



# Albemarle County

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-168, **Version:** 1

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**AGENDA DATE:** 2/3/2021

**TITLE:**

Rio Road Corridor Plan - Overview

**SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:** Overview and status of the Rio Road Corridor Study

**ITEM TYPE:** Regular Information Item

**STAFF CONTACT(S):** Richardson, Walker, Kamptner, Herrick, Filardo, Rapp, Benish

**PRESENTER (S):** David Benish

**LEGAL REVIEW:** Yes

**REVIEWED BY:** Jeffrey B. Richardson

**BACKGROUND:** The Board of Supervisors directed staff to undertake a corridor study of the Rio Road Corridor. A consultant, Line+Grade Civil Engineering, has been hired to develop this plan in conjunction with Community Development Department staff. Line+Grade has previously assisted the County in the development of the recent Avon Street Corridor Study, as well as other planning and development projects within the County. The scope of the corridor study is from the Rio/29 Small Area Plan Area boundary to the intersection of the John Warner Parkway.

As identified in the project scope, the purpose of the corridor plan is *to conduct an evaluation of the corridor, and to develop comprehensive design alternatives to serve as a guide for future development and infrastructure rehabilitation projects. The corridor plan will provide solutions which will enhance the mobility and access for all users-developing traffic safety and operations improvements which will best serve the future needs of the corridor.*

The corridor plan and recommendations are expected to be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan and Places29 Master Plan. Other amendments/update to the current Master Plan document will likely be needed to make the master plan consistent with the recommendations of the corridor study. The extent of those changes will not be known until the completion of the corridor study.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Infrastructure Investment: Prioritize, plan, and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs.

**DISCUSSION:** The following overview of the project is provided:

**Timeline:** Staff and consultant work are underway now. The scope of services assumes a project schedule of approximately 12 months, and work began in earnest on the project in November 2020. Once completed, the corridor plan, either in full or components/recommendations, would be adopted as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan/Places29 Master Plan. That process will take place once the corridor plan is completed, reviewed and accepted by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

**Components of work:** There are generally four stages of the consultant's work: background and document review (underway); assessment of existing conditions (also underway); vision phase-development of conceptual design alternatives; and development of a unified corridor plan with recommendations for improvements. Information developed during these stages will be made available on the project website for review and comment, and meetings will be scheduled to also present and discuss this information with the public.

In developing the plan, the consultant will assess the Comprehensive Plan and Places29 Master Plan recommendations, existing zoning characteristics, existing traffic studies, and other existing current and projected traffic data. The consultant will evaluate the corridor against VDOT access management criteria (intersections and entrances) and relevant safety criteria (including crash data), and will assess the multi-modal characteristics of the corridor.

**Public engagement:** The Communications and Public Engagement office and the Office of Equity are part of the project team and are working with CDD staff in developing and implementing the public engagement process. Efforts will be made to ensure all users of the road and residents along the corridor are aware of the project and have the opportunity to view information and provide input along the way, and that the County's expectation for equity and inclusion are addressed. Our Public Engagement Goals are to:

- Inform participants about the project, the process, and provide background information to prepare everyone to participate fully.
- Create space to share and understand different perspectives, knowledge, and experiences.
- Reduce barriers to participation.
- Learn who we are, and who we are not, reaching and adjust the approach to respond accordingly.
- Create an inviting, enjoyable experience with a high number of participants throughout the process.

To these ends, the following is general overview of the public engagement processes to be used:

- A project website is being developed to provide background information about the project, the corridor and transportation planning; status of the work; schedule for meetings and other input opportunities; and a location to review and provide comment on draft materials/draft plan. This site will be up and running by the time this report is distributed.

- On-site and in-the-field communications techniques will also be used, including "pop-up van" stops and signs along sidewalks informing the public of the project and input opportunities. Mailers and/or hand distributed flyers and notices to key stakeholders groups and neighborhood groups will also be used to inform the public of the project.

- Strategic virtual meetings will be conducted to review components of the consultant's work, focused on the existing conditions, vision-conceptual design alternatives, and the unified plan with recommendations. The website will be used for disseminating information and draft components of the plan for review. Input/feedback will be used on an ongoing basis to complement virtual meeting processes.

Virtual meetings will be scheduled in early February to provide a basic overview of the project for the public.

- The corridor plan will ultimately be subject to input from the relevant Community Advisory Committees (CACs), Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors. Public hearings will be required for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

This report and presentation is intended to provide a basic overview of the project. Staff will be providing the Board periodic updates of the project either as a future agenda item or as part of the Transportation Quarterly Reports.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** Funding for the project was previously allocated in Summer 2020. The Plan will provide recommended improvements that will necessitate funding for implementation/development.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Board receive the report and presentation and provide feedback.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None