

# RECREATION & COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

## A G E N D A

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE

November 18, 2008 - 6:00 P.M. – Council Chambers - Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

OPEN FORUM / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

AGENDA ADOPTION:

- 
1. Community Pool, Future Plans and Ideas (Ms. Marianne White)
  2. Bicycle Plan Review
  3. Playground Equipment Update
  4. Safe Routes to School Update
  5. Committee Member Comments

ADJOURN:

## **TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE BICYCLE PLAN**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In November 1994, the Chincoteague Town Council expressed interest in developing a bicycle plan as part of a state road improvement project. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) informed the Town that in order to be eligible for VDOT Funding for projects that involve bicycle facilities, the local government must have adopted a bicycle facilities plan.

In January 1995, the Town Council requested that the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) provide technical assistance in developing a bicycle plan. The Commission agreed to provide assistance to the Town under the A-NPDC Transportation Planning Technical Assistance Program. After adopting the plan on October 6, 1997 the Town recognized the need for a continuing planning effort with regards to bicycling needs and formed the Bicycling Advisory Committee in December 1999 to fulfill this function. The Bicycling Advisory Committee is responsible for updating the Town's Plan and providing advice on bicycling needs to the Chincoteague Town Council.

### **Purpose of Plan**

The Chincoteague Bicycle Plan is intended to meet VDOT's requirement for local governments to have an adopted bicycle facilities plan in order to receive project funding. In addition to transportation needs, the plan also identifies bicycling recreational needs. A Virginia Guide for Bicycle Facility Planning outlines the following seven guidelines for an acceptable plan:

1. The plan must be approved by the local government.
2. The plan should have goals, objectives, and policies.
3. The plan should have a map of the major trip origins and destinations of bicycle riders.
4. The plan should have a map(s) of the existing and proposed bicycle facilities.
5. Along with the map(s), the plan needs to have a narrative about each of the proposed facilities which includes Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), posted speed, and road width for roads on which the selected \ routes have been placed.
6. A listing of the types of improvements and programs (e.g. on-road, off-road, encouraging commuting, etc.)
7. Proof of public involvement in the development and approval of the bicycle plan should be shown. A Bicycle Advisory Committee is recommended that includes citizens, some of whom are bicyclists. A public hearing to review the plan should have been held.

## Planning Process

The Town of Chincoteague Bicycle Plan was initially developed by the Public Works Committee, with technical assistance from A-NPCD staff. It is revised on a regular basis by the Town's Bicycling Advisory Committee. The public continues to be involved by the workshops sponsored by the committee.

### B. BACKGROUND

The Town of Chincoteague is located on Chincoteague Island, which is part of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Chincoteague Island is accessible from the mainland via route 175, a primary state road. The Town is approximately 6 miles long by 2 miles wide, and is approximately 12 square miles in area. The population of Chincoteague is approximately 4,000. The summer population is estimated to be 14,000.

The Town is well known as the home of the Chincoteague Ponies, which live at the nearby Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague National Seashore. The refuge and national seashore attract visitors year-round, and along with recreational boating and fishing, are the basis for Chincoteague's large tourism economy.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Park Service (NPS) maintain bicycle trails through the refuge and national seashore, providing access for wildlife observation and swimming at Assateague Beach. The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge estimated 20,365 bicycles entering the refuge for the twelve month period ending July 1, 1997.

Bicycling on Chincoteague has become increasingly popular over the years, with visitors riding from their motels to the refuge, beach, stores, and other destinations on the island. There are bicycle shops that rent bikes, as do several motels and stores. Bicycle clubs from Maryland and Virginia sponsor annual rides to Chincoteague.

The development of bicycle paths on Chincoteague is supported by the following transportation goal in the 2001 Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan (page 63):]

**GOAL:** Promote a transportation system that will provide for the safe, efficient, and convenient movement of people and goods by road, water, and pedestrian means.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines several objectives in order to implement this goal. Including the following:

**OBJECTIVE:** Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic. Through this Bicycle Plan the Town hopes to develop better bicycle access to improve safety and enhance the image of Chincoteague as a great place to live and visit.

## C. CYCLE FACILITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Because bicycles are considered vehicles in Virginia, they are permitted on all roads except for limited access highways. Unfortunately, most roads were not designed to safely accommodate motor vehicles and bicycles at the same time. This can result in conflicts. As motor vehicles encounter bicycles on narrow roads, traffic slows down. Drivers move into the oncoming lane to pass bicycles, posing a threat to themselves and oncoming traffic. Many bicyclists feel unsafe under these conditions and avoid riding. The planning and development of proper bicycle facilities allows for the free flow of motor vehicle and safe bicycling. The design standards for a “proper” bicycle facility depend on the type of bicyclist, width of road, traffic volume, and average vehicle speed. In order to plan proper bicycle facilities, standards have been developed to ensure the needs of the “design bicyclist” are met by the “facility design”.

### Design Bicyclist

Engineers use the idea of a design bicyclist to determine the type of bicycle facility design needed. There are three types of bicyclists: advanced, basic, and children, as follows:

Group A – Advanced Bicyclists: These are experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions and prefer direct access to destinations via the existing street and highway system. They should have enough road width to reduce the need for motor vehicles or bicycles to change position when passing.

Group B – Basic Bicyclist: These are casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles, such as marked lanes. They need either low-speed, low-traffic streets or designated bicycle facilities.

Group C – Children: These are pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored by parents. Eventually they ride on their own to schools, parks, stores, and other neighborhoods. They need to ride on residential streets with low motor vehicle speeds and volumes: roads with well-defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles; or on separate bike paths.

Because Group B and Group C have similar needs, engineers combine these in a design bicyclist model with two broad classes of bicyclists: Group A (advanced) and Group B/C (basic/children).

Bicycle facilities should be designed to meet the needs of the least skilled bicyclist expected to use the facility. Since schoolchildren and tourists with children are a major part of Chincoteague’s bicycling activity, the Town’s bicycle facilities should be designed for the Group B/C bicyclist.

D. EDUCATION AND SAFETY

One goal of the Bicycling Advisory Committee and the Town is to promote bicycling safety by educating the bicycling public on rules of the road and hazard awareness. The Committee will regularly prepare, revise and distribute a brochure and other literature towards this effort.

E. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Trip Origins and Destinations

Mapping the locations of bicycle trip origins and destinations provides the basis for determining logical bicycle routes on Chincoteague. Trips originate where people live, so the origins are spread throughout the island. Concentrations of trip origins are the motels along Main Street and Maddox Boulevard, as well as the campgrounds and bicycle rental shops. Destinations can be divided into recreation, businesses, and public services. The following locations of trip origins and destinations are shown on the attached map.

Trip Origins

Town Neighborhoods  
Vacation Homes  
Rental Homes  
Motels  
Bed and Breakfast Inns  
Campgrounds  
Bicycle Rental Shops

Trip Destinations

Assateague National Seashore  
Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge  
Oyster Museum  
Tourist Information Center (Chamber of Commerce)  
Island Businesses  
Town Harbor  
Town Dock  
Memorial Park  
Schools  
- Elementary  
- High School  
Churches  
Downtown  
- Stores  
- Post Office  
- Town Office  
- Police

## Existing Facilities

The existing bicycle facilities on Chincoteague consist of the bicycle lanes on Maddox Boulevard from the Refuge to Chicken City road, and shared lanes on the rest of the roads and streets in town. However, most of the streets in town are not up to VDOT bicycling standard due to the narrow width and/or the presence of parking. The attached map delineates the existing facilities.

## Needs Assessment

An analysis of the trip origin and destination and the existing facilities shows that the major need for bicycle facilities is to get tourists from their lodgings to the refuge/beach and to the stores and services on Maddox Boulevard and Downtown. Based on this analysis, the following bicycle facility needs were identified:

### Priority

1. Chicken City Road - Church St. to Maddox Blvd.
2. Maddox Boulevard – from Main St. to Deep Hole Road.
3. Hallie Whealton Smith Drive
4. Church St. – from Main St. to Chicken City Road / Ridge Road intersection.
5. Main St. – Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to Beebe Road.
6. Maddox Boulevard – From the Chamber of Commerce (traffic circle) to the Assateague Bridge.
7. Path from Eastside Road to

### Solution:

1. Widen existing paving to allow bicycling shoulders.
2. Prohibit on street parking and provide new parking lots. Stripe a bike lane. Alternative: Stripe Ocean Boulevard, Taylor St., and Hallie Whealton Smith Drive for alternate routes.
3. Pave and stripe.
4. Prohibit parking on Church Street or limit to 10 minute parking in front of the Opportunity Shop. Also widen and stripe from Fowling Gut to the Chicken City Road / Ridge Road intersection.
5. Acquisition of property and constructing a bicycle path on Main St. along the water's edge and prohibit parking in the downtown area, striping bicycle lanes.
6. Provide separate bike path and and improve access at the circle.
7. Acquire easements for the

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Maddox Boulevard via. Maddox Family Campground.                              | construction of a separate bicycle path to connect Eastside Road and Maddox Boulevard. |
| 8. Fowling Gut Path (“The Canal”) running down the center of the Island.     | 8. Property acquisitions to erect a separate bicycle path along Fowling Gut.           |
| 9. Chicken City Road Extension.  | 9. Widen the road and pave shoulders.  |
| 10. Eastside Road.   | 10. Widen and pave shoulders.  |
| 11. North Main Street – from Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to the turn circle. | 11. Widen and pave shoulders.  |
| 12. South Main Street – from Bunting Road to Curtis Merritt Harbor.          | 12. Pave shoulders.  |
| 13. Bunting Road.  | 13. Widen and pave shoulders.  |
| 14. Beebe Road.  | 14. Widen and pave shoulders.  |

F. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives have been outlined to guide the development of bicycle facilities and programs on Chincoteague:

1. GOAL: Improve bicycling access  
 OBJECTIVES:
  - A. Develop a comprehensive, island-wide system of bicycle routes.
  - B. Improve the marking signage of existing and future bicycle facilities.
  - C. Implement a review of bicycle facility needs with each capital road Project.
2. GOAL: Enhance bicycle safety.  
 OBJECTIVES:
  - A. Decrease hazards confronting bicyclists and increase roadway capacity

for motor vehicles.

- B. Educate the traveling public on bicycling safety.
- C. Implement a program of bicycle safety and enforcement.

3. GOAL: Encourage bicycle facility development.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Expand the island bicycle system as state road improvement project budgets allow.
- B. Incorporate the implementation and maintenance of the island's bicycle system into the Chincoteague public works program.
- C. Seek grant funding to provide for bicycling transportation and recreational needs.

4. GOAL: Improve and diversify the tourism economy.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Promote tourism by enhancing the awareness of bicycle accessibility to the island's natural and historic points of interest.
- B. Promote recreational bicycling on Chincoteague.
- C. Conduct one bicycle special event each year.

## G. PROPOSED BICYCLE FACILITIES

The Map shows the bicycle facilities proposed for the Town of Chincoteague. The following narrative describes the proposed facilities, including Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), Average Speed, and Road Widths.

### Priority

1. Maddox Boulevard – from Main St. to Deep Hole Road.

AADT: 8,800 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 25'

2. Church St. – from Main St. to Chicken City Road / Ridge Road intersection.

AADT: 4,500 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 20'

3. Main St. – Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to Beebe Road.

AADT: 9,100 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 25'

4. Maddox Boulevard – From the Chamber of Commerce to the Assateague Bridge.  
AADT:7,400                      Average Speed: 30 (25 posted)                      Road Width: 25’
5. Path from Eastside Road to Maddox Boulevard via. Maddox Family Campground.  
AADT: N/A                      Average Speed: N/A                      Road Width: N/A
6. Fowling Gut Path (“The Canal”) running down the center of the Island.  
AADT: N/A                      Average Speed: N/A                      Road Width: N/A
7. Chicken City Road Extension – Maddox Boulevard to Deep Hole Road.  
AADT: 1,200                      Average Speed: 25                      Road Width: 20’
8. Eastside Road.  
AADT: 3,500                      Average Speed: 30 (25 posted)                      Road Width: 20’
9. North Main Street – from Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to the turn circle.  
AADT: 1,200                      Average Speed: 30 (25 posted)                      Road Width: 20’
10. Main Street – from Bunting to Inlet View Campground  
AADT: 2,700                      Average Speed: 30 (25 posted)                      Road Width: 24’
11. Bunting Road.  
AADT: 2,000                      Average Speed: 30 (25 posted)                      Road Width: 22’
12. Beebe Road.  
AADT: 1,200                      Average Speed: 25                      Road Width: 20’

H.     RECREATIONAL PLAN

The Map also shows the bicycle facilities proposed for the Town of Chincoteague for recreation.

- A. Hallie Whealton Smith Drive  
    -A separate recreational loop.
- B. Main Street – from Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to Beebe Road  
    -A route comprised of a separate facility along the waterfront.
- C. Fowling Gut – North and South Corridor  
    -A separate facility along the canal.
- D. Maddox Boulevard  
    -A separate facility from East Side to Piney Island and connecting to Maddox Boulevard.

## I. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Policies

The following Policies will guide the implementation of bicycle facility development on Chincoteague:

1. ADMINISTRATION of the Town's bicycle program, including distribution of information and planning of special events, shall be under the direction of the Town Manager.
2. COORDINATION of street/highway improvements and planned bicycle facilities with VDOT and other state and federal agencies shall be the responsibility of the Town Manager.
3. MAINTENANCE of the Town's bicycle system shall be the responsibility of the Public Works Director.
4. FINANCING of bicycle facilities shall be provided through VDOT's statewide transportation improvement program and various grant sources as applicable.
5. SAFETY EDUCATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT for the Town's bicycling program shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Police.

# MAP OF CHINCOTEAGUE

QUEEN SOUND

BAY

CHINCOTEAGUE

CHINCOTEAGUE CHANNEL

LEGEND:

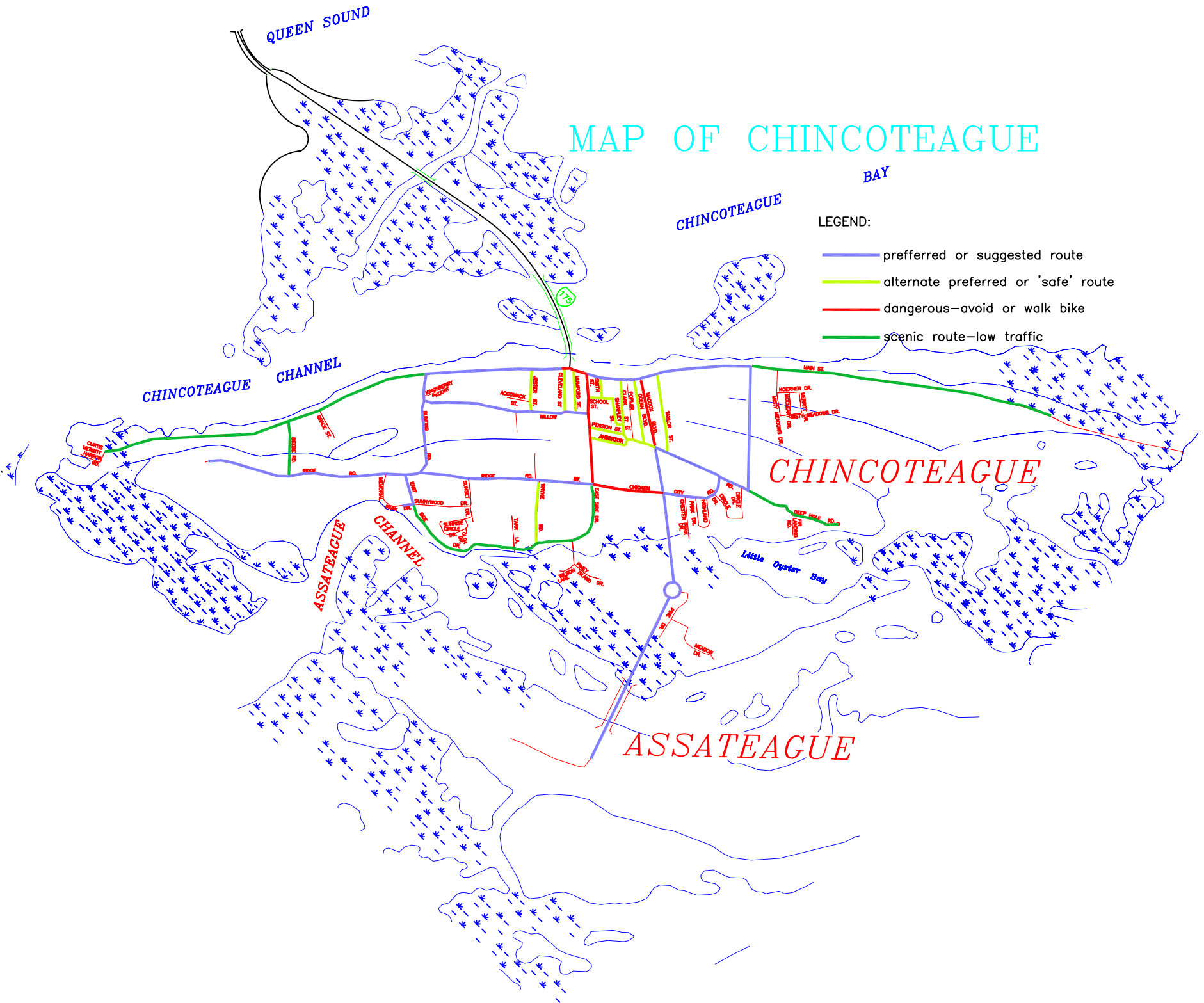
- preferred or suggested route
- alternate preferred or 'safe' route
- dangerous—avoid or walk bike
- scenic route—low traffic

CHINCOTEAGUE

ASSATEAGUE CHANNEL

ASSATEAGUE

Little Oyster Bay



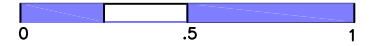
# BICYCLING MAP of CHINCOTEAGUE

QUEEN SOUND

CHINCOTEAGUE

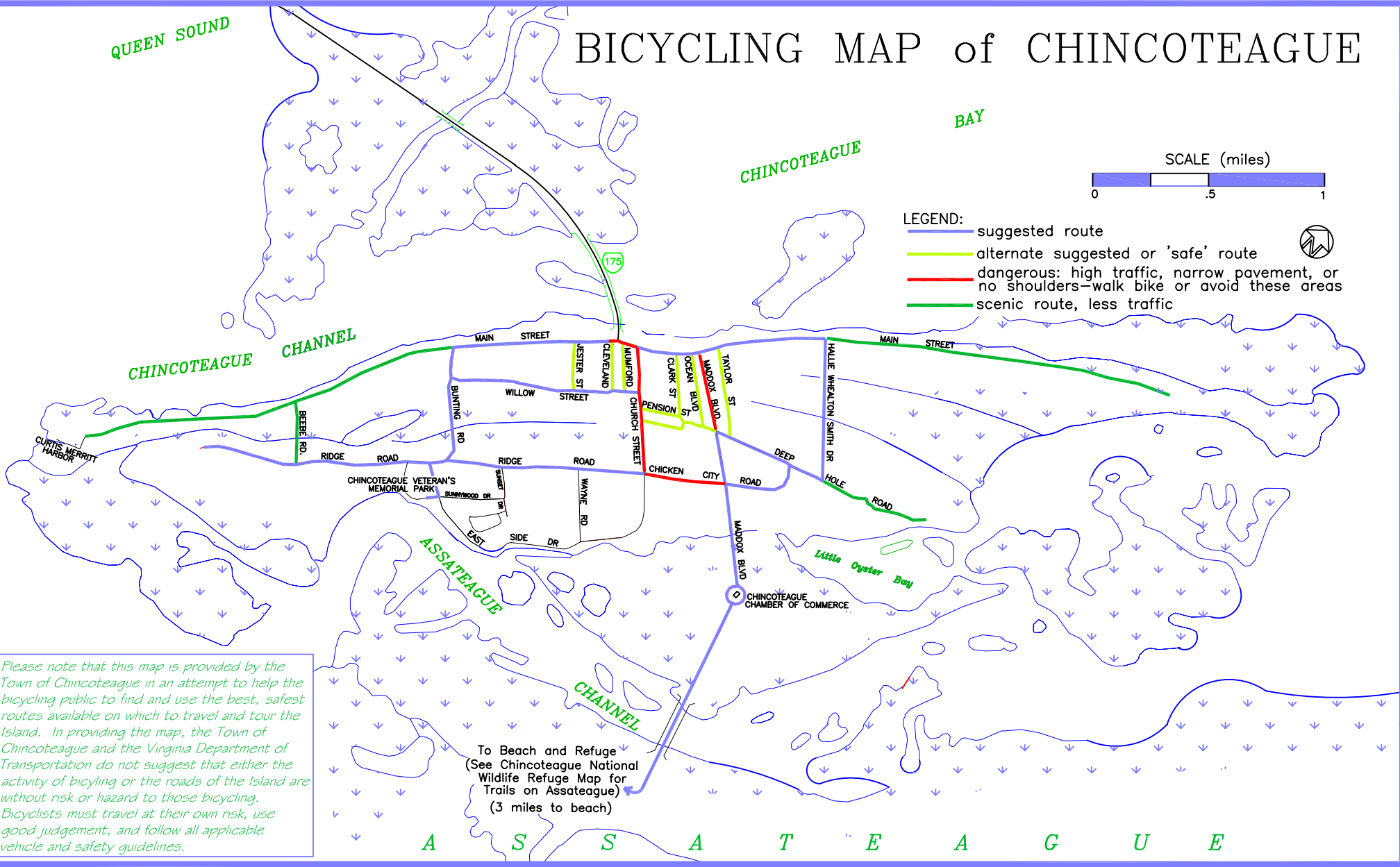
BAY

SCALE (miles)



**LEGEND:**

- suggested route
- alternate suggested or 'safe' route
- dangerous: high traffic, narrow pavement, or no shoulders—walk bike or avoid these areas
- scenic route, less traffic



Please note that this map is provided by the Town of Chincoteague in an attempt to help the bicycling public to find and use the best, safest routes available on which to travel and tour the Island. In providing the map, the Town of Chincoteague and the Virginia Department of Transportation do not suggest that either the activity of bicycling or the roads of the Island are without risk or hazard to those bicycling. Bicyclists must travel at their own risk, use good judgement, and follow all applicable vehicle and safety guidelines.

To Beach and Refuge  
(See Chincoteague National  
Wildlife Refuge Map for  
Trails on Assateague)  
(3 miles to beach)

A S S A T E A G U E

# MEMORANDUM

To: Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee  
From: Jared B. Anderson, Town Planner  
Date: November 14, 2008  
Subject: Safe Routes to School Program

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The Town and the two island schools are eligible for VDOT's "Safe Routes to School Program." This program is a zero match grant program that will fund up to \$100,000 for non-infrastructure programs and up to \$500,000 for infrastructure projects. As a requirement of the program the municipality or school must establish a steering committee or task force, there are no restrictions as to whom or how many needs to be on this committee. The following people are currently on the steering committee:

#### Steering Committee

Councilwoman Richardson  
Ms. Kat Edwards, A-NPDC  
Principal Olsen, Chincoteague Elementary  
Vice-Principal Taylor, Chincoteague Combined School  
Jared Anderson, Town of Chincoteague  
Mr. Mike Tolbert, Accomack County Schools  
Ms. Lisa Reed, PTSA  
Mr. Gene Wayne Taylor, RCEC

We would encourage any other RCEC member to join the steering committee. We will probably meet no more than two times before New Year's. Next Meeting is November 24, 10 AM at the Council Chambers.

Another requirement of the Safe Routes to School Program is that prior to any grant application submittals a School Travel Plan must be completed, by December 1. This does not leave us much time. However, the plan need not be extensive and should be basic in nature. The Steering Committed has already gathered much information from the schools, parents, teachers, and community members..

We are asking for the committee's thoughts, concerns, and ideas so that the steering committee will be able to better establish the School Travel Plan.

Please take a few moments to complete the attached form; it will help the steering committee.

## Safe Routes to School Prioritization of Programs and Projects

These programs and projects were submitted at the November 6, 2008 Steering Committee Meeting. Prioritizing them or ranking them will give the author(s) of the School Travel Plan and the steering committee a better idea of what project/programs we should focus our attention. A suggestion would be to rank the top three non-infrastructure and the top three infrastructure projects.

### **Non-infrastructure Programs/ Projects to include in School Travel Plan (what we discussed at meeting) Rank top three (3)- 1 being your top choice.**

- Safety Programs
- Parent educational programs/driving safety education
- Bike Rodeo
- Helmet giveaway
- AAA Safety
- Training for safety patrol (Elementary)
- Speed Trailers
- Educational Materials (DVD, videos, books, etc.)
- Walking/ Biking Mileage Club (donate new bike to someone in club)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Infrastructure Projects to include in School Travel Plan (what we discussed at meeting today) Rank top three (3)- 1 being your top choice.**

- Additional bike racks / covered bike racks
- Sidewalk in front of school
- Bike trail Hallie Whealton Smith Drive
- Make sure bike routes are properly and clearly marked and striped.
- Chicken City Road-if possible extend shoulders
- Crosswalk signals
- Buttons for crosswalk on all Maddox Blvd crossings
- Lighting on Hallie Whealton Smith Drive
- Curb cuts, make sure all improvements are ADA compliant
- Sidewalk gap closure- Main Street
- Other \_\_\_\_\_