



PRESS RELEASE

COUNTY AND VDOT ANNOUNCES PROGRESS IN EFFORTS TO REPLACE CLOSED CLEMENTS MILL BRIDGE

For Immediate Release

Date: March 22, 2007

For Additional Information,

Contact: Richard E. Huff, II, County Administrator

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors and the Virginia Department of Transportation are pleased to announce that progress has been made in efforts to construct a new bridge on Route 687 (Alean Road) at Clements Mill. The existing structure, which connects the Red Valley area to the Wirtz and Burnt Chimney areas, has been closed for some time due to maintenance concerns. This project has been agreed to be added to the Franklin County FY 2008-2013 Secondary Six-Year Plan for transportation improvements and it has been determined recently that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will permit a new single lane bridge to be constructed to replace the existing single lane bridge. This has been proposed by the Franklin County Board of Supervisors and assisted by VDOT. The County expresses its appreciation to Senator Charles Hawkins for his assistance in gaining the necessary approvals to consider replacing the bridge with another similar size bridge so as to avoid negatively impacting the historic mill adjacent to the structure. The project scope currently includes design alternatives that will be presented during the public involvement process following which a final design of the bridge will be submitted for approval. After approval, it normally takes VDOT 12 to 18 months for the preliminary engineering design phase of a project to be completed after which the project would then be advertised for construction. It typically takes 6 to 8 months for bridge construction to be completed following the award of the project. There have been no milestone dates (i.e. public involvement, design, advertisement or construction) established for this project yet, but the necessary steps to move forward have been identified. The bridge improvement will once again provide enhanced connectivity for motorists within the County.