



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Greene County

Program Title: Greene County Citizens Academy

Program Category: Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Terry Beigie

Title: Grant Writer

Department: Administration

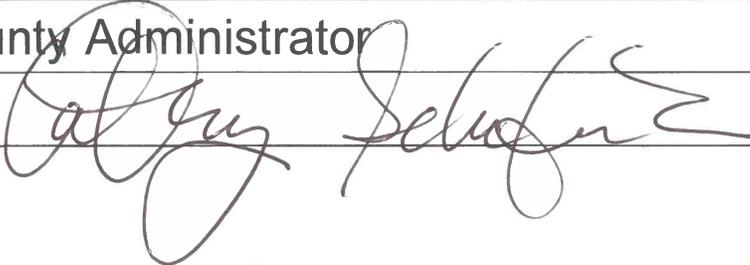
Telephone: 434-985-5201 Website: www.greenecountyva.gov

Email: tbeigie@gcva.us

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Cathy Schafrik

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
POST OFFICE BOX 358
STANARDSVILLE, VIRGINIA 22973
434-985-5201
FAX: 434-985-3705

2025 VACO Achievement Award Submission
Locality: Greene County
Program: Citizens Academy

Executive Summary:

Greene County is a community in transition from a rural community to a hybrid rural/suburban one. The population has grown by 41% since 2000 to more than 21,500 residents, straining the county's infrastructure. Finding a way to communicate important information to the community has been a struggle, including finding ways to engage the public in local government. The development of a Citizens Academy was a recommendation highlighted in the Ruckersville Small Area Plan, developed in 2018. The Greene County Citizens Academy began in early 2024 and continues to this day.

Background:

Greene County is a small rural community at the crossroads of two large thoroughfares—U.S. Routes 29 & 33). The population has grown by 41% since 2000 to more than 21,500 residents. The growth has strained infrastructure and required the County to emphasize the need for proper planning for economic and residential development. In 2010, the County decreased

the growth area after numerous public work sessions for its Comprehensive Plan. The growth area remains along U.S. route 29 in Ruckersville.

The [Ruckersville Small Area Plan](#) was approved by the Board of Supervisors on June 12, 2018. The plan is a 10-year to-do list for Greene County officials and the Ruckersville Community, including residents and businesses. This plan was developed over seven months and included community members, business owners, elected officials, and local staff to develop a vision for Ruckersville's future. Three public meetings were held throughout the process to offer ample public input. The plan was developed with assistance from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and was identified as a need through the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The Ruckersville Area Plan identified 26 recommendations in the following categories: Community; Economic Development; Infrastructure; Land Use; and Transportation. The Department of Planning and Zoning has created a Ruckersville Advisory Group and developed a Citizens Academy, which are two of the 26 recommendations in the small-area plan. The volunteer Ruckersville Advisory Committee, which consists of 15 community and staff members, meets on the second Thursday of each month. The goal of the committee is to set a schedule to ensure the implementation of the Ruckersville Area Plan recommendations. In 2024, the Department also developed a Citizens Academy, in conjunction with the Ruckersville Advisory Committee, and has held seven recorded public meetings, the most recent June 12, 2025.

Program Overview:

The Ruckersville Advisory Committee and the Department of Planning and Zoning worked to create a program to better communicate the work of local government in Virginia. The

first presentation was held February 7, 2024, with a session on the introduction to local government with special emphasis on the Dillion's Rule in the Commonwealth. It explained the different branches and explained constitutional officers and their role as well as the separation between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board.

The second program focused on the role of the Department of Planning and Zoning on April 11, 2024. The third program focused on Economic Development and Tourism on June 13, 2024. The fourth program focused on the role of Parks & Recreation on August 15, 2024. The fifth program was on education on November 14, 2024. The sixth program was on Water and Sewer on April 17, 2025. The seventh program was on Grant Writing on June 12, 2025. Each program is created by the department heads and brought to the Ruckersville Advisory Committee the meeting prior to the presentation for feedback from the volunteers. Presentations are adjusted as necessary prior to the public meeting. A question-and-answer session is held at the end of each program. The programs are all live streamed and the videos and presentations are placed on the Citizens Academy page of the County's website (<https://greenecountyva.gov/182/Citizens-Academy>).

Financing, Staffing and Replication:

There is no cost for the public to participate, with the goal to help educate the public about the local government and have more active participation by the public. The program was designed in-house with staff and volunteer community members and works to incorporate each facet of the County government. The Director of Planning and Zoning attends each of these meetings to introduce the speaker and program and specific staff attend to discuss their aspect of

the government. The volunteer members of the Ruckersville Advisory Committee are usually in attendance and there is no additional cost for that attendance.

Results of the Program:

Sessions have been well-attended and we have received word from nearby community leaders that they like the program and want to create something for their own localities.

Conclusion:

The Department of Planning and Zoning and the Ruckersville Advisory Committee have worked collaboratively with other departments to present information to the public regarding local government and its impact on everyday lives. There are other areas of the government that we'd like to see create a program for the public and the Department and Committee are working to make that happen. Please see attached documents regarding the Ruckersville Area Plan's recommendations for this program.

Key to Recommendations Table:

- Community
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Land Use
- Transportation

Key to Recommendations Timeline:

- [I] Immediate
- [S-T] Short-Term
- [L-T] Long-Range

Recommendation	ID	Timeline
Disrepair Remediation	C-1	I
Marketing and Branding for Recreation Opportunities	C-2	S-T
Community Center	C-3	L-R
Streetscape and Beautification Plan	C-4	S-T
Community Events	C-5	S-T
Housing Partnerships	C-6	S-T
Medical Services	C-7	L-R
Additional Parkland	C-8	I
Ruckersville Advisory Group	C-9	S-T
Citizens Academy	C-10	S-T
Business-Ready Sites	ED-1	S-T
Regional CEDS Plan	ED-2	S-T
Business Recruitment	ED-3	S-T
Audit of Commercial and Industrial Zoning Districts	ED-4	S-T
Tourism and Visitation	ED-5	I
Continue Greene County Broadband Initiative	I-1	S-T
Continue Water and Sewer Audit	I-2	S-T
Develop a Common Vision with Utility Providers	I-3	S-T
Comprehensive Zoning Audit (zoning text amendments)	LU-1	S-T
Targeted Zoning Map Amendments	LU-2	I
Open Space Requirements	LU-3	S-T
Route 29 Median	T-1	S-T
Operational Improvements	T-2	I
Develop Bike and Pedestrian Recommendations	T-3	S-T
Road Network	T-4	L-R
Access Management	T-5	L-R

Recommendation:	Citizens Academy		ID:	C-10
Category:	Community	Type:	Program	
Description:	Develop a Citizens Academy to train and educate Ruckersville residents and businesses on the functions of local government, local zoning and leadership.			
Outcomes:	Public Involvements and Leadership			
Point of Contact:	Planning Department	Partners:	County Administrator's Office	
Priority/Timeline:	Immediate (2020)	Justification:	Lower Priority	
Steps:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partner with identified organizations to provide training and education 2. Work with Ruckersville Advisory Group to develop a curriculum 3. Begin the annual training program 			
Sources:	Ruckersville Advisory Panel	Budget:	Staff Time	
Notes*:				