

# Where's the road money?

By Greg Pearson  
STAFF WRITER

Last fall, after a transportation summit and with considerable hoopla, the county government was saying Chesterfield would have a road funding solution in place by the time the budget was approved. The FY08 budget was approved on Apr. 11, but no money has been set aside for improving Chesterfield roads.

The county staff proposed nine options to raise \$300-500 million over the next ten years since the county estimated it needs \$1 billion to meet Chesterfield's needs back in 2004, and the Chesterfield Transportation Department says the gap has grown in the past three years. County Administrator Lane Ramsey said the transportation plan would be in the FY08 budget to be approved this spring and suggested Chesterfield might take action on some options even earlier.

Thus far, no solutions have been approved. Last month, on a 3-2 vote the county board set the property tax rate at 97 cents per \$100 of assessed value without any set aside for roads. The proposed one penny rate for roads would have raised \$3 million in the first year and grown to a nickel rate over five years.

"We have to do something different because we're not getting much [money] from the state," said Kelly Miller, chairman of the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors.

"Our road future isn't very pleasant," concurred Transportation Director John McCracken.

To reconstruct a two-lane road costs \$8 million per mile. To widen a two-lane road to four lanes costs \$10 million while widening a

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This bumper to bumper line of traffic on route 360 is typical of rush hour any day. Residents not only cope with too much traffic, they also are used to seeing orange cones and merging traffic as the widening of the road continues.

## County organizations set debate dates for local races

By Greg Pearson  
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Chesterfield residents will hear local candidates' views on the issues when they meet for debates this fall. On five consecutive Thursday nights starting Oct. 4, the Chesterfield Business Council (CBC) will hold debates for the supervisors and the School Board. The Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce is holding debates for the supervisor races only.

"We feel it's important to educate our membership on where the candidates stand on the issues," said President Lenita Gilreath of the county chamber. Citizens who are not members of the chamber should contact the chamber (748-6364) in advance to reserve space for the luncheon meetings on Sep. 13 or Oct. 10. For the Matoaca supervisor race, the debate will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 17, and no reservations are required.

In recent years, no one has sponsored debates for the general public in Chesterfield races. Some smaller forums were held, but often the candidates knew the questions in advance. Usually incumbents are more reluctant

to enter debates, often feeling they are better known than their challengers.

Cliff Bickford, chair of the CBC's Government Relations Committee, said candidates will be given a list of topics in advance to prepare for but not be provided with the questions. The CBC plans on giving unopposed candidates 15 minutes to discuss their views before asking some questions.

Both groups are still working on the format of their debates, but they wanted to release the dates early so the candidates could be available.

The chamber and the CBC may also sponsor a joint debate for candidates of the 11th District State Senate race where Republican Steve Martin is challenged by Independent Roger Habeck. The details including time and place have not been determined.

The CBC is considering partnering with the Richmond Business Council, also part of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, for a debate for the delegate race in the 68th District. That district includes both Chesterfield and the city of Richmond, but the location and date have not been determined.

### Chesterfield Business Council debates for Supervisor and School Board

District	Date	Location	Time
Dale	Oct. 4	L.C. Bird HS	7:00 p.m.
Clover Hill	Oct. 11	Clover Hill HS	7:00 p.m.
Bermuda	Oct. 18	Thomas Dale HS	7:00 p.m.
Matoaca	Oct. 25	Cosby HS	7:00 p.m.
Midlothian	Nov. 1	Midlothian HS	7:00 p.m.

### Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce debates for Supervisor

Districts	Date	Location	Time
Clover Hill & Midlothian	Sep. 13	Holiday Inn-Koger Center	11:15 a.m.
Bermuda & Dale	Oct. 10	Cultural Center of India	11:15 a.m.
Matoaca	Oct. 17	Cosby HS	6:30 p.m.

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- 22--Sugarland

**July**

- 7--Taylor Hicks
- 11--Hootie & the Blowfish
- 18-- Los Lonely Boys & Pat Green
- 26--Sara Evans
- 28--Chicago

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