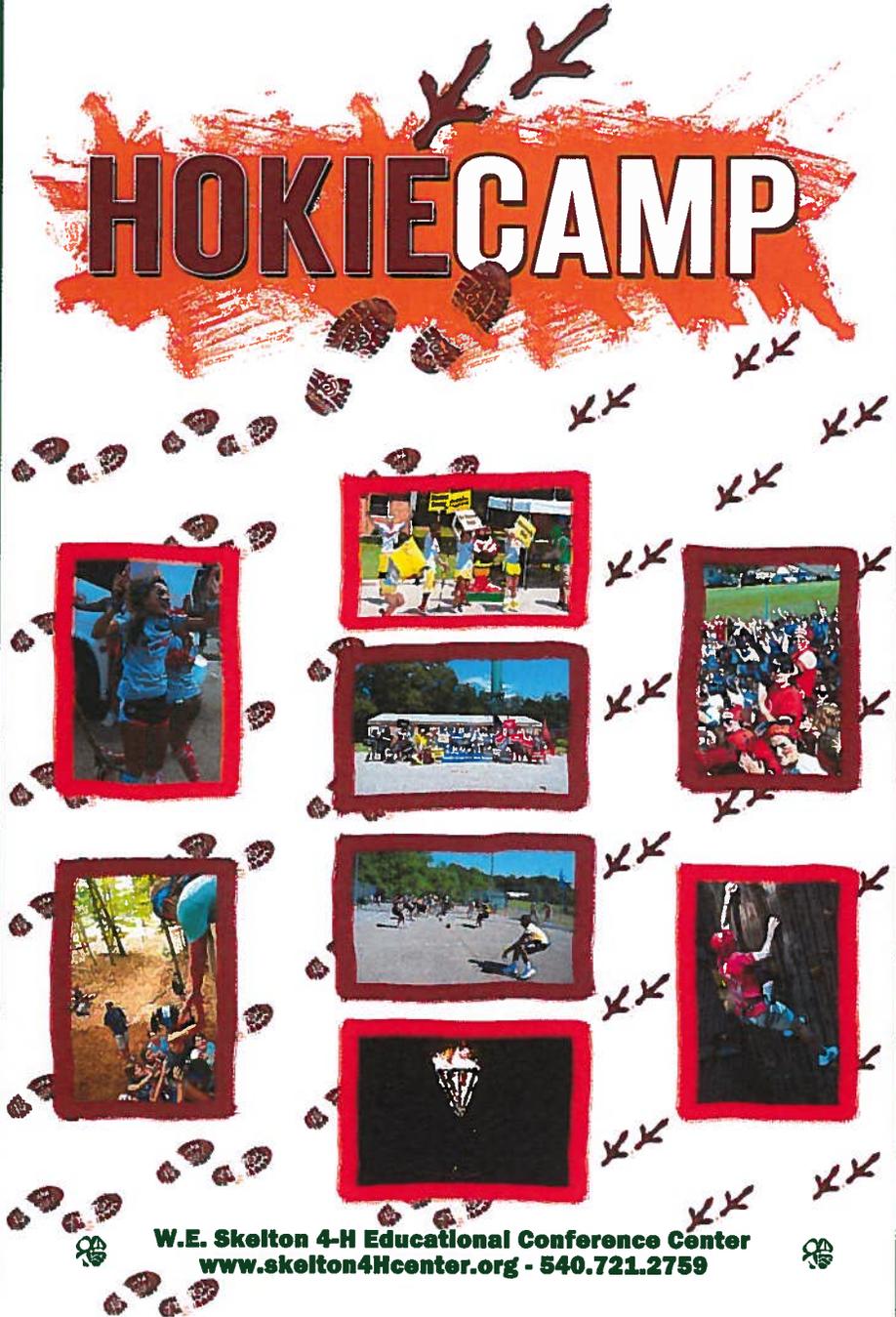
AFJROTC



High Schools from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Tennessee and West Virginia



HOKIECAMP



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
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W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
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Environmental Labs and Outdoor Education



Meador Nature Education Center(2000)



Environmental Education Class





K-12 School Groups





VA Tech Executive Resource Center (2004)





Willard Amphitheatre (2005)



Rhythm and Views Concerts





Friendship Retirement Community Wellness Center (2008)





Rocovich Shooting Sports Complex (2010)





SML Pistol Shooters Association





Dedication of Harris Flag Plaza (2010)

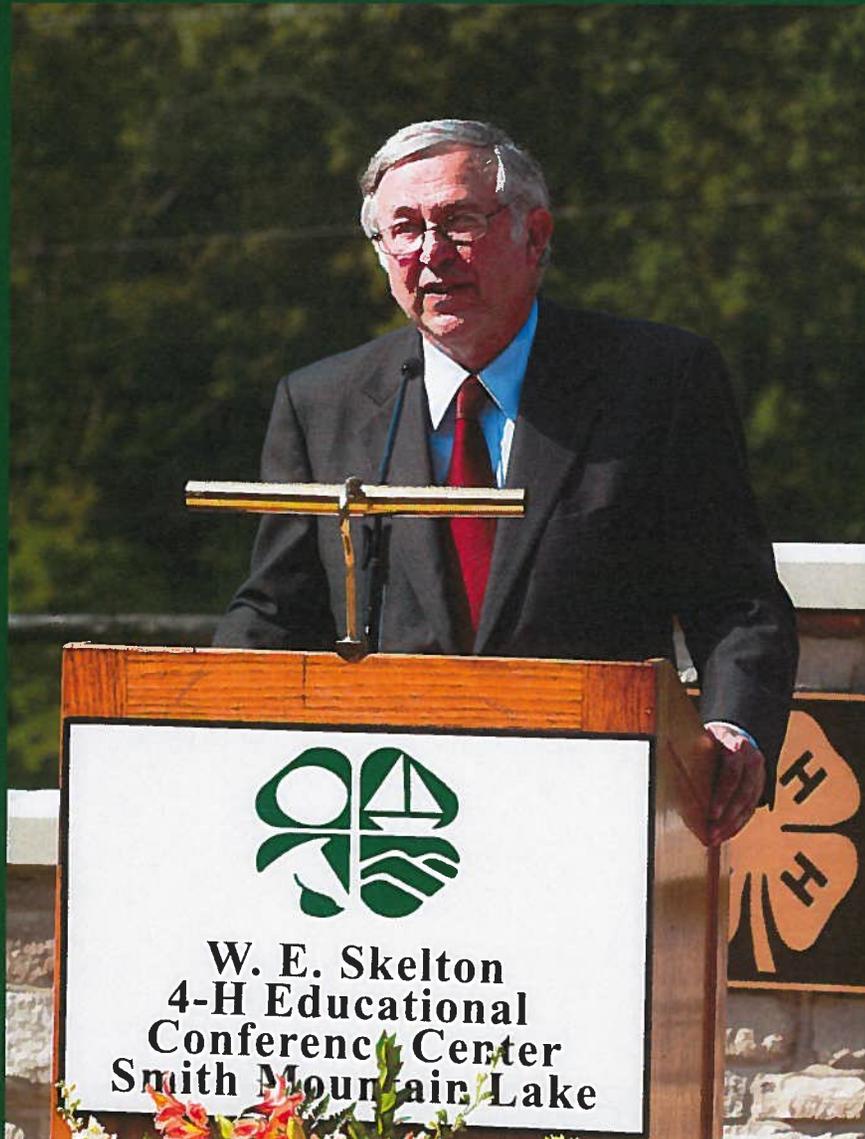




President Charles Steger Virginia Tech



Dedication
Harris Flag
Plaza 2010



Partnership
With VA Tech

Researched
Based Programs



Welcome Center (2011)





State-of-the art Board Room Welcome Center





Franklin County Sheriff's Department Patrol Boat (2013)





First Tee Golf (2013)



Patsy T. (P.T.) Smith Memorial Golf Training Complex (2013)



Smith Central Activities Building (1965 , 2012, 2014)



New Dining Room Smith Central Activities Building





Climbing Tower (2014)





Community Impact or Service

Franklin County Fire Training





Smith Mountain Lake Fire and Rescue

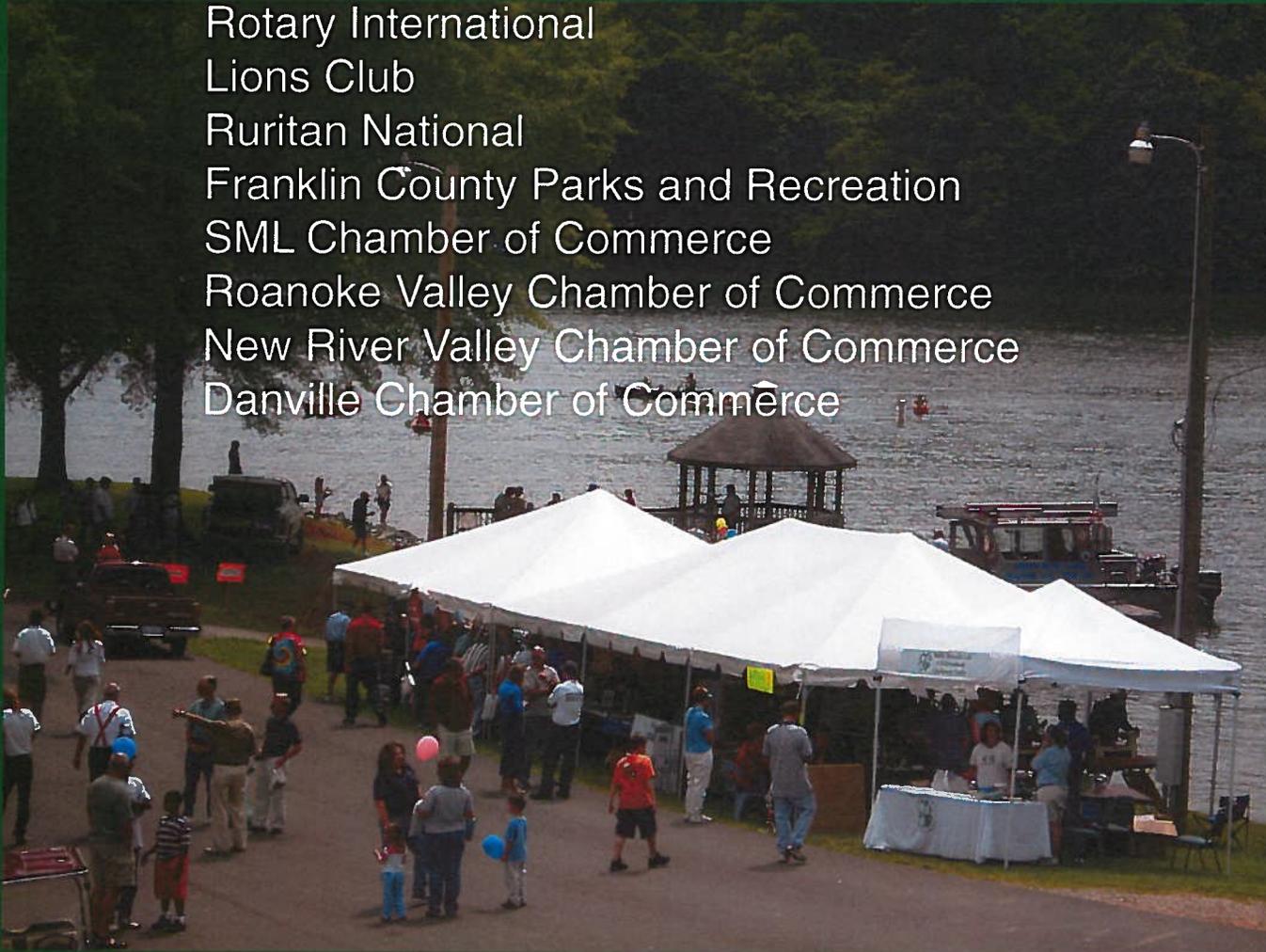




Civic Organizations



Rotary International
Lions Club
Ruritan National
Franklin County Parks and Recreation
SML Chamber of Commerce
Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce
New River Valley Chamber of Commerce
Danville Chamber of Commerce





Take Pride in SML Clean Up Site





Wounded Warriors





Leadership Retreats/ Teambuilding



Teambuilding for
Universities
And Colleges



VA Tech
Ferrum
Radford University
JMU
Longwood University
Patrick Henry CC
Randolph College
Elon
Roanoke College
UVA
Wooster College
Concord College
Hollins College
VCU



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
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Road Scholar



Taubman Conference Center

48 States



Corporate Retreats Indoor and Outdoor





Social Events



Church Retreats
Family Reunions
Class Reunions
Weddings
Corporate Retreats
Company Picnics
Military Reunions
Crafting Groups
Workshops

Reid Jones Jr. Lodge Meeting Room



W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center
www.skelton4Hcenter.org - 540.721.2759





Legislative Trail Ride Va. General Assembly (2009 and 2015)





Skelton 4-H Center By the Numbers



- 155,000 4-H Campers since 1966
- 250,000 other users since 1966
- Road Scholar Participants from 48 states
- 1,200+ Hokie Campers every summer
- 90%+ of the Construction on Campus has been done with Private Donations
- Over \$7 million in Construction and Renovation projects invested over the last 10 years.
- 4-H Center uses over 65 local vendors and suppliers



Skelton 4-H Center By the Numbers



- Campus of over 30 building and programs spaces
- Over 23,000 sq. ft. of Classroom and Meeting Space
- Camp capacity 437 beds split between Camp and Hotel style rooms
- Adult Conferencing bed capacity 150
- Dining Room can feed up to 450 at one time



Skelton 4-H Center

By the numbers



- 16 Full time employees
- 20 Part time employees
- Employ 25 Camp Counselors
- Camp Counselors are all College students from throughout the region
- Peak Employment in summer is 55
- Total Yearly Payroll \$800,000



SAVE THE DATE



- 50th Anniversary Celebration
 - June 19, 2014
- 3:00 PM at Harris Flag Plaza in front of Smith Central Activities Building
- Virginia Tech President, Timothy Sands, will be in attendance.
- Charles Patton, President of Appalachian Power, will be in attendance



“To Make the Best Better”



We appreciate your long term support for the
W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center



Franklin County

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

**W.E. SKELTON
4-H EDUCATIONAL
CONFERENCE CENTER**
AT SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE

Land Generously Donated By

**AEP APPALACHIAN
POWER®**

A unit of American Electric Power

FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

8



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<p><u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> Stormwater Management fees</p> <p><u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:</u> Request to set public hearing date to amend Chapter 27 to incorporate new Stormwater Management fees.</p> <p><u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u></p> <p><u>Action Strategy:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u> Neil Holthouser, Director of Planning Ronnie Wilson, Development Review Coordinator</p>	<p><u>AGENDA DATE:</u> May 20, 2014</p> <p><u>ITEM NUMBER:</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u></p> <p><u>INFORMATION:</u></p> <p><u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u> YES</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u></p> <p><u>INFORMATION:</u></p> <p><u>ATTACHMENTS:</u></p> <p><u>REVIEWED BY:</u> RET</p>
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BACKGROUND:

On April 15, 2014, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code to repeal Chapter 7: Erosion & Sediment Control, and replace it with a new Chapter 7: Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management. This code change effectively establishes a local Virginia Stormwater Management Program for Franklin County, effective July 1, 2014. (Franklin County will begin reviewing development plans for compliance with state stormwater management standards on July 1, 2014.)

At this time, it is also necessary to amend Chapter 27 of the County Code to incorporate new fees for the review of stormwater plans and the issuance of stormwater permits. The existing fee schedule for Erosion & Sediment Control will not be affected.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is developing a recommended fee schedule for stormwater management, with different fee levels or "tiers" for different types of projects and different amounts of land disturbance. It should be noted that, under state law, 28% of the locally-charged fee must be remitted to DEQ to offset the state's administrative costs in overseeing the statewide stormwater management program. Franklin County will keep 72% of the gross fee. DEQ is in the final stages of developing its fee schedule, reflecting recent changes in the law to lessen the impact on single-family home construction. DEQ's recommended fee schedule is therefore not available as of this writing. It is staff's intent to bring forward the schedule as recommended by DEQ. Staff is not proposing any increase above the state's minimum recommended fee, nor is staff recommending anything lower than the state's recommendation. This is consistent with the direction being taken by all neighboring localities that have opted to create a local stormwater management program.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors schedule a public hearing to amend Chapter 27 of the Franklin County Code, to incorporate stormwater management fees. Staff requests that the Board set a public hearing date of Tuesday, June 17, 2014.

FRANKLIN COUNTY
Board of Supervisors



Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<p><u>AGENDA TITLE:</u> Award proposal for Solid Waste Collection Truck</p> <p><u>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:</u> Purchase of Solid Waste Front Loader Collection Pursuant to RFP.</p> <p><u>STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA:</u> County Government Services</p> <p><u>GOAL #:</u> #3 Customer Service</p> <p><u>ACTION STRATEGY:</u> Define and implement alternative methods for delivering County Services to expand citizen's options.</p> <p><u>STAFF CONTACT(S):</u> Messrs. Huff, Smith, Sink</p>	<p><u>AGENDA DATE</u> <u>ITEM NUMBER:</u> May 20, 2014</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u></p> <p><u>CONSENT AGENDA:</u> Yes</p> <p><u>ATTACHMENTS:</u> No</p> <p><u>REVIEWED BY:</u> <i>REX</i></p> <p><u>INFORMATION:</u></p>
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BACKGROUND: At the February 18, 2014 Board of Supervisors Meeting the Board approved to seek proposals for a Solid Waste Front Loader Collection Truck. All bids were received on March 17, 2014 at 4:00 pm. We anticipate replacing the 2003 Volvo with the new truck and use the 2003 Volvo for a spare backup collection truck. The approved FY 2014 – 2015 annual capital budget currently has funds proposed in the amount of \$250,000 to purchase a new solid waste collection truck to keep our fleet from becoming outdated to the point of becoming undependable. The request is being made now as the bids were only good for ninety days and it will take time for truck assembly. The actual purchase will take place in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

DISCUSSION: We received 6 different proposals from 4 different vendors with different trucks and bodies. We received 2 different proposals from 2 different vendors that met the specifications. One was from Cavalier Equipment Corp. for the proposed sum of \$243,383.00 and the other was Advantage Truck Center for the proposed sum of \$242,711.07. Staff anticipates placing a 1991 Volvo Front Loader Collection Truck VIN # 4V2DCFJE3MN644264 on surplus that has 581,455 miles on it.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff requests that the Board of Supervisors award the Solid Waste Front Loader Collection Truck to Advantage Truck Center with the E-Z Pack Body for the purchase price of \$242,711.07 as it fully meets the proposal specification. Funding will come from the 2014-2015 Landfill Equipment Capital Account(3000-036-0004-7001) in the 2014-15 budget and funding has been budgeted for this truck to be lease purchased over a 5 year period, the same as the last several landfill collection trucks that have been purchased..

MEMORANDUM
Case # REZO-4-14-12838



To: Franklin County Board of Supervisors
From: Neil Holthouser, Director of Planning
Date: May 20, 2014
Tax #: 54-94
District: Union Hall Magisterial District
Applicant: Gregory Davis
Owner: Wendell K. & Lisa F. Scott

REQUEST:

PETITION FOR REZONE – Petition of **Gregory Davis/Petitioner and Wendell Kevin Scott & Lisa Ferguson Scott/Owners** requesting a rezone for a +/- 9.313 acre parcel from B-2, Business District General to A-1, Agricultural. The subject property is located at 2121 Old Franklin Turnpike (SR 40) in the Union Hall District of Franklin County; and is further identified as Tax Map # 54 Parcel # 94. The petitioner is now seeking to rezone to allow for the construction of a single-family detached dwelling. The Future Land Use Map of Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as appropriate for Commercial Highway Corridor uses, and does not prescribe a specific residential density. The existing B-2 zoning category does not prescribe a specific residential density. The proposed A-1 zoning category allows a maximum residential density of 1.25 dwelling units per acre. This petitioner's application for rezoning states an intent to construct one single-family dwelling on this site, resulting in a residential density of 0.093 dwelling units per acre. However, the property could be further subdivided, resulting in a greater residential density. (Case # REZO-4-14-12838)

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission held a public hearing in consideration of this request at its May 13, 2014, meeting. By a vote of 4-1 (Webb dissenting; McGhee, Mitchell absent), the Planning Commission approved the following:

*The Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors **approve** the request for rezoning from B-2, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District, if amended to include the following proffer:*

Limitation of Use – All permitted uses in the A-1, Agricultural District will be proffered out except residential single-family dwelling and crop production.

As of this writing, the petitioner/owners have not elected to file a statement of proffers. The petitioner/owners request rezoning from B-2 to A-1, with no proffers.



SITE STATISTICS:

Location: 2121 Old Franklin Tpke (SR 40) approximately .9 mile east of the Town of Rocky Mount; Union Hall District

Size: +/- 9.313 acres

Existing Land Use: Rural residential; one site-built dwelling

Adjoining Zoning: A-1; B-2

Adjoining Land Uses: Commercial, Agricultural/Forestry, Rural residential

Adjoining Future Land Uses: Commercial Highway Corridor (near I-73 interchange)

SITE / AREA PHOTOGRAPHS

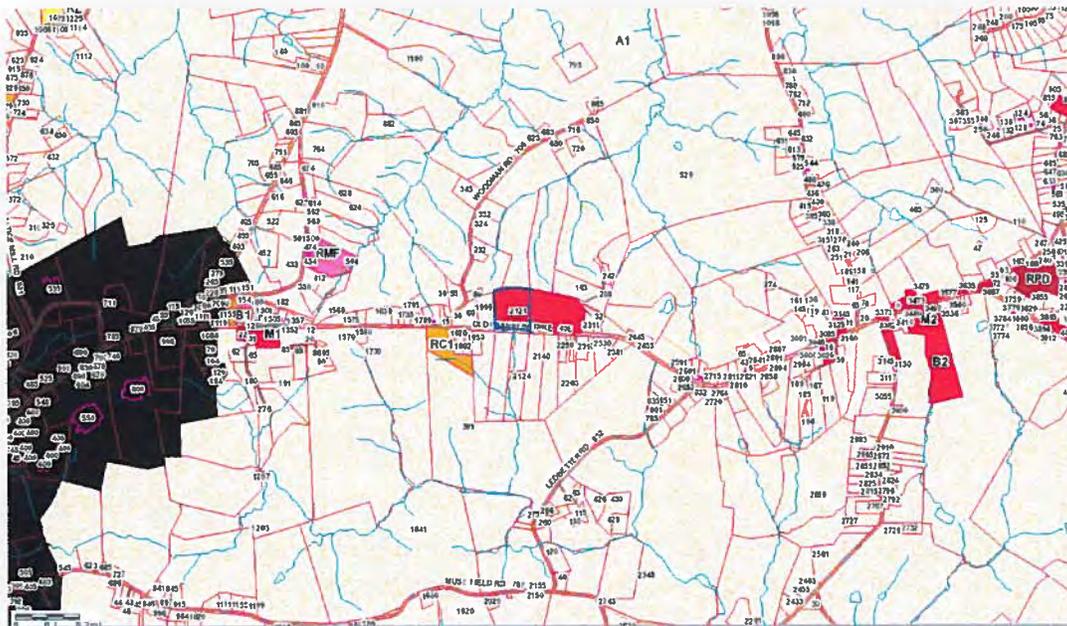


Looking Northwest into the property from SR 40

SITE / AREA MAPS



The location of the parcel where the rezoning is proposed is shown outlined in blue.





The surrounding zoning categories include A1 (Agricultural) and RC-1, with some B2 within a mile of the parcel. The Rocky Mount town limits are shown in black in the left-hand portion of the image.

BACKGROUND:

The applicant is a contractor who represents the owners who currently live in Atlanta, but have plans to move to Franklin County to live on the property, which they inherited. They would like to replace an older residence on the property with a new home. In addition to the existing house the 9.313-acre tract contains a metal shed and several small outbuildings. The rear of the property is fenced.

The property was recently the subject of a plat recorded at PB 1040 P 1916, which delineated the boundaries of this tract. Originally, two tracts (including the adjacent TM #54-363.3) were rezoned from A-1 to B-2 in February 1992. At the time a contracting and excavating business was approved to be located on the two properties along with the old dwelling. Since that time both properties have been transferred to new owners via inheritance.

The overall surrounding area is characterized by a mix of residential, commercial, and rural uses, with neighboring properties zoned A-1 (other than the one aforementioned adjacent zoned B-2). Several properties with similar uses and environmental/topographic characteristics as this property are included in the areas zoned A-1. The adjacent property zoned B-2 is undeveloped except for the portion of the driveway that provides access to the rear portion of the property. However, the contracting business that was located along the rear of this property is being removed from the property under review, and will be entirely located on the adjacent B-2 property.

ZONING ORDINANCE:

Sec. 25-177 of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following intent for the A-1 district:

- (a) *This district includes unincorporated portions of the county that are occupied by various open uses such as farms, forests, lakes, reservoirs, streams and park lands. This district is established for the purpose of facilitating existing and future farming operations, preserving farm and forest lands, conserving water and other natural resources, reducing soil erosion, preventing water pollution, and protecting watersheds and reducing hazards from flood and fire.*
- (b) *It is expected that certain desirable rural areas of this rural district may logically develop residentially at low density. It is the intent, however, to discourage the random scattering of residential, commercial, or industrial uses in this district. It should also be presumed that the agricultural and forestry activities may produce some noise, odors and other effects and a certain level of tolerance for these*



effects must be expected to those who would dwell in this district. Special use permits will be employed to seek improved level of compatibility between uses.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Franklin County’s Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as appropriate for Commercial Highway Corridor Development. The Comprehensive Plan sets forth the following policies for this category:

Commercial Highway Corridors

Commercial Highway Corridors are linear commercial development along an established primary highway. These highway corridors are intended to provide development opportunities extending behind the parcels that front on the primary highway.

The Commercial Highway Corridors identified in the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan are:

Route 220:

- Between Brick Church Road and Iron Ridge Road
- Between Shady Lane (983) and the Rocky Mount Town limits.
- Between Cassell Drive and the Franklin County Commerce Park

Route 40 West:

- Between the Rocky Mount Town limits and Six Mile Post Road

Route 40 East:

- Between the Rocky Mount Town limits and Golden View Road

Policies for Commercial Highway Corridors

1. The County will explore and implement effective ways to manage and improve the negative impacts of strip commercial development on important arterial roads that have already experienced development. These impacts include frequent curb cuts, proliferation of signs and visual clutter, poor aesthetics and poor traffic flow.
2. In areas that face increasing pressure for strip commercial development, the County will explore ways to provide incentives to encourage beneficial development, and desirable site characteristics, and to reduce the negative impacts on the rural character of the County. The methods will include planning for intersecting local access road nodes connecting to parallel collector roads.
3. The County will encourage and monitor site plans for new development along key commercial corridors to coordinate entrances according good engineering practices to reduce safety hazards and congestion and to meet or exceed VDOT commercial highway entrance standards.
4. Discourage further linear expansion of commercial highway corridors.



5. Discourage the future designation of any new commercial highway corridors.
6. New commercial development should be directed to identified Towns and Villages and/or lateral expansion of existing commercial corridors.
7. Scale and design of development should be in keeping with traditional character of Franklin County.

CONSIDERATIONS:

The Zoning Ordinance states that areas zoned A-1 may “logically develop residentially at low density.” Franklin County’s Comprehensive Plan defines low density as 1 to 2 dwelling units per acre.

The A-1 zoning district allows for a maximum density of 1.25 dwelling units per acre, with a density bonus up to a maximum of 1.5 dwelling units per acre available for residential cluster developments. Residential clustering is required in the A-1 district if the number of residential lots exceeds the following formula:

$$L \geq (A/2) + 10; \text{ where } L = \text{the number of residential lots and } A = \text{the total acreage of the tract being subdivided.}$$

Given the size of the combined parcels, it is possible that the property could be recombined and re-subdivided for residential development.

As of this writing, staff has received a number of inquiries regarding this application from surrounding property owners and the public, but no negative comments have been noted or received regarding the application itself. Some concerns have been expressed regarding the possibility of future uses that could impact surrounding neighbors. There is one letter from a neighboring family stating they have no objections to the proposal.

The Comprehensive Plan conflicts with the application; however in discussing the proposal with the Long-Range Planner it was noted that the proposal is identical in nature to the surrounding properties both in proposed use and proposed zoning, with the single exception of the adjoining B-2 property. The question of the I-73 interchange and associated commercial development is still some years out, and many changes could take place in this area in the more immediate future. The Long-Range planner states no objections to the proposal and all of the members of the Development Review Team who expressed opinions were in support of the application or had no comments.

If approved, this rezoning request would allow all uses permitted by right in the A-1 District, including further subdivision and residences, bed and breakfasts, antique shops, cemeteries, conservation areas, manufacture homes, bona fide farming activities, and other uses associated with animals or agriculture including kennels, greenhouses, and commercial stables. More intense uses such as campgrounds, higher-traffic retail (convenience stores, grocery stores), processing mills, flea markets, lumber yards, milk



stations, meat processing, mining, tourist and resort facilities, chipping mills, recreational facilities, shooting ranges, and feed lots would require the issuance of a Special Use Permit by the Board of Supervisors after advertisement, notification and public hearings.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission held a public hearing in consideration of this request at its May 13, 2014, meeting. By a vote of 4-1 (Webb dissenting; McGhee, Mitchell absent), the Planning Commission approved the following:

*The Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors **approve** the request for rezoning from B-2, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District, **if amended to include the following proffer:***

Limitation of Use – All permitted uses in the A-1, Agricultural District will be proffered out except residential single-family dwelling and crop production.

As of this writing, the petitioner/owners have not elected to file a statement of proffers. The petitioner/owners request rezoning from B-2 to A-1, with no proffers.



SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

The following suggested motions are sample motions that may be used. They include language found in Section 15.2-2283, Purpose of zoning ordinances of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended.

- 1) (APPROVE) I find that the proposal will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property, that the character of the projected future land use of the community will not be adversely impacted, that such use will be in harmony with the purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance and with the public health, safety and general welfare. Therefore I move to recommend approval of the petitioner's request to rezone the property from B-2 to A-1 as submitted.

OR

- 2) (DENY) I find that the proposal is of substantial detriment to adjacent property and that such use will not aid in the creation of a convenient, attractive, or harmonious community. Therefore I move to deny the request to rezone the property from B-2 to A-1.

OR

- 3) (DELAY ACTION) I find that the required information for the submitted petition is incomplete. Therefore I move to delay action until all necessary materials are submitted to the Planning Commission.

STATE OF VIRGINIA:

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY:

RECOMMENDATION:

A request for the rezoning from B2, Business District General, to A1, Agricultural, of a parcel consisting of approximately +/- 9.313 total acres located at 2121 Old Franklin Turnpike in the Union Hall District of Franklin County, identified and recorded as Tax Map # 54, Parcel # 94 in the Franklin County Real Estate Tax Records.

TO THE HONORABLE SUPERVISORS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY:

WHEREAS, the **petitioner/Gregory Davis; owners/Wendell Kevin Scott and Lisa Ferguson Scott**, have filed with the Secretary of the Planning Commission a petition requesting the rezoning of the property identified as Tax Map # 54, Parcel # 94 from B2, Business District General, to A1, Agricultural; and

WHEREAS, the petition was entered into the record as Case # REZO-4-14-12838; and

WHEREAS, the petition was referred to the Planning Commission on May 13, 2014, which after due legal notice as required by Section 15.2-2204 and Section 15.2-2205 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, a public hearing was held on May 13, 2014; and

WHEREAS, at that public hearing all parties in interest were afforded an opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission after due consideration, has recommended to the Franklin County Board of Supervisors that the rezoning request as referenced above be **APPROVED if amended to include the following proffer:**

Limitation of Use – All permitted uses in the A-1, Agricultural District will be proffered out except residential single-family dwelling and crop production.

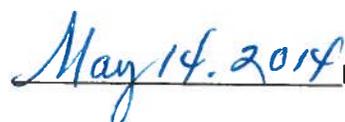
NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Planning Commission recommends to the Franklin County Board of Supervisors that the above-referenced parcel(s) of land and the Petitioner/Owner(s), be granted the request for rezoning from B2, Business District General, to A1, Agricultural with proffer.

The above action was adopted on the recommended motion of Mrs. Wendy Ralph, representative of the Union Hall District. The motion was seconded by, Mr. James Colby, representative for the Gills Creek District of Franklin County. The motion was approved as written above upon the following vote:

AYES: Law, Colby, Ralph, Doss,
NAYES: Webb
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: McGhee, Mitchell

 Clerk

Franklin County Planning Commission

 Date

Shively, Bonnie

From: Smith, Susannah
Sent: Thursday, May 15, 2014 9:27 AM
To: Wendell Scott
Cc: Shively, Bonnie
Subject: RE: Rezoning Case #4-14-12838
Attachments: Davis_ScottRezone12838Final.pdf

Hi Mr Scott,

Thank you so much for your speedy reply. As we stated, you are under no obligation to add proffers to your request, and it will be presented to the Board as you have petitioned.

Attached please find the final recommendation from the Planning Commission that will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. Please ensure that you and/or your representative(s) are in attendance at the public hearing to be held next Tuesday, May 20, at 6 pm in the Board of Supervisors meeting room (where the Planning Commission also held its meeting this past Tuesday).

Please let me know how I may be of further service.

Best regards,
Susannah

Susannah Bridges Smith, AICP, CFM, Associate-ASLA
Development Services Department, Planning and Community Development
Senior Planner / Current Planning Manager, Floodplain Coordinator
255 Franklin Street, Suite 103
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
(540) 483-3027 ext. 2430

The following links may be helpful:

Dept. Website: <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/planning>

Permit Forms: <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/development-services-forms>

The Franklin County Flood Ordinance is online at:

http://library.municode.com/HTML/10799/level2/COCO_CH9FLMA.html

Septic Pump-out Program information is online at:

<http://www.franklincountyva.gov/pump-out-septic-program>

From: Wendell Scott [<mailto:scottwk32@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, May 15, 2014 7:47 AM

To: Smith, Susannah

Subject: Re: Rezoning Case #4-14-12838

After considering the implications that the proposed proffers would have on our ability to make use of our land, particularly in light of fact that other A1 zoned properties adjacent to ours would not be subject to such restrictions, we are seeking A1 classification free of proffers.

If we need to talk, please feel free to call me at 404 3753420.

On Wed, May 14, 2014 at 11:49 AM, Smith, Susannah <susannahsmith@franklincountyva.gov> wrote:

Hi Mr & Ms Scott,

As you are aware, the Planning Commission last evening voted to recommend approval with proffers for your petition to rezone your property from B2 to A1. The case will be heard by the Board of Supervisors Tuesday evening at 6 pm in the same meeting room as the Planning Commission hearing.

Per our telephone discussion, attached please find the recommendation and a draft statement of proffers per the Planning Commission's recommendation to the Board for your review. You are free to amend the statement as you wish. You are under no obligation to consider proffers; they are completely voluntary.

As your case is scheduled to be heard by the Board next Tuesday evening, staff will need to have your packet to the Secretary no later than Thursday afternoon. Please let me know your decision in writing as soon as possible. Thank you so much.

Please let me know how I may be of further service.

Best regards,

Susannah

Susannah Bridges Smith, AICP, CFM, Associate-ASLA

Development Services Department, Planning and Community Development

Senior Planner / Current Planning Manager, Floodplain Coordinator

1255 Franklin Street, Suite 103

Rocky Mount, VA 24151

[\(540\) 483-3027 ext. 2430](tel:(540)483-3027)

The following links may be helpful:

Dept. Website: <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/planning>

Permit Forms: <http://www.franklincountyva.gov/development-services-forms>

The Franklin County Flood Ordinance is online at:

http://library.municode.com/HTML/10799/level2/COCO_CH9FLMA.html

Septic Pump-out Program information is online at:

<http://www.franklincountyva.gov/pump-out-septic-program>

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
PETITION/APPLICATION FOR REZONING
(Type or Print)**

I/We, Wendell & Lisa Scott, as Owner(s), Contract Purchasers, or Owner's Authorized Agent of the property described below, hereby apply to the Franklin County Board of Supervisors to amend the Franklin County Zoning Maps as hereinafter described:

1. Petitioners Name: Greg Davis

2. Property Owner's Name: Wendell Kevin + Lisa Ferguson Scott

Phone Number: 404-375-3420

Address: 1999 Old Franklin Pike
Rocky Mt, VA Zip: 24151

3. Exact Directions to Property from Rocky Mount: From Rocky Mt, 40 E exit
of town approximately 1 mile, property on left 1999

4. Tax Map and Parcel Number: Tax Map 54 Parcel 94

5. Magisterial District: Union Hall

6. Property Information:

A. Size of Property: 9.313 acres

B. Existing Land Use: Business

C. Existing Zoning: Business

D. Existing number of allowed dwelling units per acre or commercial/industrial development square feet per acre: 1

E. Is property located within any of the following overlay zoning districts:

 Corridor District Westlake Overlay District Smith Mountain Lake Surface District

F. Is any land submerged under water or part of a lake? Yes No If yes, explain.

7. Proposed Development Information:

A. Proposed Land Use: Single Family Dwelling

B. Proposed Zoning: Residential

C. Size of Proposed Use: 9.313 acres

D. Proposed dwelling units per acre or commercial/industrial development square feet per acre: 1 dwelling 2906 sq ft

Checklist for completed items:

- ___ Application Form
- ___ Letter of Application
- ___ List of Adjoining Property Owners and Addresses
- ___ Concept Plan
- ___ Application Fee

I certify that this petition/application for rezoning and the information submitted herein is correct and accurate.

Petitioner's Name (Print): Wendell K. Scott Greg DAVIS
Signature of Petitioner: Wendell K. Scott 266 Morgan Clay Ln.
Date: 3/31/14 Glade Hill, VA 24091
Mailing Address: 8215 Norwich Place 540-520-410
Suwanee, GA 30024
Telephone: 404 375 3420

Owner's consent, if petitioner is not property owner:

Owner's Name (Print): Wendell Scott
Signature of Owner: Wendell K. Scott
Date: 3/31/14

Date Received by Planning Staff: _____
Time: _____
Clerk's Initials: _____

CHECK #: _____
RECPT. #: _____
AMOUNT: _____

Checklist for completed items: Application Form Letter of Application List of Adjoining Property Owners and Addresses
in Concept Plan Application Fee I certify that this petition/application for rezoning and the information submitted herein is
correct and accurate. Petitioner's Name (Print): Signature of Petitioner: *Wendell K. Scott*

Date: *3/31/14*

Mailing Address: *8215 Norwood Place, Suwanee, GA 30024*

Owner's consent, if petitioner is not property owner:

Owner's Name: (Print): *Wendell K. Scott*

Signature of Owner: *Wendell K. Scott*

Date: *3/31/14*

Date Received by Planning Staff: Time: Clerk's Initials:

Request to rezone from B-2 to R-1

Wendell Kevin and Lisa Ferguson Scott
Tax Map 54
Parcell 94
9.313 Acres

We would like to tear down the old house on this property and build a new single family home. We would like to request to change the zoning on this land from B-2 to R-1. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

BK 1040 PG 01916

UNITY MAP
NO SCALE

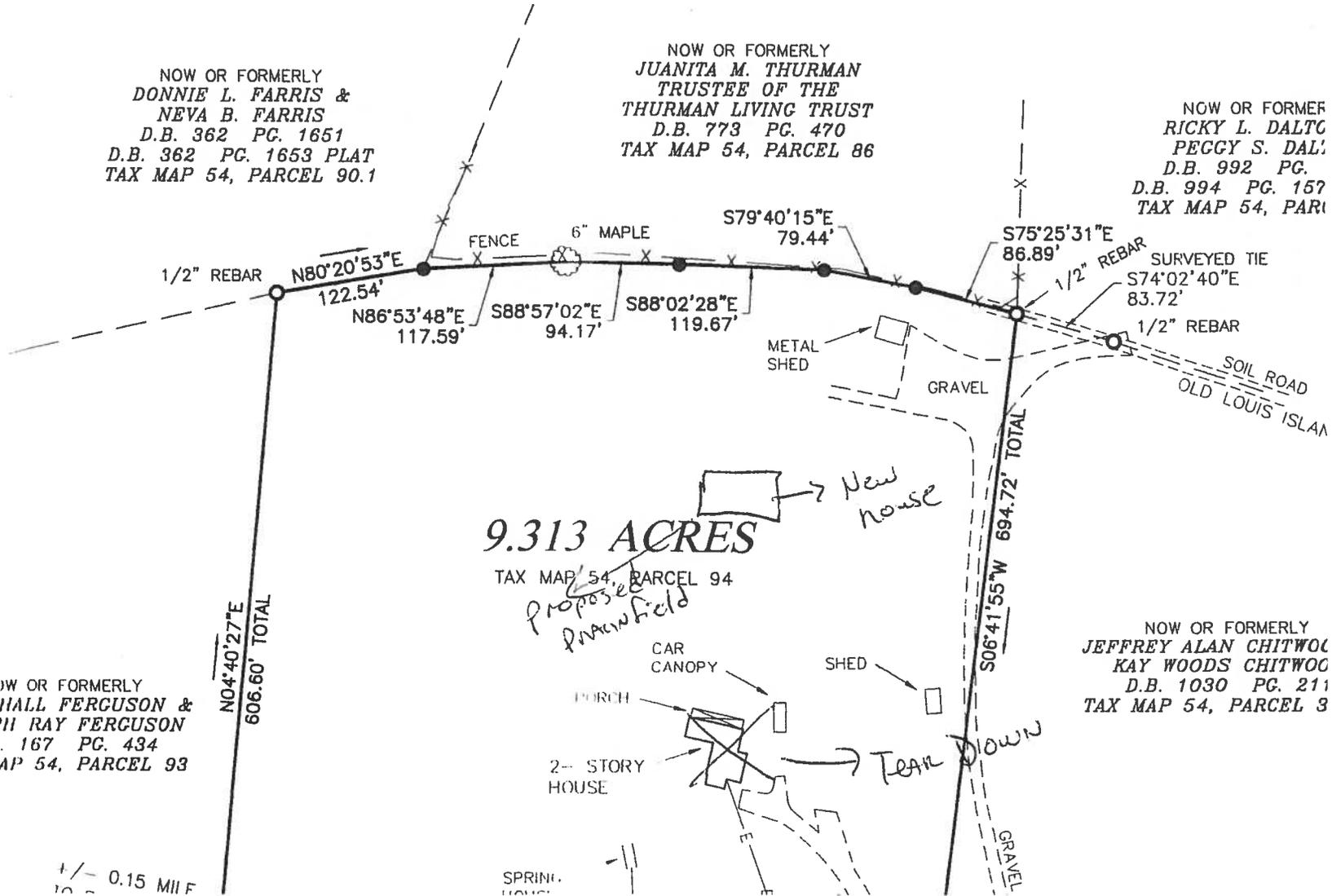
NOW OR FORMERLY
**DONNIE L. FARRIS &
NEVA B. FARRIS**
D.B. 362 PG. 1651
D.B. 362 PG. 1653 PLAT
TAX MAP 54, PARCEL 90.1

NOW OR FORMERLY
JUANITA M. THURMAN
TRUSTEE OF THE
THURMAN LIVING TRUST
D.B. 773 PG. 470
TAX MAP 54, PARCEL 86

NOW OR FORMERLY
RICKY L. DALTON
PEGGY S. DALTON
D.B. 992 PG.
D.B. 994 PG. 157
TAX MAP 54, PARCEL 85

NOW OR FORMERLY
**MARY HALL FERGUSON &
JOSEPH RAY FERGUSON**
D.B. 167 PG. 434
TAX MAP 54, PARCEL 93

NOW OR FORMERLY
JEFFREY ALAN CHITWOOD
KAY WOODS CHITWOOD
D.B. 1030 PG. 211
TAX MAP 54, PARCEL 3



ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Adjacent property owners are mailed a notice of the request. Please provide each owner's name and mailing address plus zip code for every property adjacent to the site and directly across from any public right-of-way adjoining the site. Names and addresses are available in the County Real Estate office in the Courthouse.

NAME: Juanita M. Thurman ADDRESS: 683 Woodman Rd.
(Trustee)
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540008600 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Donnie L. + Nera B. ADDRESS: 45 Lakeview Drive
Farris
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540009001 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Donnie L. + Nera B. ADDRESS: 45 Lakeview Drive
Farris
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540009000 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Joseph Ray Ferguson ADDRESS: 1999 Old Franklin Turnpike
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540009300 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Nancy L. + Posey L. Jr. ADDRESS: 1810 Old Franklin Turnpike
Lynch
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540036300 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Elaine H. Chitwood ADDRESS: 120 Woodman Road
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540036305 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Joseph Ray + Mary Hall ADDRESS: 1999 Old Franklin Turnpike
Ferguson
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540036306A Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Steven Wayne + Wesley G. ADDRESS: 8140 Old Franklin Turnpike
Hall
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540036307 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Jeffrey Alan + Kay Woods ADDRESS: 2090 Altice Mill Road
Chitwood
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540036303 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Ricky L. + Peggy S. Dalton ADDRESS: 1163 Buck Horn Lane
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540009500 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

NAME: Wendell Kevin + Lisa Ferguson ADDRESS: 1999 Old Franklin Turnpike
Scott
 TAX MAP NUMBER: 0540009400 Rocky Mount, VA 24151

Shively, Bonnie

From: Smith, Susannah
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2014 8:30 AM
To: Shively, Bonnie
Subject: FW: Termination of Special Use Permit application

FYI

From: Russell Baskett [<mailto:russellbaskett@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 6:54 PM
To: Smith, Susannah; Holthouser, Neil
Cc: Stan Spiewak; James Bennett [jimb24095@gmail.com]; Judy Wolfe; Larry Broomall; director@smlgoodneighbors.org
Subject: Termination of Special Use Permit application

Susannah and Neil:

SML Good Neighbors, Inc. is formally **withdrawing** the application for a Special Use Permit for the property on Sandlwood Road. Therefore, this application can be removed from the requests going before the Board of Supervisor on May 20th. Following the 6 to 1 vote to deny approval of the application by the Planning Commissioners, it became clear to the leaders of SML Good Neighbors, Inc. that we should not continue seeking the Special Use Permit.

Russell



Russell C. Baskett, Ph.D.
President and Executive Director
949 Boardwalk Dr.
Moneta, VA 24121
(540) 798-2332
www.smlgoodneighbors.org
Like us on Facebook at:
SML Good Neighbors, Inc.

Developing good neighbors skills and values in children through programs that nourish, educate and support them while providing life-changing experiences for college students through leadership development internships.