

Greenbrier Town Hall Meeting  
December 2, 2008

Following are responses to issues, grouped under headings, raised at the Greenbrier Town Hall Meeting.

Communicating with Citizens

As a result of a suggestion from a citizen attending the Greenbrier Town Hall Meeting, responses to the questions posed at the meetings will now be provided on the City's web page. Responses will be grouped and provided under topic areas.

A citizen also posed a question as to what plans the City has to educate the public about issues relating to the current economic downturn, particularly how citizens can better prepare and cope. The Public Communications Department will be looking to include such issues in future Channel 48 programming. They are exploring various opportunities to provide useful information, and will coordinate with our Economic Development and Budget Departments.

Budget

The City is currently in the early stages of our budget development for FY 2009-10. Throughout the month of October, we held community meetings to hear the voice of the citizens through Listen and Learn Sessions. These sessions brought forth very valuable information about our future direction and even some current needs. Chesapeake City Council held its Strategic Planning Retreat to address the FY 2009-10 budget on November 19, 2008. This retreat allowed staff to provide Council with information about the current and ensuing fiscal year as well as an Economic Climate Report for the City of Chesapeake based on the current economic crisis.

With the identified shortfall, Council deemed it prudent to hold a follow-up discussion to the initial retreat to re-evaluate our priorities and communicate specific goals that are advantageous to our citizens in conjunction with probable resources available for FY 2009-10.

While Council has not yet determined its final direction to the City Manager, they are well underway in establishing those priorities. Once they have been established, we will provide a communication to the general public as we formulate a fiscally sound budget to meet those objectives. Chesapeake, like other localities, is engaged in determining the best solution for its respective shortfall. It is our intent to address Council's specific goals within estimated resources available for FY 2009-10.

We are carefully reviewing all capital projects, whether funded, unfunded, or proposed, as well as any other anticipated fiscal requirements.

The City of Chesapeake's pay structure was recently reviewed by an external consultant during the 2007-08 fiscal year. The consultant's concluded that the salary ranges of many positions lagged behind those of comparable size Hampton Roads municipalities. Recommendations of the consultant were adopted as Phase I of the Pay Plan for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Additionally, the consultants concluded that executive salary ranges were not competitive and adopted the philosophy that salaries of employees with more than seven years of services should be at the market value. This philosophy will be addressed in the implementation of Phase II of the pay plan.

To address concerns regarding individual salaries of senior management, it should be noted that many of these employees have more than 15-20 years of service with the City. With such long tenure, the salaries of some of these employees are between the market and maximum value of the salary scale.

#### Real Estate Assessments/Taxes

Real Estate sales are collected and analyzed each calendar year resulting in the new assessment for the upcoming year. By State laws, they are to reflect 100% of the fair market with uniformity and equalization being considered as well. The January 2009 reassessments will reflect current (2008) market trends. This year (January 2008) 14,834 properties experienced a decrease in assessed value. The Real Estate Assessor anticipates this trend will continue for the upcoming year.

Real Estate is localized and is assessed with that in mind. The real estate sales data utilized for the 2009 reassessment will consist of sales in the City of Chesapeake and reflect the market trends for this area. While Chesapeake is experiencing decreases in the market value of real estate, it is not to the degree of decreases experienced in such areas of the country as California, Florida or Nevada.

#### Education Funding/School Lock Box

In FY 2003-04, the "lock box" funding strategy was created to provide a means for funding critical school capacity needs as well as improvements of existing facilities. Since 2003, the funding deposited to the lock box has included:

General Fund Revenues	38.2M
Hotel Tax 3.5%	10.1M
Proffers	1.0M
Other	3.3M

These funds are used to pay for improvements using cash and those funded with bond debt currently in excess of \$350M. While these funds facilitate the repair and improvement needs, School Categorical State Aid funding specifically designated as School Construction funding provides an annual disbursement from the State of Virginia in the amount of \$650,000. However, given the current economic conditions, the State is proposing to eliminate this funding.

### Greenbrier TIF

Following is a list of the Greenbrier TIF projects:

Project name	Funding FY 08-09 through FY 2012-13
Conference Center Parking Garage	\$24,744,100
Conference Center District	2,213,835
Greenbrier Center Pedestrian Safety	1,120,475
GB Center Trolley/Shelters	6,475,628
Greenbrier Center District	5,681,291
Mall Bike Trail	69,426
Municipal District	41,813,522
Commerce Bike Trail	120,338
Woodlake Drive Extension	2,736,339

### Crossing Greenbrier Parkway

The Greenbrier TIF will be providing new pedestrian crossings on Greenbrier Parkway at Crossways Boulevard/Mall Entrance and Volvo Parkway. The existing pedestrian crossing at Eden Way will be improved. All new/improved crosswalks will contain either brick pavers or stamped concrete/asphalt, and pedestrian signals. The work is currently underway and is expected to be completed by mid-2009.

## Bridges

The City of Chesapeake owns and maintains over 90 bridges. Currently there are eleven weight-restricted bridges within the City of Chesapeake, nine of which are owned by the City. These weight-restricted bridges present a logistical challenge for emergency response; however, the City has taken proactive measures to address this issue.

City Council previously appropriated funds to replace six of the weight-restricted bridges. The Gilmerton Bridge is also fully funded through a combination of federal, state, and local funds. The Deep Creek AIW Bridge is owned and operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, and we continue to work with our legislative delegation to identify funds to replace the bridge. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Overpass is partially funded in the State's six-year transportation improvement plan, and replacement of the Sunray Overpass remains unfunded. The Jordan Bridge was decommissioned in November 2008 due to the advanced age and deterioration of the structure.

Additionally, legislation was introduced and adopted on behalf of the City to allow certain emergency apparatus to cross weight-restricted bridges when responding to and returning from emergency situations. The legislation took effect July 1, 2007, and allow emergency vehicles to exceed the gross weight limited posted on a bridge provided that a determination has been made by a professional engineer that the vehicle can safely cross the bridge.

## Recycling

The City has considered using large recycling bins on several occasions in past budget years and has decided against implementing the program due to the additional costs that would be incurred, which could approach an additional \$1 million annually. However, City Council is interested in an enhanced recycling program and may reconsider this option in the near future.

Currently, items collected in the City's program are: newspaper; aluminum cans, pie plates, foil; clear, brown and green glass; #1 and #2 plastic bottles; steel food cans; and telephone books.

## HRT

HRT currently has bus stops on Eden Way North and Ring Road. According to HRT, the installation of additional bus shelters would be at city expense. An installed bus

shelter is approximately \$10,000. Regrettably, the City does not have funds in the current budget for bus shelters.

### Streetlights

The City no longer requires the street light pole number in order to report an outage. A caller need only provide the location of the street light. When the City receives the report of an outage, it contacts Dominion Power. Dominion Power responds according to its time schedule.

The Public Works Department has contacted Dominion Power and requested that the sneakers on the street light in front of Greenbrier Mall be removed.

### Parking on Welles Court

It is standard practice to allow parking on both sides of the street for residential streets which are a minimum of thirty (30) feet wide. Furthermore, parking on both sides of the street has the benefit of generally slowing traffic as motorists tend to use more caution when traveling between parked cars. Welles Court is a thirty (30) feet wide residential street with a twenty-five (25) MPH speed limit and fall into that category.

If, however, residents wish to have parking restrictions implemented, there is a petition process that can be undertaken. For the petition to be granted, over fifty percent (50%) of the residents would be required to sign the petition agreeing to parking restrictions. If the residents choose to use this process, they are required to contact the Public Works Traffic Engineering Division to obtain the petition form. Upon receiving the signed petition, Traffic Engineering will issue a work order for the installation of the “No Parking” signs.