



Albemarle County

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AGENDA DATE: 2/1/2017

TITLE:
Economic Development Initiatives Update

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Update to the Board of Supervisors on the continued progress on major economic development initiatives.

ITEM TYPE: Regular Information Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Walker, Catlin, Stimart

PRESENTER (S): Walker, Catlin

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Douglas C. Walker

BACKGROUND: The Board of Supervisors has initiated a number of significant economic development activities over the past several years, and continues to place a high priority on the timely completion of those efforts. The recent departure of several senior staff members including the County Executive has required transition of responsibility and reassignment of staff resources to maintain focus on the economic development initiatives. This discussion will outline the status and upcoming milestones for these initiatives, demonstrating the County's continued commitment to advancing economic development as directed by the Board.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Economic Prosperity: Foster an environment that stimulates diversified job creation, capital investments, and tax revenues that support community goals

DISCUSSION:

Economic Development Strategic Plan:

An Economic Development Strategic Plan was partially completed prior to the departure of the County's Economic Development Director in November, 2016. A consultant is currently being selected to work with staff to complete a draft plan for the Board's consideration later this spring. Following the Board's initial review, a

community engagement process will be conducted to solicit feedback prior to finalizing the plan for the Board's approval in the early fall. Approval of a strategic plan, along with the hiring of the new County Executive as outlined below, are key milestones in the process of hiring the Economic Development Director.

County Executive/Economic Development Director Hiring Process:

The County Executive hiring process is underway. It is currently contemplated that preparations for the hiring process for the new Economic Development Director will occur in parallel to the greatest extent possible so that that hiring process can begin in a timely way after the arrival of a new County Executive and approval of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Exploration of Opportunities Related to the Relocation of County Court Facilities and/or County Administration Functions:

The Board passed a resolution on November 2, 2016, directing County staff to fully explore and pursue partnership possibilities that deliver the most cost efficient, economic benefit to County residents while preserving accessible Court facilities by relocating either Court facilities or County administration offices to an urban area in the County. On December 14, 2016, the Board approved the procurement of a Legal Advisor and a development advisor to assist in this work. The County's current bond counsel, Hunton and Williams, will serve as Legal Advisor during this process in collaboration with the County Attorney's Office. Staff anticipates posting an RFP for a Development Advisor (copy provided as Attachment A) the week of February 3 with the intention of having a consultant in place and active by mid-April. Additional milestones on the exploration of partnership possibilities will be provided to the Board as they are available.

Rio/Route 29 Small Area Plan:

Work on Phase 1 of the Small Area Plan is underway with the draft vision framework scheduled to be endorsed by the Board in April. Once adopted, the Small Area Plan vision, informed by a market analysis and the engagement of business stakeholders from the area, will set guidance and expectations for economic development for this critical urban area of the County.

Strategic Focus on Redevelopment and Revitalization:

The County's FY17 - 19 Strategic Plan outlines urban redevelopment and revitalization as the County's highest priorities, with economic development as a driving focus. Specific strategies include revamping of the County zoning ordinance to facilitate desired economic activity in designated development areas and proactive rezoning in the Route 29/Rio Road area based on the Small Area Plan vision to create by-right opportunities for desired economic development projects. The Board has approved funding for the additional staffing capacity required to meet established timelines and these efforts are underway. Updates on the progress of these strategies will be provided to the Board on a regular basis.

Economic Development Office:

The Economic Development Office continues ongoing operations with existing staff and additional support/oversight being provided by the County Executive's Office.

BUDGET IMPACT: No budget impact is associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

No action is required by the Board related to this item.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - RFP for Development Advisor