



**County of Albemarle**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
401 McIntire Road, North Wing  
Charlottesville, VA 22902-4579

phone: 434-296-5832  
[www.albemarle.org](http://www.albemarle.org)

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: Albemarle County Planning Commission**

**FROM: David Benish, Development Process Manager**

**DATE: May 24, 2022**

**RE: Presentation of Rio Road Corridor Plan**

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### **Background:**

The Board directed staff to undertake a corridor study and planning process for Rio Road from east of the *Rio29 Small Area Plan* area (east of Putt-Putt Place/Glenwood Station) to the City Limits at Melbourne Road. A consultant, Line & Grade Civil Engineering, was contracted to undertake this project. The Rio Road corridor planning process began in the Spring of 2021 with the consultant's work being broken into two phases.

Phase 1 consisted of the section of road east of Route 29 to just south of the John Warner Parkway/Rio Road intersection. Phase 2 covers the remainder of Rio Road to Melbourne Road (the two-lane section of Rio Road). These two sections are very different in terms of character, purpose/function, traffic volumes, and issues of importance, lending to a desire to break the work up into two separate phases. The consultant has now completed the work on both phases of the corridor plan. The final document has combined the two phases into one unified document. A link to the draft document is provided below.

**Attachment 1 - [Rio Road Corridor Draft Plan](#)**

**Attachment 2 - [Rio Road Corridor Study Draft Appendix](#)**

### **Purpose:**

The goal of this project is to develop a community vision and plan that will guide future design and improvements of the Rio Road corridor. It is important to note that this is a "planning level" document and, as noted in the goal statement above, it establishes a vision for improvements along the corridor with sufficient level of analysis and conceptual design work to understand whether the proposed concepts and recommendations can address existing and future conditions and can be constructed meeting VDOT and other relevant engineering standards. Recommendations from this plan will need to be prioritized along with other transportation projects within the County and funded through various local, state and/or federal programs. The projects would then be subject to further study and engineering to determine the project's ultimate final design before being constructed.

In summary, the concepts within this document are not final designed projects approved and ready for construction, but rather reflect the vision for what kind of improvements are needed to address the issues found along the corridor and would be considered the most desired or acceptable form of improvement for the corridor. It should be noted that only one project discussed in the plan is currently funded by VDOT, the John W. Warner Parkway/Rio Road roundabout improvement. A conceptual design for that project was funded through the Smart Scale program prior to the start of this Corridor Study. The consultant did evaluate the funded roundabout design concept; however, there is no recommendation in this plan to modify the location or design of the funded roundabout project.

**Public Input:**

Page 6 of the draft Plan outlines the public input processes used, and the feedback received, during the plan's development. The public input efforts have been guided by the County's Communications and Public Engagement office (CAPE).

Three primary approaches were used to collect public input:

- Comments received through the project website
- Four (4) "pop-ups" or "remote office hour" meetings along the corridor—at the Center (twice), the Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC), and the Putt-Putt Fun Center site.
- Multiple public meetings were held in conjunction with the Places29-Rio Community Advisory Committee

During these input opportunities, citizen's issues, concerns, opportunities, and desires were gathered. Following these input opportunities, the proposed concepts/recommendations were presented to the public using all three methods. Due to the complexities involved with the issues and potential concepts for the Phase 1 portion of the corridor, an update on the Phase 1 concepts was provided to the Board on October 13, 2021 for their initial review and comment.

**Summary and Recommendation:**

The draft Rio Road Corridor Plan is being presented to the Planning Commission for information, review, and comment. The Commission's comments will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for consideration during their review of the Plan. Staff's recommendation for the Board will be to accept and endorse the Rio Road Corridor Plan and refer the Plan back to staff for consideration and adoption as part of the ongoing "AC44" update of the Comprehensive Plan.