



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 18-484, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 9/12/2018

TITLE:

Rio29 Small Area Plan

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Presentation of final draft designs for direction on readiness for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Graham, Gast-Bray, Falkenstein

PRESENTER (S): Rachel Falkenstein, Andrew Gast-Bray

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: At a January 30, 2018 joint meeting, staff and consultants shared the Phase 2 designs and framework with the Board and Planning Commission. Staff presented a plan for connectivity demonstrating transportation facilities and green infrastructure/amenities. The designs also included renderings and a sample quadrant plan to demonstrate community form. The Board and Planning Commission expressed support for the framework and designs, but wanted further discussion on implementation and more detail about the plan concepts prior to moving the project forward to a Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA).

STRATEGIC PLAN: Thriving Development Areas: Attract quality employment, commercial, and high density residential uses into development areas by providing services and infrastructure that encourage redevelopment and private investment while protecting the quality of neighborhoods

DISCUSSION: Staff will be presenting the latest draft designs for the Rio29 Small Area Plan. Concepts presented will include refined connectivity, parks & trails, place types/character, and transformative projects. Staff is looking for the Board's feedback and endorsement of the concepts before moving forward to a CPA, with the goal of a CPA by the end of 2018. At an August 21 Work Session the Planning Commission recommended staff move the design concepts forward to a CPA.

This Connectivity plan (Attachment A) addresses the community's desires to be able to easily walk, bike, drive, or take transit to locations within the Rio29 area - and from the area to other nodes. The proposed network addresses these desires by providing more direct routes to destinations and recommends that streets be upgraded to or constructed as "complete streets", which are designed for all users. The Plan proposes a hierarchy of streets based on street capacity and design to ensure that streets are designed to be functional and that development is appropriately scaled along the streets.

The Parks & Trails plan (Attachment B) proposes to integrate green infrastructure elements throughout Rio29. The plan shows how we can capitalize on existing green features and publicly owned parcels to provide public amenity spaces, increase environmental sustainability through the use of low impact development techniques

and stormwater management best practices, and establish a much-desired trail network to enhance access and mobility between public amenities and private attractions. This integrated green infrastructure network will also enhance quality of life, strengthen sense of place, and reflect the County's environmentally-friendly identity.

To facilitate the creation of different, better places, the Small Area Plan recommends prioritizing the form of development above overly specific land uses. The Place Types/Character plan (Attachment C) designates parts of Rio29 as Urban Core, Core, Flex, and Edge areas and recommends form guidelines for each place type, in addition to general use categories. These guidelines will also encourage the development of vibrant communities with a mixture of living, working, and entertainment spaces while continuing to give landowners flexibility in how they develop and use their property.

Recognizing that change will happen over time, a series of Transformative Projects (Attachment D) have been identified as catalysts and necessary steps in implementing the Small Area Plan. These recommended projects will take place over the short, mid, and long-term, dependent on when conditions such as financing and redevelopment permit. A more detailed breakdown of each project, including stakeholders and funding sources, will be included in the full Plan document.

It is hoped that moving the plan forward will enable the County to use the Plan as an "invitational or opportunity plan" to encourage landowners to redevelop Rio29 consistent with the County's vision for the area. The subsequent Comprehensive Plan Amendment, if adopted, will enable expedited review of development applications in the pipeline that are consistent with this vision, as well as laying a clear set of parameters to transform the area's zoning into a new hybrid form-based code to promote development in the area in general to meet the County's vision.

BUDGET IMPACT: Portions of consultant services for Phases 1 & 2 of the *Small Area Plan* were funded through two \$65,000 Urban Development Area Planning Grants through the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment. Additional funds for Phase 2 & 3 consultant work have been covered by the \$120,000 FY17 budget allocation for the *Small Area Plan*.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board endorse the Small Area Plan design concepts and direct staff to advance the presented information to a Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Connectivity plan
- Attachment B: Parks & Trails plan
- Attachment C: Place Types/Character plan
- Attachment D: Transformative Projects