



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-163, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 1/20/2021

TITLE:

Eastern Avenue South Alignment Study Results

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Providing the results of the Eastern Avenue Alignment Study to the Board for information

ITEM TYPE: Consent Information Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Henry, Filardo, McCulley, Rapp, McDermott

PRESENTER (S): Rapp, McDermott, Kelsey

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Douglas C. Walker

BACKGROUND: Eastern Avenue provides access to residential properties including multiple phases of the Foothill Crossing development and adjoining streets. As additional residential developments (i.e., Westlake at Foothill Crossing) are expected to continue north of Lickinghole Creek, an extension of Eastern Avenue is needed to improve connectivity to the Crozet development area and Route 250 (Rockfish Gap Turnpike). Currently, Route 240 (Crozet Avenue) provides the only existing vehicular crossings of Lickinghole Creek within Crozet. The approximately 5.5-mile detour required to cross Lickinghole Creek is not a viable option for existing residents within the County, particularly as future development continues in Crozet. The completion of Eastern Avenue will help to mitigate increased congestion within downtown Crozet and along Route 240 as well as Route 250. This extension of Eastern Avenue has been identified as a priority project in previously adopted Crozet Master Plans and will be carried over into the draft update currently in production.

A revenue sharing proposal in 2019 revealed a significantly higher than anticipated preliminary cost estimate for the project. Therefore, the County hired an engineering consultant (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. [Kimley-Horn]) to perform a location and design study to improve the accuracy of the cost estimates in an attempt to move the project forward. A Purchase Order for the location study and the design concept was issued to Kimley Horn in late July of 2020. This study included the analysis of three (3) potential alignments with a recommendation on a preferred route as well as an updated estimated cost based off 30% complete conceptual roadway, bridge structure and drainage design.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Mission: To enhance the well-being and quality of life for all citizens through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds.

Strategic Plan Priority # 6 (Revitalize Aging Urban Neighborhoods): Apply the county's Transportation Project Prioritization Process to plan, identify funding, & implement bicycle, pedestrian, & transit infrastructure improvements within & serving our Aging Urban Neighborhoods.

DISCUSSION: The County's engineering consultant for the project, Kimley-Horn, identified and analyzed

three (3) conceptual alignments for the extension of Eastern Avenue, south to Route 250 (Rockfish Gap Turnpike). The study evaluated potential constraints including wetland impacts, tree clearing, property impacts, and construction costs. Based on Kimley-Horn's analysis of these constraints, Alignment B is the recommended alignment as it presents a balance of impacts while minimizing cost. In addition to the factors considered in the Kimley-Horn analysis, it should also be noted that Alignment B also closely conforms to the description of the proposed roadway found in the current Crozet Master Plan, which is not expected to be changed in the update underway. Alignment C, was notably different from the description found in the Master Plan which would likely result in broad impacts to land use and transportation expectations based on those plans.

As staff continues to move this project forward, Kimley Horn will complete their conceptual design work associated with Alignment B which will support the preparation of a Revenue Sharing application for the upcoming submission cycle in late Spring of 2021. Based on recent direction from VDOT, applications submitted during this 2021 cycle may potentially be awarded funding in FY2027 and FY2028. Due to the high estimated cost of this proposed project and uncertainty regarding the availability of state funding in future years, staff will also be exploring other potential grant funding sources.

BUDGET IMPACT: Funding to support the Eastern Avenue Alignment and Conceptual Design Study was previously allocated by the Board out of the Transportation Leveraging line item in the Albemarle County Capital Improvement Plan. Once complete, a cost estimate for the full implementation of the construction of the Eastern Avenue Southern Connection will be developed. Based on this, future funds will be required to support the advancement of this project, likely as a match for State or Federal grant application. The amount of those future funds is not yet known but will be the subject of a future Board item.

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is to provide information only. No action is required.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attach A: Kimley Horn "Eastern Avenue Alternative Alignment Development Summary" report (11 pages)

Attach B: Pages from the Transportation chapter of the adopted 2010 Crozet Master Plan (2 pages)