

APPENDIX L:

Letter from Fire Chief



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On December 27th and 28th 2018, I spent eight hours at the intersection of North 5th Street and Market Street observing traffic flow on Market Street. During that time 435 commercial and semi trucks traveled down market street, both east and westbound. The excessive amount of truck traffic is creating safety concerns. The following concerns were noted:

1. The amount of commercial and semi-truck traffic has increased which causes concern due to the density and pedestrian traffic along Market Street. Due to the buildings and sidewalks being relatively close to the roadway, these large vehicles do not have an escape route in the event of an emergency. Simply put there is nowhere for them to go.
2. During this observation, I observed commodities such as gasoline, kerosene, diesel fuel, propane, as well as heating oil being transported along Market Street. While not illegal in some cases, many of the trucks are not placarded which causes concern as to the contents of the load.
3. Due to the density and age of the buildings, trucks carrying highly flammable liquids are extremely concerning. Any rupture or release of the product that ignites or leaks into the waterway could be catastrophic to the downtown Lewisburg area.
4. The truck traffic is causing a delay in emergency response and placing the lives of first responders at unnecessary risk. Our department responds to approximately 50 calls a year on Market Street. Recently we have had mirrors knocked off emergency vehicles due to the large trucks trying to pass. We also have experienced delays in traveling down Market Street due to the trucks not having room to allow emergency vehicles to pass. Responding to the Lewisburg Bridge, which normally takes less than 2 minutes, took 17 minutes due to the trucks blocking the roadway. Unfortunately, these trucks then take side streets that create additional concern since they can't navigate the tight spaces.
5. The increased vibration creates a collapse concern for the aging infrastructure within the downtown area. Many of the buildings are well over 100 years old, and the increased vibration has the potential to compromise their foundation.
6. During the observation, I witnessed several near misses involving the large trucks and either pedestrian or passenger vehicles. These trucks require a greater stopping distance and simply do not have enough room on Market Street.
7. The large trucks also disrupt the evacuation routes in downtown Lewisburg. Understanding the downtown Lewisburg area is prone to flash flooding, the large trucks block the evacuation routes of those individuals trying to escape the rising flood waters.

While these are some of the major concerns of the fire department, we do believe that an alternate route would be in the best interest of the professional drivers as well as the community.

Respectfully,

James J. Blount, Fire Chief
William Cameron Engine Company