



## Berryville Walkabout

### Summary

On May 23, 2013, approximately 14 people met at Johnson-Williams Middle School in Berryville, Virginia to observe school dismissal and take a closer look at the walking and biking network around the school. Participants included the school principal, school staff members, the school district nurse, a planner from the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Planning Commission, a member of Berryville Main Street (VA 7), the Berryville Chief of Police, the Berryville Assistant Town Manager and Planner, a reporter from the Winchester Star, and others. The team met for an hour and a half, including observation of dismissal and discussion of barriers to walking and biking in the school library. Prior to the meeting, Jim Elliott and Lauren Kaufman walked along the Swan Avenue, S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) (US Route 340), W. Main (VA 7) St. (State Route 7), Lincoln Avenue, and Tyson Drive. The sections below summarize the findings from the walkabout.

**Walkabout date:** May 23, 2013

**Location:** Johnson-Williams Middle School, Berryville, Virginia

**Champion:** Christie Dunkel

**LTAC:** Jim Elliott, Northern Virginia

### Possible Walking Routes

Road Name	Lanes in each direction	Speed limit	Road Width	Shoulders Present?
Swan Avenue	1	25 mph	26 ft	No
S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340)	1 w/ center 2-way turn lane	25 mph	37 ft	No
W. Main Street (VA 7)	1 w/ center 2-way turn lane	25 mph	37 ft	No
Lincoln Avenue	1	25 mph	24 ft	No
Tyson Drive	1	25 mph	26 ft	No

### Summary of Existing Conditions

The Johnson Williams Middle School is located on a large campus near downtown Berryville. There is a relatively new neighborhood to the immediate west and south of campus that has sidewalks on most streets. Sidewalks are also available on at least one side of S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340), W. Main



Street (VA 7), Church Street, Swan Avenue, Rosemont Circle, and Lincoln Avenue near the school. However, sidewalks are more limited in the neighborhood north of W. Main Street (VA 7) and west of S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340).

The primary pedestrian crossing locations near the school are at the intersections of Swan Avenue and S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340), S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) and W. Main Street (VA 7), W. Main Street (VA 7) and Lincoln Avenue, and Lincoln Avenue and Tyson Drive. Each of these crossings is provided with a marked crosswalk; however, with the exception of the crosswalk at the Lincoln Avenue/Tyson Drive intersection, none of the intersections has curb ramps that meet current ADA guidelines.

NOTE: Where issues and barriers are location-specific, a location id (i.e., letter) is provided. These correspond with the enclosed map.

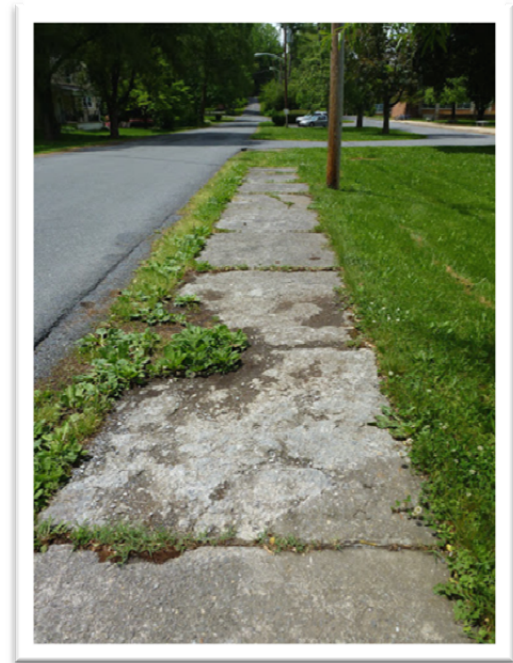
#### Issues/Barriers to Walking and Biking to School

*Sidewalk on north side of Swan Avenue is badly deteriorated (A)*

Swan Avenue abuts the school property on the south and is an important pedestrian access route for students who live east and south of the school. Swan Avenue is also used by students who walk to downtown Berryville and Rixey Moore Park after school.

There is an asphalt sidewalk on the north side of Swan Avenue but it is badly deteriorated and does not connect to the school. The school has applied for an infrastructure grant from the VDOT to install a new sidewalk. The proposed sidewalk would be moved further away from the roadway due to VDOT requirements for building sidewalks on roads without curb and gutter, and would be extended to connect with the school campus.

Figure 1 Sidewalk on Swan Avenue.





*Crossing S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) at Swan Avenue is challenging (B).*

Figure 2 Swan Avenue at S. Buckmarsh Street



Students who live east of the school or who walk to Rixey Moore Park must cross S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340). The crossing at Swan Avenue is the most conveniently located crossing across S. Buckmarsh Street near the school; however, it is perceived as dangerous due to high motor vehicle speeds and volumes and increasing truck traffic. US 340 connects Berryville to Front Royal and other nearby towns.

The intersection is stop controlled for traffic on Swan Avenue but uncontrolled for traffic on S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340). A crossing guard had previously been posted here but is no longer provided. There is a standard

“parallel line” marked crosswalk across S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340), which is supported by school crossing signs oriented to both directions of traffic and school crossing warning signs and pavement markings oriented to southbound traffic. There are sidewalks on both sides of S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) north of Swan Avenue and a sidewalk on the west side of S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) south of Swan Avenue; however, the curb ramps proved at the intersection do not meet current ADA guidelines and vegetation encroaches on the sidewalk on the west side of S. Buckmarsh near the intersection.



*Crossing S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) at W. Main Street (VA 7) is challenging (B).*

For students walking to Rixey Moore Park, the best location to crossing S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) at Swan Avenue is to cross S. Buckmarsh Street (US 340) at W. Main Street (VA 7). This intersection serves two major roadways connecting Berryville to nearby towns. Buckmarsh Street in particular serves truck traffic through Berryville. The intersection is signalized and includes high-visibility "piano key" marked crosswalks and pedestrian signal heads; however, the marked crosswalks are nearly worn away and are slightly skewed on the north, east, and west legs, increasing pedestrian crossing distance, and the pedestrian push buttons do not meet current ADA guidelines. All of the intersection approaches prohibit turns on red and all approaches also have a left-turn pocket with a through/right lane. Curb ramps at the intersection are not ADA compliant and there is limited pedestrian waiting area on the corners. Signal timing does not "rest in walk," meaning pedestrians only get the WALK indication for a few seconds before the flashing DON'T WALK indication followed by the DON'T WALK indication while concurrent traffic still has the green indication.

Figure 3 S. Buckmarsh Street at W. Main Street







*Crossing W. Main Street (VA 7) at Lincoln Avenue is challenging (D).*

Figure 4 W. Main Street at Lincoln Avenue



Students who live north of campus must cross W. Main Street (VA 7), and the crossing at Lincoln Avenue is the most conveniently located crossing across W. Main Street (VA 7) near the school. The intersection is stop controlled for traffic on Lincoln Avenue and uncontrolled for traffic on W. Main Street (VA 7). A school staff member assists students crossing at this location. There are standard “parallel line” marked crosswalks for all legs of this crossing, which is supported by school crossing signs and a school pavement marking oriented to westbound traffic. However, the crosswalk for the east side leg is skewed, increasing pedestrian crossing

distance, and the curb ramps do not meet current ADA guidelines.

*On-campus pedestrian pathways do not connect to off-campus sidewalks along the most convenient pedestrian routes.*

At dismissal the walkabout team observed that most students walking toward Tyson Drive did not use the campus pathway system to connect to the sidewalks on Tyson Drive. Instead, they took a more direct route across the grass. Similarly, the walkabout team observed that many of the students who exited campus toward Swan Avenue preferred to walk across the grass rather than take a less direct route along the campus pathway system. In the debriefing

Figure 5 Students walking across the grass to Swan Avenue.





meeting after the walkabout, members of the walkabout team also mentioned that students cross the school field to the northeast and exit to W. Main Street (VA 7) near the auto parts store.

*Bike racks are provided on campus but are not convenient for students accessing the school from the west.*

A bike rack is provided on campus on the south side of the school building off of Swan Avenue. Students accessing the school from the east must ride their bicycles all the way around the school to get to these racks, mixing with traffic in the school driveways along the way. This may be a barrier for students considering whether to ride their bicycles to school.

Figure 6 Reference Map

