



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 18-100, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 1/2/2018

TITLE:

Miller School Rd and Owensville Rd Through Truck Restriction Study

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Request for a through truck restriction on Miller School and Owensville Roads

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Kamptner, Graham, Benish, McDermott

PRESENTER (S): Kevin McDermott

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: Over the past few years, as the frequency of large trucks using rural county roads has increased, the safety concerns on roads that are potentially unsuitable for this type of traffic has also grown. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Albemarle County staff, County Supervisors, Police, and Fire and Rescue have all been dealing with issues related to this on a frequent basis. Supervisors Mallek, McKeel, and Palmer have requested staff to examine this issue as it relates to the rural areas in the western portion of the County and specifically to Miller School Road (Route 635) and Owensville Road (Route 678). Similarly, Albemarle County staff and VDOT have received requests from numerous property owners living on and near these roads requesting an evaluation of the appropriateness of heavy vehicles on these roads. Public information meetings have been held with residents in the Batesville and Garth Road areas to discuss issues and concerns related to this.

STRATEGIC PLAN: *Rural Area Character:* Preserve the character of rural life with thriving farms and forests, traditional crossroad communities, and protected scenic areas, historic sites, and biodiversity.

DISCUSSION: Based on the "County of Albemarle and VDOT 'Through Truck Restriction' Process" adopted December 2000 (Attachment A), which outlines the process for assessing and approving through truck restrictions, the steps that County and VDOT staff have taken to this point and described above in the "Background" constitute the Neighborhood Request & Supporting Documentation phase of the project. County and VDOT staff have reviewed the requests and preliminary information related to transportation on the two subject roads. Based on the VDOT "Guidelines for Considering Requests to Restrict Through Trucks on Primary and Secondary Highways" (Attachment B) it was determined that these requests are reasonably feasible to qualify for a restriction. The next step in this process involves the completion of a detailed assessment of the potential through truck restriction. Staff is requesting the Board provide authorization to engage with a consultant to complete this detailed assessment.

The initial assessment involved a review to determine that reasonable alternate routes for truck traffic exist. Route 29 and I-64 provide alternate routes for each, although a full assessment of the potential alternate

routes would be completed during the detailed assessment. Staff was also made aware of the history of concerns of the character and frequency of encounters with truck traffic along the two roads including numerous instances when the roadways were closed down for periods of times because of trucks that were unable to navigate the road because of their narrow, curving nature. The functional classification of both roads as Collectors allows through truck restrictions.

In addition to the identification of alternate routes, the detailed assessment will conduct traffic counts, review crash history, and perform a geometric evaluation to determine the appropriateness of specific types of vehicles for the roadway. VDOT allows restrictions to apply to any truck or truck and trailer or semitrailer combination, except a pickup or panel truck, as may be necessary to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens. However, the focus of this detailed assessment will be on trucks of an exceptional length or width that pose a safety risk on the roadways. These will include tractor trailers or other large truck and trailer combinations as well as construction vehicles with wheel bases that are wider than standard width such as large dump trucks. It should be noted that through truck restrictions do not impact vehicles that have an origin or destination that requires it to use the roadway for access.

Upon completion of the detailed assessment, staff will present the report and associated recommendations to the Board, and will request that the Board set the proposed through truck restriction for a public hearing at a later date.

BUDGET IMPACT: If a detailed assessment is authorized, the County will be responsible to procure the services of a traffic engineer to perform the study. This study will be a one-time cost of \$18,940. Funding is recommended to be provided by the Reserve for Contingencies, which currently has a balance of \$226,819.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board direct staff to proceed with the detailed assessment and to present an appropriation request to fund the traffic engineering study to the Board for approval at a future Board meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: County of Albemarle and VDOT "Through Truck Restriction" Process

Attachment B: VDOT Guidelines for Considering Requests to Restrict Through Trucks on Primary and Secondary Highways