



County of Albemarle

Community Development Department –
Planning Division

UNPAVED ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

February 2026

Intro:

Every year, Albemarle County receives State allocated Unpaved Road Funds to be used on unpaved roads through the Secondary Six-Year Plan (SSYP). These funds are primarily utilized to hard-surface secondary roads through the Rural Rustic (RR) Road program. Roads that are requested for RR paving need to meet geometric, traffic, and safety criteria to be eligible for paving. Unpaved roads that do not meet RR standards cannot have RR funds used for any improvements.

In the past, roads that failed to meet RR standards for paving were left off the SSYP because the level of funding and potential impacts for improvements to meet the necessary road standards was greater than the County was willing to accept. The Board policy was to utilize the RR program to hard-surface unpaved roads. In 2024, the VA General Assembly expanded the scope of the Unpaved Road Funds regarding allocation of funds to include non-paving improvements. This change allows Albemarle County to develop a new program that prioritizes improvements for unpaved roads using the RR funds allocated every year for more than paving.

Program Overview:

The Unpaved Road Improvement Program (URIP) is a new program that will identify, prioritize, and improve unpaved rural roads in Albemarle County with Unpaved Road Funds. Improvements will be focused on permanent infrastructure that address geometrics, drainage, and safety of unpaved roadways in Albemarle County. URIP will be completed concurrently with the RR program and will be adopted as part of the SSYP every spring by the Board of Supervisors (BOS).

URIP projects are permanent improvements to the infrastructure of the road. Eligible projects include stormwater improvements, erosion control measures, adjusting the grade of the road, smoothing out curves, road widening, and obstacle removal. Relaying or smoothing gravel, ditch cleaning, and other maintenance duties will not be eligible for URIP funding. URIP funds will not be used for private driveways and will only make improvements in the VDOT Right-of-Way.

Roads considered for URIP will be either:

- Roads requested for RR paving that failed to meet the VDOT requirements for Rural Rustic Road paving, or
- Unpaved Secondary Roads that have been identified for improvements by VDOT or Albemarle County.

Roads will be prioritized in a manner similar to how our RR paving is prioritized, by Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes, then by crash history.

Like RR, URIP projects will be programmed into the SSYP over a five-year time period; barring immediate road safety concerns where priorities need to be changed. VDOT will retain the judgement for what projects qualify for URIP funds, and what projects require maintenance funds.

Timeline:

The URIP will be drafted and approved every year with the RR and adopted within the SSYP each spring by the BOS for the upcoming five fiscal years. Like the RR program, this process starts in the fall and concludes nine months later in the spring.

1. Albemarle County and VDOT staff meet to discuss what roads have been requested for RR and what roads qualify for URIP.
2. Albemarle County and VDOT staff finalize draft SSYP for the BOS, indicating which roads will be in the URIP and which will be in the RR.
3. Albemarle County staff presents the draft SSYP to the BOS and receives feedback.
4. The BOS holds a public hearing on the proposed SSYP, followed by adoption of SSYP.
5. Albemarle County staff return to the BOS with resolutions to designate adopted SSYP roads as either RR or URIP roads.

This process repeats every year.

Other Considerations:

- Roads that have had URIP improvements can be considered for future RR paving funds after VDOT review and receiving the necessary 2/3 supporting votes from affected homeowners. (See RR Program documents for additional details.) Any road segment proposed for URIP must have URIP work completed prior to consideration to be added to the RR program.
- VDOT is responsible for determining the specific improvements that will be undertaken through the URIP program.
- New roads cannot be built using URIP funds.

- URIP funds cannot be used to remove asphalt to return it to an unpaved condition.