

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 27, 2009
TO: The Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sanford B. Wanner, County Administrator
SUBJECT: Authorization to Expend Funds for Ironbound Road Widening Project - \$197,000

Planning for the Ironbound Road widening project began over 10 years ago and initially included provisions to place overhead utilities underground from Strawberry Plains Road to the Ironbound Road and Longhill Connector Road intersection. While the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) funds will pay to move overhead utilities to a new overhead location, County funds would need to fund the additional incremental costs of placing those utilities underground. In March 2008, staff decided not to place the utilities underground from Magazine Road to the Ironbound Road and Longhill Connector Road intersection based on revised VDOT cost estimates that exceeded available County funds in the project budget. This decision impacted five residences in the City of Williamsburg and two in James City County. Leaving the utilities aboveground on this section of the road saved an estimated \$1.1 million of County funds.

Staff recently learned that Verizon and Cox must assume responsibility to place their utilities underground, which reduces the County cost to lay the utilities underground to an estimated \$570,000. Since part of this section of Ironbound Road is within the City of Williamsburg, the City has agreed to contribute one half of the cost of the section within the City limits. Therefore, the total County contribution is \$394,000 and the City's share is \$176,000. One half of these funds, a total of \$197,000 for James City County, is due within 90 days of approval. The remaining half is due one year later.

Placing the utilities underground as originally planned will minimize the impact of the road-widening project on the private property owners who live along this section of Ironbound Road. In addition, it will result in a significantly enhanced viewshed along this important corridor, including frontage on the County-owned property on Palmer Lane.

Given that the undergrounding of utilities will improve visual appearance, staff recommends that the Board approve the expenditure of \$197,000 for this project in FY 2010 from the Greenspace Fund. The appropriate budget allocation will be included in the County's FY 2011 budget to cover the remaining cost.


Sanford B. Wanner

SBW/gb
IronboundPro_mem

Attachment