



BRYAN COUNTY APPROVES AGREEMENT WITH PEMBROKE AND RICHMOND HILL TO IMPLEMENT NEW SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

BRYAN COUNTY, GA – August 23, 2021 – Bryan County recently approved an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Pembroke and the City of Richmond Hill, concluding disputes and discussions related to Service Delivery. Bryan County worked to ensure the resolution of those issues was fair and in the interest of all Bryan County citizens, both inside and outside incorporated areas. The Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) agreement approves the provision of services and funding for many of the governmental services provided by Pembroke, Richmond Hill, and the county that are relied upon by the public.

Bryan County and Richmond Hill agreed to fund up to \$3,500,000 over seven years for several projects set out in the agreement, mostly road and transportation improvements, with Richmond Hill constructing the projects and also funding 25 percent of the cost. The list of agreed upon projects includes improvements to Brisbon Road and the walking bridge over Sterling Creek. Both of these projects will improve safety and mobility for pedestrian traffic. The county's share of funding for these projects will come from TSPLOST and SPLOST 7 funds since the projects were initially planned with that funding in mind.

In addition, the county entered a sewer agreement with Richmond Hill to utilize its existing excess sewer capacity to provide service in South Bryan County unincorporated areas.

In 2010 and 2012, the county legally transferred funds from its General Fund to its newly formed Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund to invest in infrastructure to spur residential and commercial growth. The \$1.079 million initial investment has been paid back to the General Fund from the Water and Sewer Fund with interest and this investment has reaped great returns in tax digest growth, which benefits both incorporated and unincorporated residents of Bryan County.

“This initial investment was not an erroneous transfer but instead a wise investment that benefitted both the incorporated and unincorporated areas and led to growth of the tax digest with the addition of housing, commercial, and industrial development,” Bryan County Commission Chairman Carter Infinger said. “Because of the growth in the digest that was spurred by the water and sewer investment as well as the prudent management and leadership of the commissioners and staff, the county has been able to roll back the tax rate for all county residents for the last six years.”

Bryan County’s reserves are well within the recommended levels for a coastal community that remains under the continued threat of impacts from a hurricane, according to Bryan County Administrator Ben Taylor.

“Having a cash reserve on-hand allows the county to further invest in infrastructure projects and leverage grant opportunities that benefit the community and provide for additional growth in the tax base. The growth stimulated by future county investments will lay the groundwork to allow for further roll back of the tax rate in the future,” Taylor said.

Since 2014, Bryan County has increased the number of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) units from three to seven, countywide. Two of these units were already strategically placed to respond to calls within the Richmond Hill city limits, Taylor said. This agreement adds an additional unit available to respond to city residents. Response times for EMS services remain below the national average in both the unincorporated and incorporated areas.

Other terms set forth in the agreement are filed with the Department of Community Affairs. The SDS agreement resolves all litigation between the parties. The county denied all claims in the litigation and no other provision of any agreement relates to those claims. Comments in the Richmond Hill press release issued on Aug. 20, 2021, about tax decisions of the county or accounting adjustments are misinformed and incorrect.

For more regular information about Bryan County, please visit www.bryancountyga.org or follow the county on their social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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