



# Albemarle County

## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 24-150, **Version:** 1

---

**AGENDA DATE:** 2/21/2024

**TITLE:**

Fontaine Interchange Improvements

**SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:** Request feedback regarding potential changes to funded Smart Scale project at the Fontaine interchange

**ITEM TYPE:** Regular Information Item

**STAFF CONTACT(S):** Richardson, Wall, Filardo, McDermott, Hersh-Ballering

**PRESENTER (S):** Hersh-Ballering

**LEGAL REVIEW:** Not Required

**REVIEWED BY:** Jeffrey B. Richardson

**BACKGROUND:** In Round 4 of Smart Scale, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (CA-MPO) submitted an application for improvements to the US 29 and Fontaine Interchange that were estimated to cost just over \$12 million. Specifically, the project would replace the existing unsignalized diamond interchange with a partially displaced left-turn.

The new interchange would allow closure of the current left-turn movement from northbound US 29 (across southbound US 29) to westbound I-64 through the addition of a free-flow U-turn for northbound traffic exiting US 29 at Fontaine to return south along 29 and use the existing I-64 westbound on-ramp. The project would also remove the left turn movement from eastbound Fontaine onto US 29 northbound, requiring a U-turn movement (with a loon, which is pavement outside of the normal traffic lanes that allow for larger vehicles to safely make a U-turn on a divided roadway) immediately west of the Fontaine/Ray C Hunt intersection to access the northbound 29 ramp. A shared-use path is proposed through the segment. See Attachment A for project design sketch.

This project was intended to be more cost-effective than a Round 3 Smart Scale application that proposed replacing the existing diamond interchange with a diverging diamond, which was not successful. The Round 4 application was successful.

Recently, stakeholders have expressed concern that the proposed partially displaced left turn interchange does not meet the long-term needs of the rapidly developing area. Since then, Albemarle County have worked with stakeholders and VDOT to determine next steps for this project.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Infrastructure & Placemaking - Invest in infrastructure and amenities that create connection, opportunity, and well-being

**DISCUSSION:** Given stakeholder concerns, VDOT has prepared at least four alternatives to the awarded project that fit within the awarded project's footprint and budget. VDOT and CA-MPO staff have presented

these alternatives to the MPO Policy Board at their January meeting. While no official action is needed to proceed with the project as originally awarded, the MPO Policy Board would need to take official action to 1) request VDOT use one of the alternative designs, or 2) cancel the awarded project and consider submission of a different design in a future round of Smart Scale - in which the project would not be guaranteed to receive funding. The MPO Policy Board, which includes two members of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, will need to take official action (or choose not to take action) at their February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. This agenda item and presentation are intended to inform the Board of Supervisors about the future of project that will impact Albemarle County, though no official action is needed by the Board.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** There is no budget impact associated with this item. There is no local match required either for the project already awarded funding or any of the alternatives presented.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Board share their questions and concerns regarding the Fontaine Interchange Improvements.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

A - Awarded Project Design