

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	3
WHAT WE HEARD   The Big Ideas .....	4
PLAN & PROVIDE EQUITABLY FOR EVERYONE .....	4
DIVERSIFY & BOLSTER THE LOCAL ECONOMY .....	4
IMPROVE & EXPAND VITAL COMMUNITY SERVICES .....	4
PROTECT & CONNECT TO OUR RURAL ENVIRONMENT .....	4
WHAT WE KNOW   Community Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure Today .....	5
Enhance the Effectiveness & Transparency of County Government .....	5
Governance .....	5
County Administrative Facilities .....	5
Public Safety .....	6
Improve Infrastructure to Support Sustainable Growth & Development .....	9
Water and Sewer .....	9
Refuse and Recycling .....	11
Electricity and Natural Gas .....	12
Telecommunications .....	12
Provide Quality Services that Improve Community Livability .....	13
Education .....	13
Parks and Recreation .....	14
Community Centers .....	17
Libraries .....	19
Healthcare .....	19
HOW WE MOVE FORWARD .....	21
Goal Statement .....	21
Strategies: .....	21
Enhance the Effectiveness and Transparency of County Government .....	21



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Improve Infrastructure to Support Sustainable Growth & Development .....	22
Provide Quality Services that Improve Community Livability .....	23



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### **INTRODUCTION**

Community facilities, services, and infrastructure play an important role in shaping a community. Educational facilities, like schools and libraries, drive the local economy by educating the future workforce. Parks and recreation opportunities encourage active lifestyles and draw visitors that contribute to the local tourism economy. Availability of medical and emergency services support resident health, well-being, and safety. Infrastructure availability, including broadband, water, and sewer, is a key factor in where and how development occurs. The condition and accessibility of these and other community facilities and services influence the overall quality of life enjoyed by Nelson County residents. This chapter articulates how Nelson County is serving its residents' community facilities, services, and infrastructure needs today and planning for the needs of tomorrow.



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### **WHAT WE HEARD | The Big Ideas**

#### **PLAN & PROVIDE EQUITABLY FOR EVERYONE**

During community engagement, residents Countywide expressed a desire for enhanced public safety, medical, and educational services. Greater diversity in multi-model transportation and recreation opportunities, including family-oriented recreation, aquatics, and accessible trails, is also highly desired by the community at large. Community perception indicated potential disparities in delivery of these services, particularly in remote rural areas such as those East and South of Route 29. While levels of service are likely to vary across rural geographies, all segments of the community deserve high quality services that are reasonably accessible. Equitable planning, partnerships, and innovations, like virtual and mobile services, can help ensure all residents can access the services they need.

#### **DIVERSIFY & BOLSTER THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

Community facilities and services influence the local economy in important ways. The community recognizes the importance of the local school system and is supportive of partnerships with community colleges and trade schools to expand vocational training and create a more attractive and diverse workforce for employers. Residents also recognize water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure as an important factor for drawing businesses and workforce to Nelson County.

#### **IMPROVE & EXPAND VITAL COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Fire and rescue, public schools, and medical/clinical services were the community's top-ranked community service priorities. Lack of infrastructure, such as water, sewer, electric vehicle charging, and broadband were also noted community issues. The County has a responsibility to its citizens to plan, provide, and maintain these and other vital services in an efficient and sustainable manner. Partnerships with private providers, non-profit organizations, and regional authorities are critical to achieve this mission.

#### **PROTECT & CONNECT TO OUR RURAL ENVIRONMENT**

The community strongly supports expanding recreational opportunities, multimodal connectivity, and existing trail networks. Connecting residents with the natural environment through recreation will help promote a culture of conservation and stewardship, as well as enhance the well-being and quality of life for residents. Looking to the future, water service capacity and availability will be key determinants of how well the County is equipped to direct growth toward appropriate areas and protect its beloved rural lands.

The header features a stylized landscape with mountains in shades of purple, blue, and green, and rolling hills in shades of green and blue. The text is overlaid on this background.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### **WHAT WE KNOW | Community Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure Today**

Public engagement identified a number of areas for improvement to County services. This section summarizes the key focus areas for Serving the Community as identified through community input and data analysis. These focus areas are key opportunities for Nelson County to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of the community, as well as provide a greater quality of life.

### **Enhance the Effectiveness & Transparency of County Government**

#### **Governance**

Successful governance is the main objective of the five-member Board of Supervisors, one for each district of the County. A County Administrator is appointed by the Board, and it is their responsibility to ensure the effective delivery of services to the community, through the aid of many government departments and boards.

Nelson County's Board and administration is committed to transparency, efficient, and accountable government. Keeping the community informed and engaged is an important aspect of this responsibility. Nelson County's website details County facility information, provides all board meeting dates and agendas, and acts as a repository for County news and information. Additional communications efforts, innovative tools, and different information platforms should also be pursued to help keep residents informed of events and important news, as well as the changes and developments of regular governance. Examples include establishing a more robust social media presence, expanding the online geographic information systems (GIS) catalogue, and creating virtual/online service options.

#### **County Administrative Facilities**

The Nelson County Courthouse, in downtown Lovingston, houses the County Administrator, Commissioner of the Revenue, Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology offices. Other County government offices are located in smaller offices around Lovingston. To better centralize and modernize functions that are not located in the County Courthouse, a new office building is proposed for the Social Services, Planning and Zoning, and Building Departments. This new office will help administrators be more efficient and accessible to residents.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Public Safety

#### Law Enforcement

Nelson County residents feel Nelson is a safe place to live and continued community safety is the top priority for the County's law enforcement. Nelson is served by an elected Sheriff and 21 appointed deputies responsible for jail operations, prisoner transportation, courthouse and courtroom security for local District and Circuit Courts, and civil process and mental hygiene warrants. They are given the statutory authority to enforce the laws and ordinances of Nelson County and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Sheriff's office is located within the County Courthouse in downtown Lovingston. Jail services are provided through regional cooperation with the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail. The current Sheriff's office facilities support the Sheriff and deputies, but due to the shared space within the County Courthouse, additional space and expansion is needed. Storage space for records and evidence, safety barriers and visitor waiting areas, additional video surveillance equipment, fenced and gated parking areas, and upgraded training spaces that meet Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services standards are desired to further aid the Sheriff's office in its service to the County.

**Table 8.1: Number of Crimes in Nelson County**

Year	Violent Crime	Property Crime	Burglary	Larceny Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson
2019 <sup>1</sup>	26	166	27	123	16	0
2015	5	183	61	112	10	0
2010	10	218	55	141	22	0

Source: FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division

#### Fire & Rescue

Emergency fire services are managed by seven volunteer fire departments. These fire companies are located in Lovingston, Piney River, Faber, Gladstone, Rockfish, Wintergreen, and Montebello.

Nelson County staffs two full-time ambulances, based in Lovingston, for emergency medical services (EMS) across the entire County. In addition, there are four volunteer EMS agencies located in Gladstone, Rockfish, Roseland, and Wintergreen. With the exception of Wintergreen

<sup>1</sup> Editors Note: 2019 is the most recent data available.



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Rescue, volunteer staffing for EMS squads has been steadily declining, leading to longer and unequal response times for many areas throughout the County.

In addition to volunteers, Wintergreen Fire Department and Rescue Squad are supplemented with paid professional staff. Both companies respond to calls throughout Nelson County via mutual aid. This partnership has been invaluable and should continue to be supported. A master plan for Wintergreen Fire and EMS created in 2019 explores the status, needs, and goals for these entities up to the year 2024.

***[Callout with Wintergreen graphic and master plan link]***

**Table 8.2: Fire & Rescue Facilities Location and Needs**

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Fire and Rescue Company	Station Location	Age and Needs
<b>Company 1 - Lovington</b>	53 Baker Ln, Lovington, VA 22949	Nearly 50 years old. This station only barely meets the needs of the company and requires significant expansion or improvement.
<b>Wingina/Norwood Station</b>	3639 James River Rd, Wingina, VA, 24599	Facility is adequate for the company's needs.
<b>Company 2 - Piney River</b>	249 Firehouse Rd, Piney River, VA 22964	Aged station. Well maintained and in great shape.
<b>Company 3 - Faber</b>	8207 Irish Rd, Faber, VA 22938	Two structures, one older and smaller and one newer and in excellent shape.
<b>Company 4 - Gladstone</b>	8786 Richmond Hwy, Gladstone, VA 24553	Two structures that provide ample space.
<b>Company 5 - Rockfish</b>	11100 Rockfish Valley Hwy, Afton, VA 22920	Newer station with suitable space and expansive grounds.
<b>Company 6 - Wintergreen</b>	2390 Wintergreen Dr, Roseland, VA 22967 487 Monocan Dr, Nellysford, VA 22958	Both the mountain station and Nellysford/Stoney Creek stations have been expanded twice and suit the current needs of the company.
<b>Company 7 - Montebello</b>	119 Fork Mountain Ln, Montebello, VA 24464	This station is of suitable size for the current company.
<b>Company 8 - Roseland Rescue Squad</b>	7745 Patrick Henry Hwy, Roseland, VA 22967	Renovated and expanded in the last decade. Provides ample space for the company.
<b>Company 9 - Nelson EMS</b>	8047 Thomas Nelson Hwy, Lovington, VA 22949	Recently renovated to provide living spaces to rescue personnel.

Currently, nearly all training needs for Nelson Fire and EMS agencies are being provided by Wintergreen Fire Department & Rescue Squad. A new state of the art, live fire, multi-story training facility has recently begun construction in Nellysford and will be available to all Nelson County agencies.



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

The County's fire and rescue facilities vary greatly in age, size, and complexity. Each facility has differing needs for upgrades and maintenance; these should be evaluated on an annual basis to prioritize urgency. Across all companies, standardized operational practices and expanded living spaces and amenities, such as bunks and kitchens, are identified needs. The County would also benefit from a master plan to prioritize facility, staffing, and equipment needs. With volunteerism declining nationwide, volunteer recruitment and retention should be an important consideration in the master plan.

### **[Callout Box on Call Volume (Data Not Yet Provided)]**

#### **Fire & EMS Call Volume**

Call volumes and response times differ between each company with a total of [?] calls for fire emergencies and [?] calls for EMS support. Response times for fire emergencies were an average of [?] minutes from 911 call to arrival on the scene and an average of 26 minutes for EMS.

#### Emergency Communications

Responding to emergency 911 calls, and the subsequent dispatching of emergency service responders, is shared between the Nelson County dispatch center in Lovingston and the Wintergreen dispatch center in Wintergreen. While calls are handled well and in a timely manner, there has been some duplicity in dispatching between the two centers. Operations should be evaluated to help reduce redundancies. Operational improvements include adding additional fire and rescue channels as well as continuing to modernize and renovate dispatching methods with evolving technologies.

### **Improve Infrastructure to Support Sustainable Growth & Development**

#### Water and Sewer

##### Public Water and Sewer Utilities

Nelson County Service Authority provides the County's water and wastewater services. Four water treatment and wastewater treatment plants serve the County, located in Lovingston, Schuyler, Wintergreen, and Gladstone. The Lovingston facilities also provide water and sewer access for Lovingston, Shipman, Colleen, and Piney River. While smaller than the other facilities, the Gladstone facility serves a significantly smaller number of customers.

The water treatment plants in Schuyler and Wintergreen are currently undergoing renovations with estimated completion by 2024. Water usage at the Lovingston plant has begun to reach

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

capacity and any further expansion of water access in the area will require additional expansion or renovation of the plant. Furthermore, the sewer lines in and around Lovingston are aged and require replacement. NCSA is actively pursuing funding to begin this project. Expanding capacity in Lovingston is important for the County's economic goals and will also help protect rural lands by directing growth to appropriate areas.

**[Callout: Roughly 35% of county residents are on public water supply. As of 2022, NCSA has 2,951 water connections and 2,557 sewer connections. (Central Virginia Planning District Commission Water Supply Plan, 2011)]**

**Table 8.3 Water and Wastewater Capacity Table**

*Capacity measured in GPD	Total Water Capacity	Average Daily Water Usage	Total Wastewater Capacity	Average Daily Wastewater Usage	Water Source
<b>Lovingston</b>	150,000	85,000	220,000	85,000	Groundwater (6 wells) + Surface Water (Black Creek Reservoir, Nelson County Water Treatment Plant)
<b>Schuyler</b>	86,000	30,000	25,000	10,000	Surface Water (Johnson's Branch Reservoir)
<b>Wintergreen</b>	859,200	249,000	300,000	185,000	Groundwater (4 wells) + Surface Water (Lake Monocan)
<b>Gladstone</b>	4,000		15,000		Collection Box Reservoir

Source: Nelson County Water Service Authority, Region 2000 Water Supply Plan (2011)

Regional Water Supply

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Nelson County is included in a regional water supply plan conducted for the Central Virginia Planning District Commission in 2009, revised in 2011, and proposed to be updated in 2023. The plan identified existing water sources, current water usage, and estimated future water demands. Based on outlined projections from the most recent iteration of the plan, Nelson County risks a water shortage by the year 2058 without the increase of additional water sources or the reduction in reliance upon groundwater. It is estimated that an additional 0.4 million gallons per day (mgd) will be required by 2060 to meet growing private water supply needs within the County.

The plan recommends increasing the Black Creek reservoir yield with withdrawals from Tye River during high water events. The plan also identifies alternative reservoir sites for short-term and long-term storage capacity based on the Rockfish Valley/Wintergreen Resort Water Source and Capacity Study (2007) and notes that future interconnection with Amherst County may also be explored. The County should work proactively with the service authority to identify its preferred solution, undertake additional environmental and feasibility studies, pursue easement or property acquisition, and develop necessary infrastructure to protect the water supply. An updated water supply plan or local comprehensive water and sewer master plan is also advisable to address current and future needs.

### Refuse and Recycling

Solid waste disposal and recycling collection is an important County-provided service. Garbage and recyclables are collected at five different collection sites dispersed throughout the County. Two additional collection sites collect only garbage and do not handle recyclables.

Nelson County is a member of the Region 2000 Services Authority, which operates a regional landfill for solid waste disposal. From the collection sites, solid waste is transported to the transfer station in Arrington where it is collected, sorted, and stored before it is eventually transferred to the regional landfill in Rustburg, VA. This regional landfill is expected to reach its capacity sometime around the year 2029. Nelson County will need to work with its regional partners to determine how solid waste disposal will be handled past that year.

### **[Callout Box: Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Sites:]**

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Trash and Recycling

Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Sites:

1. Faber Center (Staffed\*) – 366 Cove Valley Lane, Faber, VA 22938
2. Massies Mill Center (Staffed\*) – 921 Tan Yard Road, Roseland, VA 22967
3. Rockfish Center (Staffed\*) – 136 Rockfish School Lane, Afton, VA 22920
4. Shipman Center (Staffed\*) – 11535 James River Road, Shipman, VA 2971
5. Montebello Center (Unstaffed) – 1 Fish Hatchery Lane, Montebello, VA 24464

Solid Waste Only Collection Sites:

1. Gladstone Center (Unstaffed) – 5607 Richmond Highway, Gladstone, VA 24553
2. Wintergarden Center (Unstaffed) – 3366 Wintergreen Drive, Roseland, VA 22935

\*Each staffed location features refuse sheds.

### Electricity and Natural Gas

Electricity is provided to Nelson County through three private electric entities: Appalachian Electric Power, Central Virginia Electric Coop, and Dominion Energy.

Natural gas is available through three oil and gas providers: Blue Ridge Oil, Foster Propane, and Tiger Fuel.

### Telecommunications

Nelson County recently partnered with Firefly Fiber Broadband to expand broadband availability throughout the County. The project will connect homes, businesses, and community centers plus create additional free Wi-Fi hotspots to help school children, remote workers, and the rest of the community access highspeed internet. When the project is complete in 2023, high-speed broadband connectivity will be available to almost all areas of the County.

Several areas of the County suffer from poor cellular service coverage due to difficulties imposed by the mountainous terrain. The County processes permit applications from cell service providers to install additional cellular towers in the County and update or renovate current ones as technologies evolve. Approximately 88% of the County is currently being served by 4G coverage, with the majority of poor or little coverage being located in the Montebello and Tyro areas of the County.

### Map 8.1 Cell Coverage Map

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Provide Quality Services that Improve Community Livability

#### Education

Nelson County Public Schools include two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. Rockfish River Elementary School is located in Afton and Tye River Elementary School is located along the Route 29 corridor, between Lovingston and Colleen. Nelson Middle School and Nelson County High School are also located along the Route 29 corridor, just south of Lovingston, in a combined building with shared facilities. In addition to these public schools, the County is home to a number of private pre-schools as well as North Branch School, a private, not-for-profit school offering pre-school through 8th grade, located in Afton.

Public school student enrollment has decreased steadily over the last decade and is expected to continue over the coming years. The schools continue to monitor student projections and will be evaluating division facilities, needs, and projected enrollment to make appropriate decisions to support the education of students to provide them with the skills and experiences they will need to be competitive when they conclude their K-12 schooling to successfully enter the next phase of their life—be it entering the workforce, joining the military or attending college. Short-term and long-term needs will be incorporated into the decision-making process.

#### ***[Callout Box: Enrollment Data]***

##### **School Enrollment**

Enrollment for all Nelson County Schools over the decade:

- 2022-2023: 1,480 Students
- 2021-2022: 1,583 Students
- 2012-2013: 1,993 Students

School planning is facilitated through the County School Strategic Plan. The current strategic plan was created in 2017 and extended through to 2022. Work on a new strategic plan is expected to begin in 2023 and should outline specific projects for facility renovation or replacement. Long-term planning and maintenance of school facilities should be incorporated into a school facilities master plan that identifies improvements beyond the shorter two-year period of the strategic plan.

#### ***[Callout Box on Nelson County High School Career & Technical Education]***

##### **Education Opportunities**

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Nelson County High School currently offers opportunities in career and technical education for its students. This helps prepare students for future careers in such fields as agriculture, ecology, automotive repair, business, health and medicine, and industrial trades. The Career and Technical Education wing of the high school should be evaluated for facility improvements to ensure that students experience the most modern technologies in their respective fields. Additional opportunities should also be explored to offer a wider variety of classes to students and better prepare them for careers and higher education opportunities. Partnerships with local community colleges, such as Blue Ridge Community College, Piedmont Virginia Community College, and Central Virginia Community College, can help achieve this.

### Parks and Recreation

#### Active Recreation

Providing indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities is a vital service Nelson County carries out to create a more livable community. Nelson County's Parks and Recreation Department provides recreation services for children, youth, and adults. The County actively partners with the public schools, community centers, and non-profit organizations to provide recreation programming and events throughout the County.

**Table 8.4 Parks and Recreation Facility Table**

Name	Type	Size	Ownership
<b>Lake Monocan</b>	Park		
<b>Montreal Park</b>	Park	13.59 Acres	
<b>Nelson County Wayside</b>	Park		
<b>Spruce Creek Park</b>	Park		
<b>Tye River Park</b>	Park		
<b>Ryan Field</b>	Sports Field	3.9 Acres	
<b>Nelson Middle/High School</b>	Sports Field		Nelson County
<b>Tye River Elementary</b>	Sports Field		Nelson County
<b>The Nelson Center</b>	Sports Field	1.9 Acres	Private
<b>Nelson Heritage Center</b>	Sports Field		Private
<b>Dixie Fields</b>	Sports Field	7.5 Acres	

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

Name	Type	Size	Ownership
<b>Rockfish Ruritan Park Fields</b>	Sports Field	2.25 Acres	
<b>Sturt Property</b>	Unimproved	344 Acres	Nelson County
<b>Larkin Property</b>	Unimproved	309 Acres	Nelson County

Based on community engagement, expanding parks and recreation opportunities should be a priority for the County. Community-identified needs include walking paths, aquatic facilities, parks, and playgrounds. Facilities should be geographically dispersed with accessible amenities such that residents of all ages and abilities can reap the physical, mental, and social benefits of recreational activity. Parks and recreation investments should be guided by a master plan, which the County has identified as a need. This plan should provide a detailed assessment of public needs and identify priorities and funding for expanded facilities and programs.

**[Callout Box: Central Recreation Center]**

A public, centrally located recreation center was identified as a desire by the community. Such a center could provide indoor sporting facilities, exercise equipment, meeting spaces, and aquatic recreation for the community. With enough space, it could also provide additional centrally located outdoor recreation, such as sports facilities, playgrounds, or community gardens. Nelson County should explore the options available to provide the community with this service, including potential partnerships with the public schools and non-profit community centers.

### Outdoor Recreation

Nelson County is home to renowned outdoor recreation opportunities and is a well-known destination for these beautiful natural havens. Popular destinations include the Appalachian Trail, the Blue Ridge Parkway, George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, the James River, and Crabtree Falls, the tallest waterfall west of the Mississippi. These important natural recreation areas are part of what makes Nelson such a wonderful place to live and visit. Nelson County is committed to protecting and preserving them for future generations to enjoy.

### Paths and Trails

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

While Nelson County has many hiking, walking, and bicycle trails, many of them are disconnected from one another and are difficult to access without a vehicle. The current stock of hiking and nature trails was also identified as being difficult to manage for the young, elderly, or disabled. Finding opportunities to create a more connected and accessible trail network should be a top priority for Nelson County. The TJPDC conducted a regional bike and pedestrian plan in 2019, which should be utilized to help the County expand trails and bikeways. Further discussion of pedestrian and bicycle trails is explored in Chapter Six of this Plan.

**Table 8.5 Paths and Trails Table**

Name	Type	Size	Ownership
<b>Blue Ridge Tunnel</b>	Trail	2.25 Miles	
<b>Rockfish Valley Trails</b>	Trail		
<b>Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail</b>	Trail	6.7 Miles	

### Rivers & Waterways

Rivers and waterways in Nelson County are an excellent asset and hold many recreation possibilities for the community. These should be easily accessible for all, and the County should continue to work together with local organizations and landowners to facilitate additional water access points.

Five river segments are classified as Qualified, Potential, or Designated Scenic Rivers; the James River doubles as a designated blueway, or water trail (see Table 6.3).

**Table 6.3: Scenic River and Blueway Designations**



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

River	Segment (within County border)	Scenic River Classification
Rockfish River	From South Fork Rockfish River to Salem Road	Potential
Rockfish River	From Salem Road to confluence with the James River	Designated
James River	Length of the southern County border	Qualified; also designated as a blueway
Tye River	From Tye River Road to confluence with the James River	Designated
Mechums River	From County border to Hollow Lane	Potential

Source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

### Map 8.2 Parks and Recreation Map with River Access Sites

#### Community Centers

One of the most important aspects of Nelson County is its many vibrant communities. The pride and sense of community values is reflected in the seven privately-owned and funded community centers found throughout the County.

These community centers provide vitally important services, offering recreational, educational, and commercial opportunities as well as holding community events. Many of the services provided by these organizations are those that are not officially provided by the County but are still necessary to the community. Nelson County can support these organizations by providing resources, promotions, partnerships, and inter-organizational coordination.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

**Table 8.6 Community Centers**

Name	Location	Center Description
<a href="#"><u>Nelson Center</u></a>	8445 Thomas Nelson Highway Lovington, VA 22949	Centrally located in the former Lovington School along Route 29 in Lovington, this facility contains community meeting spaces and offices for several organizations.
<a href="#"><u>Nelson Heritage Center</u></a>	1653 Thomas Nelson Highway Arrington, VA 22922	Located in the former Nelson Memorial High School along Route 29 just south of Colleen. Amenities include meeting spaces, a gymnasium, outdoor sports fields, a computer lab, and classroom spaces.
<a href="#"><u>Fleetwood Community Center</u></a>	1357 Crabtree Falls Highway Roseland, VA 22967	A non-profit organization located in the Massies Mill area. They strive to enhance the lives of their diverse community members through education and physical activities. The center is currently working to restore the historical Fleetwood School for use as a local education center, recreation facility, and tourism destination.
<a href="#"><u>Rockfish Valley Community Center</u></a>	190 Rockfish School Lane Afton, VA 22920	Located in Afton, this center offers commercial activities, events and event spaces, recreation, and educational activities to the surrounding area.
<a href="#"><u>Tuckahoe Clubhouse</u></a>	443 Monacan Drive Nellysford, VA 22958	Serves as the community center for the Wintergreen area, working as a party space, training facility, exercise room, meeting area, polling place, and much more.
<a href="#"><u>Walton's Mountain Museum</u></a>	6484 Rockfish River Road Schuyler, VA 22969	A privately owned museum that also serves as a community center and meeting space in Schuyler.
<b>Gladstone Senior &amp; Youth Center</b>	8786 Richmond Hwy ( RT 60 ) Gladstone, VA 24553	Serves as a community center for the Gladstone area.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Libraries

Centrally located along Route 29 in Lovingston, the Nelson Memorial Library, a branch of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library system, provides many library services to the community. Renovations in 2020 expanded the available catalogue and space, as well as updated and modernized the building. The library offers several meeting spaces, computer and internet access, as well as community activities and events to help better serve the residents of Nelson County. Future plans include outreach services to better serve the residents of Rockfish Valley, Gladstone, Tyro, and Schuyler.

### Healthcare

Residents of Nelson County have access to some medical and dental services located within the County. For more specialized medical needs or emergency care, many Nelson residents must travel to hospitals or medical centers located in Augusta County, Charlottesville, or Lynchburg.

- **Blue Ridge Medical Center**, founded in 1985 in the Colleen area of Nelson County, offers primary care, pediatrics, dentistry, x-ray, lab, physical therapy, and behavioral health.
- **University of Virginia Family Medicine Stoney Creek** is located in Nellysford and offers primary care services for patients of all ages, with advanced specialization in women's health, pediatrics and geriatrics.
- **Sentara Afton Family Medicine** offers a range of medical services, including primary care, pediatrics and geriatrics, physical and mental health exams, lab work, gynecology, vaccinations, dermatology, minor surgery, referrals, and family counseling.
- **Region Ten's Nelson Counseling Center**, located in Lovingston, provides a variety of services to individuals of all ages who have mental health, substance use, or developmental disability concerns.

While these organizations provide important services to the people of Nelson County, there is a need for more emergency and urgent care services to help ease the burden on citizens that must travel great distances for these services. Promoting and encouraging additional medical service options, including increased access with mobile clinics and transportation services, should be a priority for the County.



# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### **[Callout Box: Substance Abuse]**

Nelson County is fortunate to have a lower-than-average rate of drug overdoses and opioid prescriptions per person than seen elsewhere in the Commonwealth. The drug overdose rate in Nelson County in 2018 was 33.1, while Louisa County saw a rate of 65.0 and Charlottesville/Albemarle a rate of 69.1. Similarly, Nelson County saw an opioid prescriber rate of 17.9, the lowest in the Thomas Jefferson Health District Commission.

However, Nelson also had the highest suicide rate among TJHDC localities as measured in 2017, reaching 26.8 suicides per 100,000. The violent crime and drug arrest rates rose markedly between 2007 and 2018, from 53.2 per 100,000 to 160.6 per 100,000; and 61 per 100,000 and 75 per 100,000, respectively. Although Nelson has seen relatively low rates of drug overdoses and opioid prescriptions in recent years, the violent crime and drug arrest rates increased significantly between 2007 and 2018. Additionally, the opioid prescription rate may not capture all opioid use due to discrepancies in rural access to prescription locations. Methamphetamine has also proven to be a more serious problem in Nelson County, though overdose rates for this substance are also low in Nelson County.

Encouraging as it may be to see relatively low rates of drug abuse by certain metrics, Nelson County would benefit from additional monitoring and education around substance abuse—particularly in the face of rising

### **Map 8.3 Nelson County Community Facilities Map**

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### HOW WE MOVE FORWARD

Nelson County is committed to enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the County government, improving infrastructure to support sustainable growth, and providing quality services that improve upon the community's quality of life.

#### Goal Statement

Nelson County offers superior community services and facilities that serve all segments of the community, support economic development, and ensure community health and safety.

#### Strategies:

##### Enhance the Effectiveness and Transparency of County Government

###### Governance

1. Expand and improve external government communications to increase transparency and public participation across all demographics.
2. Enhance interdepartmental communication across County government as well as between the various public boards.
3. Create a comprehensive facility inventory, maintenance schedule, and level of service standards to protect existing investments and ensure sound planning and budgeting for facility improvements.
4. Ensure that the County is using up-to-date information technology and cybersecurity practices.

###### County Administrative Facilities

5. Construct a new, centrally located facility to house additional administrative offices.

###### Public Safety

6. Construct additional Sheriff facilities to allow for additional training and storage spaces.
7. Renovate and modernize current Sheriff facilities to meet security standards.
8. Identify possible mental health emergency service providers to support the community and reduce these burdens from the Sheriff's office. Consider that drug use is a facet of public safety, and pursue greater public education on this matter.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

9. Create a County-wide fire and emergency medical services (EMS) strategic plan that can be regularly updated and maintained to address response time, facility, and staffing needs.
10. Expand fire and EMS facilities to include additional living spaces such as bunks, kitchenettes, and recreation areas.
11. Ensure that the Emergency 911 operations center is fully supported, with paid staff and most up to date technological capabilities, to continue to respond to community needs as quickly as possible in the face of an aging population.
12. Continually monitor public safety staffing needs, expanding as needed to maintain public safety as the County experiences additional residential and commercial growth.
13. Pursue stronger community outreach and training on disaster readiness and resilience.
14. Seek out stronger partnerships with community-based organizations to educate the public and collect more data on substance abuse in the population.

### **Improve Infrastructure to Support Sustainable Growth & Development**

#### Public Water and Sewer Utilities

12. Continue to work with regional partners to upgrade and develop necessary infrastructure to meet the County's long-term water supply demand.
13. Utilize results of the updated CVPDC water supply plan.
14. Continue to work with the regional authority to create a water and sewer master plan to identify current system needs and target long-term strategies to maintain and expand service areas.
15. Promote water conservation practices to reduce water use and conserve the water supply.

#### Refuse & Recycling

16. Work with regional partners to evaluate the needs of the County's solid waste and recycling disposal as the regional landfill nears capacity.
17. Support waste management and recycling planning through rational, cost-effective, and environmentally-safe approaches.
18. Assist in educating the community on recycling and waste reduction efforts.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

### Telecommunications

19. Continue the County's partnership with Firefly Fiber Broadband to expand broadband services to all areas of the County.
20. Promote the broadband expansion project with additional public outreach so that residents remain up-to-date on deployment and availability of services.
21. Support expansion of cellular service quality and availability through cooperation with cellular providers. Evaluate the need for planning and zoning changes to improve service.

### **Provide Quality Services that Improve Community Livability**

#### Education

22. Support the creation of an up-to-date Nelson County Public School's Master Plan that identifies and plans for critical needs of school facilities.
23. Continue to monitor student enrollment to ascertain short-term and long-term needs of students.
24. Support educational programs through County schools, community centers, community organizations, and regional community colleges to help prepare the community workforce for employment.
25. Develop a strategy for greater investment in personnel, facilities, and/or public-private partnership as needed to expand access to after-school childcare programs.

#### Parks & Recreation

26. Create a Parks and Recreation master plan that identifies gaps in equitable services and opportunities to expand recreation across the community.
27. Investigate and pursue options to create a centralized County-owned recreational facility to offer athletic fields, aquatic recreation, and exercise opportunities to the community.
28. Continue partnerships with local organizations, such as community centers, to provide recreation opportunities across the community.
29. Create additional family-friendly parks and amenities throughout the County to provide alternative recreational areas for residents.

The header features a stylized landscape with mountains in shades of purple, blue, and green, and a green foreground. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of this graphic.

# Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

## Draft Chapter 8: Serving the Community

30. Partner with local and regional organizations, as well as private landowners, to increase access to natural areas and riverways.

### Community Centers

31. Create a joint public-private partnership with Nelson County's community centers to facilitate coordination between different organizations, increase programming, and connect residents with their services.
32. Promote the use of school buildings, community centers, long-term care facilities, and multi-use facilities for citizens year-round.

### Libraries

33. Continue to work with the County library to ensure that it meets the needs of the community.

### Healthcare

34. Encourage emergency, long-term care, and urgent medical care land uses in appropriate areas of the County.
35. Work with Virginia Department of Health, and other regional partners, to identify community health needs and increase the availability of healthcare services.
36. Continue to work with Jaunt and other regional transportation providers to expand transportation access to better connect residents to medical care.
37. Pursue public-private partnerships to expand access to and capacity for social service networks.