County of Albemarle
Community Development Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Architectural Review Board (ARB)
FROM: Khris Taggart, Sr. Planner I
RE: TA2025-03: Zoning Text Amendment to permit outdoor storage, display, and sales by-right instead of by Special Use Permit
DATE: November 4, 2026

On June 8, staff presented the ARB with a two-part approach to this ordinance amendment: a by-right process and standards for vehicle displays, and regulations for all other displays. The ARB supported the approach for vehicle displays, prompting staff to draft ordinance language regulating related landscaping, lighting, and parking, which includes an option to request a Special Exception from these regulations. These regulations would apply to all motor vehicles stored or displayed within the Entrance Corridor (EC) overlay district, from passenger vehicles to large commercial vehicles. Because the largest of those commercial vehicles can create greater visual impacts, staff recommends regulating them differently. One option, which staff recommends, is requiring these vehicles to be set back a specified distance from the EC, in addition to meeting the landscaping, lighting, and parking regulations. Another option is to require ARB review for display areas containing these larger vehicles.

Because the ARB raised concerns about the proposed regulations for “everything else”, staff conducted additional research to identify where adjustments could be made. This research found that the number and types of outdoor storage, display, and sales applications have evolved over the years. Out of the 56 SP applications for outdoor storage, display, and sales received since 1990, 40 were submitted between 1990 and 2008. The earlier applications were almost evenly split, with 21 "everything else" displays and 19 vehicle displays. However, after 2008, vehicle displays made up the majority with 12 requests, compared to only 4 for "everything else." Examining the types of non-vehicle display applications received, staff found they covered a wide range of categories, including home and garden, sheds, retail merchandise, manufactured homes, furniture, and storage areas. Adding to this variety, specific uses within these categories, such as garden centers, often display a diverse range of items. Given the low volume since 2009 and the challenge of developing uniform standards for diverse categories and items, staff recommends that these outdoor displays continue to require an SP.

A discussion of this updated approach is scheduled for the ARB on November 9. beginning with the following questions:

1. Does the recommended approach for “everything else” display seem reasonable?
2. Should large commercial vehicles be regulated differently than consumer vehicles?