



Aerial, Smith Mountain Lake, Roanoke

# RURAL VIRGINIA ACTION COMMITTEE

June 11, 2025

## **AGENDA**

### **VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AUTHORITY RURAL VIRGINIA ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING**

**June 11, 2025  
12:30 P.M. – 1:20 P.M.**

**One James Center, 9th Floor – VEDP Board Room  
Richmond, Virginia**

<b>12:30 p.m. – 12:33 p.m.</b>	<b>Welcome/Call to Order – Nick Rush</b>
<b>12:33 p.m. – 12:34 p.m.</b>	<b>Public Comment Period – Nick Rush</b>
<b>12:34 p.m. – 12:36 p.m.</b>	<b>Approval of Minutes for 3/5/2025 Meeting – Nick Rush</b>
<b>12:36 p.m. – 12:46 p.m.</b>	<b>Emergency Committee on the Impacts of Federal Workforce and Funding Reductions (May 12<sup>th</sup> Presentation) – David Devan</b>
<b>12:46 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.</b>	<b>Cardinal News Presentation – Dwayne Yancey</b>
<b>1:10 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.</b>	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
<b>1:20 p.m.</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>

**Minutes**  
**Rural Virginia Action Committee Meeting**  
**Board of Directors of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership**  
**March 5, 2025**  
**12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**One James Center, 9th Floor – Board Room**  
**Richmond, Virginia**

**Welcome and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Chair Nick Rush. A quorum was present.

In-person Committee members: Stephen Edwards, Rick Harrell, John Hewa, Connie Loughhead, Secretary Caren Merrick, Nick Rush

Absent Committee members: Nancy Howell Agee, Mimi Coles

Other Committee members present: Stephen Edwards, Todd House, Pace Lochte, Sonya Montgomery, Will Sessoms, Steven Stone

**Public Comment Period**

Chair Rush solicited public comments. There were none.

**Approval of Minutes for December 11, 2024**

Chair Rush requested approval of the December 11, 2024, meeting minutes. Upon motion by Mr. Harrell, seconded by Ms. Loughhead, the minutes were unanimously approved.

**Update: Local and Regional Competitiveness Initiative**

Adam Watkins, Assistant Vice President and Interim VP of Economic Competitiveness, provided an update on the Local and Regional Competitiveness Initiative (LRCI). Mr. Watkins' PowerPoint presentation is included in the Committee meeting materials. He briefly reviewed the three components of the LRCI: a self-assessment tool, a report on peers, and custom engagement. The LRCI process was updated based on feedback received from the last assessment conducted in 2020. He anticipates that the self-assessment tools will launch this summer.

**VDACS Marketing and Economic Development Overview**

Joe Guthrie, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), Rob Davenport, Director of the Division of Marketing at VDACS, and Rachel Meyers, Program Manager in the Office of Agriculture and Forestry Development at VDACS, provided an overview of marketing and economic development at VDACS. A copy of their PowerPoint Presentation is included in the Committee materials.

Mr. Guthrie highlighted that agriculture, Virginia's largest private industry, has an economic impact of \$82 billion annually and provides over 380,000 jobs. He also provided an overview of VDACs generally and outlined current initiatives and areas of concern. Mr. Davenport spoke about opportunities and challenges in rural farming in Virginia. Ms. Meyers provided an overview of grants awarded under the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID).

### **Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Rural Virginia Action Committee will be held on June 11, 2025. There being no further business, Chair Rush adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

# EMERGENCY COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

# PRESENTER



**David Devan**

Senior Vice President, Policy and Strategic Partnerships

[ddevan@vedp.org](mailto:ddevan@vedp.org)

# VEDP'S PRESENTATION TO THE G.A. IN WYTHEVILLE HIGHLIGHTED PAST, CURRENT, AND FUTURE INVESTMENTS IN VA'S RESILIENCE

Virginia's actions and investments support general economic resilience, and support the current economic challenges, but also create a playbook and tools to support future challenges, such as:

- Impacts of AI
- Potential federal government RIFs
- Industry transitions (e.g., historically tobacco, furniture, coal)

## Past Investments

- VOEE
- The Virginia Talent Accelerator
- Site Development
- Diversifying Virginia's Economy
  - Project incentives
  - International trade plan
- Investments in the Innovative Framework

## Current Activities

- Emergency subcommittee
- Supporting dislocated workers
- Helping businesses navigate change
  - Federal policy
  - International Trade

## Future Recommendations

- Upskilling, reskilling, and next-skilling
- Continued diversification
  - Lead generation
  - GA support for projects
- Top State for Talent



# STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN VIRGINIA'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC HEALTH HAVE POSITIONED VA TO RESPOND MORE EFFECTIVELY



## Policy development and labor market alignment

VOEE has provided data-driven insights and fostered collaboration among education, workforce, and economic development stakeholders

University of Virginia



## Workforce development

The Talent Accelerator Program has become a key differentiator for Virginia, and programs like TTIP, FastForward are expanding the supply of talent in critical fields at all levels

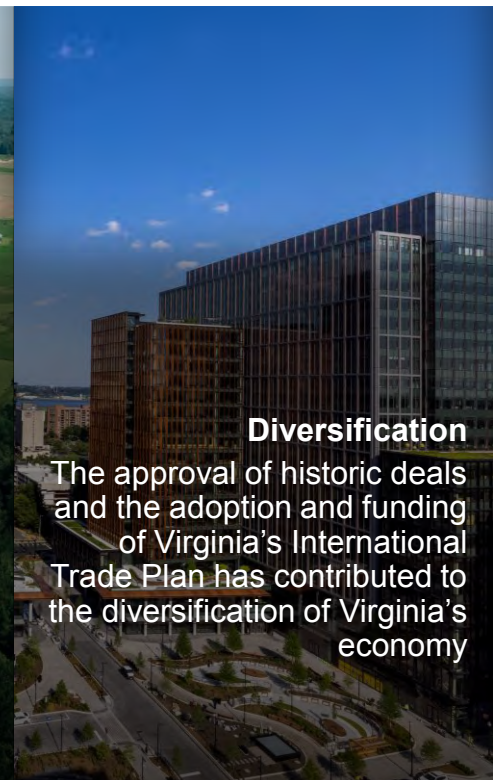
Weidmüller Group, Chesterfield County



## Infrastructure investment

VBRSP has promoted the development and characterization of industrial sites, while marquee investments in transportation infrastructure help set the Commonwealth apart

Commonwealth Crossing



## Diversification

The approval of historic deals and the adoption and funding of Virginia's International Trade Plan has contributed to the diversification of Virginia's economy

Amazon HQ2, Arlington



# VEDP CAN DELIVER BETTER RESULTS THANKS TO THE FUNDING OF ITS INNOVATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Achieving Virginia's transformational goals

**Sector Depth**

**Robust  
Ecosystems**

**Commonwealth  
Collaboration**

# VIRGINIA HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO RAPIDLY RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGE

## Anticipating changes and planning

- Emergency Committee
- State agencies
- Congressional delegation

## Supporting dislocated workers

- Virginia Has Jobs
- Virginia Works response
- NOVA Next
- Local governments

## Helping businesses navigate change

- Engaging business community
- VEDP International Trade



## **AREAS THAT WE ARE CLOSELY MONITORING FOR IMPACTS ON VIRGINIA (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)**

**Rapid pivot in trade policies creating uncertainty, supply chain challenges, but also potential investment**

**Shift in industrial policy and unwinding / defunding of specific programs**

**Spending cuts that can create stress on state budget (e.g., non-discretionary programs)**

**Federal workforce reductions (civil servants & contractors) dislocating significant number of workers**

**Scaling back of funding for R&D / innovation, impacting higher ed finances, R&D assets**

**Emerging economic development opportunities (e.g., shipbuilding, energy)**

# THERE IS MORE THAT WE CAN DO TO ADDRESS IMPACTS IN THE SHORT TERM

## Upskilling, reskilling, next-skilling



## Job creation and diversification



## Upskilling, reskilling, next-skilling

Prioritize upskilling, reskilling, and next-skilling to help dislocated workers adapt to shifting federal budget priorities and reductions in the government and contractor workforce.

**ACTION** | VOEE is exploring collaboration with Virginia Works to deploy skills adjacency modeling to support policy-making

**RECOMMENDATIONS** | The General Assembly could consider scaling up funding in the short-term for upskilling, reskilling and next-skilling programs *and* expanding career coaching services to help people navigate career change and leverage available programs



# SKILLS ADJACENCY ANALYSIS COMBINED WITH CAREER COACHING CAN HELP JOB SEEKERS IDENTIFY RELEVANT JOBS OR SKILLS

Current Role	→	Target Role	Overall Skills Overlap*	Shared Skills	Skills to Learn (Reskilling)
Information Security Engineers		Data Scientists	56%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Python</li> <li>SQL</li> <li>Computer Science</li> <li>AWS</li> <li>Excel</li> <li>Forecasting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data visualization</li> <li>Artificial Intelligence</li> <li>Statistics</li> <li>Apache Spark</li> <li>Consulting</li> </ul>

Current Role	→	Target Role	Overall Skills Overlap*	Shared Skills	Skills to Learn (Reskilling)
Office Managers		Human Resources Specialists	87%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Auditing</li> <li>Marketing</li> <li>Customer Service</li> <li>Operations</li> <li>Coordinating</li> <li>Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS)</li> <li>Applicant Tracking System (ATS)</li> <li>Talent Management</li> <li>Recruitment &amp; Full-Cycle Management</li> <li>Talent Acquisition &amp; Sourcing</li> </ul>

\*Includes common skills such as communication, customer service, detail-oriented, leadership, coordinating, planning, and Microsoft Office/Excel

Source: Virginia Office of Education Economics

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Novozymes, Salem

## Job creation and diversification

Continue efforts to diversify the economy and attract new jobs and investment to build long-term resilience.

**ACTION** | VEDP is deploying a robust set of lead generation activities in FY26 to attract new jobs and investment to the Commonwealth

**RECOMMENDATION** | The General Assembly could consider enhancing Virginia's incentive offerings to aggressively court new jobs and investment

**VEDP is  
planning 150  
lead generation  
activities in  
FY26 – a 40%  
increase over  
current FY**

## SELECTED EXAMPLES

### Strategic market presence



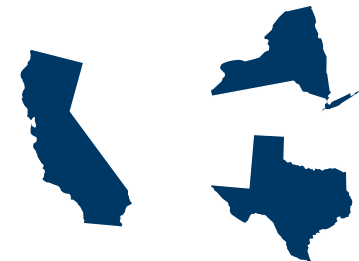
### Inbound marketing



### Driving FDI in Virginia



### Targeted outreach



**VEDP pursues these opportunities in collaboration with our local and regional partners**

# CONTINUED INVESTMENTS IN VIRGINIA'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC HEALTH WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO RESPOND TO FUTURE CHALLENGES

## Positioning Virginia as *America's Top State for Talent*



## Investing for the future



## Positioning Virginia as *America's Top State for Talent*

Sustain investments in education, workforce development, and quality of life to position Virginia as America's top state for talent.

**ACTION** | Implement Virginia's Top State for Talent Strategy

**RECOMMENDATION** | The General Assembly could consider strategically scaling investments in relevant areas including talent retention (internships) and attraction, workforce development, childcare, transportation, and other barriers to workforce entry







Deloitte, Arlington County

## Investing for the future

Continue making foundational investments to support economic growth and successfully navigate a rapidly changing national and global economy.

**ACTION** | VEDP will continue efforts to secure new jobs and investment in core growth areas, while navigating major shifts in the economy

**RECOMMENDATION** | The General Assembly could consider continuing to prioritize/safeguard investment in our foundations for long-term economic growth

## Upskilling, reskilling, next-skilling



## Job creation and diversification



## Positioning Virginia as *America's Top State for Talent*



## Investing for the future





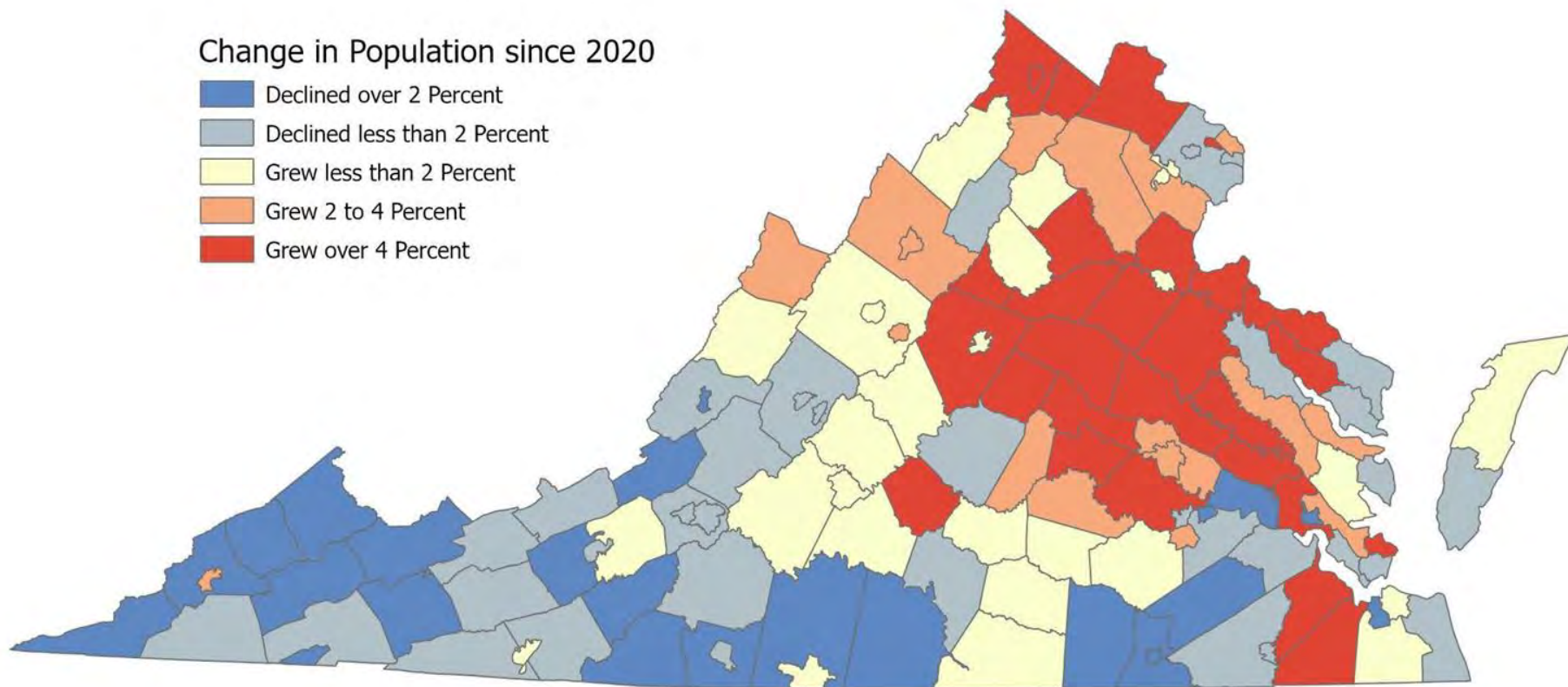
# GUEST PRESENTATION

## DWAYNE YANCEY, CARDINAL NEWS

June 11, 2025

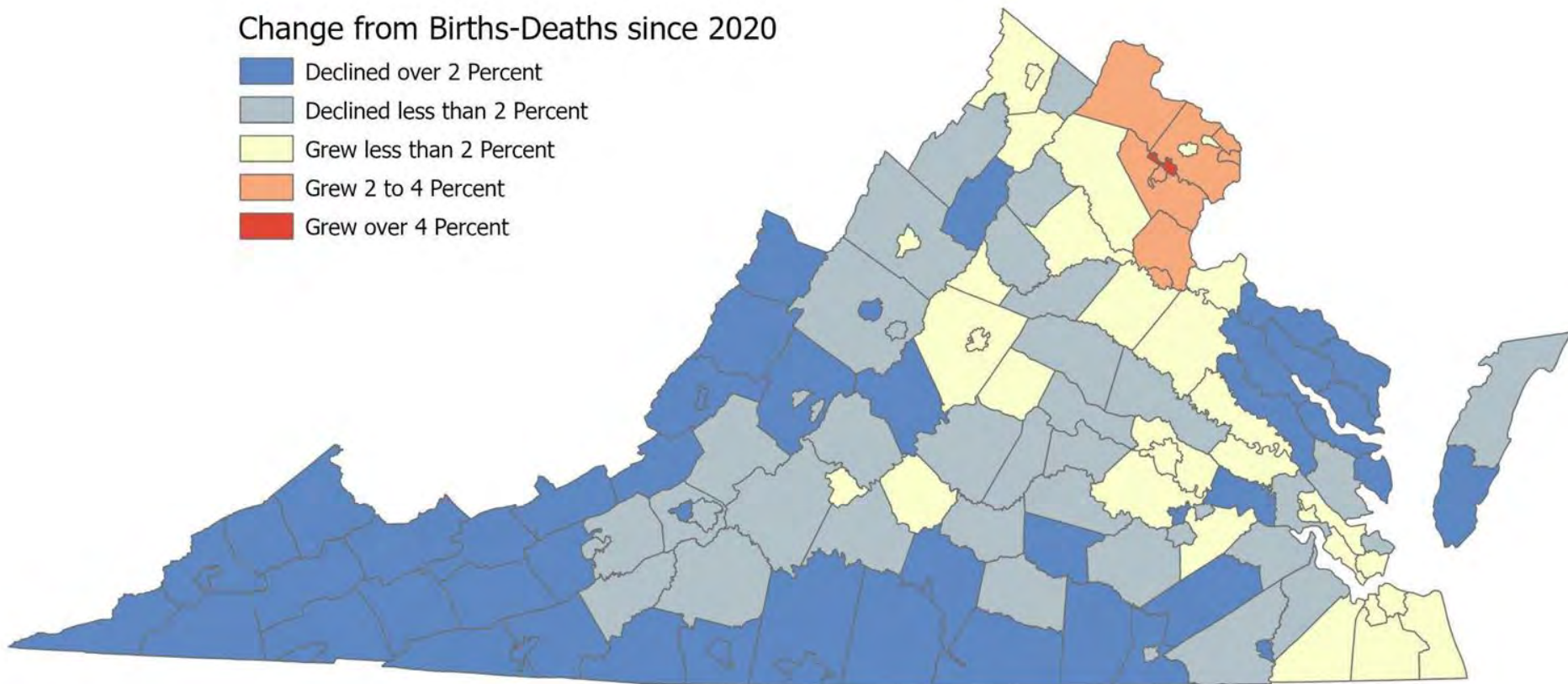
## Change in Population since 2020

- Declined over 2 Percent
- Declined less than 2 Percent
- Grew less than 2 Percent
- Grew 2 to 4 Percent
- Grew over 4 Percent

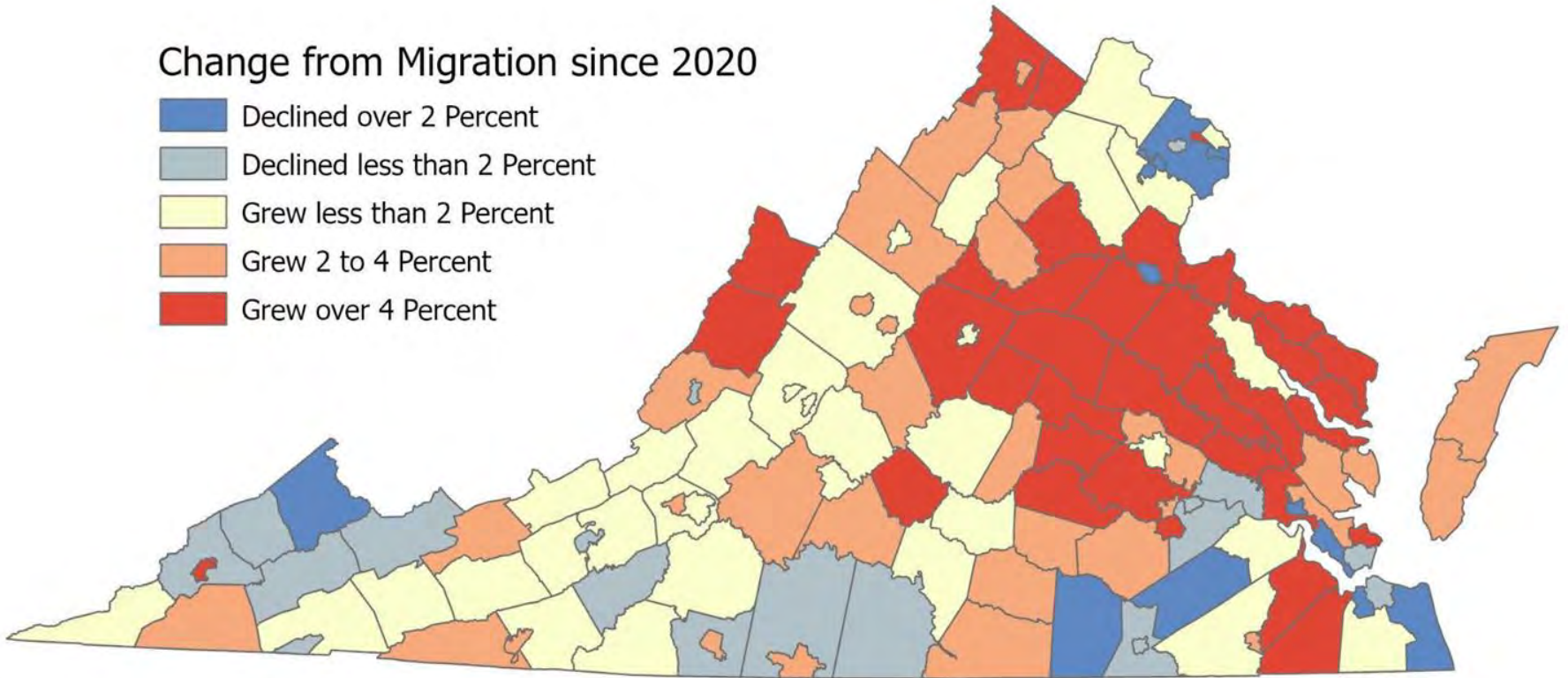
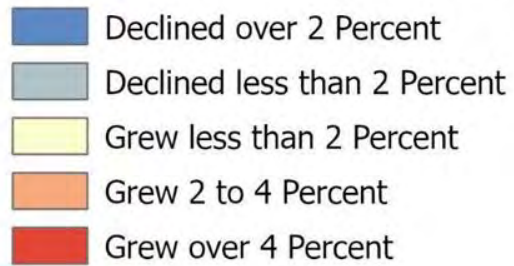


### Change from Births-Deaths since 2020

- Declined over 2 Percent
- Declined less than 2 Percent
- Grew less than 2 Percent
- Grew 2 to 4 Percent
- Grew over 4 Percent

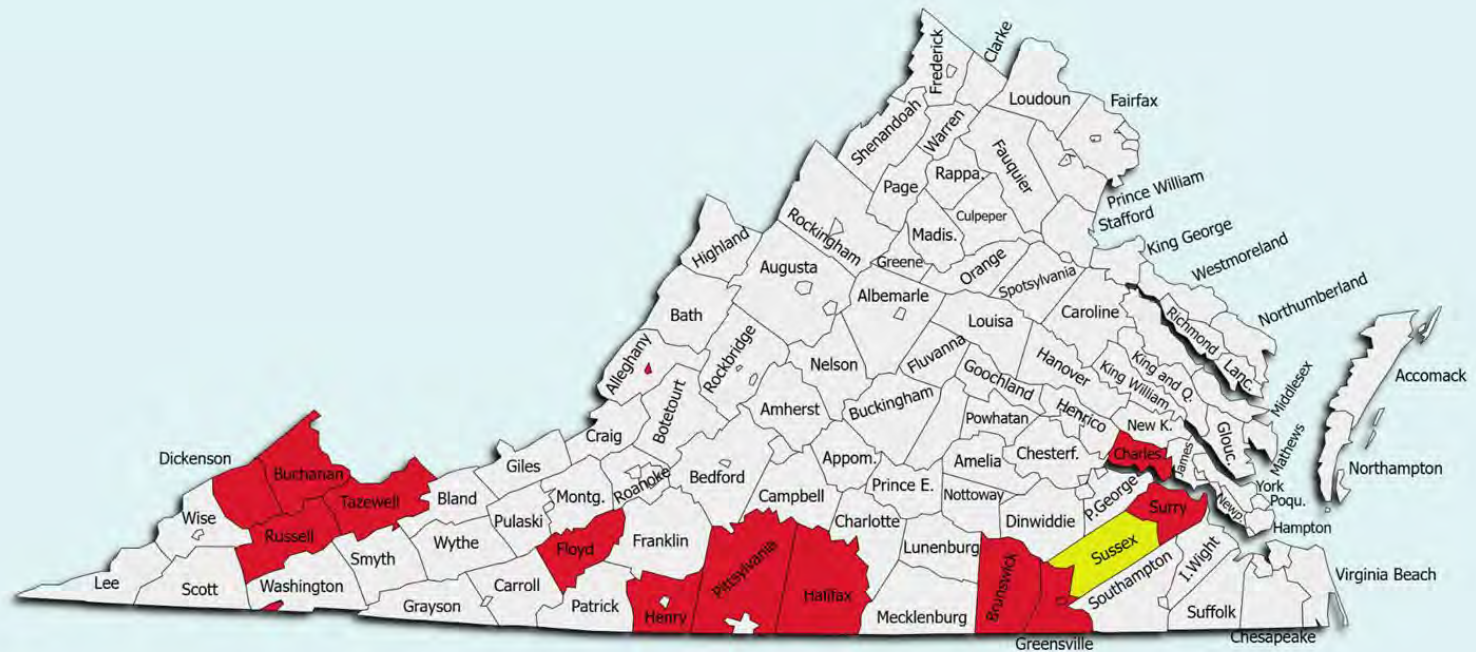


## Change from Migration since 2020





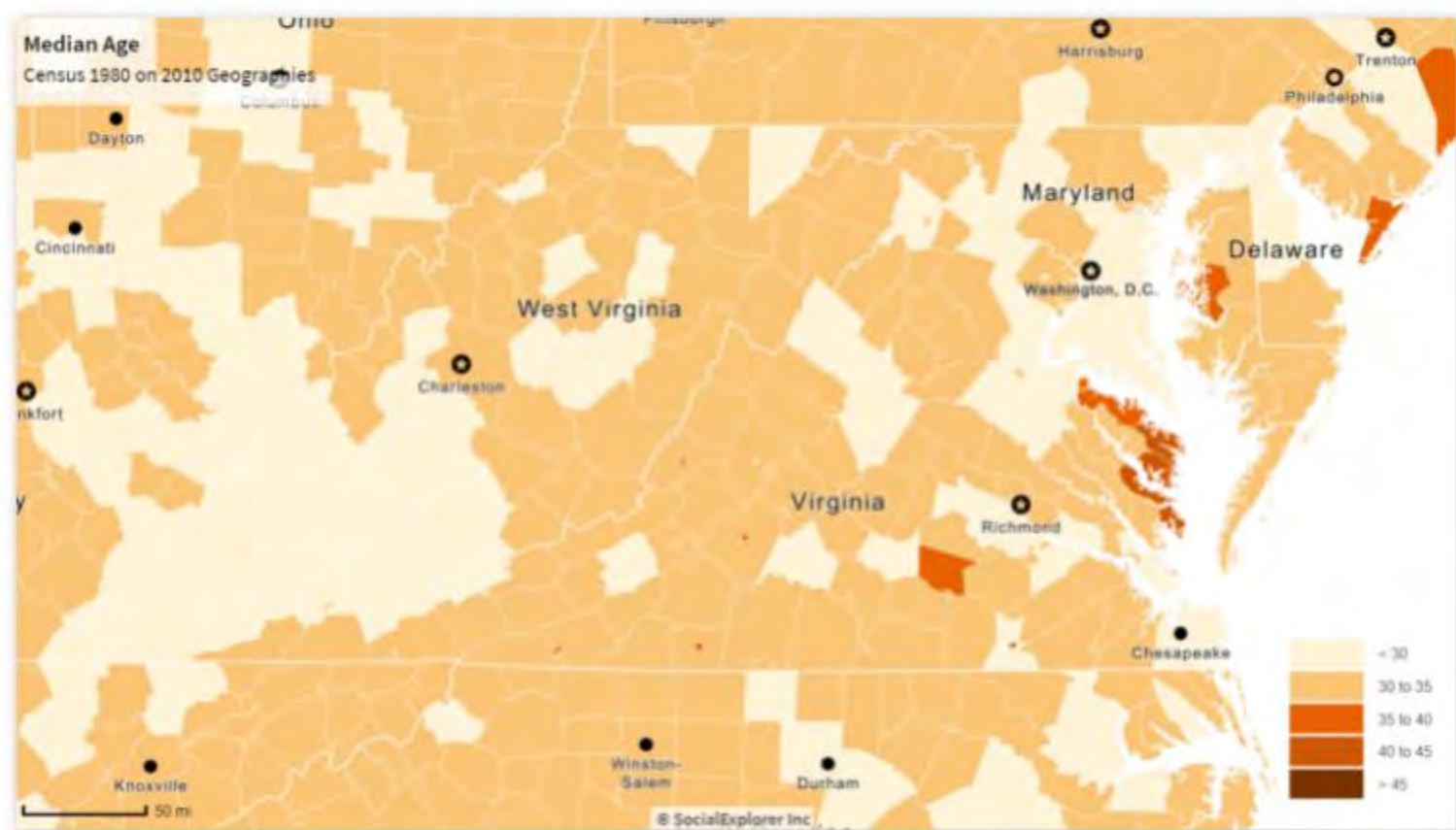
## Lost population through both death and net out-migration



- Lost population mostly through people moving out
- Lost population mostly through death

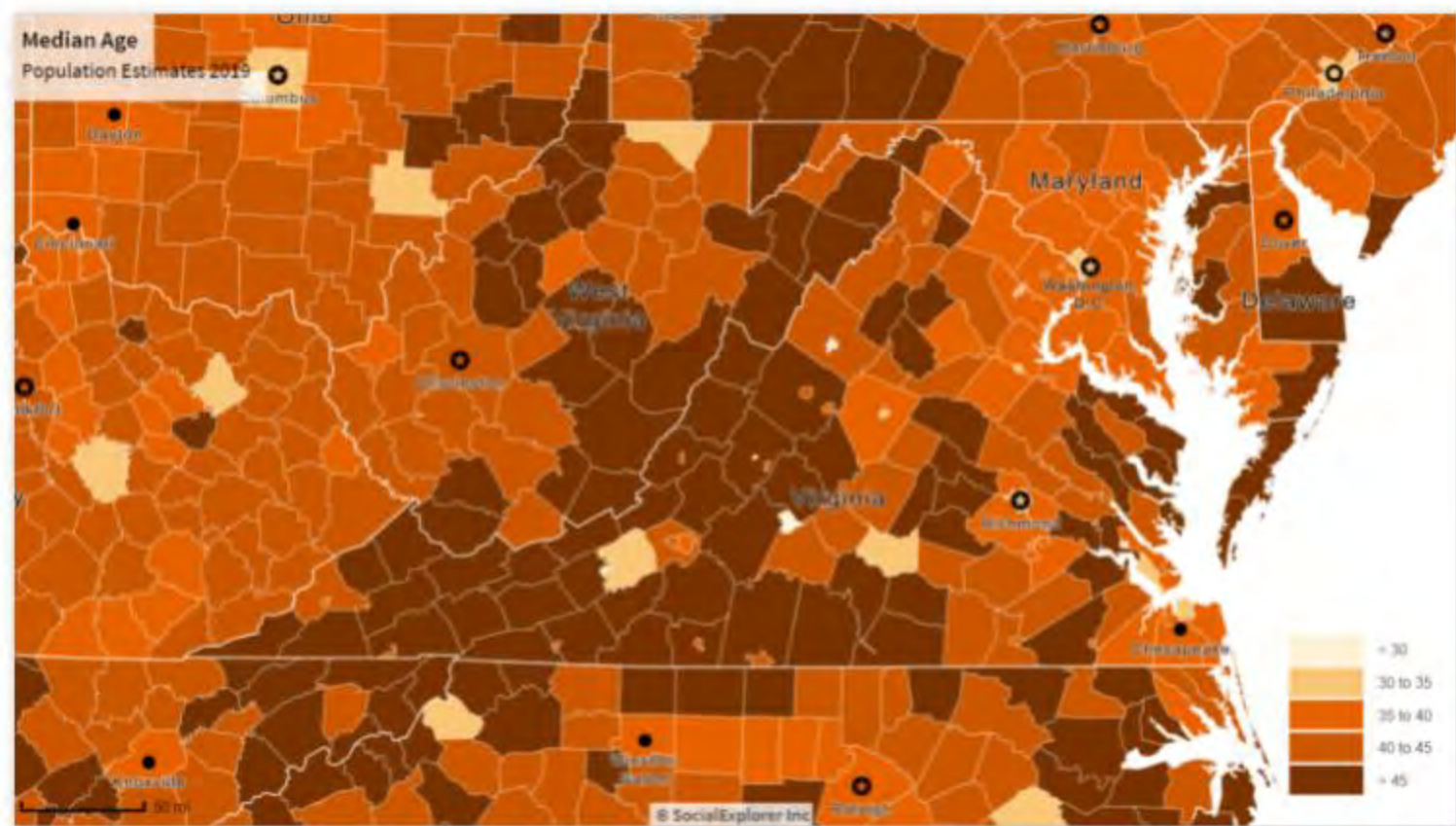
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# Median Age: 1980

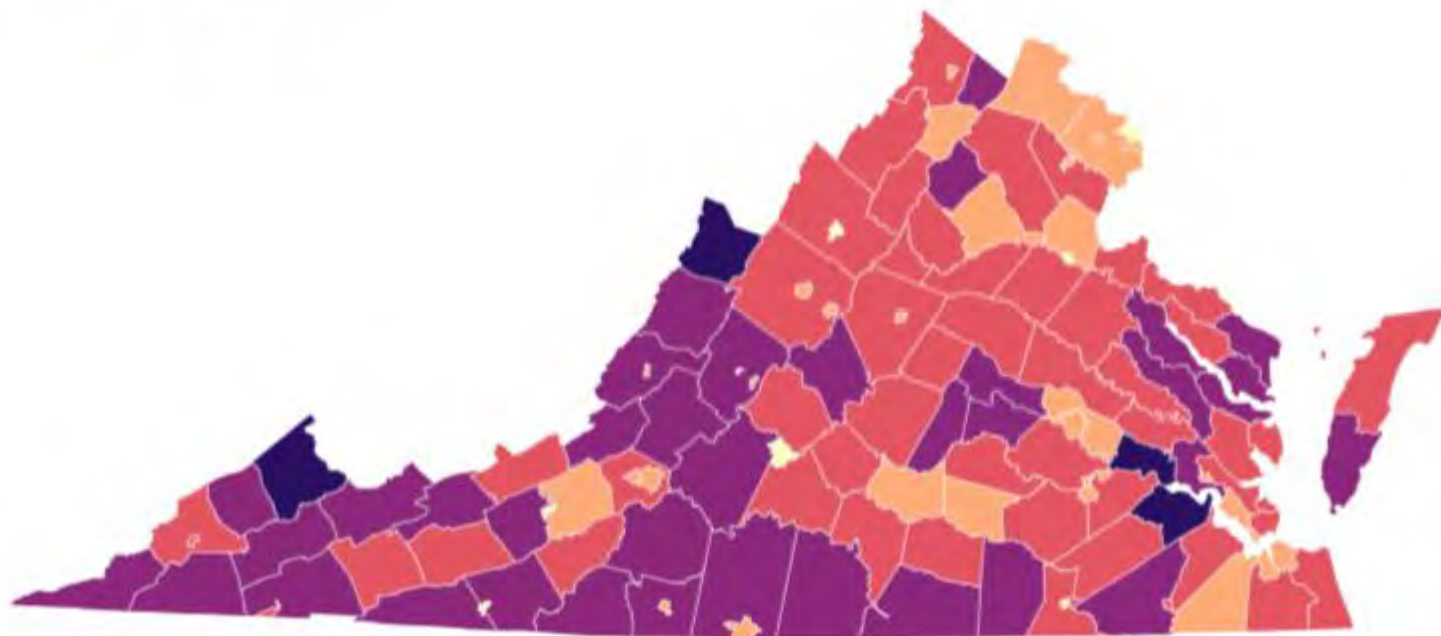




# Median Age: 2019

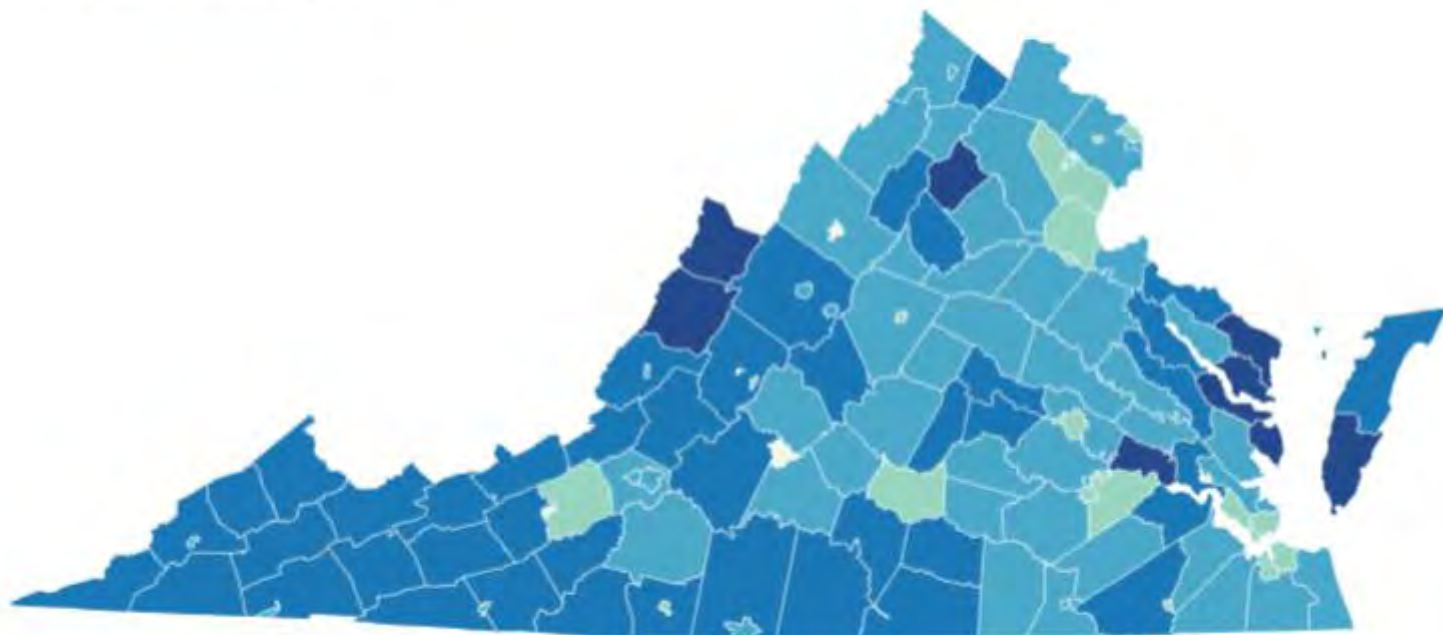
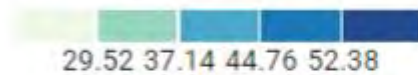


## Localities that have aged the fastest

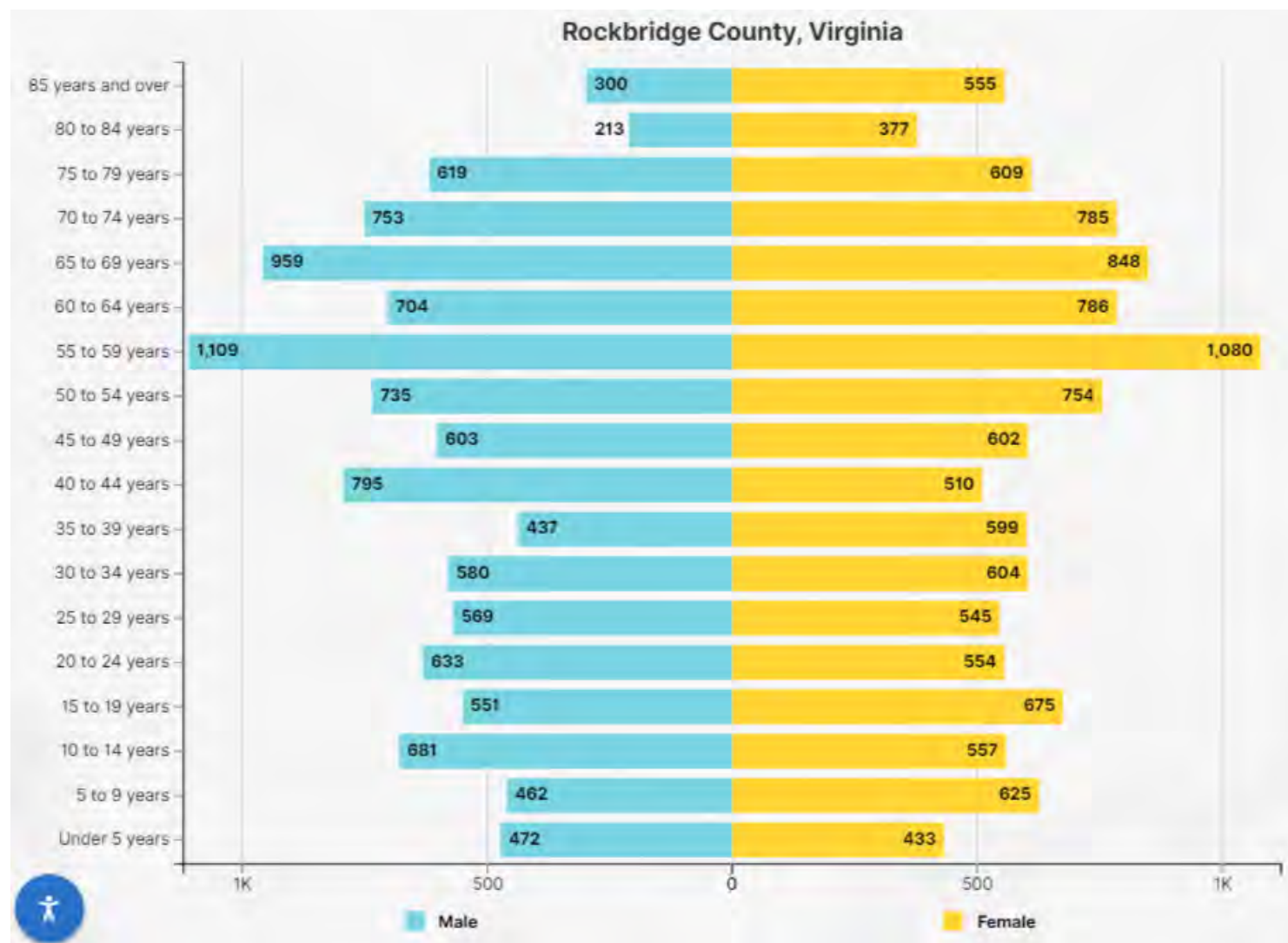


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## Median age 2023

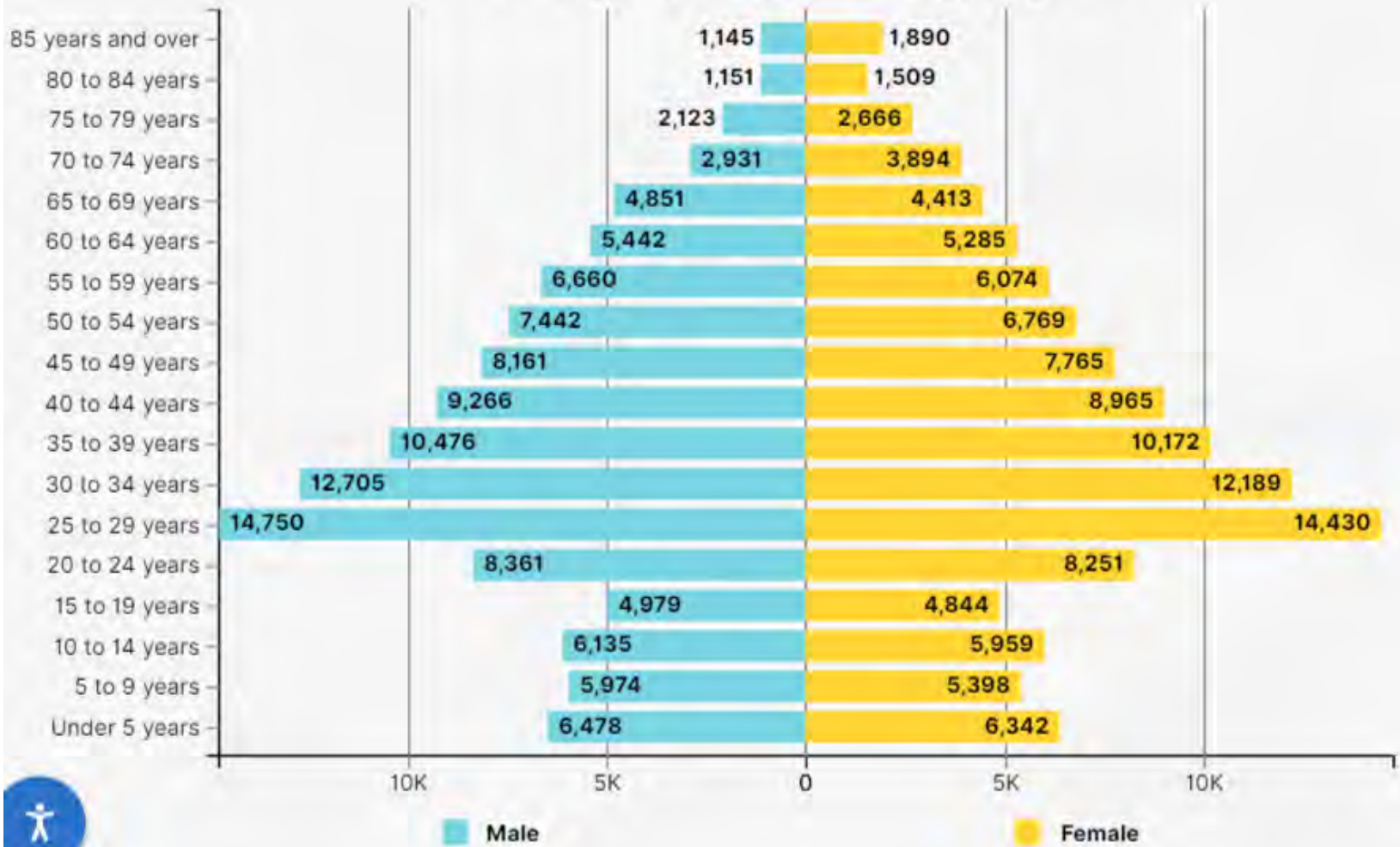


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## Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia



**Q&A**



# ADJOURNMENT