

County of Albemarle Roadway Enhancement
(“CARE”... about quality of life)

I. Purpose:

ArtInPlace intends to help define and communicate Albemarle County’s unique character through the introduction of art in two forms: sculpture and landscape architecture. This beautification helps combat the visual homogenization that results from the proliferation of gas stations, fast food restaurants, and strip malls in the urban ring. As Albemarle County grows economically we must be simultaneously dedicated to improving the quality of life in urbanizing areas and entryways. With VDOT’s new Comprehensive Roadside Management regulations in place it allows medians to be “adopted” by local businesses’ donations therefore involving the community in this effort to enhance visual integrity, character and sense of place. Landscaping signals to a visitor that they are in a special place, soothes the resident at the red light and provides a rich legacy of beauty for future generations.

II. Anticipated Benefits:

- A. Encourages and better articulates positive visual experiences along Albemarle County’s prominent roadways
- B. Creates entrance corridors that better represent the natural beauty and scenic, cultural, and historical character of Albemarle County
- C. Creates continuity with the City of Charlottesville by providing landscaping and space for public art
- D. Raises the level of citizen awareness to the importance of aesthetic and intellectual experiences in everyday life
- E. Creates a model for future roadway landscaping and overall beautification
- F. Provides an expression of our civic pride and cooperation as a community

III. Pertinent Legislation:

“Roadside Management Regulations (SB260–2004): This code section directs the Virginia Department of Transportation to develop comprehensive roadside management program regulations that will allow communities to participate in the improvement and management of state maintained roadsides and enable sponsorship signage to acknowledge such efforts.

**anticipated to go into effect December 2005*

- A. VDOT’s Goals
 - a. Establishing the minimum criteria for the planning, review, and approval of local roadside improvement initiatives.
 - b. Protecting the public’s health, safety, and welfare with the least possible cost and intrusiveness to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

- c. Providing a clearly written and understandable regulation.
- B. Process for Application*:
- a. The name, telephone number, and complete mailing address of the local government and the authorized local government representative who shall be officially designated by the local government as having full administrative and operational authority over all proposed activities
 - b. A maintenance agreement that outlines obligated specific maintenance activities and responsibilities, projected maintenance costs, and related funding commitments necessary to ensure areas are maintained and performing as originally permitted
 - c. A formal resolution from the local governing body, adopted subsequent to a public hearing during which the proposed landscaping activities are made available for review. The local governing body shall provide written notification to the department of its intention to hold such a hearing no later than 14 days prior to such hearing.

*<http://www.virginia-dot.org/infoservice/rmr-rev.asp>

IV. Costs:

- A. Preliminary Budget Considerations
 - a. Consultation with the City of Charlottesville Department of Parks and Recreation
 - b. Consultation with current Albemarle County landscape contractors; *D&D and Windridge Landscaping*
- B. Future Budget Considerations
 - a. Size and quantity of sites
 - b. Designer's maintenance plan that establishes activities necessary to maintain the intended appearance and health of the new roadway improvement. This establishes a level of desired maintenance and estimates projected costs for mowing, irrigation and plant materials.
 - c. Estimates from landscape contractors
 - d. Potential cooperation with the City of Charlottesville division of Parks and Recreation

V. Implementation of Landscaping:

- A. Identification of planting sites
 - a. VDOT Site considerations for approval by department:
 - i. Not be scheduled for future construction as defined within the department's current six year improvement plan which would conflict with the activities proposed on the project

- ii. Must contain sufficient right-of-way to reasonably permit planting and landscaping operations without conflicting with safety, geometric, and maintenance considerations
- iii. Does not contain overhead or underground utilities, driveways, pavement, sidewalks, or highway system fixtures including traffic signage or signalization which will conflict with the planting or landscaping operations proposed under the project
- iv. Does not obstruct or interfere with existing drainage conditions along the site.
- b. Potential Sites: Phase I
 - i. Airport Rd. 29N
 - ii. 29N- Rio Mills Rd/Polo Grounds Rd
 - iii. 29N
 - iv. 29N between Greenbrier (Shell) and Branchlands Blvd (Applebees, Fairfield Inn)
 - v. Rt. 20 @ Interstate 64 interchange
 - vi. 250 Business (Ivy Rd. @ 29/64 ramps)

B. Landscape Design

- a. Funding
 - i. Competition between local landscape architects for sign and media recognition
- b. Plant Selection Criteria
 - i. *Low maintenance, drought tolerant, hearty plants that will provide year round color and interesting foliage without obstructing views from drivers*

C. Apply for necessary permits from VDOT

- a. Land Use Permit: gives you permission to be on VDOT's right-of-way for proposed activities.
- b. *Planting Agreement: narrative and sketch of design of landscaping.* Suggested that the designer meet with roadside manager before submitting to work out problems beforehand.
 - i. VDOT Primary concerns
 - 1. Clear zone
 - 2. Sight distance

D. Funding: A public/private partnership

- a. Develop Communications Plan
 - i. Coverage in local media sources
 - ii. Direct mail solicitations
 - iii. Seek donations of advertising space
- b. Establish a "giving ladder" for individuals and other civic groups tax exempt contributions (example from Lynchburg LEAF Program)

- i. \$30: planted shrub
 - ii. \$125: planted evergreen or ornamental tree
 - iii. \$200: planted canopy tree
 - c. *Garner donations from local Businesses with sign recognition*
 - i. In addition to the specifications in 24 VAC 30-121-40.C.2, in order to be recognized on an acknowledgement sign, an entity must provide a minimum cash or in-kind contribution to the permittee for the landscaping activity as specified below. Such contribution shall guarantee the acknowledgement sign for five years. Cost of the acknowledgement sign shall *not count toward the minimum* contribution requirement.
 - a. Non-controlled access primary and secondary highways: \$7,500 contribution
 - b. Controlled access primary and secondary highways: \$8,500 contribution
 - c. Interchanges on controlled access primary and secondary highways: \$10,000 contribution
 - d. Interstate interchanges: \$20,000 contribution
- *Proposed Roadside Management Regulations (SB260-2004)
- E. Initial planting by contractor/landscaping firm
 - a. Funded by donations
 - b. Under supervision by city and ArtInPlace to ensure quality

VI. Implementation of Sculpture

- A. Identification of sites
 - a. Comprehensive Roadside Management states the project design shall not include the following design elements: “Statuary, sculpture, or other art objects”
 - b. Site must be located on Albemarle County Property
 - i. CATEC
 - ii. Darden Towe Park
 - iii. Airport
 - iv. 5th St. County Office building
- B. Funding secured from County of Albemarle for Sculptures (estimated at \$2000 per sculpture)
- C. Judging of received entries by ArtInPlace jury
- D. Installation
- E. Possible citizen participation for landscaping around sculpture

VII. Roles and Responsibilities

1. ArtInPlace
 - a. Facilitate landscape design competition
 - b. Create incentive plan to recognize donors
 - c. Handle smaller donations from citizens, civic organizations
 - d. Garner donations from local businesses (sign recognition)
 - e. Judge and install selected sculpture
2. Albemarle County
 - a. Apply for necessary permits from VDOT
 1. Land use permit and planning agreement
 2. Roadside Management Application
 - b. Budget yearly for landscape maintenance
 - c. Fund ArtInPlace sculpture
3. In Cooperation: ArtInPlace & Albemarle County
 - a. Work with VDOT to identify planting sites
 - b. Choose landscaping design
 - c. Develop a public relations plan
 - d. Inspection and supervision of initial planting by contractor
4. Landscape Designer
 - a. Create master landscaping plan including design and guidance regarding future care and maintenance
 - b. Provide visual representations to assist with PR and collecting donations