

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Public facilities are the outward physical symbols of services provided by governmental jurisdictions on behalf of the public. As such, they serve an important role in influencing the growth patterns of a particular area. From a regional perspective, the availability of major facilities such as hospitals, colleges, high schools, libraries, major parks, and recreation areas is an important factor in attracting people to a region and to a particular county or city within that region. And, once drawn to a particular jurisdiction, the adequacy of local facilities and services such as elementary schools, fire and police protection, neighborhood parks, and playgrounds is similarly important in determining where a person settles within the chosen jurisdiction. In this manner, public facilities affect the location of new persons migrating into Franklin County as well as relocation decisions of persons moving within Franklin County.

Although other factors such as job opportunities also influence the location desires of people, the large commuting flow across jurisdictional boundaries evidenced in this area indicate a strong willingness on the part of the people to work where the jobs are but to live where they want to live. Accordingly, since the provision of public facilities, especially locally-oriented ones, adds to the desirability of a particular area, the location of such facilities can be used by jurisdictions to guide and to stimulate future growth by making some areas more desirable than others.

An additional influence upon the provision of public facilities and services is that they be provided efficiently and equitably. Efficiency can be improved by the multi-use of facilities such as school grounds doubling as neighborhood parks, fire stations containing community meeting rooms, or sanitary landfills that will be developed into recreation sites when filled. A second way to improve efficiency is to provide facilities on a multi-jurisdictional or regional basis. Specialized health care facilities are such an example in which a single facility must be centrally located to serve a large supporting service area. Many localities can provide the small service area necessary to support a family doctor, but few can finance a medical hospital by themselves.

However, not all types of public facilities meet the above requirements and, in these cases, it is more equitable to decentralize their location. For example, given the choice between a single large park containing many diverse activities and many minor parks each with a few activities, a jurisdiction may feel it more equitable to provide the many minor parks to reach as many residents as possible. Thus, the provision of public facilities must balance the efficiency of centralized facilities versus the equity of decentralized facilities. In the final analysis, each such case must be carefully decided on its own merits.

In summary, public facilities influence future land use in the following manner:

- At the regional level, the availability of major facilities such as hospitals, colleges, high schools, libraries, major parks, and recreation areas is an important factor in attracting people to a particular area;
- At the local level, the adequacy of local facilities such as elementary schools, fire and police protection, neighborhood parks, and playgrounds determine, to a large extent, where people settle;

- The location of facilities, particularly such locally-oriented ones as schools and neighborhood parks, can serve to guide and stimulate future growth rather than merely following the patterns of past growth.

Future facilities must be provided efficiently and equitably. This will result in:

- Multi-use of facilities such as school grounds and neighborhood parks, fire stations, and community buildings, landfills, parks, and the like;
- Centralization of facilities requiring specialized manpower and/or high initial capital costs to have the necessary economics of scale;
- Decentralization of facilities not requiring specialized manpower and/or high initial capital costs.

Not only will the public facilities influence future land use in the above manner but, in turn, future land use will determine the need for public facilities in the years ahead.

The remainder of this section will address the following specific areas: law enforcement, communications, emergency management, fire protection, health care services, rescue/emergency services, public services/human resources, parks and recreation, arts, culture, historical structures, libraries, and schools and education. A community facilities map is included at the end of this section.

Law Enforcement

The Franklin County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services throughout Franklin County including Boones Mill, Ferrum, and Rocky Mount. The Sheriff's Office is dedicated to protecting the life and property of County residents and to safeguarding each citizen's constitutional rights.

The Sheriff's Office carries out its law enforcement duties based on the mutual respect and shared responsibility of the citizens it serves. In addition to law enforcement, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office is responsible for courtroom security, service of civil process, inmate housing at Franklin County Jail, a work release dormitory for non-violent offenders, and dispatchers for law enforcement and emergency services. This department also provides the following community-oriented services:

- D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education)
- Class Action (Virginia Teens and the Law)
- Resource Officers at Benjamin Franklin Middle School and Franklin County High School
- Neighborhood Watch Organization
- McGruff Program
- Child Fingerprinting
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs
- Spouse Abuse Prevention Programs
- Drug Abuse Prevention Programs
- Self-defense Instruction

The Sheriff's Department is located on East Court Street in Rocky Mount. The County Jail, located adjacent to the County Administration Building off East Court Street, was built in 1937 to house 27 prisoners; however, after renovations, the present day capacity is a maximum bed space of 70, although it routinely averages 85 inmates. The Franklin County Jail has a Department of Corrections rated capacity of 49 prisoners. A Work Release Dormitory, a minimum-security dormitory, constructed in 1987 to house up to 32 working inmates aids to alleviate overcrowding at the jail. The dormitory has, in effect removed approximately half of the jail inmates from the maximum-security jail and houses them in a minimum-security dormitory behind the existing jail facility. With approximately 74 inmates currently being housed at the County Jail, another 88 prisoners are being housed at out of county jail facilities. However, since the total inmate days for out of county facilities continue to rise, it is projected that most all inmates that will be incarcerated above the present daily population will be sent to out of county facilities. Subsequently, the cost to the County of housing out of county inmates over the last five years has increased over 1,600 percent.

In May 2005, Franklin County agreed to partner with Roanoke County, Montgomery County, and the City of Salem in establishing the Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority (WVRJA) for the purpose of constructing a regional jail facility to house approximately 605 prisoners. Since that time, the Virginia Department of Corrections Board has authorized the construction of the regional jail with approval of financing through the General Assembly anticipated in Spring 2006. Construction should begin in the fall of 2006 with plans to open the new facility in 2008. The regional jail is to be located in Roanoke County and will initially house the 605 inmates with core facilities built to house 805 inmates. Once the regional jail becomes operational, the member locality will pay their proportionate share of the Debt Service cost (Capital Factor of the Per Diem Rate) based on the guaranteed number of beds. The per diem cost for the operating factor will be based on the actual number of prisoners housed at the regional jail, with a "true up" of the cost after each fiscal year to balance the over/underpayments by each locality based on the number of projected versus actual inmates housed.

For a number of years, the Sheriff's Department has successfully operated a model work release program for inmates. Through this program, it is estimated that inmates perform more than \$150,000 worth of free labor for the County annually. Through the work program, inmates may volunteer to participate; however, participation depends upon the nature of the individual's crime and sentence. Eligible participants have three options: 1) unpaid labor; 2) paid labor with private industry; or 3) attendance in high school or college. For each 25 hours of unpaid labor, a participant may have five hours deducted from sentencing. Participants perform unpaid labor through assignments at the County Landfill, National Guard Armory, Senior Citizen's Center, Courthouse, Juvenile Court, Tax Assessor's Office, Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Commissioner of Revenue's Office, other County offices, Library, recreation parks, fire station, Dog Pound, and the Jail. Participants choosing to work for private industry return to jail each night—with their earned income being used to pay day board, fines and court costs, and to provide for their families. Participants attending high school or college also return to the jail at night.

Due to continued growth and development and the increase of the Westlake population, in June 2005, a Sheriff's Department Substation became operational at Westlake Corner. The substation is located in a leased facility in the Westlake Towne

Center on Route 122 (Booker T. Washington Hwy). The facility contains approximately 1,076 square feet and will alleviate the workload of deputies having to drive into Rocky Mount to prepare reports and perform other duties.

The Franklin County Sheriff's Department participates in the Cardinal Criminal Justice Training Academy based in Salem. The Academy provides the training necessary for officers to maintain required certification from the State Criminal Justice Services Commission.

The Rocky Mount Police Department functions on a 24-hour-per-day basis from department headquarters in its facility on Main Street. The responsibility of law enforcement is shared with the Town Lieutenant. The Boones Mill Police monitor and carry out other law enforcement duties within the Town. The Ferrum College Police Department is a fully certified police department and has jurisdiction throughout the Blue Ridge Magisterial District of Franklin County.

The Virginia State Police maintain a staff of nine troopers assigned to Franklin County to enforce statutory laws. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has a local staff of three game wardens that enforce state game/hunting, fishing, and boating laws in Franklin County. They also stock trout in local streams and provide hunter education classes. The Virginia Department of Forestry enforces burning laws that extend from February 15 through April 30 and permit fires between 4:00 p.m. and midnight only. The department also assists private landowners with forest land management.

In 1992, the West Piedmont Regional Homicide Task Force was formed. The Task Force is a joint investigative effort of the Cities of Danville and Martinsville and the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Pittsylvania, and Halifax. It was established to provide a pool of specially trained investigators to offer manpower, expertise, and equipment that can be rapidly deployed.

Through the development of the Homeland Security Office, the County recently received funds from the second round of disbursements. The Sheriff's Department, along with many law enforcement agencies as well as public safety and communication centers across the country, are implementing the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Franklin County's Sheriff Department has also worked with the school system to draft a critical incident response to school emergencies. With Homeland Security issues in mind, the current reasoning is to primarily transform the courthouse to a courts building only, and in doing so security has been a major factor. This will allow for fewer accesses enabling for better security and a safer environment.

Public Safety

The goal of the Franklin County Department of Public Safety is to provide lifesaving, fire suppression, emergency services, and fire prevention services within all of Franklin County and to develop programs and policies consistent and supportive of this goal, given the resources provided. The organization consists of four divisions: Emergency Management Division, Communications Division, Fire Division, and EMS/Rescue Division. A Public Safety Director using an Integrated Emergency Management System approach manages the Department of Public Safety. The

Department sponsors numerous continuing community education awareness and public relations programs involving emergency services planning, preparedness, and prevention.

A strategic plan developed by the Franklin County Public Safety Department in the summer of 2005, is aimed at improving fire and rescue operations to meet public expectations. The plan calls for standardized equipment for fire and rescue units, providing more training for volunteers, development of a management system for volunteers, and development of a recruitment program. There are two specific goals that the strategic plan calls for: 1) "to provide consistent county-wide emergency services response within service response standards," i.e., eight minute fire and EMS response times ninety percent of the time within two miles of the County's identified population centers and ten minute response times eighty-five percent of the time outside village centers; and 2) "to develop a strategy to recruit, retain, educate, and motivate a quality staff and volunteers while improving utilization of staff and volunteers." To assist in paying for the changes established by the strategic plan, the Public Safety Department has implemented a countywide billing system for emergency services transports.

The County is replacing the current radio system with a new emergency system at a cost of \$1.5 million. The construction of the system began in January 2006, and is scheduled to take approximately two years to complete. The new system would involve building remote receiver sites throughout the County. It will serve both law enforcement and public safety divisions.

Since the development and placement of a GIS (Geographic Information System), the County's Enhanced 911 system has become much more efficient and coordinated. When a call comes into a dispatcher, the GIS automatically zooms in to the address with the caller's name and pinpoints the caller's location on a specialized map. The map is then faxed to the appropriate responding department (fire or rescue) so that emergency personnel know exactly where to go. In addition, if an emergency helicopter is needed to airlift someone, the map will show the landing zone nearest to the location of the call.

Emergency Management—Emergency management involves overall planning and direction of public safety services and the responsibility of developing and maintaining the County's Emergency Operations Plan. The Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Safety provides training for emergency response personnel and establishes a budget for public safety operations and capital improvements. Training programs are offered to all volunteers relating to fire, rescue, and hazardous materials with some classes being offered to the public. Lectures are offered to various groups upon request.

Emergency services are provided on a 24-hour basis by a combination system comprised of approximately 220 volunteers with a supporting 15-member career system. Services are delivered by 18 County agencies, 4 non-jurisdictional agencies, and 2

specialized teams. The dedication and commitment of the volunteers to serve their fellow citizens is the foundation of the County's public safety program.

Communications—The Communications Division works with the Sheriff's Department telecommunications and receives information from the public, determines the necessary response personnel and equipment, and responds with this equipments and personnel while relaying all needed information to the responding unit(s).

Fire Protection—There are 13 fire companies within Franklin County; 3 are non-jurisdictional but provide first due response service to the County. Each company is assigned a primary response area and also acts as backup response for other districts. In December 2005, Franklin County hired a Training Officer and a Recruiting-Retention Officer as additional personnel. The following is a summary of fire protection data by company:

Company	Year Established	No. of 2004 Volunteers	No. of Calls – 2003
	1927	24	194
Rocky Mount Volunteer Fire Department (Company 2)			
	1958	13	99
Ferrum Volunteer Fire Department (Company 3)			
	N/A	35	90
Glade Hill Volunteer Fire Department (Company 4)			
	N/A	21	23
Callaway Volunteer Fire Department (Company 5)			
	1966	15	54
Snow Creek Volunteer Fire Department (Company 6)			
	1928	24	97
Boones Mill Volunteer Fire Department (Company 7)			
	1969	19	34
Fork Mountain Volunteer Fire Department (Company 8)			
	1972	45	127
Burnt Chimney Volunteer Fire Department (Company 9)			
	1972	31	91
Scruggs Volunteer Fire Department (Company 10)			
	N/A	38	42
Smith Mountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department (Company 11)			
	N/A	24	2
Hardy Volunteer Fire Department (Company 12)			
	N/A	20	21
Cool Branch Volunteer Fire Department (Company 13)			
	N/A	14	16
Henry Volunteer Fire Department (Company 14)			

N/A = not available

The fire insurance rates in the County vary with the distance from community fire departments. Those areas within five miles of the Town of Rocky Mount and 1,000 feet from a fire hydrant have an ISO rating of “6.” Rural areas throughout the County have a rating of “9,” with the exception of Scruggs with a rating of “7.” In order to maintain or improve these rates, the County volunteer fire departments must continue to replace fire equipment and make improvements to existing equipment as needed. In addition, installation of dry hydrants is beginning to aid in lowering the ISO ratings in the County; this project work is ongoing.

EMS/Rescue Services—There are 12 EMS Districts in Franklin County. Two rescue squads are non-jurisdictional and provide first due response to the County. Additionally, there is one career EMS crew that provides backup and primary Advanced Life Support Services countywide. Each rescue squad is assigned a primary response area as well as acting as backup response for other districts. The following is a summary of EMS/rescue services by squad:

Company	Year Established	No. of 2004 Volunteers	No. of Calls – 2003
Franklin County Career Division (Squad 1)	1990	N/A	1,509
Franklin County Volunteer Rescue (Squad 2)	1957	29	915
Ferrum Volunteer Rescue (Squad 3)	N/A	18	220
Glade Hill Volunteer Rescue (Squad 4)	N/A	14	332
Callaway Volunteer Rescue (Squad 5)	1992	17	136
Snow Creek Volunteer Rescue (Squad 6)	1973	32	154
Boones Mill Volunteer Rescue (Squad 7)	1963	12	200
Fork Mountain Volunteer Rescue (Squad 8)	1983	13	164
Red Valley Volunteer Rescue (Squad 9)	1977	11	188
Scruggs Volunteer Rescue (Squad 10)	N/A	22	210
Franklin County Dive Team (Squad 11)	N/A	27	0
Hardy Volunteer Rescue (Squad 12)	N/A	13	82
Cool Branch Volunteer Rescue (Squad 13)	N/A	17	75

N/A = not available

Based on the increased population, Franklin County will need new fire/rescue facilities in the Westlake/Halesford Bridge community in the near future. Additional staff will also be required in association with this need.

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors has approved mutual aid agreements with surrounding counties for fire and rescue personnel to cross jurisdictional boundaries to answer calls. This action put into writing an unofficial operating arrangement the localities have had for years.

The Cities of Danville and Martinsville, the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, and the Towns of Boones Mill, Chatham, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, Rocky Mount, and Stuart along with West Piedmont Planning District Commission and the consulting firm of Dewberry have been developing a "West Piedmont Hazard Mitigation Plan." The plan is to help promote public awareness about local hazards and risk and to assist localities in adopting procedures and ordinances to help with hazard mitigation. The adoption of the plan by the localities is expected by spring of 2006.

The Mitigation Advisory Committee, through meetings with officials from the local jurisdictions, identified high priority strategies for each jurisdiction and for the region that should be the focus of our implementation efforts.

The following are high priority strategies for Franklin County:

- Encourage purchase of and training on the use of NOAA radios. Provide NOAA weather radios to public facilities.
- Consider participating in the StormReady program sponsored by the National Weather Service.
- Provide training opportunities to local zoning and building code enforcement staff. Educate them re: damage assessment, mitigation techniques, and other related topics.
- Staff Emergency Management Office, Public Works, Building Inspections Office and Zoning Office at adequate levels.
- Investigate, develop and/or implement a channel maintenance program consisting of routine inspections and subsequent debris removal to ensure free flow of water in local streams and watercourses. Identify funding opportunities including partnering with local non-governmental or volunteer organization.
- Identify need for backup generators, communications, and/or vehicles at critical public facilities. Develop means to address shortfall identified.
- Develop Continuity of Operations plan.
- Work with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) to review local zoning and subdivision ordinances to identify areas to include wildfire mitigation principles.

The following are high priority strategies from a regional standpoint:

- Provide training opportunities to local zoning and building code enforcement staff. Educate them re: damage assessment, mitigation techniques, and other related topics.
- Work with local home improvement stores to provide workshops to residents on mitigation techniques.
- Identify training opportunities for staff to enhance their ability to use GIS for emergency management needs.

- Work with the Roanoke office of the National Weather Service to promote the “Turn Around, Don’t Drown” public education campaign.
- Work with local media outlets to increase awareness of natural hazards. Implement seasonal hazard awareness weeks or days (e.g., hurricane preparedness week, winter weather awareness day).
- Distribute information packets to raise awareness regarding the risks present in the West Piedmont region and provide disaster preparedness information.
- Coordinate with the state to update and digitize community Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).
- In the next update of hazard mitigation plan, include more detailed vulnerability assessments for manmade hazards based on FEMA and VDEM guidance.
- Investigate providing technical assistance for property owners to implement mitigation measures (i.e., strengthening building frame connections; elevating appliances, constructing a wind shelter).

Information Services

The Information Technology Department is responsible for the County’s computer and telephone systems, the County’s website, and all related equipment. GIS (Geographic Information System) is new to Franklin County and was created and maintained by the Information Technology Department. Information Technology provides overall data processing operations including system analysis/programming to meet the application needs of County agencies.

Computer and telephone systems are in operation 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. The Information Services staff responds to problems causing disruption of service after normal working hours.

Health Care Services

Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital was first funded and built by the community in 1952. Over the years the facility has undergone a \$7 million renovation and offers a full scope of medical services. The 37-bed hospital is a full affiliate of Carilion Health System and offers 24-hour emergency, general medical/surgical care, obstetrical and maternity care, and outpatient services. Established in 1998, the Carilion Foundation—formerly Carilion Community Health Fund—is a means of investing in visionary programs and partnerships dedicated to meeting Carilion’s mission of improving the health of the communities it serves. These programs and partnerships provide access to much-needed services that may not otherwise be available. In its first year, Carilion allocated \$3 million to the foundation, a portion of which was awarded to Franklin County to meet healthcare needs. In August 2004, the hospital opened a new 4,000 square-foot rehabilitation services department in the former Arrington-Bussey Funeral Home building on South Main Street across from the hospital.

In November 1992, the Free Clinic of Franklin County opened in the Town of Rocky Mount to provide primary health care services and medications for uninsured and underinsured residents of Franklin County meeting eligibility guidelines. Carilion Franklin Memorial was part of a community-wide effort to establish the free clinic.

The County is served by three medical clinics—the Boones Mill Medical Center located on U.S. Route 220 south of Boones Mill, the Burnt Chimney Medical Center on Route 122, and the Lewis-Gale Clinic in Moneta.

As of 2004, there were 25 physicians, 3 optometrists, 2 opticians, 7 dentists, 1 orthodontist, and a chiropractor in Franklin County. Specialists in all areas are located in Roanoke.

Several nursing homes and an adult care facility operate in the County. Eldercare on the west side of Rocky Mount is a 180-bed nursing facility and Franklin Health Care Center, located on Orchard Avenue in Rocky Mount, is a 60-bed facility; both provide skilled and intermediate care. Lakeview Manor Home for Adults Incorporated, located on Route 760 in Wirtz, serves adults of all ages. The facility offers personalized care to 10 ambulatory patients unable to live alone. In 2004, plans were announced for the construction of a 120-bed assisted living facility. The Lake Ridge Retirement and Rehabilitation Center will be located on land behind the Westlake Towne Center in the Gills Creek Magisterial District. Trinity Mission Health & Rehabilitation of Rocky Mount is located within the Town of Rocky Mount and licensed to care for 180 persons. Red Oak Adult Care Facility on U.S. Route 220 has a 90 bed facility. In Boones Mill, Vista View is a licensed adult care provider.

The Franklin County Prenatal Education Center was incorporated in November 1999. The Center is focused on educating women, teens, and families in the areas of prenatal care, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, infant care, child seat safety, reproductive health, and hygiene.

The Franklin County Health Department provides programs to promote good health and prevent disease and disability. Clinics conducted at the Health Department include: well child (ages birth-18 years); family planning, pregnancy testing; confidential HIV testing; tuberculosis screening and follow-up; blood pressure screening; immunizations for children and for overseas travel; newborn screenings; and sickle cell screenings. Other activities and services include:

- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides food and nutritional information to pregnant women, infants and children who have a medical risk and low family income.
- Communicable disease control: Public health officials and staff work with patients with reportable communicable diseases to maintain disease control.
- Registration of births and deaths in the County.
- Home Health Program: Nursing care for homebound patients upon doctor's order.
- Baby Care: Special help for at-risk pregnant mothers and babies at risk, birth to 2 years of age.
- Community health education programs.
- Environmental Health – Public health professionals issue permits and perform inspections of food service and tourist establishments, migrant labor camps, marinas and swimming pools; issue permits and monitor public non-community water supplies; assist in land use planning and subdivision review; evaluate soil and sites prior to issuance of permits to construct wells or septic systems; investigate animal exposures and coordinate rabies vaccination programs; and perform lead investigations on sites where children exhibit elevated blood levels.

Public Services/Human Resources

A wide range of public and human resource services are available to residents of Franklin County. This section outlines a number of these services.

The **Franklin County Department of Social Services**, located on U.S. Route 220 three miles south of Rocky Mount, provides both financial and social work services that are administered according to state and federal regulations. The Department's mission is to promote self-reliance, strong families, and provide protection for County residents through community-based services. Financial services include: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); food stamps; Medicaid; auxiliary grants for the aged, disabled and blind; indigent burial; energy assistance; and assistance with hospital bills for the medically indigent. These programs have different eligibility guidelines and require completion of applications and verification of information. Programs are designed to assist low-income families or individuals through cash grants or in-kind payments to meet financial needs. Social work services include: protective services for children and adults; foster care; adoption services; other court-ordered services; nursing home screenings and placement; adult home placement; adult stabilization and support; day care; employment services; and crisis intake and referrals. Certain social work services are based solely on need and not on income eligibility. The focus of social work services is to strengthen a family's or individual's ability to be self-sufficient, independent, to avoid inappropriate institutional placements, and to provide protection for those persons unable to protect themselves.

The **Piedmont Community Services Board** provides a comprehensive range of community mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse services. Emergency services including crisis intervention and evaluation for inpatient hospitalization and detoxification are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Mental health and substance abuse clinical services focus on a variety of individual and family problems, including: depression and anxiety; sexual abuse; drug and alcohol abuse; parenting and other significant adjustments to daily living; prevention and early intervention services for children, youth and families at risk of developing serious behavioral, mental health or substance abuse problems; Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for employees (and their families) of participating local industries. EAP services include supervisory training as well as employee assessment services, consultation, and drug/alcohol testing. Services for persons with serious mental illness include: medication management; psychosocial rehabilitation program; and case management services. Inpatient psychiatric treatment is arranged in cooperation with state mental hospitals and private psychiatric hospitals. Intensive substance abuse outpatient, inpatient and residential treatments are provided by PCS and by referral to public and private facilities. A comprehensive mental retardation service, provided through PCS and cooperating partners such as the **Developmental Center of Franklin County**, includes: family support and case management; infant stimulation services; sheltered employment; and residential services. All programs are licensed by the Virginia Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. Services are provided on a sliding scale based on a family's ability to pay. Some fees are covered by Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross and other insurance.

The **Southern Virginia Mental Health Institute**, located in Danville, is a regional facility of the Virginia Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation that serves member localities, including Franklin County, within Central Virginia, Southside, and West Piedmont Planning Districts. This 100-bed hospital, built in 1976 on a 15-acre tract near the Danville Community College campus, provides short-term hospital services. Upon release, patients are referred to their local mental health carrier for continued treatment.

The **Franklin County Family Resource Center** provides a variety of services for victims of domestic violence and families in crisis. Services include: shelter for victims of domestic abuse; community education/public awareness; crisis-intervention counseling; information and referral services; advocacy services; resource library; support groups for women; domestic abuse hotline; and financial, employment and housing counseling. All contacts, whether written, in person, or by telephone, are confidential and non-judgmental. Individuals are not required to give their name when calling. No fees are charged for services.

STEP (Support to Eliminate Poverty), Incorporated (formerly known as Franklin County Community Action, Incorporated) initiates, provides, and coordinates programs to combat the underlying causes of poverty and to help improve the quality of life for low-income residents. Services include Community Outreach, Legal Aid satellite location, Before and After School programs, Project Discovery, Discovery Club, Early Learning Center, Headstart, Literacy Volunteers of Franklin County, Summer Feeding Program, Family Development, Summer Youth Employment Program, Summer Day Camp, Partners in Prevention, Cars for Work, Therapeutic Foster Care, Feed a Friend, Virginia Water Project, Section 8 Rental Housing, Housing Weatherization, Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation, Single Family Regional Loan Fund, Lead-Based Paint Abatement, and alternative Special Education Program.

The **Volunteer Emergency Families for Children** program provides volunteer emergency placement services for children from birth to 18 years of age.

Helping Hands of Franklin County offers financial counseling, emergency funding, and referrals of individuals and families to appropriate agencies.

The **American Red Cross – Franklin County Chapter** provides disaster relief, assistance to military families, health and safety classes, and coordinates bloodmobile services.

The **United Way of Franklin County** is a non-profit organization which generates financial support for approximately 44 local programs and agencies.

Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA) (formerly known as Piedmont Seniors of Virginia, Incorporated), is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Planning District 12. It is one of 25 area agencies created through the 1973 Amendment to the Older Americans Act. Governed by a Board of Directors, SAAA provides services directly and through subcontractor agreements to individuals aged 60 and older. It is a private, non-profit organization that receives funds from federal, state, and local governments. Due to the demand for a number of services, there is a waiting list and, when available funding for a service is not enough to fill demand, the Older Americans Act directs Agencies on Aging to target the service to elders with low income who lack family and friends to assist them. In addition, services are clustered in populated areas and some outlying sections of counties cannot be served. The following is a list of services which the agency funds or provides: information and assistance, senior employment services, transportation, health promotion activities, safety, insurance counseling, volunteer opportunities, home-delivered meals, light housekeeping, personal care, respite, care coordination, legal assistance, and long-term care ombudsman services.

The **Franklin County Department of Aging Services** provides a wide array of services to promote the physical, emotional, and economic well being of older adults and to promote their participation in community life. The **Franklin County Senior Citizens Center** links together in support of common objectives existing planning and services resources needed by the elderly of the community. Examples of services of the Department of Aging are: transportation, specialized transportation for handicapped individuals, socialization and recreation, free blood pressure screenings, congregate meals, health promotion/disease prevention program, public information, and resident repair/renovation.

Passage of the Comprehensive Services Act by the Virginia General Assembly in 1992 altered the funding systems for services to at-risk and troubled youth and their families. In July 1998, Franklin County created the **Office of the Comprehensive Services Act** (CSA Office) to oversee the County's CSA Program. The intention of the CSA Program is to implement a collaborative system of services and funding that is child-centered, family-focused, and community-based when addressing the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youth and their families. The Franklin County CSA Program consists of two multi-disciplinary teams: the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) and the Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT). Both have representatives from the County Public Schools, County Court Services Unit, Support to Eliminate Poverty, County Health Department, Community Services Board, County Department of Social Services, and the County Board of Supervisors.

The **Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services**, based in Martinsville, provides the following services to individuals with handicaps or disabilities that would prevent or interfere with their employment: medical and psychological work-up, job counseling, and guidance and placement.

The **West Piedmont Disability Services Board** was established in 1983 with Franklin County as a charter member. The Board is intended to provide input to the State Disabilities Council on the needs of sensory handicapped persons in the County and the Planning District area as well as development of a plan for meeting the needs of the handicapped.

The **Virginia Cooperative Extension of Franklin County** provides research-based information to County residents on a variety of topics relating to agriculture, family and consumer services, and 4-H youth activities. Information is made available through educational brochures, seminars and clinics, individual consultations, and membership in organized groups such as 4-H clubs, agricultural commodity groups, family and community education clubs, and Virginia Master Gardeners.

The **Franklin County Housing Board** oversees the Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation program that provides assistance for upgrading sub-standard plumbing. In addition, the Board supervises the Housing Weatherization program. These programs are provided to low-income households.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Leisure time is a relatively new concept to Americans. It was not too many years ago when the average American worked fifty hours a week and children had daily chores on the farm or in the family business that kept them busy as well. Today, the average work week is much less and many have extra leisure time available. Recreation is one

way of providing a diversion and refreshment from the pace of our complex lives and can enrich our mental health. This is most important because today, as in no other period of history, parks and recreational amenities play a vital role in the personal and physical development of citizens.

Franklin County residents have enjoyed a wide range of outdoor nature opportunities provided by state and federal lands in the County. In addition, the County and Town have provided organized recreation facilities and programs. The centerpiece of Franklin County's parks and recreation programming over the years has been Franklin County Recreation Park.

The County's most significant recreation feature is Smith Mountain Lake. This recreation amenity is responsible for the most significant economic investments in the County since its creation in 1968. Franklin County's current prosperity is made possible by the availability of outdoor recreation and lifestyle amenities in the community. These assets attract people from all over the nation to our community.

In the past, Franklin County was able to keep up with the demand for parks, open space, and other recreation infrastructure at one or two park sites and school facilities. In recent years, sustained population growth and shifting recreational interests have placed a burden on the existing park system to the point where substantial shortages in facilities now exist. This new growth around the County is having a secondary impact in that it replaces potential park land and active open spaces with housing which in time increases the demand for additional recreational facilities. Challenges facing the parks and recreation system over the next ten years will include serving the increasing numbers of the public.

Franklin County runs a comprehensive parks and recreation program that serves over 20,000 residents per year with special events, athletic programming, art and cultural classes, and general park visitation. The Department is staffed by ten full-time employees. An additional 100+ part-time and contractual employees facilitate operation of athletic leagues and assist with park management. The Parks and Recreation Department's annual budget is nearly \$800,000 per year with a capital budget of nearly \$1,000,000. Franklin County Parks & Recreation manages 667 acres of public lands, 18 miles of trails, six ballfields, eight youth soccer/football fields, one basketball court, six tennis courts, five picnic shelters, 30 miles of blueways, a youth skatepark (Spring 2006), and partners with the General Services Department in management and scheduling of the Rocky Mount Armory.

Local County Parks

Franklin County Recreation Park – There are a number of locally maintained parks within Franklin County, one of which is the Franklin County Recreation Park located approximately four miles southeast of Rocky Mount. This 115-acre county-supported park includes four lighted tennis courts, a basketball court, a nature trail, two children's playgrounds, two picnic shelters (20' x 60' and 60' x 150') and individual picnic tables, an amphitheater, a soccer field, and two baseball/softball fields. The County added two tennis courts to the site in 2005. A sand volleyball facility was constructed in 2005. A Frisbee golf course will be added in spring 2006.

Waid Recreation Area – The County also developed Waid Recreation Area, a 510-acre park located at the end of State Route 800, off Route 640 (Six Mile Post Road) in the Pleasant Hill community. This park offers a variety of recreational pursuits for citizens of all ages and preserves a portion of the historic Old Carolina Road. The facility includes two baseball/softball fields, picnic facilities, an 82-year old bridge surplus by VDOT, about a mile of frontage on the Pigg River and a three-acre wetland area. In March 2001, Franklin County was awarded a \$126,255 grant by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation towards the purchase of a 292-acre open space parcel to adjoin the original 218-acre park. This acquisition will also assure the preservation of an additional section of the historic resource known as the “Old Carolina Trail” and provide additional opportunities for significant trail development and tourism-related projects in the future.

The Pigg River Blueway also begins at this site. The County also collaborates with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) in a trout stocking program along the Pigg River through the park. This is the longest stretch of publicly accessible riverfront in the County and as such receives significant use as a winter fishery. Waid Recreation Area contains the largest stretch of the colonial-era Carolina Turnpike. This historical resource is unique in the mid-Atlantic and contains the old Waid Stage Stop. A vernal pool is found at Waid.

The County is completing development of an additional five-field sports complex at this site. Opening of this complex is projected to occur in Spring 2007. The fields will be used for soccer, football, and lacrosse programs through the County’s Department of Commerce and Leisure Services. Additional developments at the site will include picnic shelters, expanded trail access, and improved historical/environmental interpretive programs. Waid Recreation Area can accommodate a wide range of facilities and its Master Plan should be revisited through the proposed Comprehensive Parks & Recreation System Plan to better plan future development.

Gilley’s Park – Located near Benjamin Franklin Middle School, this park was developed by both Rocky Mount and Franklin County on a tract of land at the end of Trail Drive in Rocky Mount. The Town and County jointly own the property, which adjoins the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park. This three-pond complex offers fishing, a trail system, and picnicking for the residents of Franklin County. The DGIF and Franklin County stock the ponds throughout the year.

Lynch Park – This 3-acre river access park lies within the Town of Rocky Mount. It serves as the terminus of the upper Pigg River Blueway. Facilities include kiosk, parking lot, picnic shelter, open play area, and canoe ramp.

Brubaker Park – A 5-acre river access park adjacent to Hickman Bridge in Callaway serves as the upper access point for the 35 mile long Blackwater River Blueway. Facilities at the site are limited to canoe access, gravel parking lot, and picnic site. Future development may include playground, open play area, and hiking trail.

Lion’s Field – This is a single-use youth ballfield in the Town of Rocky Mount. The site includes a youth ballfield and limited parking.

Mary Elizabeth Park – Located on East Street in the Town of Rocky Mount, this 3-acre site includes two tennis courts, picnic facilities, rollerblade facility, and playground. Mary

Elizabeth is the oldest park in Franklin County and includes a number of mature hardwoods.

Mary Bethune Park – Also within the Town of Rocky Mount Park, this 5-acre facility is a small neighborhood park honoring one of the nation's early African-American leaders. The site includes a picnic facility, hiking trail, and playground.

Veterans Park – This is a new park recognizing the contributions of Franklin County residents in our nation's defense. The 1.5-acre site includes a parking area, monument, and views of the river. Future development may include a walking trail connecting this site with Lynch Park.

Rocky Mount Armory – The County presently uses the National Guard Armory in Rocky Mount for limited recreational programming. Use of the Armory for public purposes is controlled by the Virginia National Guard. In the past, this building served as the hub of indoor recreational activities for the County. Since 9/11, availability to the building for public purposes has been sporadic given National Guard activities. Use of this building has declined by 70% since 2001 due to security concerns and additional requirements placed on groups that wish to use the facility. While the demand for indoor space for community events, weddings, private parties, meetings, recreation leagues, and classes has increased since 2001, the availability of space has not.

Franklin County Y.M.C.A. - The Franklin County Family YMCA opened its new 49,000-square-foot building off North Main Street in Rocky Mount in the Technology Park in April 1998. In 1997, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors and the Franklin County Industrial Authority approved issuance of \$5 million in bonds for construction of the facility. In June 2003, a new public fitness trail opened at the YMCA. The trail is the second to be completed at a 30-acre park on property leased from the Town at a cost of \$1 annually over the next 50 years. Project funding came from public donations, YMCA funds, and a \$123,000 grant. In addition, a community park is being created to include a playground as well as paved walking trails that run two miles through an 18-acre section of the land behind the YMCA. Future plans include an athletic field, picnic shelter, public campsites, and ten exercise stations. In November 2005, the YMCA opened a \$3 million, 27,000 square-foot Youth Programs Center for children ages 2 to 12. The newly opened facility resides next to the existing YMCA building and emphasizes programs in art, music, dance, and theater. Currently, construction for a youth skatepark adjacent to the YMCA is scheduled to be completed in Spring 2006. In addition, a 3,500 square-foot satellite fitness center is located at the Westlake area of the County.

Citizen Square – The Town of Rocky Mount, in conjunction with Franklin County, has developed a community square named Citizen Square on Franklin Street at its intersection with College Street in the Town. The facility is available for community activities, including a farmers market that provides the setting for many events.

Future Local Park Developments

Dr. Henry King Community Park – This 1.5-acre park lies in the center of the Henry Village. Development of this site will include a picnic shelter, walking trail, and small playground.

Windy Gap Community Park – This 12-acre site is adjacent to the future Windy Gap Elementary School on Truman Hill Road in the Boone district of the County. The Board adopted the master plan in Spring 2005. Facilities will include a playground, open play area, picnic shelter, one-half mile walking trail, environmental education facilities, and access to the school site's play areas. Development of this site is expected to be completed in conjunction with the school facilities.

Hales Ford Community Park (LakeWatch) – A 19-acre site provided to the County for general public recreation purposes by the Lakewatch Development Partnership, this location is positioned in the Lakewatch Development equidistance from Hales Ford and Westlake Village. While no master plan exists for this site, typical community park facilities include organized play areas, hardcourt surfaces, hiking trails, picnic shelters, tennis courts, and playgrounds.

Willard Park – The Willard Development Corporation provided ten acres to the County on Route 616 approximately three miles east of Westlake Corner. The slope of this site limits development potential. No timeline for development of this site has been adopted. Potential development could include playgrounds, walking trails, and picnic shelters.

School Systems Facilities

Additional recreational activities are sponsored by the various schools; churches; 4-H Clubs; Scout groups; civic, fraternal, and social organizations that are located throughout the County. Of particular significance are those recreational facilities which are owned and maintained by the Franklin County School Board. There are eleven public elementary schools located strategically throughout the County, each of which has a gymnasium used for basketball and other indoor activities. Six of the elementary schools have fields that are used for baseball/softball as well as fields that are used for soccer. All schools have a general playground area that can be used for a variety of nonstructured activities. A 12-station fitness trail has been installed at Dudley Elementary School as a cooperative effort of the Franklin County Recreation Department and Smith Mountain Lake Ruritan Club. Other School Board facilities at Franklin County Middle School and Franklin County High School are used extensively for recreational purposes. There are two baseball fields; three softball fields; two soccer fields; and two gymnasiums at Benjamin Franklin Middle School which has an East and West Wing on the campus. Franklin County High School has a track, three gymnasiums, a practice field for football/soccer, and a stadium with field for football/soccer. Many of the school playgrounds are open to the general public after school hours.

The County's organized youth and adult recreational programs depend upon use of school facilities for operations. The Franklin County School System and County Parks & Recreation Department have a joint-use agreement that allows each to use the other's facilities first before other private, or semi-private groups. The County makes extensive use of this agreement to run its indoor recreation programming as Franklin County is one of the largest communities in the Commonwealth without a Community Center.

The heaviest programmed athletic facilities in the community are at the school sites and in particular Boones Mill Elementary School and Benjamin Franklin Middle School. The County's football program is based out of the Middle School as are the majority of the County's youth fast-pitch softball programs.

State Parks and Recreation Facilities in the County

In the northern portion of the County is Smith Mountain Lake—the upper of two lakes created by Appalachian Power Company's Smith Mountain Hydroelectric Project. The lake covers approximately 20,000 acres in Franklin, Pittsylvania, and Bedford Counties and has a 500-mile shoreline, 60 percent of which is in Franklin County. The only large lake in the state with a stable water pool level, Smith Mountain Lake supports a variety of water-oriented recreational pursuits. Chief among them are fishing, boating, water skiing, and camping and picnicking at the numerous campgrounds and picnic areas around the reservoir. The lake is kept stocked with trout, striped bass, walleye, and muskellunge by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries which, in addition, has constructed several boat launching ramps in proximity to the lake. A state park on Smith Mountain Lake lies in neighboring Bedford County.

Smith Mountain Lake Park - Franklin County presently leases 37 acres from the Commonwealth on the shores of Smith Mountain Lake in order to facilitate development of the County's first lake park. This park will be the County's only public access for shoreline recreation activities along Smith Mountain Lake. This park is presently under development and is scheduled for completion in summer 2008. Facilities at this park site will include: accessible fishing pier, parking lots, beach, picnic shelters, hiking trails, playgrounds, concession/bathhouse, and possible DGIF (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) presence. Lake markers R17, R19, and R21 flank the new park site that is known as the Smith Mountain Lake Community Park. Development of the park that lies across from Smith Mountain Lake State Park in Bedford County is being supported by a grant from DCR for up to \$87,000, with half of that amount to be provided by the County. These funds will provide shoreline stabilization along a 50-foot causeway leading into the park that will carry all pedestrian and vehicular traffic into the park. VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation) Recreational Access Program funds are available for roadway construction. The total value of the proposed park construction is \$2.8 million. The Parks and Recreation Department anticipates that this park will receive extraordinary high visitation during the summer months.

The Smith Mountain Lake State Park, located in Bedford County across from the Smith Mountain Lake Community Park in Franklin County, attracts visitors from all around. According to a 2003 report, this is the third most visited park within the Virginia State Parks system—drawing from Northern Virginia as well as other states such as North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The 1,248-acre park includes both day and overnight facilities, a 50-site campground, 20 rental cabins, boat rentals, a boat ramp and two launching ramps, a swimming beach which opened in 1989, hiking trails, fishing, a picnic shelter, a visitor center, an amphitheater, and interpretive programs including a Junior Rangers program for children 6-10 years old.

4-H Educational Conference Center (4-H Center) - Since opening in 1965, the W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center, formerly Smith Mountain Lake 4-H Educational Conference Center, a 120-acre peninsula overlooking Smith Mountain Lake, has received a \$1.7 million update. The conference center, which serves a 22-county/city area in central and western Virginia, offers summer camps from Monday through Friday throughout the summer for all of West Central Virginia. Facilities include lodging for approximately 400 people, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, basketball and tennis courts, an athletic field, archery, mini-golf, canoeing, fishing, swimming, horseback riding, a rifle range, and an animal science building with lots of animals during the summer. All lodges are winterized, so activities continue into the fall. Youth,

women's, men's, church, civic, business, and fraternal groups use the Center for weekend retreats and special meetings. There are eight meeting spaces totaling 14,500-square-feet, the largest being 7,130-square-feet, and seating from 20 to 200 persons. In 2000, the Meador Nature Education Center opened to provide environmental education programs and incorporates a number of energy efficient and sustainable technologies which feature a lecture room, "wet" laboratory, resource room/library, touch tanks and Aquaria with live specimens, and outdoor teaching areas. Other educational facilities at the Center include a computer lab with 16 computer stations.

Grassy Hill Natural Preserve - In April 1999, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) obtained 1,392 acres in two adjoining tracts of the Grassy Hill section of Franklin County on State Route 919, which became the state's 27th natural area preserve. Managed by DCR, the tracts have an elevation of 1,800 feet and have been shaped by the force of millions of years of weathering. The rolling landscape has ultra hard rock that has produced chemically harsh soils which favor rare plant communities. Two rare types of plants grow in the area—one is the Smooth Coneflower which is on the federal government's endangered species list, and the second is the Fame flower which is globally rare. Although the area has grown over into a forest of oak, hickory, and pine trees, some of the original prairie-like plant community remains. The site was designated as a natural preserve in September 1999 through a partnership between the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. In the summer of 2004, a 4.5-mile hiking trail was developed as a result of the County's partnership with DCR. According to officials, DCR may build additional hiking trails in the preserve and possibly construct some wildlife observation towers as well as a park area.

Turkeycock Wildlife Management Area - Turkeycock Mountain Wildlife Management Area lies along the ridge of Turkeycock Mountain northwest of Martinsville. Here, the mountain's ridge also forms the boundary between Franklin and Henry Counties, and the management area's 2,679 acres extend into both counties. The area is primarily forested. Elevations range from 1,100 to over 1,700 feet. There are a number of small streams that drain the area and Scout Pond is located near the area's southwestern corner.

Turkeys, as you might expect, plus deer, raccoon, and squirrels are the species primarily hunted on the area. Continuing management will enhance the habitat for these species as well as for a variety of non-game species found on the area. Two parking areas, one at Scout Pond and the other near the center of the area, area accessible seasonally. A number of roads and trails throughout the interior invite foot travel throughout the year. Hiking, wildlife viewing and associated outdoor interests are additional opportunities on the management area.

Adjacent to Philpott Reservoir is the Fairy Stone State Park and the Fairystone Farms Wildlife Management Area. The Wildlife Management Area occupies 5,321 acres in neighboring Patrick County and 460 acres in Henry County. Divided into several parcels, the Wildlife Management Area surrounds much of Fairy Stone State Park and borders portions of Philpott Reservoir. The refuge receives frequent visits by waterfowl throughout the year and provides some unusual opportunities for bird watchers. The Wildlife Management Area and other nearby public lands also provide the opportunity to hike and view an array of upland wildlife species.

Fairy Stone State Park that is 4,868 acres in size lies just southwest of Philpott Reservoir and is centered on a 168-acre lake stocked with game fish such as bluegill, crappie, largemouth bass, and channel catfish. The lake provides a large swimming beach with modern bathhouses, concessions, and playground area for children. Other park facilities include a nature center, amphitheater, picnic areas, campgrounds, vacation cabins, bridle paths, and hiking trails. Fairy Stone was one of the six original Virginia State Parks built in the 1930's and remains to be one of the largest parks today.

Federal Facilities

Booker T. Washington National Monument - Booker T. Washington National Monument preserves and protects the birth site and childhood home of Booker T. Washington while interpreting his life experiences and significance in American history as the most influential African American between 1895 and 1915. The park provides a resource for public education and a focal point for continuing discussions about the legacy of Booker T. Washington and the evolving context of race in American society.

Booker T. Washington National Monument (BOWA) is located in Franklin County. It comprises 223.92 acres and contains a visitor center, administrative offices located within a former school building, an 1890s tobacco barn, reconstructed plantation outbuildings, two marked archeological sites, three small cemeteries, and two walking trails that loop through the cabin area, meadows, and woodlands. Twentieth-century replicas include a slave cabin, smoke house, blacksmith shop, privy, hog pen, duck lot, and chicken house.

Blue Ridge Parkway - One of the nation's most scenic highways, the Blue Ridge Parkway, traverses the mountain crests that form Franklin County's western border. The Parkway, which links the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with the Great Smokey Mountains in North Carolina and Tennessee through its many overlooks, permits the traveler to stop and enjoy the varied scenery. Smart View Recreation Area, one of several stopping points along the Parkway, is located in Franklin County and offers picnicking and hiking opportunities on a 500-acre site. Pine Spur in Franklin County has potential for major recreational area development, according to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; this location is included in the Blue Ridge Parkway Master Plan. The Blue Ridge Parkway is the nation's most heavily traveled road in the National Park Service system, attracting millions of visitors each year.

In October 1993, Franklin County joined a multi-regional planning process effort to develop a plan to protect the visual character of the Blue Ridge Parkway. This plan, which was completed in 1997, was designed to consider impacts of both public and private development within and along the Parkway corridor. Concerns such as viewsheds from the Parkway are considered. In addition, the plan addresses issues such as: balancing protection of Parkway resources with the development potential of privately owned lands running adjacent to the Parkway; examining possible model ordinances for application along the course of the Parkway; assessing the need for protection of viewsheds looking out from the Parkway onto public and private adjacent land areas; and funding approaches for implementing protection strategies. Other issues were brought forward in the planning initiation stages, such as critical lands inventory and land protection through Western Virginia Land Trust.

Adjacent to the Blue Ridge Parkway near Roanoke in western Virginia and bordering Franklin County in the Hardy area, Virginia's Explore Park became a 1,100-

acre family-oriented destination since 1994. Together with a Roanoke River greenway/parkway, Explore Park's preservation and conservation areas in nearby Roanoke and Bedford Counties. Located where the river cuts through the Blue Ridge Mountains at the intersection of the Parkway, the Explore Park offers quality historical, environmental, and recreational activities. The primary area that benefits from the project encompasses the Counties of Roanoke, Bedford, Franklin, and Botetourt, the Cities of Salem and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton. Explore tells the story of America's western-moving frontier, an effort that began the Blue Ridge foothills over 225 years ago.

Philpott Reservoir – On the southern border of Franklin County, seventeen miles southwest of Rocky Mount, is Philpott Reservoir with 2,880 acres and approximately 100 miles of shoreline offering numerous opportunities for various water sports. The Reservoir is a flood control and hydroelectric project constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along the Smith River. Philpott Lake and surrounding lands cover approximately 10,000-acres in Franklin, Henry, and Patrick Counties. Roads throughout the area access a number of public areas which feature boat launching ramps, docks, swimming beaches, campgrounds, and picnic areas. Of the eleven recreation areas surrounding Philpott, six are located in Franklin County.

Much of the area is in the Philpott Reservoir Cooperative Wildlife Management Area totaling approximately 6,000-acres. Hunting is permitted in season except in the wildlife refuge, public recreation areas, and within 1,000 feet in all directions of the Philpott Dam. The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has stocked the reservoir with crappie, bluegill, catfish, walleye, several species of bass, and trout. A strain of rainbow trout has been stocked in Philpott Reservoir in hopes of developing self-sustaining rainbow population. In May 2005, the County agreed to partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a trail project that would extend from Philpott Lake and connect Philpott Dam with the Salthouse Branch Recreational Area. The new hiking trail, which is scheduled for completion in the near future, will be approximately 5.2 miles. The County contributed \$10,000 while the Corps of Engineers provided the remaining \$15,000 to complete the total estimated cost of \$25,000.

Non-Profit Facilities

Phoebe Needles – In the late 1970's Phoebe Needles began operating as a conference center. The Center offers lodging, dining and recreational facilities for all types of groups and organizations. Phoebe Needles is owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia.

Ferrum College – The County partners with Ferrum College on a wide variety of programming at Ferrum facilities when possible.

Glade Hill/Union Hall/Penhook Park – A 4-acre park located ½ mile west of Penhook, this site is presently being restored by the community for general use by the public. Facilities include walking trail, athletic field, concession building and parking lot. Future facilities may include a playground, hardcourt playing surface, and improved ballfield.

Antioch Community Park – This 14 acre site is located on Callaway Road. The park has fallen into disuse and is presently being rehabilitated by a group of community volunteers. The County provided funding to the group to complete a master plan in 2004. The master plan recommends development of the following facilities: walking trail,

youth sports field, open play area, parking lot, picnic shelters, hardsurface playing area, and tennis courts.

North County Recreation Park – A 17-acre park site that has fallen into disuse. The site is in need of significant rehabilitation to be returned to active use. Facilities at this site in the past included: playground, tennis courts, picnic shelter, hiking trails, and bathrooms. Restoration of this site is being discussed by some in this Coopers Cove Community but presently, no action has been taken.

Waidboro Ruritan Club – This club manages a youth ballfield and playground at their facility in Waidboro. The site is presently used by a wide range of citizens for youth sports.

Crossroads Ruritan – Located approximately three miles southwest of Ferrum College, this site offers a wide range of potential for active sports. Present facilities include a clubhouse and two ballfields. The club and the county have worked together to provide access for youth sports teams.

Christian Heritage Academy – Located in Rocky Mount, this private school presently has three soccer fields, a walking track, and an indoor gymnasium. The facilities are presently used by private athletic groups and no public use has been permitted.

Blueways

The development of blueways or canoe trails in Franklin County are beneficial not only now but also for years to come. In addition to providing family outdoor recreation, blueways have been proven to provide an economic boost as well as an added advantage of attracting newcomers to the area.

Pigg River Blueway

Upper This seven-mile stretch runs from Waid Recreation Area to Lynch Park. The float takes approximately four hours to complete and is home to the annual Pigg River Ramble. Fishing along the Upper Pigg is moderate with the exception of the trout stocking program in Waid Park. Due to its setting on the upper extremities of the Pigg River drainage, this section is limited in floating duration to spring and after significant rain events.

Middle This seven-mile section will run from the Town of Rocky Mount Power Dam access point to Colonial Turnpike. Thus far the only public access point secured is from the Town of Rocky Mount. Once future access points are secured, the Middle section will be open for public use.

Lower This section will run from Colonial Road to the County's boundary with Pittsylvania County. No public access has been secured.

Blackwater Blueway

Upper Running from Brubaker Park to Blue Bend Road, this nine-mile section offers a wide variety of scenery and small rapids. Public access is available at both of these locations.

Middle Running from Blue Bend Road to a private take-out above the Town of Rocky Mount's water intake facility. This seven-mile stretch is floatable for the majority of the year and is open for public use.

Lower Scheduled for completion in Fall 2006, this section will run from the US 220 wayside north of Rocky Mount to Hopkins Mill Road at Smith Mountain Lake. Twenty miles in length, this section offers the best rapids and best fishing of any river in Franklin County. Public access will be available at developed put-ins along the route: US 220 Wayside, Farm View Road, and Hopkins Mill Road.

In September 2005, the Pigg River Canoe Trail was named "the best new facility" for localities with a population between 25,000 and 50,000 by the Virginia Parks and Recreation Society. The County also received a 75/25 matching grant from the Virginia Recreational Trail Fund to build five access points along the Blackwater River running from the Brubaker Park to Smith Mountain Lake. The total project cost is estimated at \$40,000 to construct the access points at Grassy Hill Road, Blue Bend Road, the U.S. Highway 220 wayside and ford at Farm View and Round Hill Roads, and at Golden View Road near Brooks Mill bridge. Once the Blackwater River canoe trail is completed, it will be 34 miles long, the longest blueway in the Roanoke Valley.

In 2003, Franklin County utilized funding from the National Park Service to form a task force called the Franklin County Trail Team to determine what is needed to build an interconnecting system of trails. Input solicited at public forums was used to aid in development of the County trail system that connects all the public recreation sites within Franklin County. These sites include the two County parks, the new County park under development at Smith Mountain Lake, the Smart View Recreation Area off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Philpott Lake, and the Turkeycock Wildlife Management Area that borders Franklin and Henry Counties. The team coordinated efforts by the various government agencies that manage those lands. To keep costs down, the team has used volunteer labor, use of public land wherever possible, and are seeking grants for trail construction. Currently, the County in a joint effort with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation constructed a four-mile hiking trail in the Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve just north of Rocky Mount, connecting with the Franklin County YMCA. The trail was completed in September 2005. The Franklin County Trail Plan was adopted in October 2004.

The West Piedmont Regional Bicycle Plan was developed in May 2005 to identify and promote a coordinated network of local and regional bicycle routes within the West Piedmont Region. The Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, the Cities of Danville and Martinsville, and the Town of Rocky Mount along with West Piedmont Planning District Commission and the assistance of the consulting firm of Kimley-Horn corroborated to develop the plan to guide the future of bicycle transportation in the Region. The plan identifies priority projects at the regional and local levels and includes

recommendations for support programs and policies as well as implementation. Further information is available at <http://www.wppdc.org>.

In July 2005, the County began distribution of a new brochure, "Franklin County – The Family Recreation Destination," to promote tourism within Franklin County. The 32-page brochure offers 44 points of interest for tourists including attractions centering on sports, history, arts, crafts, and "the world."

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors also awarded \$29,350 in tourism grants in July 2005 for the 2005-06 budget, to 12 local organizations that stage special events to attract tourists to the area. An impartial panel composed of professors from Ferrum College and Virginia Tech evaluated the applications and made the recommendations for the recipients. The Franklin County Department of Commerce and Leisure Services administers the tourism grant program.

Franklin County's Parks and Recreation Department works under the philosophy that partnerships are critical to the development of comprehensive recreation and parks services in large and diverse communities. The County works with state, local, federal, and non-profit partners engaged in the delivery of parks and recreation services so as to eliminate duplication of services, provide focus and diversity of program operations, and keep the cost to the taxpayers as low as possible.

The County actively seeks private partners to assist in the development and acquisition of new parks and recreation facilities. Volunteers, donors, and corporate partners are vital resources to provide a sustained program of recreation services.

Provision of recreational amenities by private associations should be considered within larger scale recreational planning. However, when private groups charge fees for participation, or limit participation based on membership status, ability to compete, or other factor, the County should recognize these programs as private activities. The County will remain focused on public recreation and parks that are available to all citizens.

As Franklin County continues to grow, demands on its services will increase. The increases will be felt in two directions: 1) increased levels of participation and activity in existing programming, 2) increased demand for a wider variety of programming. The County will need to complete a comprehensive parks and recreation system plan in the near term to better forecast, plan, and meet future demands for parks and recreation services. Through planning the County may be better able to budget and plan for these needs ahead of development and demand.

Library Facilities

In August 1986, the Franklin County Public Library moved into a new 9,610 square-foot building, a half block from the County Courthouse in Rocky Mount. In September 2004, renovation was completed on the former Leggett and Peebles department store facility on Franklin Street to house the Library. The 27,890 square-foot facility houses a collection of 85,000 volumes, with subscriptions to 10 daily newspapers and 225 periodicals. Annual circulation is approximately 190,000 items.

The Library provides both in-house and over-the-phone reference assistance, interlibrary loan service, and quality children's programs. A variety of programs are offered for adults as well. In addition, the Library serves as a center for local history and genealogy materials. There is also a meeting room available for use by non-profit cultural, civic, and educational groups in the community. The library works closely with the Literacy Volunteers of Franklin County to combat adult illiteracy. A Bookmobile serves the outlying areas as well as nursing homes and day care centers. The Bookmobile monthly schedule is published in local newspapers and announced on local radio stations.

Patrons may take advantage of the thirty computers available for public use. These workstations have public Internet access and the standard office suite features (i.e., word processing, spreadsheets, etc.). The Library's on-line subscription databases provide both the elementary school student and the scholar with a wealth of reference sources. From their home or office computer, patrons may search the Library's catalog for titles, authors, or subjects; or they can check their borrower's records and even reserve or renew items online.

Despite its rapid development in recent years, the Library is still severely deficient in both facilities and the ability to deliver services. Moreover, given the size of Franklin County and the public's growing demand for information, branch locations need to be strategically positioned in each quadrant of the County, beginning with the first such facility in the immediate future and continuing with other branches over a period of years. The most urgent need for replacement of its 1989 bookmobile, which has required extensive and costly repairs in recent years, is being met by a HUD grant that will provide a new bookmobile by the end of 2006.

The Stanley Library at Ferrum College is open for public use by Franklin County residents. A major asset at the Stanley Library is the Audio-Visual Center, including satellite television and a nationwide computerized interlibrary search and loan facility. With the assistance of the Franklin County Historical Society, Stanley Library houses the Franklin County Heritage Collection, which is open to the public for research purposes with a special program available.

The Education and Cultural Center at the Booker T. Washington National Monument near Smith Mountain Lake houses a library containing Black history and ecology materials as well as classrooms and audiovisual resources.

The Franklin County area is served by two community colleges, both of which have Learning Resource Centers which include a library. Patrick Henry Community College, located in Henry County, opened a new library in November 1971; Virginia Western Community College, located in Roanoke, constructed a new library facility in 1970. Both libraries are congressionally designated depositories of U.S. Government documents—maintaining current governmental information on a large variety of subjects.

In addition to the facilities referenced above, there is a Law Library located in the Franklin County Courthouse. This facility is supported by County funds.

Education Facilities/Services

Public Schools—The Franklin County School System serves more than 7,300 students, pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 in the following facilities:

- Eleven elementary schools with enrollments ranging from 180-440 students;
- Two middle schools on the same campus serving approximately 1,450 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students;
- The Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration (CATCE), an innovative technology and career center serving approximately 600 eighth and ninth grade students; and
- One high school serving over 2,200 students in grades nine through twelve.

The eleven community-centered elementary schools serve students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades. Each school is staffed by a full-time principal, secretary, librarian, school nurse, and certified teachers. Students also have access to a guidance counselor. Teachers and staff present a program of instruction covering basic skills and additional needs of the students, while providing opportunities for cultural diversity, social awareness, and student pride in self, community, and county. Currently, the Windy Gap Elementary School is being planned for location near the intersection of Jubal Early Highway (Route 116) and Truman Hill Road (Route 678) in the Boone district of the County, as growth in this area constitutes the construction of an additional elementary facility.

Centrally located in Rocky Mount, Benjamin Franklin Middle School consists of two schools—East Hall and West Hall—each housing students in grades sixth through eighth grades. The middle school concept provides for an easier transition from elementary to high school and offers a program designed to meet the unique physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs of students of language arts, social studies, science, and math. A broad range of exploratory, physical education, vocational, and fine arts offerings are also available. A comprehensive guidance program helps students develop positive self-esteem and responsible decision-making skills.

The \$5.3 million Franklin County School System's Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration (CATCE) in Rocky Mount is considered unique because it represents a community effort to prepare students for the workforce of the 21st century. In June 2002, The Franklin County School Board renamed the Center as the "Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration" in honor of retired Franklin County Division School Superintendent Leonard A. Gereau. The Gereau Center combines challenging academic standards and integrate critical thinking skills with technological skills in preparing all eighth grade and selected ninth grade students for the work force of the 21st century. The Gereau Center's uniqueness is derived from the way district leaders were able to envision changes in the skills necessary for the emerging work force and bring together several components: curriculum development, state-of-the-art hardware and software, parent and industry involvement, and a new building designed to support the infusion of technology into learning. Curriculum emphasis at the Gereau Center is targeted on a "principles of technology" concept with a specific focus on exploration, problem solving, critical thinking and blending of the academic and technology curriculum. An aviation and aerospace program has been added to introduce eighth graders to the science of flight through many different

perspectives with a strong concentration on the application of math, science, and technology Standards of Learning. In May 2004, The Gereau Center was featured in a national publication as an example of “creative and innovative thinking in school design.” The center was one of 13 schools nationwide to be recognized in the publication entitled “*Schools as Centers of Community: A Citizen’s Guide for Planning and Design.*” Recently, the Gereau Center received federal and state grants totaling approximately \$315,000 for a proposed environmental learning and alternative energy center for students, builders, and the community.

Franklin County High School, located in Rocky Mount, serves students in ninth through twelfth grades. Students are offered an array of academic challenges, social opportunities, and extracurricular programs which prepare them for life after graduation from the high school setting. Academic offerings at this level are varied and provide a wide range of learning experiences. At the high school level, students may pursue vocational/technology choices, academic and general courses, or liberal arts classes. Many students at Franklin County High School pursue dual enrollment in classes through Virginia Western Community College or Patrick Henry Community College.

All public schools in Franklin County are fully accredited by the Virginia Department of Education. Franklin County High School enjoys long-standing accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. All schools develop a Comprehensive School Improvement Plan with goals and objectives aligned with the division’s mission to ensure the continuing growth of student achievement.

Franklin County ranks in the top fifteen school divisions in Virginia in test scores and academic performance. In addition, the County’s public school system was designated as one of sixteen *Outperforming School Districts* in Virginia because students scored higher than expected on reading and math tests with the school division’s diverse population.

The Roanoke Valley Governor’s School for Science and Technology, an educational experience for students from neighboring regional school divisions, is designed for advanced ninth through twelfth grade students who are planning to pursue careers in the areas of science or mathematics. Higher level courses, both at the Center and on-line, are offered to enrolled students. The Governor’s School also offers speakers from industry and colleges for technology colloquiums, field trips to technological sites, and mentors. Participating students from Franklin County High School attend the Governor’s School in the morning and return to the high school for lunch and their remaining afternoon classes.

The Career and Technical Program, offered to students in grades six through twelve, is responsive to the business community. An advisory committee of business leaders helps provide direction to the programs to ensure that the community needs are met. The division offers courses in the following areas: Trade and Industrial Education; Business Education; Marketing Education; Agricultural Education; Family and Consumer Science; Technology Education; and Health Occupations.

Special Education Programs and Services are available in all schools in the school system. Additionally, related services are provided, if needed, to ensure a successful education program in the areas of speech and language therapy, physical and occupational therapy, psychological services, and counseling.

The Adult Education Center is for adults who desire to complete their schooling or who wish to upgrade their skills. Students are provided assistance in such areas as, but not limited to: language usage, reading, mathematics, social studies, science, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Spanish, and basic computer skills. Many of the offerings are free or at a low cost. Classes are also offered for adults who want to prepare for the GED test.

The Gifted and Talented Education Program in Franklin County Schools provides varied opportunities for identified students with differentiated instruction, accelerated materials, and enrichment programs throughout the school year. The focus of the program includes the enhancement of the academic curriculum, developing creativity, improving problem solving, reasoning and logic, as well as an exploration of the arts.

Franklin County Public Schools Volunteer Program welcomes the assistance of the community in order to meet the challenges faced by today's students. School volunteers make a real difference in the educational experience of young people. The benefits of volunteer involvement of time, attention, and energy freely given are vast and varied. School volunteer programs have a primary goal of helping schools provide the best possible education for the community's children. The contributions of school volunteer partners are limitless. The creative teacher-volunteer team will develop many ways to increase learning opportunities for students.

School Partnerships are an important component of educating children in the Franklin County Public Schools. School partnerships are voluntary formal linkages between the private sector and schools in which educational opportunities are expanded and enhanced. Any private or public concern or not-for-profit institution that wishes to partner with a school can be considered. Partners may include industries, businesses, banks, hospitals, newspapers, civic or religious groups, or individuals. The school division actively seeks partnerships at both the elementary and secondary levels.

School Enrollment Projections—Each year, the Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia releases a report entitled *Summary of Historic and Projected Membership*. The publication contains projections of annual school enrollment for Virginia and its 133 local school districts for the fall membership as well as previous years or historic figures. New projections are made and released between March and April each year in order to take into consideration the most recent data available on births and school membership. Projections are made for each grade, over a 5-year cycle. It includes fall membership projections by grade for the state and its school districts and previous fall enrollment for the state and its school districts.

The report notes that, as planners and administrators seek to accommodate additional students, the cost to the state and local school districts will be substantial. Some districts may need to build new school facilities and renovate old ones. Some may be forced to augment facilities with mobile classrooms. Those with particularly high increases may even need to consider split shifts or year-round classes. Along with new facilities, school districts will also need more teachers.

Further complicating the situation, enrollment increases, particularly those resulting in changes in the numbers of births, are not uniform from grade to grade. This

requires that planners and administrators pay careful attention and maintain flexibility in order to utilize facilities to the best advantage.

The report included the following historic statistics and projections for Fall Enrollment Membership in the Franklin County School System for the period from September 30, 1995-September 30, 2010:

Historic & Projected Fall Enrollment Membership
Franklin County School System
September 30, 1995 – September 30, 2010

September 30	Membership/Projection
1995	6,758
1996	6,813
1997	6,947
1998	6,962
1999	7,050
2000	7,140
2001	7,121
2002	7,149
2003	7,178
2004	7,183
2005	7,228
2006	7,307
2007	7,314
2008	7,343
2009	7,365
2010	7,347

Source: *Summary of Historic & Projected Membership*, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, March 2006.

Several factors influence the accuracy of the school enrollment projections, according to the Center for Public Service. Like all projections, school enrollment projections are derived from historical data and are based on the assumption that recent trends will continue in the future. Unexpected and therefore unpredictable events during the next two decades could significantly alter their accuracy. School enrollment projections are particularly vulnerable to such events, since policy changes such as the age at which a child can enter kindergarten or changes in the minimum age for leaving school are relatively frequent. Changes in the dropout rate will also affect the accuracy of projections. Because projections are based on historical data, errors in those data can reduce the accuracy of projections. In addition, partly because random variations and the likelihood of unpredictable events increase with time, projections are most accurate at the state level and least accurate at the level of individual grades in the local school districts.

Colleges—Franklin County is served by two community colleges. Patrick Henry and Virginia Western Community Colleges are two-year institutions of higher education established under a statewide system of community colleges in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The service areas of both colleges extend into Franklin County. These colleges operate under the policies established by the State Board for Community Colleges and with the support and advice of a local Community College Board. They are financed primarily by state funds supplemented by federal funds and by contributions from the various local political subdivisions, individuals, and businesses within their

service area. Programs of study include associate degrees in arts, sciences, and applied science as well as certificate and career study programs.

Patrick Henry Community College is located in Henry County on a 137-acre campus which includes an Administrative and Classroom Building, a Learning Resource Center, a Gymnasium/Auditorium, a Fine Arts Center, the A. L. Philpott Technical Center, the F. Burness Frith Economic Development Center, and a Motor Sports facility. The A. L. Philpott Technical Center houses a Computer-Integrated Manufacturing Laboratory. A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Research Center, an industrial research center, utilizes the college's Computer-Integrated Manufacturing facility and provides a means of studying ways to aid Southside Virginia industries. The Center serves Southside Virginia which consists of 20 counties, from Patrick in the west to Southampton in the east, and five cities within the region. The F. Burness Frith Economic Development Center is a facility dedicated to workforce training and development programs to promote economic development initiatives in the region. The PHCC-Arrington HP Engine Academy provides training for the development of motor sports engineering and is the only facility of this type in the Virginia Community College System.

Virginia Western Community College is located on a 70-acre campus in southwest Roanoke. The South Campus has five buildings, four of which were acquired in 1966 from the Roanoke Technical Institute. Webber Hall, the Occupational/Technical Building was built in 1980. The North Campus has three buildings including an Administration Building, Library, and Science Building. With the steady demand on area community colleges and private enterprises to supply computer-training classes, Virginia Western Community College began an Institute for Business Development in 1984. Some businesses have helped the college purchase the software they wanted their employees to use in exchange for discounted training. The college offers on-campus credit courses at its regular tuition rate or customized non-credit classes for a negotiable fee.

Both community colleges are members of the Virginia Community College System and are approved by the State Board for Community Colleges. The State Council of Higher Education of Virginia has approved their associate degree curricula offerings. In addition, both colleges are members of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges and are fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Ferrum College, located in the community of Ferrum in Franklin County, was founded in 1913 as a mission school for children of the mountain region who were receiving no formal education. Throughout the years, the institution has grown from a secondary school—called Ferrum Training School—to a junior college, to its present-day status as a four-year institution fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

A private 700-acre liberal arts institution affiliated with the United Methodist Church, Ferrum offers bachelor's degrees (B.S., B.A., B.S.W.). The co-educational college has approximately 1,000 students. Ferrum's broad range of majors—both traditional and specialized—is similar to what is found at much larger institutions. Ferrum offers programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Social Work degrees. The College offers majors in some distinctive areas not found in many small colleges such as environmental science, international studies,

recreation and leisure, and Russian. Perhaps the most unusual of all is the major in agriculture with its 134-acre, 60 cow dairy farm operated by students and staff. More familiar offerings include accounting, biology, psychology, history, Spanish, business, political science, and English.

Ferrum College's twenty-one campus buildings and spacious surroundings include student residence halls, a recently-renovated student center, Vaughn Chapel, a 5,000 seat football stadium, modern classroom and laboratory facilities, the Stanley Library, the Performing Arts Center, the Grousbek Music Center, a gymnasium/athletic complex that includes basketball courts, weight rooms, and a 25-meter swimming pool, a new fitness center, and the Ferrum Riding Center. In May 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture approved a \$14.6 million loan for new construction and renovations that the College will undertake to make some major facility improvements due to be completed in late 2006. The construction projects include two new residence halls with apartment-style living spaces and community areas, improvements to several existing residence halls, a major transformation of Franklin Hall into a state-of-the-art alumni and student center expanded to include an alumni convention center and internet-café, and renovations to Beckham and Roberts Halls updating classrooms with state-of-the-art technology and conference rooms.

In June 2004, Ferrum College announced that it would begin a degree completion program for bachelor's degrees in business administration with an emphasis in management and criminal justice at the Roanoke Higher Education Center this fall. With the appropriate number and type of prior college credits transferred to Ferrum College, students may complete a bachelor's degree in fewer than 18 months. All classes will be held at the Roanoke Higher Education Center.

In December 2005, Ferrum College announced that the Ferrum College Board of Trustees approved a plan for community and economic development, which would continue the College leadership role in improving facilities for the institution. The plan is called the "Blue Ridge Village" which will be constructed on College owned property. The plan is an arrangement of retail and service entities. Plans for the Blue Ridge Village include health services, a grocery store, restaurants, shops, a bank, and residential construction. Under the Blue Ridge Village plan the Ferrum Farm Museum will be relocated to the north side of Route 40, contiguous to the Blue Ridge Institute on property currently occupied by College maintenance facilities.

Workforce Training—In 1999, Franklin County began addressing workforce development concerns by investing significant funds and efforts to establish the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium. The Consortium brought together local and regional entities including local governments, the local school system, colleges, and community-based agencies for the purpose of creating a "single service delivery system," specifically addressing issues of employment, training, and education for the citizens and employers of the regional community. The Consortium Partners include: County of Franklin, Town of Rocky Mount, Ferrum College, Patrick Henry Community College, Virginia Western Community College, Franklin County Public Schools/Adult Education Center, Virginia Employment Commission, Goodwill Industries (WIA Contractor), Chamber of Commerce, Franklin County Department of Social Services, STEP Incorporated, Southern Area Agency on Aging and Department of Rehabilitative Services. Subsequently, the Commonwealth of Virginia designated the Consortium as a

One Stop Center for the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board. Consortium services include:

- Higher Education, Certifications and Degree Programs for Higher Wage Jobs—Accounting, Administration Support, Architectural Drafting, Business Management, Criminal Justice, Finance, HVAC, Information Systems Technology, Leadership Academy, Microcomputer Applications, Plumbing and Welding.
- Employment and Recruitment Services—prescreening and job placement services, job listing service, assessment of skills and aptitudes; career development and planning; on-site interviewing, on-line employment resources and specialized job fairs.
- Workforce Development and Business Training Services—assessment of workforce needs; customized training; organizational consulting; coordination and administration of a local training fund; business retention, expansion and relocation assistance; workshops on critical business issues; business development and assistance to start-up companies; basic skills upgrade; GED and Diploma Preparation and Testing; On-the-Job Training and Business Plan Referral Service.

The Consortium is currently housed in a “leased space” located in the upper level of the County’s West Campus High School facility. The Consortium has limited classroom, instructional and training space. Despite such space limitations, the Consortium Partners have demonstrated continued support of the center’s operational budget and in-kind support by providing on-site staff representatives including: college faculty, e-learning specialists, workforce coordinators, information technology technicians, and computer laboratory assistants. Other support personnel include: career counselors, dislocated worker representatives, disadvantaged adult and youth case managers, Veteran representative, rehabilitation counselor, unemployment and job search representatives.

The services and programs offered by the partners of the Workforce Development Consortium are customer driven. Citizens and employers are surveyed through a separate process for the purpose of determining how best the Consortium can address the needs of the community.

As of the spring of 2005, Franklin County had received two grant awards totaling \$1,461,426 from the Virginia Tobacco Commission’s Economic Development Program for development of a new \$6 million workforce development center facility. Additionally, the County received statewide recognition when Governor Mark Warner announced a Community Development Block Grant Award in the amount of \$700,000 to support the project. Additional funding in the amount of \$1 million is being sought from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. The new center will expand existing classroom, training, and instructional space by including eleven classrooms, three computer laboratories, a compressed video classroom and multiple learning modules. The new center will be designed to facilitate the learning environment that will support regional clusters including: information technology and instruments; computer technology; hospitals/medical services, chemicals and plastics; telecommunications; research and development and technical design; professional/scientific/technical services; securities and insurance; nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing.

Students may earn four-year degrees through Old Dominion University's Teletechnet Program. The TELETECHNET program is an interactive distance education program which has revolutionized higher education. It enables students who live in numerous areas to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from a fully accredited university without leaving their areas of residence. Through 21st century technology, Old Dominion provides the resources of a large university with personal attention. Site directors administer the program at each location, with registration, financial aid, and advising available to assist students in their academic pursuits. TELETECHNET students complete their first two years of college through their local community colleges or other accredited institutions and ultimately receive their bachelor's or master's degree from Old Dominion University. The program is designed for part-time attendance, catering to the adult student who may be working full-time and carrying other responsibilities.

Old Dominion University (ODU) has also started an Experiential Learning Program (ELP) which provides new options for students seeking academic credit for college-level knowledge gained through work and life experience. ODU recognizes that learning can occur at various times and places in one's life. ELP will allow degree-seeking students to earn college credit for previous work experience, military training, volunteer and community activities, and other types of education.

Founded in 1992 as the A.L. Philpott Manufacturing Center, Virginia's Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership (VPMEP) is a state organization that provides technical and business assistance to Virginia's small- and medium-sized manufacturers. VPMEP assists in the areas of quality systems, strategic planning, manufacturing systems, industrial sales and marketing, and organizational effectiveness/workforce development. Small manufacturers, which have accounted for the majority of manufacturing sector job growth in Virginia and the nation over the last 25 years, need this kind of help because they do not have the technical and business staff of larger manufacturers. For this reason, they lag the productivity growth of large manufacturers by as much as 30 percent on average. VPMEP's revenues are generated from federal and state funding and fees charged for services. CIT (Center for Innovative Technology) is VPMEP's key statewide partner providing funding and statewide coordination of resources. Federal funding for VPMEP is provided through the National Institute of Standards and Technology through the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, a nationwide network of centers similar to VPMEP that assist smaller manufacturers in becoming more competitive. VPMEP's areas of expertise in development and implementation include Strategic Management Services, Quality Management Systems, Lean Enterprise, and People Systems. News and general information on MEP is available on the Internet at <http://www.vpmep.org>.

Over the past decade, economically disadvantaged youth and adults received training and employment services under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) through the Central Piedmont Employment Consortium (CPEC). Effective July 1, 2000, the Workforce Investment Act replaced JTPA. Franklin County joined the Fifth District Training and Educational Consortium and its Workforce Investment Board, serving several localities to the north of Franklin County. In the summer of 2002, the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium in Rocky Mount opened a One-Stop Center. In January 2002, an open house was held at Franklin County's Community Technology Center on the west campus of the Franklin County High School in the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium. Franklin County was one of 1,300

applicants for a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to establish the technology center for the general public. The County was one of only 147 grant recipients to provide access to computers in areas that are economically distressed.

The County's school system provides instruction to students in a variety of vocational subjects including agriculture, business, health occupations, marketing, technology, and trade and industrial education. Evening classes are offered for adults in a variety of work-related courses. An active Vocational Advisory Council within the County assists the school system in conducting on-going needs assessments to upgrade and assess vocational programs.

Government Services

Franklin County is the seventh largest county in area in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It operates under a Board of Supervisors-County Administrator form of government. The County is divided into seven magisterial districts, each of which is represented by a supervisor elected to serve a four-year term on the Board of Supervisors. The Board has control over local taxation, budgets, borrowing, general county policy, and adoption of local plans and ordinances.

The County Administrator is employed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors—which is responsible for determining the policies governing the financial and business affairs of the County. The Administrator oversees the day-to-day operations of the County government and serves as advisor and Clerk to the Board of Supervisors. Public services are provided by the following departments: Public Safety (fire, rescue, animal control, and central dispatch), Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Library, Building Inspections (inspections/building maintenance), Planning and Zoning, Solid Waste Management (landfill/collection), County Administrator's Office, and Information Technology. The County's GIS (Geographic Information System) became operational in May 2004 to provide visual data and information in the form of computerized mapping, photos, and printed data to the general public as well as a shared framework for all business processes in the County's government offices. Additional GIS mapping and information will be provided by Anderson and Associates in the development and maintenance of a website that will display tax parcels, parcel data such as the name and address of the property owner, and other pertinent information. The site will be available to the public in the near future.

A high degree of citizen participation in local government is encouraged by the Board of Supervisors through the appointment of local residents to numerous advisory boards and commissions which assist in the operation of these public services. Local residents serve on the School Board, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, the Housing Board, Social Services Board, Industrial (Economic) Development Authority, and the Tri-County Lake Administrative Commission (TLAC). In addition, a number of local residents participate in the planning and activities of the Franklin County Litter Control & Recycling Program.

The Sheriff (law enforcement, jail, central dispatch), Treasurer, Commonwealth's Attorney, Commissioner of the Revenue (real estate and land use program), and Circuit

Court Clerk are constitutional officers, elected by the voters. The School Board is also elected by the voters of Franklin County.

Franklin County is a member of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission and the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission—two of 21 planning districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Other member jurisdictions within the West Piedmont Planning District are Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania Counties; the Cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the Town of Rocky Mount. The Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke; the Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; and the Towns of Clifton Forge and Vinton are member local governments of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. The Commissions serve as coordinating bodies for the member localities, planning for the delivery of needed services. In June 1992, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, designated the West Piedmont Planning District as an Economic Development District.

The Franklin County Administration Building is located at 40 East Court Street in Rocky Mount. The Finance offices are located in the Virgil Goode Building at 70 East Court Street, which is adjacent to the County Administration Building. Also, the Planning and Community Development and Building Departments are located at 120 E. Court Street in the same complex as the other County offices. The offices of the Commissioner of Revenue and Commonwealth's Attorney are located in the Courthouse Addition. The offices of the Treasurer and Clerk of the Circuit Court are located in the Franklin County Courthouse. The office of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission is located at 1100 Madison Street in Martinsville and the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission is located at 313 Luck Avenue, S.W., in Roanoke.

Community Facilities Summary

- The Franklin County Sheriff's Department is the agency responsible for the protection of life and property, prevention and detection of crime, apprehension of offenders, and regulation of conduct in the County. A substation recently became operational in the Smith Mountain Lake area at the Westlake Town Centre. The department also provides community-oriented services such as D.A.R.E, Class Action, resource officers for the Middle and High Schools, Neighborhood Watch Organization, and many other programs. The Sheriff's Department participates in the Cardinal Criminal Justice Training Academy based in Salem. In addition, the Virginia State Police maintains a contingent of nine officers in the County. In 1992, the West Piedmont Regional Homicide Task Force was formed in conjunction with other neighboring jurisdictions. It consists of a pool of specially trained investigators that provides manpower, expertise, and equipment that can be rapidly deployed.
- The County has established a Department of Public Safety made up of four divisions: Emergency Management Division, Communications, Fire Division, and Emergency Medical Services/Rescue Division. A Hazardous Materials Team also has been established. In 1992, the construction of a new Communications Center was completed. The County's Enhanced 911 system went into service in late 1992. At present, the County maintains thirteen fire companies and twelve EMS districts. In October 1992, the Board of Supervisors approved a mutual aid

agreement with neighboring counties for rescue personnel to cross jurisdictional boundaries to answer calls.

- The Cities of Danville and Martinsville, the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, and the Towns of Boones Mill, Chatham, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, Rocky Mount, and Stuart along with West Piedmont Planning District Commission and the consulting firm of Dewberry have been developing a “West Piedmont Hazard Mitigation Plan.” The plan is to help promote public awareness about local hazards and risk and to assist localities in adopting procedures and ordinances to help with hazard mitigation. The adoption of the plan by the localities is expected by spring of 2006.
- Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital, a 37-bed facility, has undergone a major expansion. Several medical centers operate in the County to provide medical services on an outpatient basis. The Free Clinic of Franklin County opened in the Town of Rocky Mount in 1992 to provide primary health care services and medications for uninsured or underinsured Town and County residents. The County is served by three medical clinics—the Boones Mill Medical Center, the Burnt Chimney Medical Center, and the Lewis-Gale Clinic in Moneta.
- Several nursing homes and an adult care facility provide services in the County. Eldercare, a private 180-bed nursing facility, and the Franklin Healthcare Center which opened its new \$2.5 million, 60-bed, 20,703 square-foot addition in October 2003 provide skilled and intermediate care. Lakeview Manor Home for Adults Incorporated in Wirtz serves adults of all ages. Plans were announced in 2004 to construct a 120-bed assisted living facility to be known as the Lake Ridge Retirement and Rehabilitation Center at Westlake. In addition, Trinity Mission Health & Rehabilitation of Rocky Mount is located within the Town of Rocky Mount and licensed to care for 180 persons. Red Oak Adult Care Facility on U.S. Route 220 has a 90-bed facility. In Boones Mill, Vista View is a licensed adult care provider.
- The Franklin County Health Department provides programs to promote good health and prevent disease and disability. Many activities and services which include Home Health Programs, Baby Care, Community health education programs, environmental health, and others are offered to residents.
- A variety of public and human resource services are available to residents in the County. These include the Franklin County Department of Social Services, Piedmont Community Services Board, Southern Virginia Mental Health Institute, Franklin County Family Resource Center, and STEP to mention a few.
- The County maintains and supports a countywide recreation program. The Franklin County Recreation Park, a 115-acre, county-owned park, is located approximately four miles south of Rocky Mount. The County developed Waid Park, a 510-acre facility at the end of State Route 800, off Route 640 (Six Mile Post Road). This facility preserves the historic Old Carolina Road, Waid Plantation and stagecoach stop and includes athletic fields, walking trails, and picnic shelters. The County Recreation Department and Board of Supervisors are in the process of developing the Smith Mountain Lake Community Park on a 37-acre site at Smith Mountain Lake across from the Smith Mountain Lake State Park in Bedford

County. In addition to these park facilities, there are facilities available in the Town of Rocky Mount as well as the numerous recreational opportunities provided by both the Smith Mountain Lake and Philpott Lake areas.

- One of the nation's most scenic highways, the Blue Ridge Parkway, traverses the County's western border. The County has joined a multi-regional planning process to develop a plan to consider impacts of both public and private development within and along the Parkway corridor. Smart View Recreation Area, which lies along a portion of the Parkway, provides picnicking and hiking activities on a 500-acre site.
- As Franklin County continues to grow, demands on its services will increase. The increases will be felt in two directions: 1) increased levels of participation and activity in existing programming, 2) increased demand for a wider variety of programming. The County will need to complete a comprehensive parks and recreation system plan in the near term to better forecast, plan, and meet future demands for parks and recreation services. Through planning the County may be better able to budget and plan for these needs ahead of development and demand.
- Numerous arts and cultural opportunities are available to County residents through the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum at Ferrum College, the National Park Service at Booker T. Washington National Park, and other organizations as well as through the Franklin Guild which promote both visual and performing arts through fine arts.
- There are numerous historic/architectural landmarks in the County. The County has an active historical society, which is the Franklin County Historical Society.
- The Franklin County School System provides educational programs and opportunities to students in grades K-12 through its eleven elementary schools, one middle school, CATCE, and one high school. The local school system is one of the few divisions in the Commonwealth that is fully barrier free.
- A new Workforce Development Consortium Center is being constructed in the Town of Rocky Mount.
- Ferrum College, located in the County, is a four-year institution offering bachelor's degrees. The County is also served by two community colleges—Patrick Henry Community College in Henry County and Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke City. There are more than 20 four-year institutions within a 75-mile radius of the County including Virginia Tech, Radford University, Hollins University, Roanoke College, and Averett University.
- Franklin County has several future needs that were discussed in this section. One being Public Safety needs to recruit, retain, educate, and motivate quality staff and volunteers, and to provide consistent county-wide EMS response within service response standards; secondly, the additional demands of the Parks and Recreation Department to provide facilities and programs for the County's growing population; next, the needs of the Library to expand with additional branches in each quadrant of the County; and lastly, the Public Schools to provide sufficient facilities and services for the increasing youth population in expanding areas of the County.