

A G E N D A

JAMES CITY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

READING FILE

December 8, 2009

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

1. Williamsburg-James City County (WJCC) School District – Safe Routes to School

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WJCC School District Safe Routes to School

Background: The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program was established under Sec. 1404 of SAFETEA-LU. Congress authorized \$612 million in competitive grants for every state to start SRTS programs, to enable and encourage students to walk or bicycle from home to school. SRTS is a comprehensive program based on “5 E’s”: engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation. Virginia was allocated \$13 million for grants through this federal program. Grants are awarded through the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

VDOT requires a two-step process to seeking funding through the SRTS grant program:

- 1) Submission and approval of the School Travel Plan, a comprehensive document that proves a community has identified the steps necessary in starting a SRTS program. A School Travel Plan must address each component of the program: engineering near schools, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation.
- 2) Once VDOT has approved a School Travel Plan, a community is cleared to pursue funding through the competitive grant process.

There are two different types of grants awarded through VDOT’s SRTS Program:

- 1) infrastructure, with a maximum award of \$500,000 per total applications for each cycle; and
- 2) non-infrastructure, which addresses the education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation components. The maximum award is \$100,000 per cycle.

SRTS in Williamsburg: In 2009, the WJCC School Board, included the following annual improvement goals: To work with The City of Williamsburg, James City County, and community groups to identify and implement a “*Safe Routes to School*” program to enable more students to walk or ride bikes to school. A diverse committee, chaired by Alan Robertson, Facilities Manager for the school division, convened in Spring 2009 to begin to develop a “School Travel Plan.”

One of the first tasks of the SRTS Committee was to determine which schools in the division to include in the initial travel plan. Factors in the selection included: 1) the desire of the school administrators to be involved; 2) the proximity of students to the school; 3) the number of families already walking or bicycling or expressing a desire to do so; 4) the degree of infrastructure improvements needed or under development. After evaluating all the schools in the division using these criteria, five schools emerged: Berkeley Middle School, Clara Byrd Baker Elementary, James River Elementary, Matoaka Elementary, and Rawls Byrd Elementary.

Once VDOT has approved the School District’s School Travel Plan, each of these schools will be included in the “non-infrastructure” grant application. Three schools—James River, Matoaka, and Rawls Byrd—have proposed infrastructure improvements, which require three separate infrastructure grant applications. The proposed infrastructure improvements for each school are as follows:

- James River Elementary: Proposed infrastructure improvements at this school will be concentrated along Pocahontas Trail (Route 60) and will include enhanced crosswalks, enhanced intersection and installation of a median refuge for traffic

calming, and installation of a pedestrian signal and speed feedback radars. These treatments will serve to slow speeds and alert drivers to the presence of students traveling on foot or by bicycle. Preliminary request: \$216,000

- Matoaka Elementary: Proposed infrastructure improvements will take place along Brick Bat Rd. (State Route 613) and a county easement that provides an access point to the school from the Greensprings West neighborhood. Desired improvements include a multi-use path (~1,500 l.f.) that leads from Thorngate Drive to a crosswalk at the school entrance, striped crosswalks, speed feedback radars, and installation of a median as a traffic calming treatment and pedestrian refuge at the crosswalk. These improvements will serve to slow traffic along this once rural road and alert drivers to the presence of students walking and bicycling to school. Preliminary request: \$236,000

- Rawls Byrd Elementary: We propose constructing an off-street path approximately 300 feet along an easement between Chestnut Drive and Willow Drive. This is currently a paved culvert that is used as a cut through for students walking to school. We also propose improving pavement markings in the form of a crosswalk at the intersection of Laurel and Willow as well as at the intersection of Laurel and Brookwood. Additionally, we are proposing installation of speed feedback radars along Brookwood. Preliminary request: \$44,500

WJCC SRTS Committee:

Alan Robertson (Chair), Facilities Manager
Robert Day, Transportation Coordinator
Jeannie Trainum, Health & PE Coordinator
Denise Corbett, SHIP Coordinator
Kimberly Pickles, Asst. Principal, Matoaka
Lynn Turner, Principal, James River
John Carnifax, Parks & Recreation
Darryl Cook, County Engineer
Luke Vinciguerra, JCC Planner

Miles Pettengell, District Fire Chief
Rodney Rhodes, Wmbg Zoning Admin.
Lt. Anthony Dallman
Sr. Ofc. Sean Gormus, JCC Police Dept
Dennis Baines, Williamsburg Police Dept
Stephanie Smith, AWA
Bambi Walters, PTA Council