

## BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. E(4)

### AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

**MEETING DATE: August 26, 2003**

**TITLE: A Report on Loitering in the vicinity of Davie Road at Jones Ferry Road**

<b>DEPARTMENT: Police</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING: YES ____ NO <u>x</u></b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Hutchison 918-7412</b>

#### PURPOSE

During morning hours, day laborers hoping for contractual work congregate along the roadside on Davie Road at Jones Ferry Road. Contractors arrive to pick up those seeking work from this site and stop in the street to do so, which is potentially dangerous to both pedestrians and drivers. The people who are not picked up often loiter in the area throughout the day, sometimes committing crimes and/or causing nuisance complaints. The purpose of this item is for the Board to receive a report on the experience of the community and the Police Department as all of us deal with this issue and to receive direction from the Board about possible solutions to this persistent problem.

#### INFORMATION

One of the goals of the Police Department is to promote safety in all neighborhoods, and it follows that “hotspot” areas require intensive police services. The area of Davie Road at Jones Ferry Road has long been a hotspot. Business owners in this area have spoken with us about people who loiter on and around their private property during the day and at night; this private property includes both buildings and wooded areas. We have worked with these property owners to obtain trespass authority. We have also responded to many incidents involving people who loiter on public property (along the roadside on Davie Road). Some who loiter along Davie Road are actually waiting for work. While many are picked up, others are not. As a result, they remain in the area—sometimes very close to the roadway (on public property) or on private property—for hours. Sometimes, they cross the street and hang out in the bus shelter at 501 Jones Ferry Road.

Officers from the Patrol and Community Services Divisions, as well as from the Investigative and Administrative Divisions, are involved with the Davie Road hotspot daily. We have had to expend more resources and time in the area and are closely watching activity there in an effort to encourage a safer environment for everyone. At this point, conditions are ripe for increased numbers of incidents as more people loiter in the area, at all hours, with nothing to do. Already, we routinely respond to reports of intoxicated persons, drug activity, fights, harassment, and other crimes/nuisances in this area. Currently, we have no specific authority to prohibit loitering on public property adjacent to Davie Road at Jones Ferry Road.

It is not the intent of the Police Department to deprive people of the opportunity to work. We do think, however, that congregating on public property alongside Davie Road is dangerous and that such congregation contributes to the chaos and crime in the area. We suggest that the Town designate a

convenient and safe pick-up area during some designated time in the morning, for example, from 6:30 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. We may want to consider a designated pick-up area that is within walking distance from Davie Road so that it would not represent a terrible inconvenience for pedestrians. People should be able to wait for their rides in a safe area off the street and those providing rides should be able to pull off the street into a safe area to pick them up. Of course, we would need to closely monitor activity at any designated area to promote a safe atmosphere. The Board may want to suggest possible pick-up locations.

Should we decide to formally designate a pick-up area, we would need to draft and adopt an ordinance prohibiting loitering in a specifically defined area along Davie Road at Jones Ferry Road. In addition, we would need to notify those seeking work and contractors of the new pick-up area and permissible hours of operation. We anticipate that we can do this successfully by meeting with various affected property owners and with leaders within the Hispanic/Latino community to help us design an effective “educational” campaign that would explain the need for creating an official pick-up location.

#### ADMINISTRATION’S RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends that the Board receive the report and authorize the Administration to work with affected property owners and leaders within the Hispanic/Latino community to help the town identify a solution.