



## Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Greenspace Bond Referendum

On November 8, 2005, County citizens will be asked to vote YES or NO on the following ballot question:

*“Shall James City County, Virginia, contract a debt and issue its general obligation bonds in a principal amount not to exceed \$20,000,000 pursuant to the Public Finance Act of 1991, as amended, for the purpose of financing a portion of the cost of the acquisition of land and voluntary land conservation agreements that will serve as green space for the County and preserve agricultural, forestal, or environmentally sensitive lands in the County?”*

**Why is the County asking this question on the ballot?** Counties in Virginia can only issue general obligation bonds when approved by voters. General obligation bonds are backed by the County’s full faith and credit and are the most flexible and least expensive way for the County to borrow money.

**How will the County use the money to preserve land?** The County will use the funds through two existing programs, Greenspace and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR).

Under the PDR program, the County will use \$15 million raised through the sale of the bonds to enter into land preservation agreements voluntarily offered for sale by eligible owners of rural land in the County. The PDR program provides landowners with a way to ensure that their land will remain preserved for future generations. While the landowner retains ownership, the land may not be used for residential or commercial development. Properties that preserve community character corridors, scenic roadways, farmland, forest land and environmentally sensitive areas, such as near a river, reservoir or tidal marsh, may be eligible for the purchase of a conservation easement.

Under the Greenspace program, the County will use \$5 million to protect land important to the character of the County and its appearance, primarily within the developing parts of the County. The Greenspace program may purchase land outright or purchase protective easements on the land, such as scenic easements. Lands in important historic, scenic or environmental areas are program priorities. While greenway trails are constructed through Parks and Recreation funding, the land for trails is acquired through the greenspace program.

**Are there other ways to pay for land preservation?** Yes, there are ways for the County to borrow money without voter approval. These financing methods would result in higher interest costs or bond insurance because there is more risk for the lender. The County could also increase taxes or reduce spending in other areas to generate the needed funds without borrowing. The County would be limited in the number of agreements it could enter into or amount of land it could purchase, resulting in less land preserved.

**Will a successful referendum require a tax increase?** No, the County expects recurring annual revenues will be sufficient to pay debt service and operating costs for these projects without a tax increase.

**Who can I contact for more information?** For information about the referendum and proposed bond issue, contact the County’s Communications Office at 253-6605 or e-mail [pubinfo@james-city.va.us](mailto:pubinfo@james-city.va.us).



## Parks and Recreation & Greenways & Trails Bond Referendum

On November 8, 2005, County citizens will be asked to vote YES or NO on the following ballot question:

***“Shall James City County, Virginia, contract a debt and issue its general obligation bonds in a principal amount not to exceed \$15,000,000 pursuant to the Public Finance Act of 1991, as amended, for the purpose of financing a portion of the cost of improvements to parks, greenways, trails and recreational facilities?”***

**Why is the County asking this question on the ballot?** Counties in Virginia can only issue general obligation bonds when approved by voters. General obligation bonds are backed by the County’s full faith and credit and are the most flexible and least expensive way for the County to borrow money.

**What will these bonds pay for?** The bonds will fund a variety of projects to respond to the increase in the use of sports fields, the preservation of historic areas and the continuation of needed work outlined in the Greenway Master Plan. The bonds also will fund facilities needed to keep pace with growth in our community. The County will benefit from indirect revenues generated from the programs and activities offered at these Parks and Recreation facilities.

<b>Warhill Sports Complex - \$8.7 million</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• six multi-use fields</li><li>• lighting for fields</li><li>• playground</li><li>• rest room facilities</li><li>• additional parking</li></ul>	<b>Freedom Park - \$4.3 million</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• development of historical interpretive area</li><li>• central building to house artifacts, a small office and rest rooms</li><li>• picnic shelter and passive recreation area</li><li>• additional parking</li></ul>
<b>Chickahominy Riverfront Park - \$500,000</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• picnic shelter</li><li>• playground</li><li>• additional rest rooms</li></ul>	<b>Greenways and Trails - \$1.5 million</b> <p>In accordance with the Greenway Master Plan, funds will be used to continue development of trails. Possible trail corridors include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Powhatan Creek</li><li>• a connector between the James City/Williamsburg Community Center and the Warhill Sports Complex</li></ul>

**Are there other ways to pay for park improvements?** Yes, there are ways for the County to borrow money without voter approval. These financing methods would result in higher interest costs or bond insurance because there is more risk for the lender. The County also could increase taxes or reduce spending in other areas to generate the needed funds without borrowing. The County would be limited to modest, incremental improvements through annual appropriations to the Capital Improvement Plan.

**Will a successful referendum require a tax increase?** No, the County expects that recurring annual revenues will be sufficient to pay debt service and operating costs for these projects without a tax increase.

**Who can I contact for more information?** For information about the referendum and proposed bond issue, contact the County’s Communications Office at 253-6605 or e-mail [pubinfo@james-city.va.us](mailto:pubinfo@james-city.va.us).