

## Preliminary Concept of a Route 29 Solutions Marketing Campaign -

### Marketing Campaign Goals

Every effective marketing campaign starts with specific, measurable goals. Three potential goals for Albemarle County's Route 29 marketing communications campaign include:

1. During the construction period for the Route 20 corridor's roadway improvement project, help customers navigate through the construction to businesses and retailers who are located along the Route 29 corridor – and especially to establishments located in the Route 29 – Rio Road intersection during the summer 2016 construction period, when the intersection will be temporarily closed.
2. Help reassure visitors to the area who travel into the community on Route 29 that access to major tourism destinations such as Monticello, UVA, the Downtown Mall and wineries will be easy and convenient during all phases of construction
3. Help build a unique brand personality for the Route 29 – Rio Road intersection as a vibrant, commercial, retail, and entertainment center – one of the community's distinct destinations and neighborhoods, like Pantops, the Corner, and the Mall.

### Route 29 Marketing Campaign Target Audiences

There are three potential audiences for this marketing campaign.

1. People who consistently work, shop, eat, and play along the Route 29 business corridor. This is the "must sustain" segment – the corridor's current patrons.
2. People who currently do **not** regularly work, shop, eat, and play along the Route 29 business corridor, **but** who might do so.
3. Tourists who are considering visiting attractions in the area using the Route 29 North corridor

### Route 29 Marketing Communications Strategy

To meet the campaign goals, a several-part strategy would be appropriate for Albemarle County's Route 29 marketing communications campaign:

1. Create a Compelling Campaign Theme

The communications campaign would communicate and advance three core messages:

- Route 29 business corridor (and the Route 29 – Rio Road intersection) is a vibrant commercial, retail, and entertainment **place**.
- This area is **open for business** during the Route 29 roadway construction period – all retail, shopping, dining, entertainment, and commercial operations are open for business.
- This corridor will still provide **easy access to broader tourism assets** for visitors who travel to the area along Route 29 North

These three messages should be integrated into an overarching campaign theme that appears on all campaign elements.

## 2. Complement VDOT's "Notice" Campaign and Related Research

VDOT's is currently running a Route 29 Solution communications notice campaign, notifying the traveling public when specific components of the Route 29 Solutions construction work starts. This notice campaign is effectively building awareness of what's happening – "construction is underway at X point in the Route 29 business corridor." Albemarle County's communications campaign should be designed in a manner that complements VDOT's notice campaign efforts. For example:

- Focus Albemarle County's campaign on the three key messages, as detailed above, and don't waste time and money explaining that construction is underway on Route 29 (VDOT's campaign is effectively doing that).
- Coordinate paid media placements, such as back-to-back ad placements.
- Coordinate community outreach efforts – sync messages and presentations.
- Facilitate detour of wayfinding signage on private property during construction. (VDOT and the contractor will manage detour signing on public right-of-way during construction.)
- Share research – Albemarle County's communications campaign should build on the insights afforded by the VDOT Route 29 Solutions research regarding the Route 29-Rio Road intersection's sense of place and possible names and naming architecture, which will be selected prior to the end of 2015.

The above and all other possible Albemarle County – VDOT tie-ins must first be broached with VDOT. They are offered here just as examples of possible ways to closely coordinate these two communications efforts.

### **Possible Campaign Elements**

Based on the three-part communications strategy detailed above, Albemarle County's communications campaign would be developed from among the following elements:

- Retail posters: Campaign posters for all campaign apostles to display in their locations and put up around the community.
- Bumper and front door stickers: Stickers and decals used and disseminated by all campaign stakeholders.
- Movie theaters: Video trailer that is aired in local theaters.
- Malls: Banner or backlit display.
- Radio: Paid radio placements advancing the campaign message.
- Digital: Digital media, including banners, key search words, context placement, etc.
- Social media: References and placements by campaign stakeholders.

### **Campaign Timeline**

The campaign should be deployed in a manner that makes the most of a limited budget. To this end, several campaign timing-related considerations should be taken into account. First, Route 29-Rio Road intersection utility work is underway now. Grading will start in September 2015. Second, the construction related activities on the Route 29-Rio Road intersection will increase over time, peaking in summer 2016 when the intersection will be temporarily closed. A concentrated effort will be needed in late spring 2016. Third, the November-December 2015 holiday period is a critical business period for

many Route 29 retailers. A concentrated 2015 holiday effort will be needed. Given these factors, the Route 29 marketing communications campaign should be planned around three key phases:

- Phase I: September 2015 Launch: Prepare campaign materials and recruit the local business and retailers as marketing campaign stakeholders. Launch a base-level outreach effort that utilizes stakeholders' contacts, Albemarle County's owned media, and any donated media from the local mall and theaters.
- Phase II: 2015 Holiday Period Push: Run a concentrated period of paid media placements in the November-December 2015 period.
- Phase III: Pre-Summer 2016 Intersection Temporarily Closing: Run a concentrated period of paid media placements in the spring period (April-May).