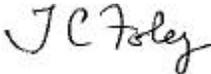


# COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b> Route 29 Solutions Business Assistance Program	<b>AGENDA DATE:</b> March 4, 2014
<b>SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:</b> Work session to consider strategies to develop a comprehensive Business Assistance Program for the Route 29 Solutions Program	<b>ACTION:</b> <b>INFORMATION:</b> X
<b>STAFF CONTACT(S):</b> Foley, Catlin, Stimart	<b>CONSENT AGENDA:</b> <b>ACTION:</b> <b>INFORMATION:</b>
<b>PRESENTER (S):</b> Lee Catlin	<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b> Yes
<b>LEGAL REVIEW:</b> Yes	<b>REVIEWED BY:</b> 

### BACKGROUND:

The Board has expressed a strong desire to consider strategies and develop a business assistance program for businesses in the Route 29 construction areas. Staff has researched various communities in Virginia and across the country to see what types of assistance programs were used in similar circumstances. In addition, the County has provided a number of different opportunities to solicit input from businesses in the Route 29 corridor regarding strategies they think could be beneficial before, during and immediately after construction. A list of assistance ideas generated from staff's research and from stakeholders' input was presented to the Board in December, 2014 for its initial reaction and discussion. Based on the Board's direction at that meeting, staff has conducted a more detailed assessment of the potential strategies and has prepared preliminary recommendations for the Board's consideration during this work session.

### STRATEGIC PLAN:

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

### DISCUSSION:

Following the December, 2014 Board discussion of this issue, staff refined the potential strategies into a preliminary proposal (provided as Attachment A) for the Board's consideration. This proposal has been shared for feedback from the community in the following ways:

- Reviewed with the Route 29 Solutions Business Assistance subcommittee
- Reviewed with representatives from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Senior Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development (CVPED)
- Reviewed with representatives from the Greater Charlottesville Chamber of Commerce
- Reviewed at drop-in opportunities at locations in the Rio intersection quadrants

The attached proposal provides an overview of the components of the draft business assistance program. Major highlights are outlined below:

- Justification for use of a comprehensive business assistance program for the Route 29 Solutions Package
- Establishment of a public private partnership to manage the program
- Creation of a geographic tier system to determine where specific strategies would be deployed
- Recommended strategies in the following areas:
  - Technical assistance
  - Marketing
  - Communication
  - Signage
  - Regulatory

Some suggestions that came forward during early feedback sessions are more complex than those in the categories above and involve significant financial and/or policy implications. The attached proposal provides background for the Board's review and consideration to determine if there is interest in proceeding further in any of those areas.

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Once the Board has provided final direction regarding specific strategies to be included in the business assistance program, a full implementation schedule will be developed to establish the timeline of when the various business assistance strategies will be deployed.

A draft list of possible strategies to consider was compiled based on feedback from the community and was presented in full to the Board in December, 2014. Board members expressed interest in seeing how those individual strategies were dealt with as this proposal moved forward. Most of those items have been incorporated into the recommendations. The full list from December is included as Attachment B with outcomes indicated for the information of the Board and the public.

Reference is made to a VDOT Route 29 Solutions US 29/Rio Road Benefit Cost Analysis Executive Summary in the attached proposal. It is included as Attachment C.

**BUDGET IMPACT:**

While an exact budget cannot be determined until the Board provides final direction, it is anticipated that funding would be required for the several of the marketing initiatives. Adequate funding to support those initiatives is available from existing sources, including unexpended funds from the Economic Development budget and from the County's Economic Opportunity Fund. It is important to note that currently there is no source of funds available for any type of loan or grant program.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that the Board provide direction regarding the recommended business assistance strategies, as well as any of the other strategies that fall into the category of significant financial and/or policy implications, for staff to prepare a final proposed package to be presented to the Board in May, 2015.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – [Business Assistance Program Outline](#)

Attachment B – [Initial Strategies List](#)

Attachment C – [VDOT Route 29 Solutions US 29/Rio Road Benefit Cost Analysis Executive Summary](#)

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