

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The City of Lexington, as an independent municipal corporation in Virginia, is responsible for the provision of its own local public services. While the City provides many of these services directly, it also is involved in the provision of some of them regionally with Rockbridge County and sometimes Buena Vista. In addition, there are a number of nonprofit agencies that provide needed services to local and area residents.

**GOAL: Provide high quality services and well-maintained facilities for City residents and businesses while minimizing the impact of such on the environment in which we live.**

**GOAL: Continue to investigate methods for providing governmental services more efficiently.**

**GOAL: Continue to improve the methods of communicating governmental services with the citizens.**

## CITY FACILITIES

City services are provided from several locations in the City and in the surrounding Rockbridge area. Most of the City's administrative offices are located in City Hall, at 300 East Washington Street. They include the City Manager's Office, the Department of Planning and Development, the Finance Department, the Commissioner of the Revenue, the Treasurer, the Electoral Board and Registrar and Offices for Human Resources, Information Technology and the City Arborist. In addition, there is a mid-sized meeting room on the first floor that is available for public use. The building was constructed in 1892-3 and was used for over sixty years as a school. In 1960 it was renovated for use as the town hall. Since then it has undergone numerous upgrades and renovations.

The City's public safety services are housed at three different locations throughout the City. The Police Station, built in 2003, is located just behind City Hall and houses all Police functions. The Fire Station, opened in 2002 and located on South Main Street, houses the Lexington Volunteer Fire Department. The Rescue Squad was consolidated into the Fire Station in 2010. Their previous building on Spotswood Drive, constructed in 1987 is available for other uses.

The City's Public Works Department is located on a 10 acre tract of land at the end of Shop Road. It houses the equipment and supplies for the street maintenance, refuse collection, water

and sewer, equipment maintenance and other services provided by the Public Works Department. An administrative office building was added to the complex in 2008.

The City owns two school buildings, the Lylburn Downing Middle School on Diamond Street and the Harrington Waddell Elementary School on Pendleton Place. Waddell was originally built in 1927 and was used as the City's high school. In the 1960's it was converted to use as an elementary school and has not received any significant renovation since the 1980s. LDMS was originally built in 1949 as an addition to the black school. It was converted to a middle school in the 1960s and has undergone two major renovations and additions since its construction.

The Lylburn Downing Community Center, adjacent to the middle school, houses the School Board offices and the Office on Youth. Originally built in 1927 as the black school, it was used by the school system until the 1980's when it was transferred for City use. In 2003, it was included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The small building on White Street, which housed the School Board offices until 201, now provides administrative and program space for the Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization (RARO), our regional recreation provider

**OBJECTIVE: Provide for appropriate maintenance of all City facilities and property.**

**OBJECTIVE: Provide new or expanded facilities when the existing facilities no longer meet the needs of the community or must be upgraded to meet increased state or federal standards.**

The City should ensure through its capital and operating budgeting processes that sufficient resources are provided to ensure a high level of maintenance of City facilities and properties. Proper maintenance extends the useful lives of facilities and improves user satisfaction. When evaluating maintenance projects, special emphasis should be placed on improvements that will reduce the energy consumption of the facility.

**OBJECTIVE: Ensure that the operation and maintenance of all facilities are performed with the goal of reducing the impact of these facilities on the environment.**

In order to plan and budget for future new and renovated public buildings, the City should develop a replacement schedule for its existing buildings.

## **WATER SYSTEM**

The Maury Service Authority (MSA) was created by Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista to own and operate the water treatment facility, which was constructed in 1973, located just west of Lexington. The Authority is an independent body composed of two members

appointed by Rockbridge County, two by Lexington and one by Buena Vista. The Authority treats and sells water to both the City of Lexington and the Rockbridge County Public Service Authority. The source of the water is the Maury River. The plant has an existing treatment capacity of 2.9 million gallons per day (MGD) with the potential to be ungraded to 4.4 MGD.

Treated water is pumped by the MSA to two water storage tanks owned by the City, a 3 million gallon tank on Enfield Road and a 1 million gallon tank on Houston Street extended just outside the City. They also pump to a County tank north of Lexington along Route 11. The Houston Street tank also serves the residential developments in the County located to the south of the City. Average daily water usage in the City of Lexington is approximately 900,000 gallons a day and has remained steady for the past few years. Although a significant number of new customers have been added, water conservation measures by some of our largest users have offset the usage by new customers.

The principal limitations to the existing water system are the ability of the MSA to transmit water from the plant to our main tank on Houston Street. Usage growth in the County has limited the MSA's ability to fill Houston Street by its main line, requiring the City to pump continuously from a pump station at Enfield Road. This severely limits the City's ability to refill the tank should there be a large loss of water from a line break or a fire. There is also significant concern about supply should the MSA's main transmission line be interrupted. Improvements planned by the County PSA should help with some of the problem, but a loop system with additional storage and redundant method of supply is the long term solution. The City, County and MSA are presently working to develop a project that will meet these long term needs for both customers.

**OBJECTIVE: Work with the County and the MSA to develop a water distribution and storage project that meets the long term needs of both customers and allows the MSA to transmit the maximum capacity of the treatment plant.**

## SEWER SYSTEM

In 1996, the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County expanded the Maury Service Authority's charter to include construction and operation of a wastewater treatment plant. A 3 million gallon per day plant was completed in 1998 with half of the capital cost paid by each jurisdiction. The City operates the plant on a contractual basis for the MSA. The MSA is presently in the midst of a project to upgrade the treatment capabilities of this plant due to new nutrient loading standards imposed by the State. The average daily flow of the plant is slightly less than 1 million gallons per day.

Much of the City's collection system is old and subject to infiltration and inflow (I&I) of storm water into the sewer system after significant rains. When this occurs, the capacity of the collections lines are taxed and treatment of this significantly higher flow becomes more difficult. The City has been investing significant funds into projects for repairing and replacing leaky sewer lines for over 15 years. While this has helped limit total flow being sent to the plant, the sharp peaks still cause

significant operational problems and create additional expenditures. It is anticipated that the City will continue to renovate and upgrade its collections system to reduce this I&I problem.

**OBJECTIVE: Continue to upgrade the sewage collection system to reduce the amount of storm and ground water entering the system, thereby minimizing the disruption to the wastewater plant from peak flows.**

## **SOLID WASTE**

The City provides weekly refuse collection for residential customers. Pick up of brush, limbs and bulky items such as appliances is accomplished once a week. Commercial collection is six days a week with a special fee imposed for this service. Pick up of bulk trash is by special arrangement. Beginning in October of 2008, the City began a curbside collection program for recyclables such as paper, bottles, cans (both ferrous and aluminum) and plastics. The City also collects leaves during the fall and takes them to Boxerwood where they are composted and returned to the community at no charge.

Refuse is disposed of at the landfill which is owned and operated by the Rockbridge Regional Solid Waste Authority. The City pays a tipping fee per ton of refuse to use that facility. By the end of 2012, the landfill will need to close and be replaced by an alternative form of disposal. The County will need to make a decision on the location of a transfer station by the end of 2008 so that trash from our region can be transported to another permitted landfill. With the implementation of a transfer station, the cost for disposing of trash will rise significantly. This will place greater pressure on all the region's localities to divert refuse from the transfer station to a recycling program and will make collection and disposal of recyclables more cost effective. The City presently recycles about 25 percent of its refuse. By 2013, it is hoped that this can be raised to 40 percent.

**OBJECTIVE: Recycle 40% of our solid waste stream by 2013.**

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

### **Police**

The Lexington Police Department is located to the rear of the City Hall property off of Fuller Street and was constructed in 2006. The department is the primary law enforcement agency of the City and consists of 16 sworn officers, a Special Enforcement Officer and two clerical/administrative positions. In addition to normal law enforcement functions, they are responsible for enforcing parking regulations, animal control and various nuisance regulations.

## **Fire**

The Lexington Fire Department is located at 708 S. Main Street in a building that was completed in 2002. It is entirely a volunteer agency with between 20 and 30 active volunteers. In addition to responding to fires, vehicle accidents and hazardous material spills in both Lexington and a large area surrounding the City, the department is a “first responder” agency, providing advanced life support medical assistance when requested by the rescue squad agencies. Approximately 750 to 800 calls per year are handled by the department. They use three engines, a ladder truck, a utility vehicle, a brush truck and a Chief command vehicle to carry out their responsibilities. The City and County (through a Joint Services Agreement) provide the operating funds for the department. Capital expenditures for the vehicles are presently the responsibility of the City.

Recently, the Lexington Fire Department has requested that the city hire a paid chief position to provide administrative and command direction to the department. The Chief is the Emergency Services Coordinator for the City.

The Lexington Fire Department is one of eleven volunteer fire departments providing protection to the Rockbridge region. Services are coordinated through mutual aid agreements and protocols established by a regional Fire Chief’s Association. In 2007, Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista jointly funded a consultants study of emergency services. Numerous recommendations were made to improve fire, rescue and communications services. The County has now established an Emergency Services Committee consisting of representatives from each constituency to review the report and recommend actions to be taken.

## **Rescue**

The Lexington Volunteer Life Saving Department is located on Spotswood Drive in a building constructed in 1986. It consists of from 20 to 30 volunteers as well as a paid component operated by Carilion Patient Transportation Services. Two paid staff are on duty seven days a week from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm., with the volunteers handling the calls in the evenings. The department uses four ambulances, a utility truck and two general purpose vehicles to respond to around 2,000 calls for service per year. In addition to serving the residents of the City, they have primary responsibility for responding to calls in a large portion of Rockbridge County. The City and County (through a Joint Services Agreement) provide the operating funds for the department and, historically, large capital purchases have been made from funds raised by the squad. The cost for the paid service is generally covered by billings to the insurance companies for the service provided.

## **Emergency Operation**

The City is responsible for providing emergency response and recovery services during either natural or man-made disasters. The City Manager is the Director of Emergency Services and the Police

Chief is the Emergency Services Coordinator. The City has developed an Emergency Operations Plan detailing the planning for emergency responses. In the event of an emergency, the City would work closely with other emergency coordinators in our area, the State Department of Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Local emergency planning is coordinated through a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) consisting of numerous agencies and providers. In addition to performing local emergency exercises, this group has developed and distributes a brochure on what to do in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak.

### **Emergency Communications**

The emergency communications for our police, fire and rescue departments is provided by the Rockbridge Regional Communications Center. This regional agency is a partnership between Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County. It is managed by a seven member board, is physically located in Buena Vista next to their Police Department and employs 14 personnel to provide this crucial service.

**OBJECTIVE: Improve the regional coordination of fire and rescue services by working through the County's Emergency Services Committee.**

**OBJECTIVE: Strengthen the ability of volunteers to provide fire and rescue services by hiring a paid Director of Emergency Services to manage both the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.**

## **ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**

### **Courts**

The City of Lexington participates in a regional court system, along with the County of Rockbridge, composed of the Circuit Court, the General District Court and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations branch of the District Court, along with their respective Clerk's offices. Also included in this regional effort is the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, the Adult Probation Office and the Juvenile Probation Office. All are housed in the new Rockbridge County Courthouse (with the exception of Adult Probation), completed in January of 2009 and located on the corner of Nelson and Randolph Streets. This new facility should meet the Court's needs for space for the next 30 to 40 years.

### **Incarceration**

The City is a partner in the Rockbridge Regional Jail with the City of Buena Vista, the County of Rockbridge and the Towns of Goshen and Glasgow. The existing facility, opened in 1988, is rated at 56 beds, but can realistically hold 100 prisoners. The present average daily jail population is around 90 to 95 prisoners. As a result, the Jail Commission is proposing an expansion of the facility to 184 beds. At the time of this writing, not all the participating jurisdictions have agreed that such an expansion is desired. If an expansion is not approved and the prisoner population continues to

grow at the rate it has over the past ten years, the Jail will have to contract with other local jails to hold our prisoners at a significant cost to the localities.

The City of Lexington also participates, with six other jurisdictions, in a regional juvenile detention facility that is located in Verona. This facility, which can hold up to 38 juveniles was opened in 2003. It presently is holding an average of 15 to 20 juveniles per day. A portion of the facility has been modified to operate a program for evaluating the needs of youth who receive services funded by the Comprehensive Services Act program.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **Recreation**

The Rockbridge Regional Recreation Association (RARO) was established in 1988 by the Lexington City Council as the regional recreation provider for both the City and County. It is an independent recreation authority governed by a seven member board and funded by both jurisdictions. It operates a wide variety of sports programs, primarily geared to the youth of the community. In 2007, RARO was given the additional responsibility of managing a year round swimming pool located at Brewbaker Field. RARO offers 33 different programs serving over 1,500 individuals per year.

There are also several other private organizations that provide recreational opportunities for local residents in the areas of swimming, soccer, tennis, basketball, baseball and lacrosse. Many additional opportunities are available through the local YMCA and Maury River Senior Center. The YMCA is located in the College Square shopping Center located on Route 11 north of Lexington. The Maury River Senior Center is operated by the Valley Program for Aging Services and is located in a facility in Buena Vista.

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

The City of Lexington owns and operates seven parks, encompassing 33.5 acres, an outdoor swimming pool, an indoor 25 yard, six lane pool, a community center, numerous athletic fields, a nature trail and five playground facilities. In addition, there is active open space at four schools within the City and facilities at the high school just outside the City. In addition, both Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute have facilities that are available for use by the public or RARO. The YMCA also has a fitness facility available on a membership basis. The City owns two tracts of land in Rockbridge County that are available for hiking, bird watching, hunting and the enjoyment of nature. Brushy Hills is a 600 acre hill just to the west of the City that has hiking trails developed and is on the state birding trail. There is a trail head located on Spring Valley Road with a kiosk and trail maps. Moore's Creek is a 140 acre tract of land which contains a 32 acre

reservoir located 12 miles south west of the City. It is available for hiking, and fishing and hunting with a permit.

Table 9-1 summarizes the location, size and type of recreation facilities owned by the City and Table 9-2 describes those facilities not owned by the City but available for use by some or all city residents.

**TABLE 9-1  
CITY OF LEXINGTON  
CITY OWNED  
RECREATION FACILITIES**

LOCATION	SIZE	FACILITIES
Brewbaker Athletic Complex	13.3 ac.	Outdoor swimming pool, indoor swimming pool, athletic fields, playground (Kidsplayce), skatepark
Richardson Park	4.5 ac.	Playground, pavilion
Downing Middle School	3 ac.	Athletic fields, gymnasium, outdoor basketball court
Waddell Elementary	3 ac.	Athletic fields, playground, multipurpose room
Woods Creek Park	3 ac.	2.8 mile walking trail
Downing Community Center	.75 ac.	Multipurpose room, meeting rooms
Taylor Street Park	.5 ac.	Playground, picnic area
Jordan's Point Park	9.5 ac.	Walking trail, picnic area, pavilion, boat ramp, athletic fields
Fairwinds Park	1.2 ac.	Playground, picnic area, open space
Lime Kiln Bridge Park	.7 ac.	Playground, picnic area



**TABLE 9-2  
RECREATION FACILITIES OWNED BY OTHERS  
IN OR ADJACENT TO THE CITY OF LEXINGTON**

LOCATION	SIZE	FACILITIES
Central School	3 ac.	Athletic fields, outdoor basketball court, playground
Maury River Middle School	15 ac.	Running track, practice fields, open play area
Chessie Trail	7 mi.	Walking trail
Lexington Golf Club	100 ac.	Private 18 hole golf course
Washington & Lee campus	362 ac.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, gymnasium, indoor pool, outdoor track
Vista Links	130+ ac.	Public 18 hole golf course
Virginia Military Institute campus	154 ac.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, gymnasium, outdoor track, racquetball courts, indoor pool, indoor track

While the City appears to have adequate recreational facilities for our residents, especially if one takes into account that 3,000 residents are college students whose needs are met by the two schools, there is a need for both indoor court space and outdoor athletic fields for the Rockbridge region. It will be important to include a full-sized gymnasium when Waddell School is rebuilt and the local governments should be aware of the need to provide additional outdoor space. Also, the YMCA is looking to partner with local governments for providing a more comprehensive indoor facility that might also be used by the general public.

**OBJECTIVE: Continue to encourage and offer a wide variety of recreational programs and facilities for City residents.**

**OBJECTIVE: Work with Rockbridge County to increase the number of playing fields in the region.**

**OBJECTIVE: Include a full-sized gymnasium when rebuilding or renovating Waddell Elementary School.**

## CEMETERIES

The City owns and operates two cemeteries, the Stonewall Jackson Cemetery and the Evergreen Cemetery.

### **Stonewall Jackson Cemetery:**

Established in 1797 by the Lexington Presbyterian Church, this cemetery has been operated as a public burial ground since 1853. Enlarged over the years and partially supported by public funds, the cemetery was transferred to the City under a deed of trust in 1949. In the 1960's, additional land was purchased for the cemetery but, to date, only a portion has been used for burials. In the 1980's, a portion was used to extend Spotswood Drive through to Houston Street and the Rescue Squad building was constructed on another portion. Today, approximately 2.3 acres remain as vacant land. (See page 7-46 of the Land Use Chapter)

The Stonewall Jackson Cemetery consists of 13.25 acres. Presently, there are about 400 unsold lots. We generally sell around 25 lots each year. One concept to extend the life of each of the cemeteries is the construction of columbariums for the interment of cremation remains. As cremations become more numerous, the installation of a columbarium could be very cost effective.

### **Evergreen Cemetery:**

In 1880, the Town of Lexington acquired the property, now known as the Evergreen Cemetery for the burial of its black citizens. Although the cemetery was municipally owned, a board of trustees from the black community managed and cared for the grounds until 1971 when the City assumed responsibility for care and maintenance.

The Evergreen Cemetery consists of 5.5 acres. Presently there are six unsold plots that are available for sale. There is the potential for 50 additional lots if rock can be removed cost effectively from one area. Usually only three to five lots are sold each year.

Although historically segregated by race, the cemeteries are administered under a completely nondiscriminatory policy.

**OBJECTIVE: Explore building a columbarium at each of the cemeteries.**

## LIBRARY

The Rockbridge Regional Library is headquartered in the City of Lexington. It serves Bath and Rockbridge counties as well as the cities of Buena Vista and Lexington. The Library currently has over 188,000 books, records and tapes with over 3,600 cardholders from Lexington. It also has computers available for internet use. The headquarters facility has been located on South Main Street since 1988. It is presently becoming cramped for space as its' usage grows. It will be important for Lexington to work with the Library to find space for growth in the downtown area.

Each of the colleges in Lexington has its own library facilities which City residents may utilize. The Washington and Lee University library has over 600,000 books and related materials. The Virginia Military Institute library has over 300,000 volumes. In addition, the George C. Marshall Research Library, located on the Virginia Military Institute campus, contains a major collection of materials relating to United States military and diplomatic history covering much of the twentieth century.

**OBJECTIVE: Work with the Rockbridge Regional Library to provide adequate space while keeping the facility in downtown Lexington.**

### EDUCATION

One of the primary reasons that Lexington chose to become a city was to be able to establish and maintain its own school system. The City supports Harrington Waddell Elementary School and Lylburn Downing Middle School. Students who live in the City attend Rockbridge County High School under a joint services agreement with Rockbridge County.

The Lexington City School Board is a five member board that is appointed by the Lexington City Council. The School Board’s mission states, *“The mission of Lexington City Schools is to provide progressive educational opportunities and challenging experiences that are responsive to the needs and talents of all students.”*

The school system serves as a source of pride for the City of Lexington. Students at the elementary and middle schools consistently score well above the State average and among the highest in the State on the Standards of Learning Assessments required by the Virginia Department of Education. The School Division was named the only “Highly Distinguished” school system in Virginia in 2010 by the State Board of Education. Please see the charts below for the elementary and middle school scores for the past eight years.

#### Third Grade

Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	74.5	73.3	80	78.2	94	87.5	85	90.38	84
Math	80.3	84.4	86	84.7	96	95.6	94	94.23	89
History & Social Science	80.3	80	85	82.6	98	89.7	100	96.15	88
Science	76.5	77.8	95	82.6	96	91.8	96	94.23	93

#### Fourth Grade

Area/Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2008 State Average	
Reading		96.2	92	93.88	88	
Math		86.5	92	95.92	84	
Virginia Studies	83	86.7	90	93.88	83	

### Fifth Grade

Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	87.7	91.3	87	86.7	86.9	97.5	95	90	89
Writing		94.9	86.6	78.8	91.1	97.5	92	91.84	87
Math	77.6	83.1	76	79.2	83	92.3	95	100	88
Science	93.9	84.5	84	84.9	86.9	90.2	97	90	88
Grade 5 U.S. through 1877					73.9	80.4	87	90	74

### Sixth Grade

Area/Year	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008				
Reading	83.9	93	93.65	85				
Math	72.9	67	69.84	68				

### Seventh Grade

Area/Year	2006	2007	2008	State Average				
Reading	89.3	85	87.93	86				
Math	69.4	81	81.03	65				

## Eighth Grade

Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	88	87	91	82.1	83.3	85.4	88	90.57	83
Writing		95	84.2	80.3	77.2	89	90	91.23	87
Math	88	88	93	92.7	92.5	90.9	78	95.24	83
Science	93	95	96	92.8	95.3	98.1	95	92.98	90
World Geography		95	96	89.6	81.2	79.3	70	85	84
Algebra	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	93

## Content Specific History

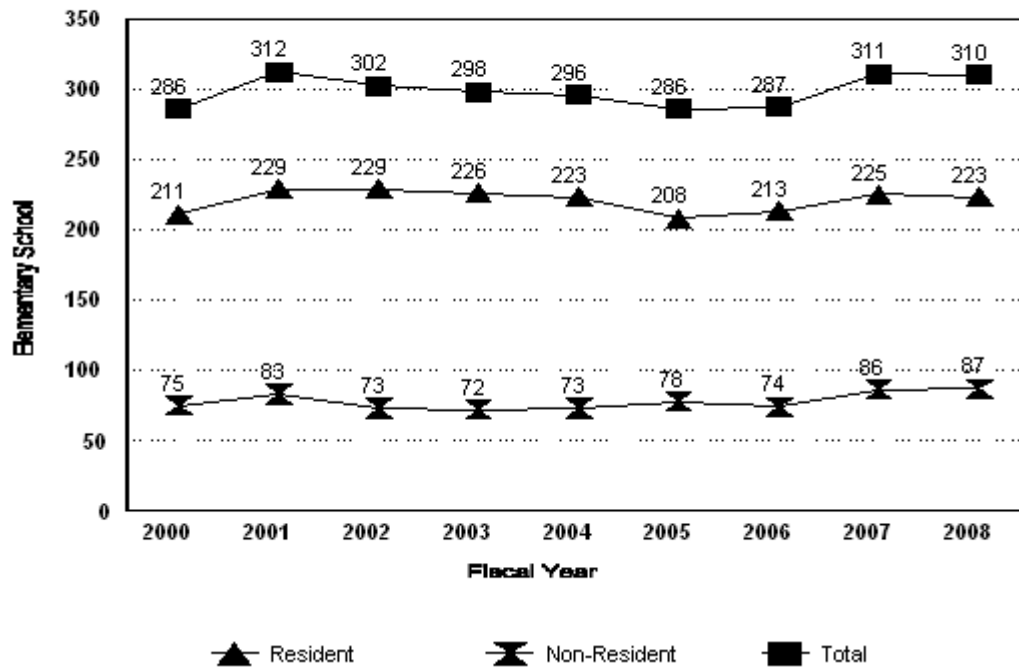
Subject	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Grade 6 U.S. 1877 to Present	77.5	73.8	76.7	80	90.48	92
Grade 7 Civics & Economics	80.3	82.1	75.5	80	75.86	84

Lexington City Schools continues to be a successful educational organization because the School Board remains committed to providing quality educational programs for the students.

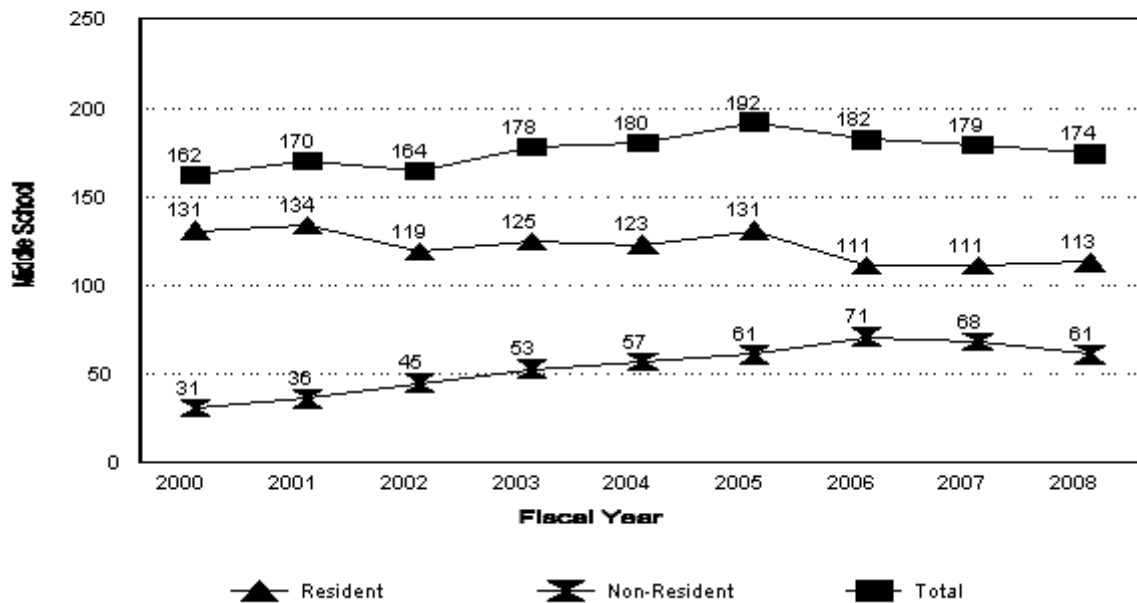
Maintaining a low student/teacher ratio, employing only highly qualified teachers, encouraging continuing education for teachers, and providing policies that support the educational community are functions that the school board proudly carries out. The student/teacher ratio for our schools is 12 to 1 while the State average is in the 17 to 1 range.

One of the most significant concerns related to the continued viability of the school system is enrollment. The School Board has stated that it remains committed to the continued operation of a City school system as long as it remains economically viable. Lexington City Schools accept tuition students from surrounding counties and cities as one means to maintain student population. These students and their families are attracted to Lexington City Schools by the demonstrated academic success of the educational program. Presently about 30% of the total enrollment for the elementary and middle schools are county children. Since state education funds come with each child, it is important to the financial viability of the school system to continue attracting these students. Also, without these students, it would be exceptionally difficult to offer the wide variety of programs demanded of our citizens. While the enrollment of city children in our two schools has dropped by about 15% since the 1990s, it appears to have stabilized since 2000. The large decline has occurred in the high school enrollment where it continues to decrease.

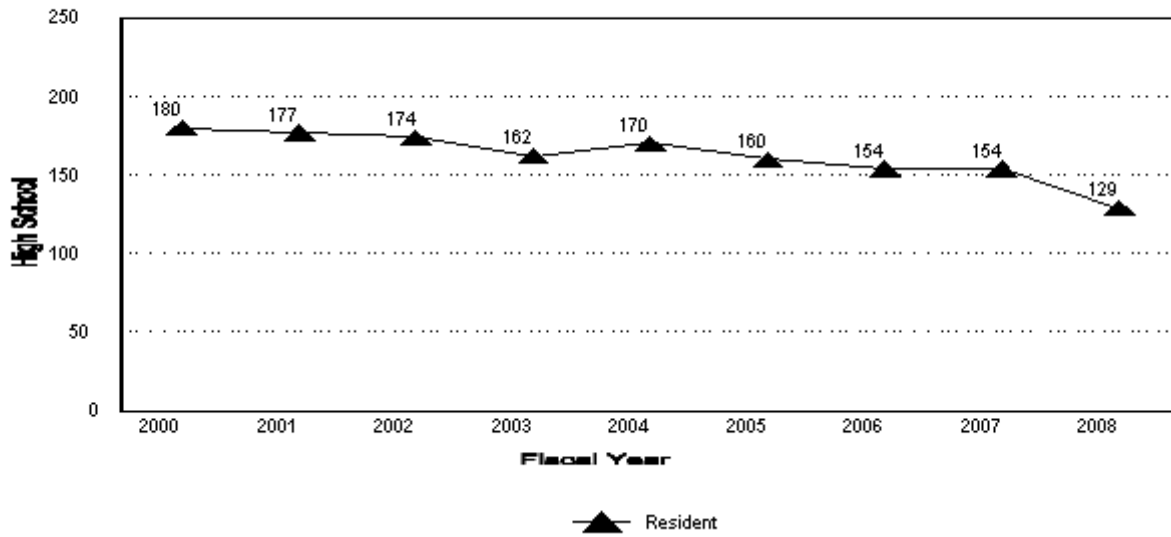
**CITY OF LEXINGTON**  
**Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)**



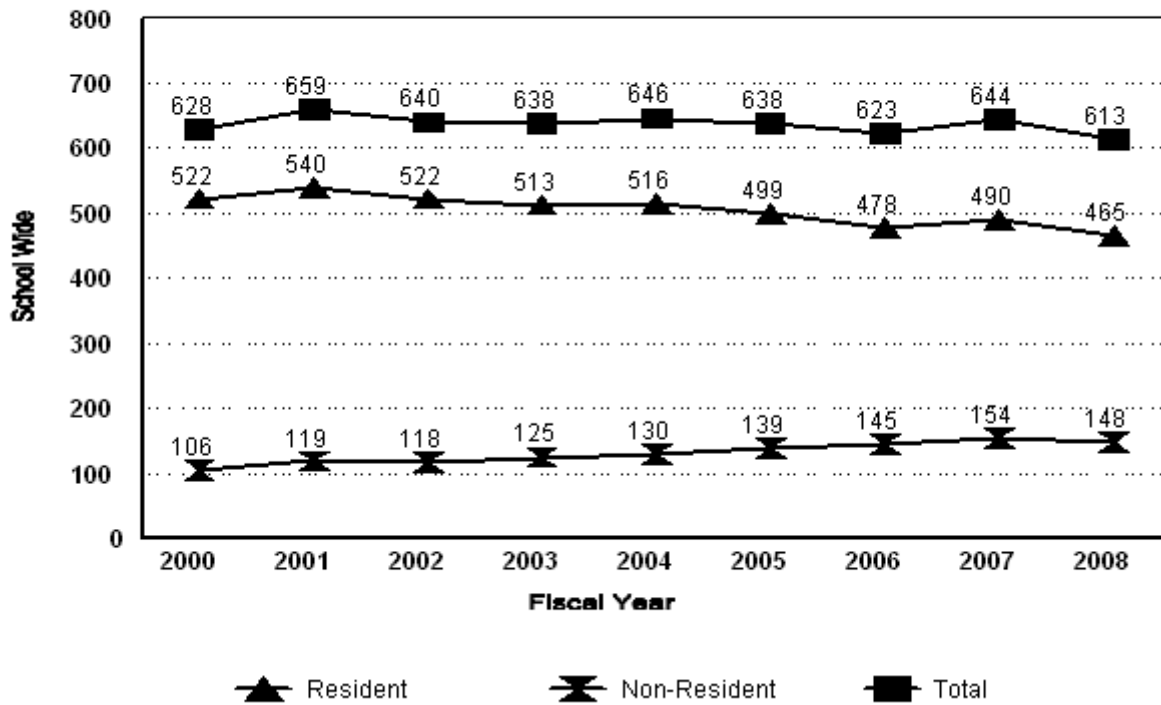
**CITY OF LEXINGTON**  
**Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)**



**CITY OF LEXINGTON**  
**Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)**



**CITY OF LEXINGTON**  
**Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)**



## **Facilities:**

The City's two schools are both over 50 years old. Lylburn Downing Middle School was completely renovated and expanded in 2010 . While major renovations and expansions were performed at Waddell Elementary School in the 1980s, it is in need of major renovation or complete new construction to meet the standards for today's educational needs. The School Board is reviewing plans to either renovate or replace Waddell Elementary School; however, this project may need to be postponed until the economy rebounds.

**OBJECTIVE: Support the Lexington City School Board's commitment to providing progressive educational opportunities and experiences for students in the City Schools and Rockbridge County High School. This includes needed upgrades to Waddell Elementary School.**

## **HUMAN SERVICES**

The City of Lexington is served by a wide variety of both public and private agencies that provide a social safety net to our residents.

Basic public health services are provided by the Lexington-Rockbridge Health Department. These services include the operation of clinics which provides immunizations, maternity services, well child services, family planning services and pregnancy testing, communicable disease control, environmental health services, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS testing, health education, nutrition services and vital records.

The Rockbridge Area Community Services Board provides mental health and mental retardation programs as well as alcohol and drug abuse services and programs. The Board also operates a number of supervised group homes for mentally retarded adults and offers programs to assist families experiencing problems.

The Rockbridge Area Social Services Board administers the Medicaid, Food Stamps, Aid to Dependent Children, Child Welfare Services programs as well as child and adult protective services and foster care.

Rockbridge Area Hospice provides physical, emotional and spiritual support for terminally ill people and their families utilizing a team consisting of doctors, nurses, social workers, clergy and volunteers. Hospice is funded through donations, volunteer efforts as well as by insurance providers.

Project Horizon is a private non-profit organization dedicated to reducing domestic, dating and sexual violence. It operates a shelter, located in Lexington, a 24-hour crisis hotline, provides counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual assault and court advocacy services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc. Provides free legal assistance to low income residents (less than 125% of the federal poverty guidelines) of the City. The most frequent issues confronted include domestic violence and other family disputes, access to affordable health care, homelessness and



housing, eligibility for various governmental assistance programs for the poor, protecting the poor's meager possessions and wages, and issues involving the elderly poor.

The Virginia Employment Commission, a State agency, provides job referral, proficiency testing, labor market information and unemployment insurance services. Unfortunately, the Buena Vista Office of the VEC closed in 2009 due to budget cuts so residents from the City must obtain their services from Augusta County or Roanoke.

The Rockbridge Area Relief Association (RARA) is a private non-profit agency whose mission is to aid local households in times of financial difficulties. RARA helps such people obtain food, shelter, utilities, medication, heating fuel, gasoline and transportation. In addition, RARA operates a local emergency food pantry. Funding is primarily from private donations and the United Way.

The Rockbridge Area Free Clinic is a private non-profit agency whose mission is to provide health care, pharmaceuticals and dental care to low income residents with no health care insurance. The health care is provided by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentist, dental hygienists and other citizens volunteering their time to provide these services.

The local office of Total Action Against Poverty (TAP) provides programs for lower income residents of the area. The office conducts housing programs including weatherization and rehabilitation, housing counseling and assists homeless families. TAP also operates a Headstart preschool program in the City, operates a high school drop-out prevention program (Project Pride) and coordinates a summer youth employment program.

The local chapter of the Salvation Army provides many types of services to needy families. Typical assistance includes short term financial assistance for rent, heating, utilities, groceries and furniture. They also purchase Christmas gifts for young children.

Valley Program for Aging Services (VPAS) is a private non-profit organization, established in 1973, to serve the needs of persons 60 years and older, their families and caregivers. Its mission is to help these people live independently in their homes while delaying or avoiding institutionalization. In the Rockbridge Area, VPAS operates many programs at the Maury River Senior Center including Meals on Wheels and personal care in the home.

The Rockbridge Area Occupational Center (RAOC) provides employment and training opportunities for disabled and mentally retarded individuals from our community, thereby providing a sense of accomplishment and self-worth while generating wages for the individual.

The Rockbridge Area Transit System (RATS) is a private non-profit transportation provider whose mission is to provide safe, affordable transportation to residents of the region who are elderly, have disabilities or have no other means of transportation. RATS enables passengers to have access to health care and employment and to participate fully in the life of the community. It is funded from a mixture of grants, donations, fares, Medicaid and government contributions.

**GOAL: Encourage the coordination and cooperation of human service agencies in their provision of services to citizens.**

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The City of Lexington is fortunate to have a wide array of cultural activities available to residents and guests. Those residents inclined to travel frequently take advantage of the museums and performing arts centers in Washington, DC, the museums and arts centers in Richmond and Charlottesville, the Black Friars Playhouse in Staunton, the Jefferson Center and the Taubman museum in Roanoke, as well as the events hosted in both the Salem and Roanoke civic centers. Residents do not, though, have to travel to other cities to enjoy a broad range of cultural activities.

Washington and Lee University is home to the widely admired Lenfest Center for the Performing Arts. Nationally and internationally recognized performers present a broad array of programming. Recent programs have included ballet, theater, musical theater, opera and operetta, choral and bank music, and dance and performance art. Students at the University produce plays, offer musical recitals, and mount art shows of note. The John and Anne Wilson Music and Art Center co-locates all of the arts at W&L in one complex where over one hundred performances are offered each year. In addition to these art forms, the University also hosts frequent presentations and conversations with political leaders, scholars of note, authors, and leaders in a variety of fields. Washington and Lee University is also home to the Lee Chapel Museum and Lee Chapel. The Chapel is the site of concerts and lectures. The University opens these events to area residents and tourists.

The University possesses major art collections, including the Washington-Custis-Lee portraits, the Vincent L. Bradford collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American paintings, the Thomas F. Torrey II collection of landscape paintings, the Stan Kamen collection of Western art, the Sydney and Frances Lewis collection of 20<sup>th</sup>-century art, and the Jacob and Bernice Weinstein collection of modern art. In 1967, the University received 4,000 ceramic objects from Mr. and Mrs. Euchlin D. Reeves, including an important collection of 17<sup>th</sup>-, 18<sup>th</sup>-, and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese Export porcelain. This collection and the paintings of Mrs. Reeves (Louise Herreshoff) are housed in the Reeves Center, a research and exhibition center on campus.

Recent additions to the art collections of the University include Chinese, Japanese, and Korean ceramics, bronzes, and jades on exhibit in the Watson Pavilion for Asian Arts, which opened in 1993. The Watson Pavilion also houses an authentic Japanese tearoom.

Virginia Military Institute frequently hosts cultural activities and opens these to the public. The recently completed Leadership and Ethics Center and Jackson Hall serve as primary venues for programming ranging from Christmas concerts to speakers of note who are nationally and internationally recognized for their expertise. Jackson Hall is also the site of the recently remodeled museum which houses an impressive collection of both VMI and military memorabilia. The highly regarded George C. Marshall Museum is engaged in on-going research into the life of Marshall as well as serving as host to hundreds of visitors annually.

Cadets, faculty and area residents present plays several times each year. The Corps also boasts a band which plays during Institute parades, review events, and often in Inaugural parades in DC.

While the City derives significant benefit from the generosity of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute, cultural activities abound outside the walls of these academic settings.

Lexington is home to the Museum of Military Memorabilia, a privately owned museum that is open to the public. The home of Stonewall Jackson is open for public tours, where individuals may also tour the working garden.

Our local high school provides additional cultural offerings, ranging from student produced plays to musical offerings.

The Theater at Lime Kiln hosts a broad range of performing arts which have included noted musical acts, plays, musicals, and reviews. Lime Kiln also provides a venue for local dance troupes for dance recitals.

Lexington has two active dance studios with dancers ranging from pre-school to adults. Students from both schools of dance present several recitals each year.

In the world of art, Lexington is home to many internationally recognized artists and authors. There are numerous art galleries operating in the downtown area. Additionally, the Rockbridge Regional Library and several of the downtown restaurants and coffee shops hang rotating galleries of artwork for public view. The Rockbridge Regional library is also sponsor for many cultural events, including readings by local authors. The local book stores also offer readings from featured authors throughout the year.

Local eating establishments frequently host area musicians for the enjoyment of attendees and in support of the musicians.

Beyond these offerings, the City of Lexington sponsors, co-sponsors, or facilitates a broad array of activities that allow citizen participation. During warmer months, Fridays Alive, featuring well-known musical groups, serves as an informal gathering for area residents. Significant occasions are also marked with community events. The Fourth of July parade is an opportunity for young biking enthusiasts to decorate their bikes and wagons and participate in the parade. The annual Christmas parade through our downtown includes Fire and Rescue vehicles as well as Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops on floats. The holiday season also features a candlelight walk from Stonewall Jackson Cemetery to Hopkins Green. The walkers sing carols as they pass down Main, Washington and Jefferson streets.

Fine Arts in Rockbridge (FAIR) kicks off the summer with workshops covering a myriad of artistic pursuits, ranging from photography to calligraphy, often concluding with a performance put on by one or more of the workshop groups. Additionally, there are multiple performances presented by the Rockbridge Choral Society.

While this listing is not inclusive, it does provide a glimpse into the robust and active cultural offerings enjoyed by residents and visitors. Because these events attract visitors, inform and enrich the lives of residents, and serve to heighten our sense of community, we believe they should be recognized and encouraged.

**OBJECTIVE: Continue to support and/or facilitate the cultural activities which differentiates Lexington from many other small communities.**

**OBJECTIVE: Identify and encourage use of alternative, non-downtown spaces within Lexington for community gatherings (e.g.,Richardson Park).**

**OBJECTIVE: Encourage additional cultural activities in the downtown to further promote the arts, a sense of community, and the economic benefits to our downtown.**

**OBJECTIVE: Explore the possibility of outdoor art installations to demonstrate to both residents and visitors the City's commitment to the arts.**