

SECTION 3 – REGIONAL PROFILE

This section of the updated Plan provides a general overview of the region, to provide the reader with a better understanding of the people, assets and makeup of the region. It consists of the following eight (8) subsections:

- Area at a Glance
- Geography
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Population
- Housing
- Employment and Income
- Declared Disasters

This section was updated with new information, including more up-to-date Census data and new maps. Members of the Project Management Team and participating localities reviewed the data presented in the Plan update for accuracy.

For the data tables in this section, except for Tables 3.1 and 3.3, data for the Town of Farmville is incorporated into Cumberland and Prince Edward Counties.

Area at a Glance

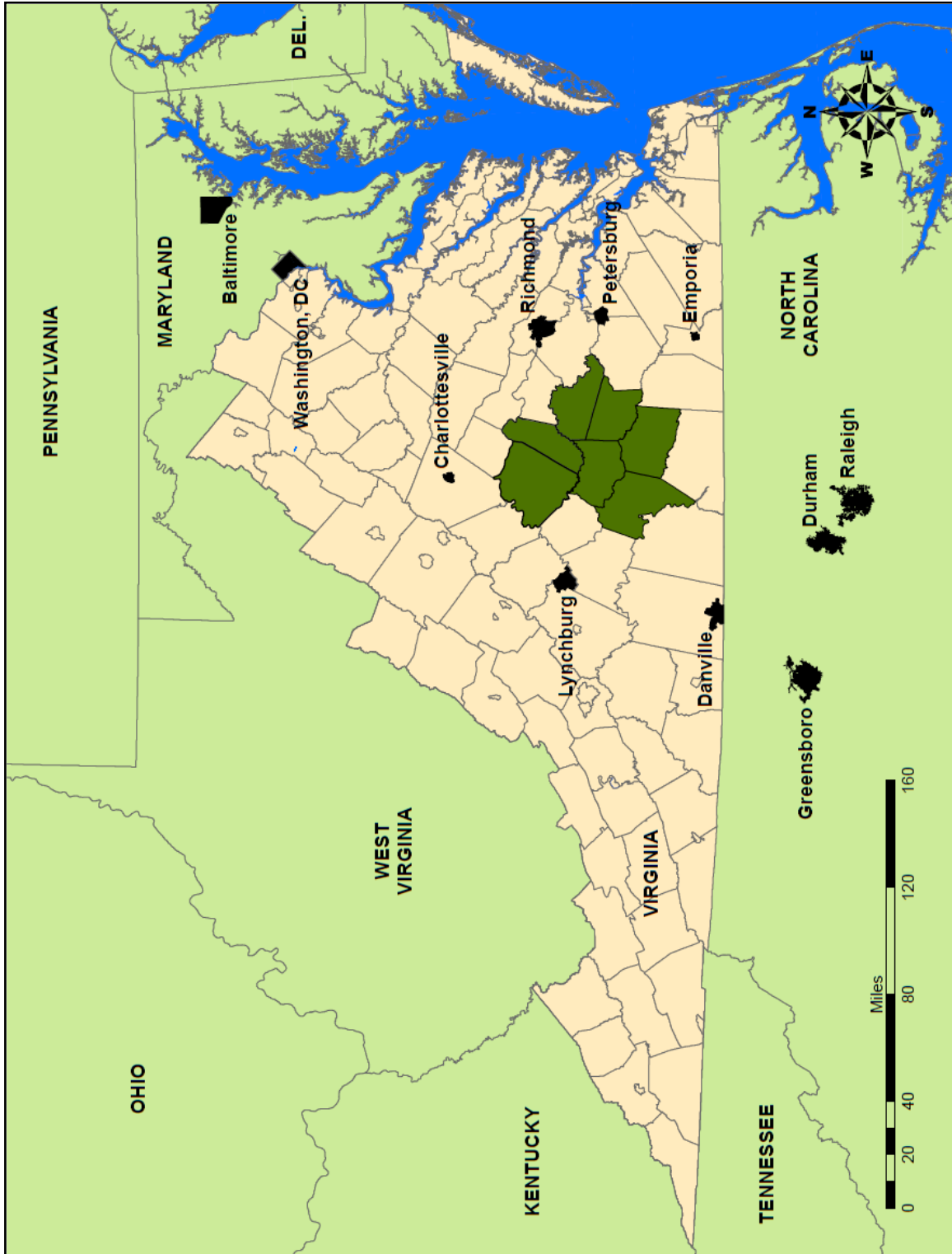
The Piedmont Region of Virginia (which includes Planning District 14) is named for the rolling foothills that comprise the picturesque landscape of the region. Planning District 14, which is where the localities participating in this plan are located, is also referred to as “Virginia’s Heartland.” The region is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in south-central Virginia. It is comprised of the counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward, and the incorporated towns of Blackstone, Burkeville, Charlotte Court House, Crewe, Dillwyn, Drakes Branch, Farmville, Kenbridge, Keysville, Phenix and Victoria. The name of the Piedmont Planning District Commission was changed on July 1, 2005 to the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC). The CRC works with many of these jurisdictions to encourage and facilitate local government cooperation and state-local cooperation in addressing, on a regional basis, problems of greater than local significance. **Map 3.1** provides a general overview of the region.

This region, known as “Virginia’s Heartland” because of its geographically centralized location, is characterized by rolling pastures, charming towns, scenic rivers and attractive byways. Residents can boast a high quality of life due to small-town conveniences and comforts, ample outdoor recreation, and abundant natural resources while having appealing urbanizing centers nearby without experiencing many of the headaches that can be found in larger cities. Using the Town of Farmville as roughly the geographic center of the region, Richmond, Virginia (the state capital) is located approximately 60 miles to the east; Lynchburg, Virginia, is 47 miles to the west, Washington, D.C. is 180 miles to the north; and Norfolk, Virginia, is 150 miles to the southeast.

The maps on the following pages denote the counties within this region, and show their proximity to major localities outside of Virginia.

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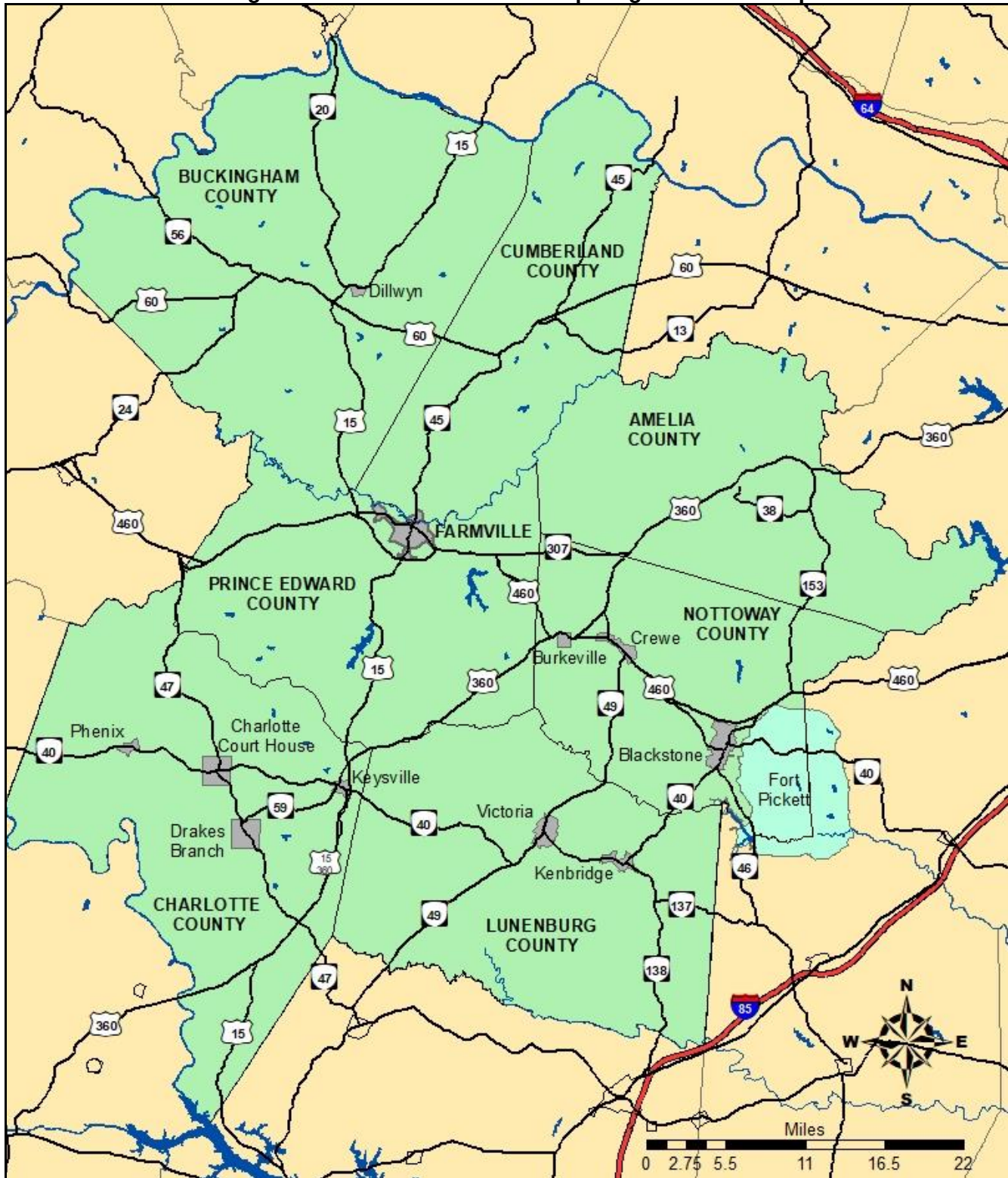
Map 3.1
Location of Planning District 14



Map created by CRC – May 2010

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Map 3.2
Planning District 14 – Localities Participating in 2023 Plan Update



Map created by CRC – June 2022

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Geography

The counties covered in this Plan Update total approximately 2,807.2 square miles in area. **Table 3.1** shows a breakdown of this land area and population density by jurisdiction.

Table 3.1
Town and County Population Numbers

Locality	Area (in square miles)	2020 Population	Persons per square mile
Amelia County	355.0	13,265	37.37
Buckingham County	580.9	16,824	28.96
Dillwyn	0.7	436	622.86*
Charlotte County	475.0	11,529	24.27
Charlotte Court House	4	505	126.25
Drakes Branch	4.1	533	130.0
Keysville	1.2	807	672.5
Phenix	1.1	232	210.91
Cumberland County	297	9,675	32.58
Lunenburg County	431.8	11,936	27.64
Kenbridge	2.0	1,112	556.0
Victoria	2.9	1,734	597.93
Nottoway County	314.7	15,642	49.7
Blackstone	4.6	3,352	728.7
Burkeville	1.0	417	417.0
Crewe	2.0	2,262	1,131.0
Prince Edward County	352.8	21,849	61.93
Farmville	7.4	7,473	1,009.86

Source: Virginia Assoc. of Counties, U.S. Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center

*Population density for the Town of Dillwyn is based on a land area of less than one square mile, which is why the persons per square mile figure is showing higher than the total population.

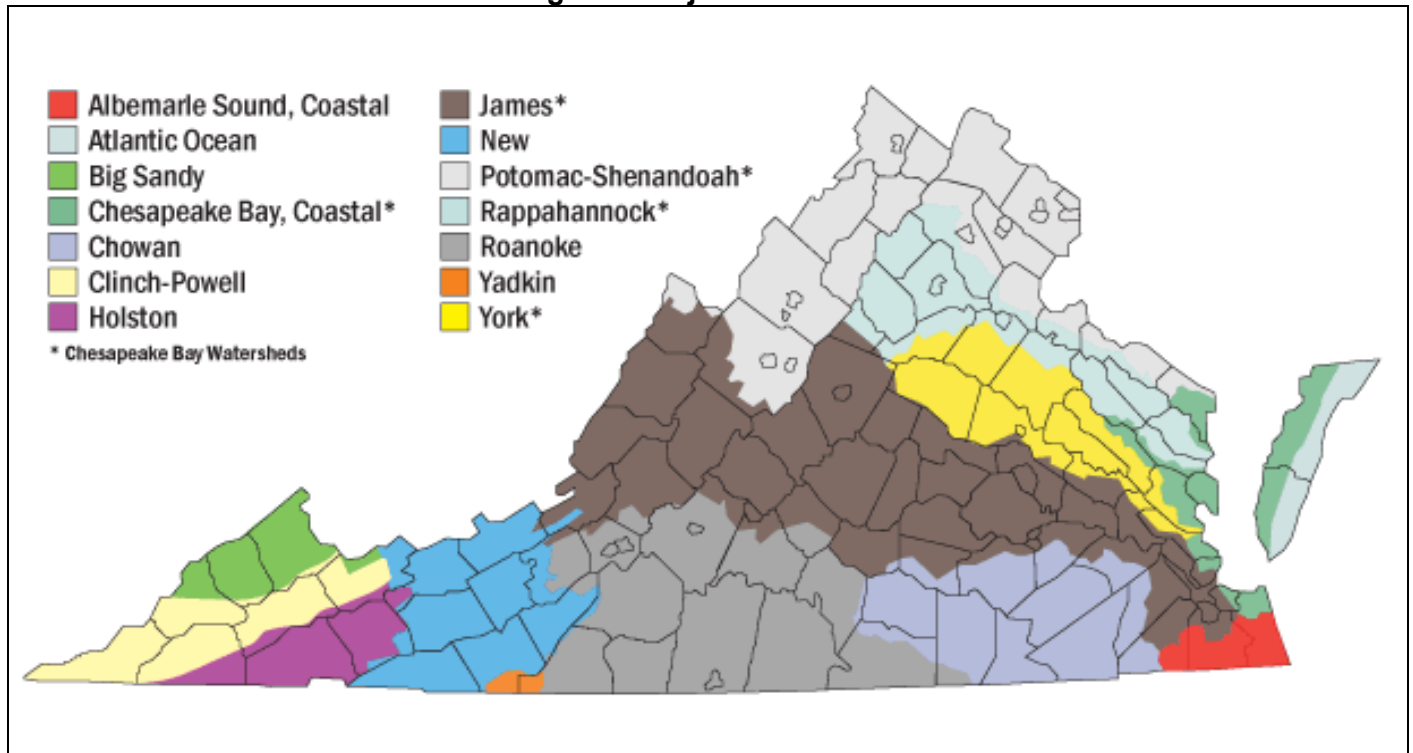
The dominating geographic characteristic for the region can be found in the rolling hills that give the Piedmont Region its name. These rolling hills are only occasionally interrupted by creeks, branches and rivers and even less common are small towns that dot the landscape. **Map 3.3** shows the major river basins in the region. Major rivers in the Piedmont Region include:

- Appomattox River
- Roanoke/Staunton River
- Nottoway River
- Meherrin River (North, Middle, and South)
- James River
- Bush River
- Little Nottoway River
- Little Willis River
- Willis River

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- North River
- Sandy River
- Slate River

Map 3.3
Virginia's Major Watershed's



Source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Website, 2007
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-water/wsheds>

Land Use

Despite some suburban development occurring in the region, much of the land cover remains forested or agricultural. **Table 3.2** shows land cover percentages for each county using the most recent satellite imagery available. The data is from 2019, the most recent available. This table can also be found in *Section 6, Vulnerability Assessment*, as well as a land use/land cover map for the region.

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Table 3.2
Planning District 14 Land Use Land Cover Data
(As a percentage of total land cover)

Land Cover Type	Amelia	Buckingham	Charlotte	Cumberland	Lunenburg	Nottoway	Prince Edward
Barren Land	0.1	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.1	0.1	0.1
Cultivated Crops	6.3	0.5	2.3	1.6	2.1	1.8	0.5
Deciduous Forest	14.8	23.5	16.0	18.9	13.0	15.8	21.0
Developed, High Intensity	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.1	0.3	0.2
Developed, Medium Intensity	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.5
Developed, Low Intensity	0.8	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.9	1.9	1.4
Developed, Open Space	3.8	3.5	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.5
Emergency Herbaceous Wetlands	0.3	0.08	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3
Evergreen Forest	20.1	18.3	16.7	14.4	23.9	17.9	11.8
Hay/Pasture	12.3	11.0	16.0	13.0	11.2	13.1	14.7
Herbaceous	4.9	9.03	7.0	6.8	7.2	5.1	14.7
Mixed Forest	22.3	24.1	24.9	28.1	28.2	26.6	28.2
Open Water	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.6	1.1
Shrub/Scrub	6.0	6.7	5.6	5.1	6.3	5.7	5.6
Woody Wetlands	7.3	1.6	5.1	5.7	2.4	5.4	4.8

Source: National Land Cover Dataset

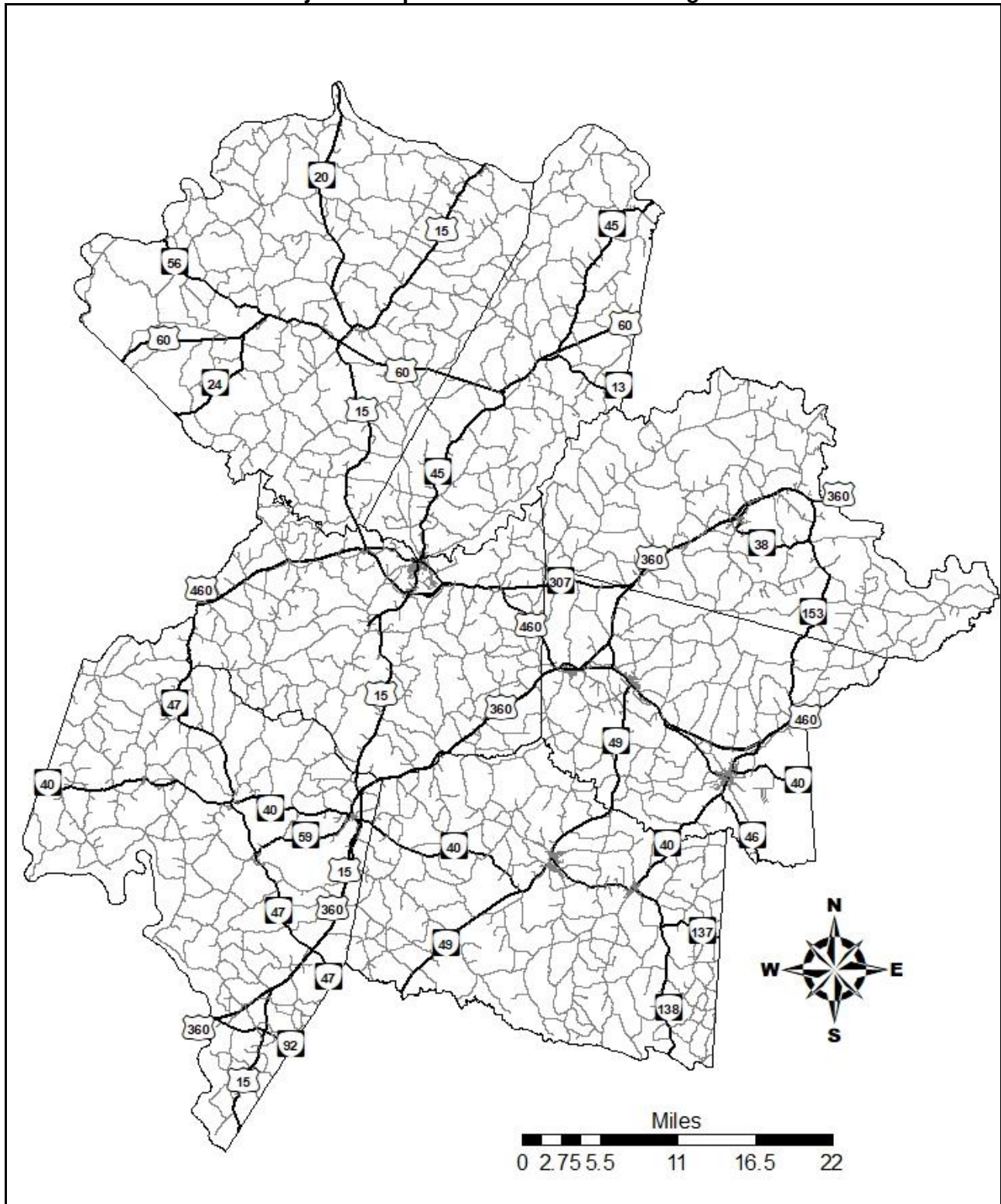
Transportation

The region is connected by a loose network of primary and secondary roads. While there is no Interstate access into the region, several important U.S. highway routes traverse the region to make roadway travel easy. Highway 15 bisects the region on a north/south axis. Highway 360 merges with Highway 15 for a short distance and it crisscrosses the region from the southwest to the northeast. Other U.S. highways in the region include U.S. 60 and U.S. 460. There are also many important local Virginia routes in the region. Important State Routes (SR) of note are SR 20, SR 40, SR 45, SR 47, SR 49, SR 56, SR 153, and SR 307. **Map 3.4** shows the major transportation routes in the region.

Other transportation modes in the region include regional airports and a series of rail lines. The closest international airports are located in Richmond, Virginia, and Raleigh, North Carolina. The Farmville Regional Airport is the largest airport in the region and serves as an important hub for commuter flight activity. Allen Perkinson Field is a U.S. Army airfield located just outside of Blackstone at Fort Barfoot (formerly know as Fort Pickett).

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Map 3.4
Major Transportation Routes in the Region



Map created by CRC – June 2022

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Population

The total population of the region in 2020, according to U.S. Census data, was 100,720. This was a decrease of approximately 3.7% percent from the 2010 Census total population of 104,609 for the region. By contrast, the entire State of Virginia saw its population increase by 7.9 percent during this period. These seven counties retain a low-density population of 35.72 people per square mile (based on 2020 population data and a total land area of 2,807.2 square miles for the region). That is much lower than the average population density for the State of Virginia which is 201.79 people per square mile (based on the 2020 population for Virginia and a land area of 42,774 square miles). Most localities in the region saw a decline in population from 2010 to 2020, with Kenbridge (-11.5 percent) seeing the largest percentage drop among towns and Charlotte County (-8.4 percent) seeing the largest percentage drop among counties. Prince Edward County saw the largest decrease in terms of raw numbers (1,519). Among the few localities that saw an increase in population, Amelia County has the largest growth during this period in terms of both growth rate (+4.5%) and raw numbers (575). **Table 3.3** shows growth rates for all counties and localities in the region.

Table 3.3
Population Growth in the Region

Locality	2010 Population	2020 Population	Percent Change	Persons Added/Lost
Amelia County	12,690	13,265	+ 4.5%	+ 575
Buckingham County	17,146	16,824	- 1.9%	- 322
Dillwyn	447	436	- 2.5%	- 11
Charlotte County	12,586	11,529	- 8.4%	- 1,057
Charlotte Court House	543	505	- 7.0%	- 38
Drakes Branch	530	533	+ 0.6%	+ 3
Keysville	832	807	- 3.0%	- 25
Phenix	226	232	+ 2.7%	+ 6
Cumberland County	10,052	9,675	- 3.8%	- 377
Lunenburg County	12,914	11,936	- 7.6%	- 978
Kenbridge	1,257	1,112	- 11.5%	- 145
Victoria	1,725	1,734	+ 0.5%	+ 9
Nottoway County	15,853	15,642	- 1.2%	- 193
Blackstone	3,621	3,352	- 7.4%	- 269
Burkeville	432	417	- 3.5%	- 15
Crewe	2,326	2,262	-2.8%	- 64
Prince Edward County	23,368	21,849	- 6.5%	- 1,519
Farmville	8,216	7,473	- 0.9%	-743
Virginia	8,001,024	8,631,393	+ 7.9%	+630,369
NATION	308,745,538	331,449,281	+ 7.4%	+ 22,703,743

Source: U.S. Census/Weldon Cooper Center

Given the lack of population growth in the region, there has been little change to the development patterns for the localities covered under this Plan Update. The Town of Farmville has seen some business development in recent years; however, the Town is taking steps to minimize the impact of development in flood-prone areas (for instance, working to purchase and remove homes located in the floodplain area). The Town of Blackstone is staring to see new business development related to the recent opening of

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the FAST-C facility at Fort Barfoot. A check with other localities in the region revealed little or no new development in areas prone to flooding or wildfire. Cumberland County reported two (2) houses built near the Appomattox River during the past five (5) years, but no other development has been reported in the region. Cumberland County staff advised that any construction near the river would most likely fall under farm exemptions.

All localities use available tools to regulate where new development can go and what form it takes. This includes zoning and subdivision ordinances, floodplain ordinances, and all applicable codes (including Uniform Statewide Building Codes). In regards to mitigation against wildfires, local government staffs work to educate citizens, to the extent possible, on best practices to keep private property safe from fire wildfire damage. Charlotte County staff advised that they had some concerns after a number of dams were upgraded to a “high hazard” classification. To address this, the County reached out to the Southside Soil & Water Conservation District for input, and then incorporated additional regulatory language in the County’s Zoning Ordinance.

Underserved communities are always a priority for emergency management personnel. Local emergency management departments have had, and continue to have, staff complete training on emerging issues. Additionally, Cumberland County is researching the implementation of a community paramedicine program. In the meantime, the County has partnered with the local Department of Social Services and the Virginia Department of Health to provide our citizens in underserved communities with better access to healthcare and other services they may need.

Population projections from the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), done in conjunction with the Weldon Cooper Center, are based on 2010 Census figures. The latest projections go out to 2040. **Table 3.4** shows population projections for 2030, 2040, and 2050.

Table 3.4
County Population Projections

County	2020 Population	2030 Population Projection	2040 Population Projection	2050 Population Projection
Amelia	13,265	13,642	14,359	15,292
Buckingham	16,824	16,265	16,617	17,218
Charlotte	11,529	10,322	9,705	9,234
Cumberland	9,675	9,165	9,354	9,683
Lunenburg	11,936	10,801	10,046	9,441
Nottoway	15,642	15,210	14,945	14,903
Prince Edward	21,849	20,039	20,792	21,856

Source: Weldon Cooper Center

Housing

Since 2000, FEMA has spent more than \$200,000 in this region for temporary housing, home repairs and other disaster-related needs for individuals and families (source: FEMA). With increasing housing values and an increasing number of housing units in the region, damage estimates from storm events can be expected to rise to higher levels. The number of housing units has risen gradually in each county since 2000. Prince Edward County has the most housing units with 9,435. This can be attributed to

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having the largest town in the region (Farmville) and two higher education institutions (Longwood University and Hampden Sydney College) located in the County.

Table 3.5
Number of Housing Units

County	2000	2015*	2019*
Amelia	4,609	5,414	5,591
Buckingham	6,290	7,263	7,444
Charlotte	5,734	6,298	6,345
Cumberland	4,085	4,650	4,723
Lunenburg	5,736	5,933	5,995
Nottoway	6,373	6,699	6,775
Prince Edward	7,527	9,269	9,435
TOTAL	40,354	45,526	46,308

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (*denotes American Community Survey estimate)

The median house value for all seven counties from 2015 through 2019 was \$145,782.46 (based on estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, averages for all six counties), which is lower than both median values for houses across the State of Virginia (\$282,800.00) and across the Nation (\$229,800.00).

Table 3.6
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

County	2013*	2015*	2019*	Change 2013-2019
Amelia	\$180,700	\$170,800	\$201,400	+11.46%
Buckingham	\$128,800	\$131,800	\$130,300	+1.2%
Charlotte	\$98,900	\$94,300	\$111,900	+13.1%
Cumberland	\$142,400	\$137,800	\$146,000	+2.5%
Lunenburg	\$100,400	\$106,600	\$119,500	+19.0%
Nottoway	\$137,600	\$132,900	\$151,400	+10.0%
Prince Edward	\$153,400	\$151,500	\$159,700	+4.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (*denotes American Community Survey estimate)

Employment and Income

The business climate in this region is unique. Historically, manufacturing was the top source of employment for the region. However, due to a variety of factors (technology, outsourcing, changes in the economy, etc.), manufacturing has been on the decline in recent years. As evidenced in **Table 3.7**, manufacturing is still a major source of employment in the region, but government (local, state and federal) and health care are also employing significant numbers of people. There is a large base of experienced and skilled employees that serve as an asset for existing manufacturers and for new manufacturers considering locating in the region. The three institutions of higher learning (Longwood University, Hampden-Sydney College, and Southside Virginia Community College) provide job opportunities for those employees skilled in education and research. There is also a healthy retail environment, and service industry jobs are available throughout the region. CENTRA Southside Community Hospital provides professional medical services for the region.

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Table 3.7
Major Employers in the Region (as of September 2021)

County	Top 5 Employers
Amelia	• Amelia County School Board • Wellsprings at Amelia • County of Amelia • Food Lion • Goodman Truck and Tractor Company
Buckingham	• Buckingham County School Board • Commonwealth of Virginia, Buckingham Correctional Center • Commonwealth of Virginia, Dillwyn Correctional Center • County of Buckingham • Kyanite Mining Corp.
Charlotte	• Charlotte County School Board • County of Charlotte • Genesis Products, Inc. • Kituwah Manufacturing LLC. • Commonwealth of Virginia, Southside Virginia Community College.
Cumberland	• Cumberland County School Board • County of Cumberland • Tindol Construction • Gemini • Johnny R. Asal Lumber Company
Lunenburg	• Virginia Marble Manufacturing • Lunenburg County Public Schools • Commonwealth of Virginia, Lunenburg Correctional Center • Benchmark Community Bank • County of Lunenburg
Nottoway	• Commonwealth of Virginia, VA Ctr. for Behavioral Rehabilitation • Commonwealth of Virginia, Nottoway Correctional Center • Nottoway County Public Schools • Commonwealth of Virginia, Piedmont Geriatric Hospital • U.S. Department of Military Affairs
Prince Edward	• Commonwealth of Virginia, Longwood University • CENTRA Health • Prince Edward County Public Schools • Wal-Mart Associates, Inc. • Hampden-Sydney College

Source: Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2021

However, the region also displays some unhealthy economic characteristics. **Table 3.8** shows the poverty level of each county in the region as of 2019. As the numbers show, the region compares unfavorably with the State as a whole (and, to a large degree, the nation). Another economic indicator for the region is the unemployment rate. **Table 3.9** provides a summary of each county's unemployment rate for 2015 and 2020 in comparison with the average rates in Virginia and nationwide.

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Table 3.8
Poverty Levels, 2019

County	Percent of Individuals in Poverty	Percent of Families in Poverty
Amelia	10.7%	7.8%
Buckingham	15.8%	11.1%
Charlotte	23.7%	14.7%
Cumberland	17.8%	13.4%
Lunenburg	16.4%	10.1%
Nottoway	18.3%	13.2%
Prince Edward	18.6%	10.4%
Virginia	9.9%	7.1%
United States	13.4%	10.6%

Source U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Table 3.9
Annual Unemployment Rate (2015 and 2020)

Area	2015	2020
United States	5.3%	8.1%
Virginia	4.4%	6.2%
Amelia County	4.4%	5.8%
Buckingham County	5.8%	7.3%
Charlotte County	5.7%	5.5%
Cumberland County	5.1%	6.0%
Lunenburg County	5.0%	5.2%
Nottoway County	4.5%	5.0%
Prince Edward County	6.2%	6.4%

Sources: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Virginia Employment Commission

In all the counties covered for this Plan Update, median income increased between the years 2009 and 2019. The highest median household incomes can be found in Amelia County (\$57,946).

Table 3.10
Median Household Income

Locality	2009	2014	2019	Change 2009-2019
Amelia County	\$48,897	\$55,870	\$57,946	+18.5%
Buckingham County	\$38,128	\$38,484	\$49,025	+28.6%
Charlotte County	\$37,591	\$34,820	\$40,573	+8.0%
Cumberland County	\$38,430	\$41,484	\$47,469	+23.5%
Lunenburg County	\$35,963	\$37,881	\$44,303	+23.2%
Nottoway County	\$40,776	\$35,911	\$45,535	+11.7%
Prince Edward County	\$36,242	\$37,238	\$47,202	+30.2%

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

Declared Disasters

Table 3.11 contains a list of federally declared disasters in Planning District 14 since 1969.

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**Table 3.11
Declared Disasters Since 1969**

Locality Affected	Date of Disaster Declaration	Description
Buckingham County	08/23/1969	Severe Storms and Flooding (Aug. 1969)
Entire Region	06/23/1972	Tropical Storm Agnes (June 1972)
Amelia County	10/10/1972	Severe Storms and Flooding (Oct. 1972)
Buckingham County	10/10/1972	Severe Storms and Flooding (Oct. 1972)
Cumberland County	10/10/1972	Severe Storms and Flooding (Oct. 1972)
Lunenburg County	10/10/1972	Severe Storms and Flooding (Oct. 1972)
Nottoway County	10/10/1972	Severe Storms and Flooding (Oct. 1972)
Entire Region	03/10/1994	Severe Ice Storms and Flooding (Feb. 1994)
Charlotte County	04/11/1994	Severe Winter Ice Storm (March 1994)
Buckingham County	04/11/1994	Severe Winter Ice Storm (March 1994)
Prince Edward County	04/11/1994	Severe Winter Ice Storm (March 1994)
Entire Region	02/02/1996	Blizzard of '96 (Severe Snow Storm, Jan. 1996)
Entire Region	09/16/1996	Hurricane Fran and Associated Severe Weather (Sept. 1996)
Lunenburg County	09/28/1999	Hurricane Floyd (Sept. 1999)
Entire Region	02/28/2000	Severe Winter Storms (Jan. 2000)
Prince Edward County	05/05/2002	Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (April – May 2002)
Entire Region	09/18/2003	Hurricane Isabel (Sept. – Oct. 2003)
Entire Region	09/12/2005	Public Assistance from Hurricane Katrina Evacuation (Aug. – Oct. 2005)
Lunenburg County	09/22/2006	Tropical Storm Ernesto (Aug./Sept. 2006)
Buckingham County	04/27/2010	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2010)
Amelia County	9/30/2011	Hurricane Irene (Aug. 2011)
Lunenburg County	9/30/2011	Hurricane Irene (Aug. 2011)
Nottoway County	9/30/2011	Hurricane Irene (Aug. 2011)
Entire Region	7/27/2012	Straight Line Winds (June/July 2012)
Amelia County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Charlotte County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Cumberland County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Lunenburg County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Nottoway County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Prince Edward County	12/18/2018	Tropical Storm Michael (Oct. 2018)
Entire Region	4/2/2020	COVID Pandemic (started Jan. 2020)
Amelia County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Charlotte County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Cumberland County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Lunenburg County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Nottoway County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Prince Edward County	5/10/2021	Severe Winter Storms (Feb. 2021)
Amelia County	3/11/2022	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (Jan. 2022)
Buckingham County	3/11/2022	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (Jan. 2022)
Charlotte County	3/11/2022	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (Jan. 2022)
Cumberland County	3/11/2022	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (Jan. 2022)
Prince Edward County	3/11/2022	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm (Jan. 2022)

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency