

GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERING REQUESTS TO RESTRICT THROUGH TRUCKS ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY HIGHWAYS

Staff Summary Analysis

Criteria Travel by any class of vehicle should be restricted only upon demonstration that it will promote the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth without creating an undue hardship on any users of the transportation network. **The Virginia Department of Transportation will consider criteria 1 through 4 in reviewing a requested through truck restriction. The proposed restriction must meet both the first and second criteria in order to be approved:**

1. Reasonable alternate routing is provided. The alternate route will be evaluated for traffic and safety related impacts. To be considered “reasonable”, the alternate route(s) must be engineered to a standard sufficient for truck travel, and must be judged at least as appropriate for truck traffic as the requested truck restriction route. If an alternate route must be upgraded, the improvement shall be completed before the truck restriction can be implemented. The termini of the proposed restriction must be identical to the alternate routing to allow a time and distance comparison to be conducted between the two routings. Also, the alternate routing must not create an undue hardship for trucks in reaching their destination.

The alternate route for truck traffic would be US-29 (Seminole Trail), Airport Road (Route 649), and Dickerson Road (Route 606). US-29 is a multi-lane divided highway designed and constructed to accommodate truck traffic. US-29 (Seminole Trail) will be widened from a four-lane divided highway to a six-lane divided highway from Route 643 (Polo Grounds Road) to Route 1719 (Towncenter Drive) in northern Albemarle County as part of the Route 29 Solutions projects. The US-29 widening project will make this a better/more improved alternate route for truck traffic and is set to be complete by October 2017. Airport Road was reconstructed using Airport Access Improvement funds to create a 4-lane divided roadway and a round-about at Dickerson Road designed to accommodate truck traffic. Realignment and improvements were also made to Dickerson Road (south of Airport Road) as part of the Airport Authority’s Runway Safety Improvements Project and included a round-about at Earlysville Road, also built to accommodate truck traffic.

2. The character and/or frequency of the truck traffic on the route proposed for restriction is not compatible with the affected area. Evaluation will include safety issues, accident history, engineering of the roadway, vehicle composition, and other traffic engineering related issues.

As indicated by Mr. Wuensch in his “Earlysville Road Traffic Analysis” report (revised Dec 29, 2015) he could not draw a correlation between the 3-year crash data and the truck traffic. He also reported that the width of the existing travel lanes vary between 10 to 11 feet and are less than VDOT standard 12 foot lanes for this category of roadway. Similarly, he reported that the shoulders along the

edge of the pavement should be at least 6 feet per VDOT standards, but the existing shoulders range from zero to 1 foot in width, with the exception of the very northern portion of the roadway improved by VDOT with the roundabout at Dickerson Road. This is consistent with Staff's observations along the corridor and in addition there are trees, steep embankments (upward & downward), fences and other man-made obstacles close to the edge of the roadway.

For the drivers of this roadway there is no buffer between the edge of the pavement and the adjacent drainage ditches, embankments, trees and other hazards, as such, there are no areas for drivers to recover should they leave the pavement area. There are no areas for collision avoidance maneuvers, a reality drivers must face when confronted by trucks or truck and trailers or semitrailer combinations traveling in the opposite direction on this narrow roadway especially at the substandard curves and areas of poor horizontal and vertical sight distance.

The report acknowledges that the 3-year crash data included numerous "runoff the road" crashes that were either the result of the lack of shoulders or avoidance maneuvers. This 3-year data is only a small sampling of the "runoff the road" incidents along this corridor and doesn't include the July 2002 incident that claimed the life of one teenager and caused incapacitating injury to a second.

Therefore it's Staff's opinion that the substandard road widths, the lack of adequate shoulders and recoverable areas, and history of "runoff the road" incidents gives credence to the petitioner's claim that physical characteristics of Earlysville Road creates an incompatible and unsafe environment between truck or truck and trailer or semitrailer combination and the other vehicles using the roadway

In addition to meeting the first two criteria, the proposed restriction must meet either the third or the fourth criteria in order to be approved.

3. The roadway is residential in nature. Typically, the roadway will be judged to be residential if there are at least 12 dwellings combined on both sides within 150' of the existing or proposed roadway center line per 1,000 feet of roadway.

The VDOT Guidelines consider a roadway residential in nature if there are at least 12 dwellings (within 150' on both sides of the road centerline) per 1000 feet of the roadway. Based on the County mapping data, the average along this roadway is only 2 dwellings per 1000 feet. Therefore, staff has determined that this roadway is not residential in nature.

4. The roadway must be functionally classified as either a local or collector.

The functional classification by VDOT is that the road is a Rural Major "Collector". This classification allows the road to be considered for Through Truck restrictions. Earlysville Road (State Route 743) is classified as a Rural Major Collector from its intersection with Woodlands Road (State Route 676) to the termini of the proposed through truck restriction at Dickerson Road (State Route 606).

In order to conform to the requirements of the Code of Virginia and to insure that all concerned parties have an opportunity to provide input, the local governing body must hold a public hearing and make a formal request of the Department. The following must be adhered to:

(A) The public notices for the hearing must include a description of the proposed through truck restriction and the alternate route with the same termini. A copy of the notices must be provided.

(B) A public hearing must be held by the local governing body and a transcript of the hearing must be provided with the resolution.

(C) The resolution must describe the proposed through truck restriction and a description of the alternate, including termini.

(D) The governing body must include in the resolution that it will use its good offices for enforcement of the proposed restriction by the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

Failure to comply with (A), (B), (C) and (D) will result in the request being returned. The Commonwealth Transportation Board and the Commissioner shall act upon any such formal request within nine months of its receipt, unless good cause is shown.