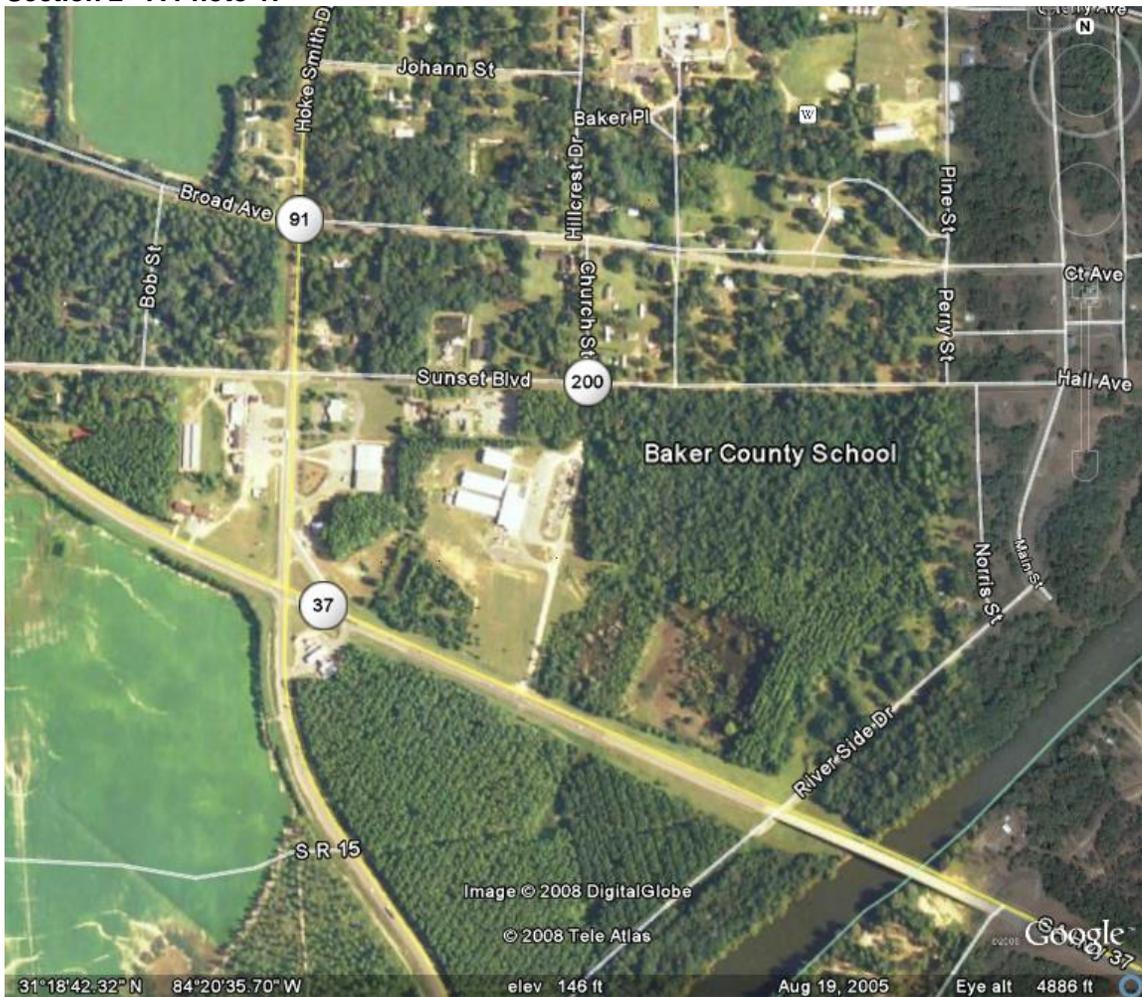


## BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL SECTION 2 – PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

### A.

The school housing Baker County elementary and middle school students in grades four through eight is located between state highway 200 (Sunset Blvd) and state highway 37. (**A Photo 1**) There are no biking and walking accommodations connecting the community and the school in our area. The only entry and exit road to the school is a dirt road that is apart of the campus. This dirt road to the school connects these two highways. There are no biking and walking sidewalks along side this dirt road, nevertheless many students are forced to walk or ride bicycles to school daily using the same dirt road as the school buses, parents, and school employees. (**A Photo 3**) Additionally, because of its convenience to the Newton city residential area, the dirt road has become a short cut for through traffic coming off highway 37 going into the residential area. The through traffic is an added safety hazard for students biking and walking to and from school and for extracurricular activities held on the school campus. At the time the school was built there were no funds available to pave the dirt road and construct sidewalks connecting the school to highways 200 (Sunset Blvd) and 37. Baker County School System is a small poor rural one school system located on two campuses in southwest Georgia. Since the school construction in 2001 all of the school system and community efforts to complete the paving project have not been successful. Please see the attached photos and captions for Section 2 for a visual description of our school community current conditions for biking and walking.

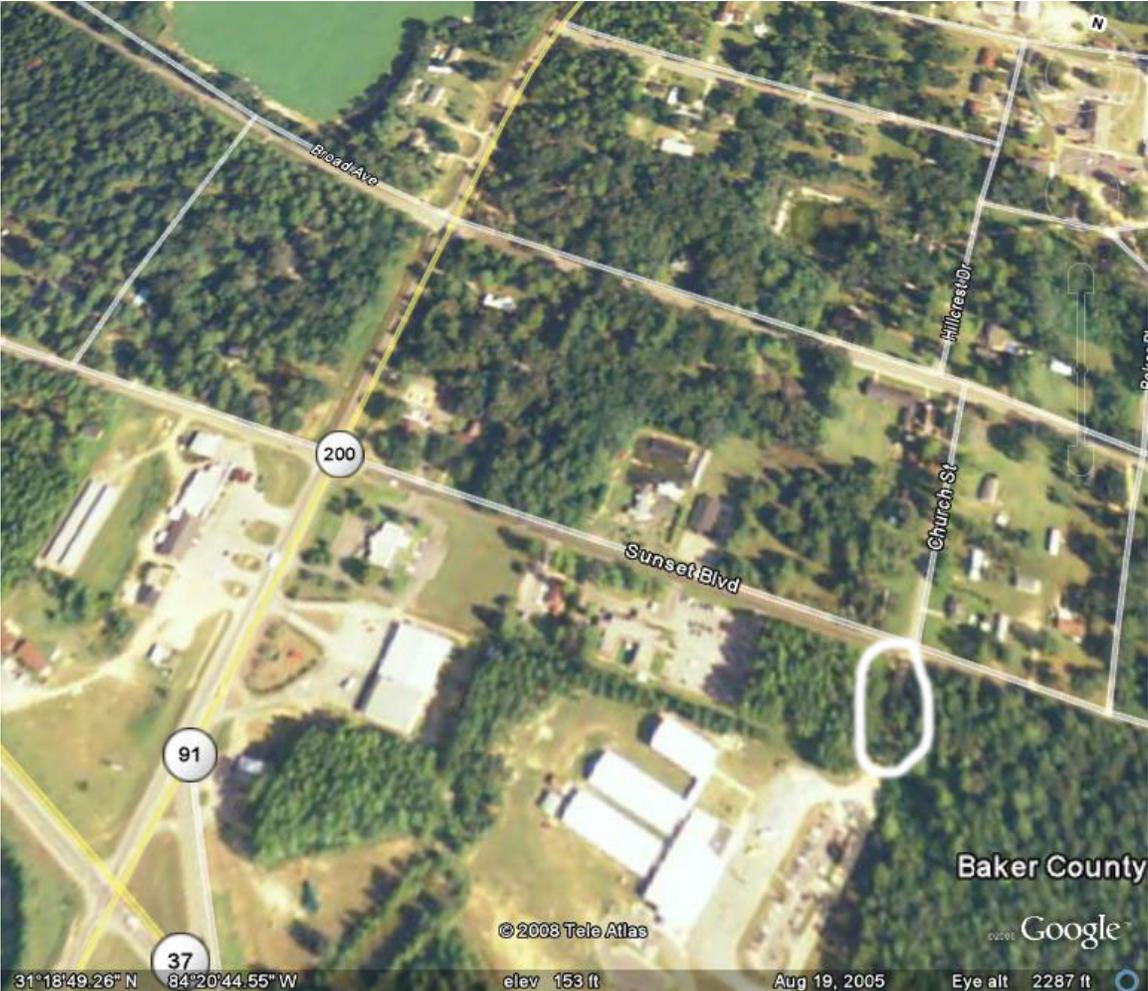
### Section 2 - A Photo 1:



The Baker County school housing grades 4 through 8 is located between state highway 200 (Sunset Blvd) and state highway 37.

# BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL

Section 2 - A Photo 2:



The circled area on the right is the most frequently used entry and exit to the school and the beginning focus of the **Bears Way SRTS** project to create a safe route for biking and walking to the Baker County School from the community. The existing and potential biking and walking school community is located north of the school.

# BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL

## Section 2 - A Photo 3:



This is a ground view of the circled area in the aerial photo above (**A Photo 2**). This photo shows the unpaved entry and exit road without sidewalks pictured from state highway 200 (Sunset Blvd) looking south to state highway 37. This is the entry and exits used by students that bike and walk to school.

## SECTION 3 – PROPOSED PROJECT

### **B.**

The most economically efficient method of establishing safe routes to the Baker County School from the community for its biking and walking students is by connecting the community to the school. This can best be accomplished by making the following physical changes and improvements. The nearest existing sidewalk in the community to the school is located along the side of the Newton Baptist Church near Broad Avenue. (**B Photo 4**) The order of physical changes and improvements need to begin on the school campus and proceed out into the community to connect to the existing sidewalk at the side of the Newton Baptist Church.

Beginning on the school campus, the dirt entry and exit road need to be paved from the existing pavement to connect to Sunset Blvd (state highway 200). (**B Photo 1**)

Indentation rumble stripes need to be constructed on the existing paving and new paving to raise the consciousness and slow the through traffic coming from state highway 37. (**B Photo 1**)

"No thru traffic" and "school zone" signs need to be installed as well. (**B Photo 1**).

## BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL

A biking and walking sidewalk need to be constructed on the right side of the dirt roadway from Sunset Blvd following the existing pavement along side the bus parking lot to connect to the side walk in front of the gym. **(B Photo 2)**

A painted crosswalk and a "School Crossing" sign is needed on Sunset Blvd that leads to the newly constructed sidewalk. **(B Photo 3)**

Finally, a sidewalk needs to be placed on the right side of Church Street from Sunset Blvd to connect to the partial sidewalk along side the Newton Baptist Church and painted crosswalks with "School Crossing" signs at the intersection of both Church Street and Broad Avenue. **(B Photo 4)**

### Section 3B - Photo 1:



The above photo, taken facing Sunset Blvd, shows the starting point for the **Bears Way SRTS** project, beginning with the existing paving connecting it to Sunset Blvd (state highway 200).

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**Section 3B - Photo 2:**



The sidewalk pictured above leads to the entry doors for the school bus drop-off and the gym entrance. A new sidewalk needs to be constructed along side the paving, until it connects to Sunset Blvd for biking and walking.

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### Section 3B - Photo 3:



This is a view of the unpaved entry and exit road taken from Sunset Blvd (state highway 200) facing south toward the Baker County School (pictured behind the trees). This entry and exit is used by bikers and walkers, as well as by the school busses, parents, and school employees. Construction of a sidewalk on the right side of this road connecting to the sidewalks in front of the gym will make this a safe route.

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Section 3B - Photo 4:



The closest existing sidewalk in the community to the school is located along side the Newton Baptist Church on Church Street. Church Street ends at Sunset Blvd and crossing it places you on the school campus dirt road.

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### Section 3B - Photo 5:



This aerial view shows how the **Bears Way SRTS** project connect the community to the school and create safe routes to school for biking and walking from any location in the community.

### C.

The Bears Way Safe Routes to School project will make physical improvements to the entry to the school campus from highway 200 (Sunset Blvd) that will create a safe biking and walking environment, as well as, encourage more students to bicycle and walk to school. The project will discourage the use of the roadway adjacent to the school as a short cut for through traffickers from the state highway 37 to the residential community, thus again improving student safety. It will create a traffic calming measure that will raise the consciousness of motorist to the existence of a school zone. These changes will also enhance the well being of the children that bike and walk to school, reduce the likelihood of them becoming obese, and improve the air quality on the school campus by reducing the number of motor vehicles frequenting the campus.

# **BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL**

## **SECTION 4 – PROGRAM INFORMATION**

The Baker County School System did not have a formal Safe Route to School (SRTS) program for its elementary and middle school children prior to the announcement of this application, although our Health curriculum addresses walking and biking safety. The elementary school unit is entitled "Personal Safety in a Healthy World". The lessons in the unit teach children ways they can prevent accidents and injuries while riding a bicycle or using a skateboard or in-line skates. It also addresses pedestrian safety and the ways accidents can be avoided by acting safely and following safety rules. The middle school unit is entitled "Safety and Recreation". It has lessons on traffic safety, pedestrian safety, and safety on wheels. With the Georgia Department of Transportation announcement of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, the Baker County School System lunched an accelerated planning process to establish a Safe Routes to School Program for its students.

After having a school representative attended an announcement meeting in Macon, we begun the planning process by identifying those persons from the school community that have a vested interest in the school and the safety of its students. Members of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning team included the school principal, a member of the board of education, a teacher, a parent, a coach, the police chief, the city manager, and the school assessment coordinator who will serve as the committee chair. The team discussed the physical changes and improvements to the infrastructure needed in developing a Safe Routes to School Program during its initial meetings. The SRTS team's suggestions are reflected in this application. The Team also decided on a Safe Routes to School model that incorporate all 5 "E"s: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering and Evaluation as a pattern to follow. A tentative plan has been developed and is posted on the Baker County School System's homepage <http://www.baker.k12.ga.us>.