

FY 20 - 23 Strategic Plan: Final Report

December 2023

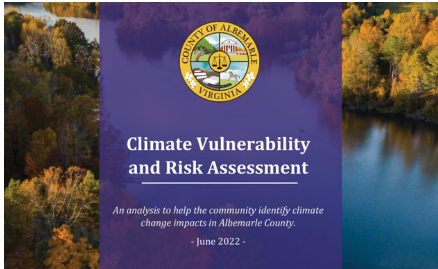
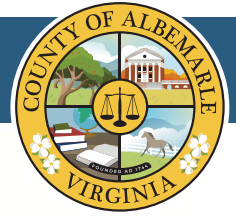
In 2018, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors adopted the FY 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. During its development, the County included previous priorities that were moving from the planning to implementation stages, while retiring accomplishments that had been achieved and addressing new initiatives. This strategic plan report is a demonstration of how Albemarle County implements our values – community, integrity, innovation, stewardship, and learning.

Strategic plans are a vital resource for County staff who use its guidance to allocate resources to achieve the plan's goals through annual budget development, staffing assignments, program enhancement, and service implementation.

The FY 2020-2022 Strategic Plan was extended through 2023 to account for impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic required shifting resources to urgent community needs around health, human services, and businesses. It also led to hiring freezes, expenditure reductions, delays due to labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, and uneven economic recovery. Through it all, Albemarle County has demonstrated resilience, innovation, and dedication to the strategic priorities identified to improve the well-being of all residents. The original plan focused on nine strategic goals; however, a tenth goal was added in 2021 to renew focus on quality government operations.

Albemarle County has continued to deliver on our commitment to enhance the well-being and quality of life for all citizens through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds. The following final report will show just how this mission statement has led to prioritization and success in implementing these strategic goals.

FY20-23 Strategic Plan



CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Develop/implement phase one of the Climate Action Plan to include high level goals & strategies focused around climate protection & resiliency to locally address climate change. Through budget process, develop recommendations for near-term implementation plans following adoption of the phase one Climate Action Plan.



EXPAND & PROMOTE OUTDOOR PARKS & AMENITIES

Complete rezoning for Biscuit Run Park & provide access to trails & greenways. Implement quality of life projects identified by the Parks & Recreation needs assessment.



DEVELOP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Economic Development program, project ENABLE, will implement strategies that create an economy driven by business, industry, & institutions in a way that complements growth management reliant upon cross-functional internal teams & external partnerships.



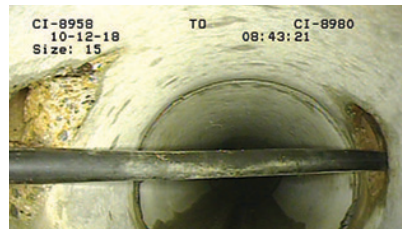
SCHOOL SPACE NEEDS

Establish & implement strategic direction including appropriate public engagement, or school space needs (e.g., preschool, school capacity, modernization of facilities).



REVITALIZE AGING URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Implement improvement actions developed from neighborhood inventory data to address neighborhood level needs. Apply the county's Transportation Project Prioritization Process to plan, identify funding, & implement bicycle, pedestrian, & transit infrastructure improvements within & serving our Aging Urban Neighborhoods. Continue the partnership with Habitat for Humanity using the Team Approach with a focus on quality community & non-displacement & until the completion of the build out for Phase 1 of Southwood.



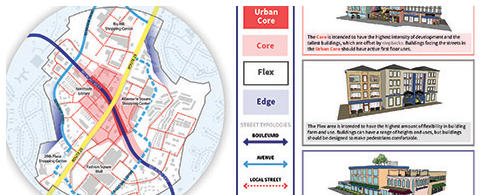
INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Determine desired levels of service for water resource protection programs based on drainage infrastructure video assessment & pilot watershed restoration program development; & recommend continuing resource requirements to fully implement those five programs at varying service levels.



EXPAND & UPGRADE THE GENERAL DISTRICT COURT & CIRCUIT COURT

With established location decision & completed design, start the construction phase by December 7, 2020 to expand the General District Court.



REDEVELOP RIO/ROUTE 29 INTERSECTION AREA

Present draft ordinance to implement Rio29 vision & encourage by-right implementation of desired urban land use form by December 2019. Leverage existing & planned public investment to enhance place making in Rio/Route 29 by Jan. 2021. EDO will develop processes, policies, &/or resources to attract private capital to fulfill the small area plan vision by June 2022.



EXPAND BROADBAND

Establish & implement strategic direction to expand broadband affordable access to under-served, rural communities.

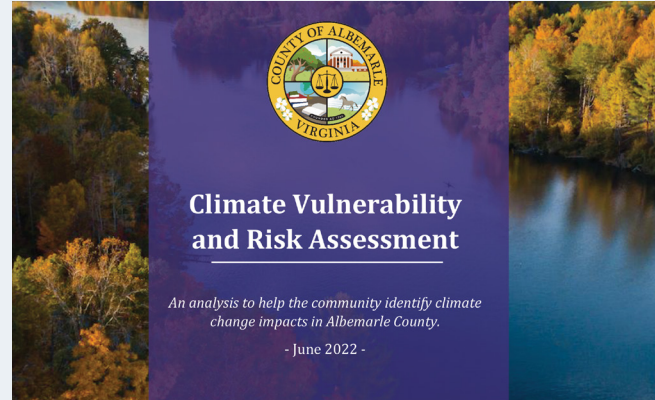
QUALITY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

At the foundation of the strategic plan is "Quality Government Operations," understanding that we are able to advance the plan's priorities by investing in our organizational well-being – which includes investments in business processes, financial management, workforce stabilization, and customer service enhancements.

GOAL 1: CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING

Develop/implement phase one of the Climate Action Plan to include high level goals and strategies focused around climate protection & resiliency to locally address climate change. Through budget process, develop recommendations for near-term implementation plans following adoption of the phase one Climate Action Plan.

Over the past four years, Albemarle County initiated a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which led to the establishment of the Climate Protection Program. This program, staffed with dedicated professionals, has facilitated various climate action initiatives, including energy-efficient upgrades for low-income households, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at County facilities, and the administration of a Community Climate Action grant competition. Furthermore, the Climate Program has played a pivotal role in integrating climate priorities into the AC44 Comprehensive Plan update and introducing tools to assess alignment with climate goals across County projects.



Climate Assessment and Action Planning: Strategic Implementation of the Climate Action Plan

Albemarle County demonstrated its commitment to practical and strategic climate action by systematically prioritizing actions within its [Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#) that was adopted in October 2020. These actions were evaluated based on their potential emissions reductions, equitable impacts, and benefits to the community. The prioritization is being used to guide implementation of actions with the highest return on investment for the community. To support program monitoring and evaluation, the County has continually improved its greenhouse gas emission inventory method to provide a more comprehensive account of emissions.

Local Partnerships and Community Engagement

To ensure community engagement and awareness, the County developed an online [Environmental Stewardship Hub](#) to provide accessible information on programs along with actions that community members can take. To support local climate initiatives and empower local entities, the County launched a pilot Community Climate Action Grant program, which awarded \$100,000 in grants to local organizations for programs aligned with CAP goals. Awarded projects include clean energy workforce trainings, distribution of bicycles to community members with limited means of transportation, a local composting initiative with job opportunities for people on the autism spectrum, improved farm equipment and practices at the New Roots Farm, and a Piedmont Prairie planting at Darden Towe Park. Those projects' results will be realized in the next strategic plan period.

Climate Resilience Planning

To lay the foundation for building resilience to the local impacts of climate change, the County completed a [Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment](#), a substantial 175-page report detailing local hazards that will be exacerbated by climate change and estimating costs to the community. Building on this analysis, Albemarle County, the City of Charlottesville, and the University of Virginia partnered in the design of [Resilient Together](#), a joint process to help our community prepare for local climate change impacts. The Resilient Together project launched in September 2023. Additionally, the County hired a consultant to support flood resilience planning within the context of our climate resilience work.

Equity Integration in Local Climate Action

In line with its strategic goals, the County placed an emphasis on equity and inclusion throughout the Community Climate Action Grant pilot and the design of the Resilient Together project, and other work. This included applying for an EPA Environmental Justice Government-to-Government (EJG2G) grant to help reach disadvantaged community members during Resilient Together. Additionally, Albemarle County created an Equity and Climate Action Lens to assess policies, programs, and projects in alignment with both climate and equity objectives.

GOAL 1: CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING (CONTINUED)

By the Numbers

- 135 actions to meet targets within Climate Action Plan.
- \$100,000 in grants distributed to local organizations.
- 754 home energy check-ups performed by the Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) with support by Albemarle County, including 330 low-income households served.
- 2,535 educational climate action kits delivered to Albemarle County 4th graders by the Community Climate Collaborative (C3), with support from the County's Climate Protection Program.
- 110 low-income households served by the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP) and LEAP through the Assisted Home Performance program, with support from the County's Climate Protection Program.
- 2,703 webpage visits to the Environmental Stewardship Hub.

GOAL 2: EXPAND AND PROMOTE OUTDOOR AMENITIES

Complete rezoning for Biscuit Run Park and provide access to trails and greenways. Implement quality of life projects identified by the Parks and Recreation needs assessment.

Albemarle County has been dedicated to expanding and enhancing our outdoor recreational parks and amenities. We have expanded land holdings and easements to improve public access, while continually enhancing park facilities, fostering community engagement, and embracing volunteer contributions. Our commitment has remained resolute in providing quality outdoor spaces for the well-being of our community.

Addressing COVID-19

Parks and Recreation quickly pivoted its operations during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure parks and resources were available to the community. A Park Ambassador Program, which kept parks accessible to the public, led to a significant increase in annual park attendance, reaching 2 million visitors between 2020 and 2021, effectively doubling the previous year's figures. Additionally, Parks and Recreation staff created and implemented the "Return to Play Guidelines and Policies" to restart athletic league programming once it was safe to do so. During the road to recovery, the Yancey Community Center was utilized by the Blue Ridge Health District to administer 2,300 vaccines.



Easements and Acquisitions

The County has made progress in expanding land holdings and easements to improve public access to park space. Notable achievements include:

- a 65-acre private land donation to expand the Patricia Ann Byrom Forest Preserve Park
- a greenway easement from the Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority, enhancing the connectivity of the Rivanna Trail and Woolen Mills; Land acquired at the Rio Point Trail Head Park, seven acres in the Pantops area for improved bike/pedestrian access to the Old Mills Trail
- secured greenway easements at various locations, such as Whittington/Wintergreen and Chesterfield Landing

These examples are just a few of the expansions made over the last several years to increase public access to park land.

B.F. Yancey Community Center

Since its 2019 opening, the B.F. Yancey Community Center has continually expanded its offerings, including programs such as Juneteenth Sunday Brunch, roller skating, exercise classes, history tours, and a thriving community garden. The center actively collaborates with resident agencies like B.F. Yancey Food Pantry, Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA), Blue Ridge Health Department, WellAware, and Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). Simultaneously, it remained committed to developing an Integrated Service Delivery Model aimed at providing collaborative, elevated services to residents in southern Albemarle, ultimately leading to tangible improvements in health and well-being for the community.

Park Planning and Development

Thoughtful park planning and development has occurred in projects throughout the county as new and improved park access is brought into the park system, most notably at the future Biscuit Run Park. To prepare for public access in the fall of 2024, seven miles of new multi-use trails were constructed at Biscuit Run Park, along with preparations for an entrance from Route 20 with parking and restroom facilities. To continue our commitment to preserving open spaces and natural areas, the County established a Natural Resource Management Program and initiated a Nutrient Management Plan at Darden Towe Park.

GOAL 2: EXPAND AND PROMOTE OUTDOOR AMENITIES (CONTINUED)

Special Events and Community Engagement

Parks and Recreation prioritized its role in organizing and hosting various events to enhance active community engagement, recognizing its unique ability to bring residents together. The dedication of a historical marker at River View Farm and the Juneteenth Sunday Brunch Celebration at Simpson Park recognized and celebrated cultural and historical milestones to acknowledge and honor the diverse histories and cultures of our county. Participating in events like the “Seas the Day” veterans appreciation event at Walnut Creek Park and supporting the Community Day at Simpson Park underscored a commitment to foster community bonds and promote a sense of belonging.

Volunteer Engagement and Key Partnerships

Volunteer engagement has been integral in the development and improvement of county parkland. The Pantops Trail Crew was formed to assist in maintaining the Old Mills Trail and surrounding trails. Partnerships with various organizations, such as the Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club, Crozet Trails Crew, Rivanna Trails Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity, have further strengthened community connections. In partnership with the Blue Ridge Disc Golf Club (BRDGC), a new 18-hole disc golf course was opened at Chris Greene Lake Park. The BRDGC raised funds to implement the park while their members donated 1,300 hours to construct new amenities. Additionally, the Charlottesville Tree Stewards planted 107 native trees across county parks in the past four years, contributing to environmental sustainability.



Park Improvements and Upgrades

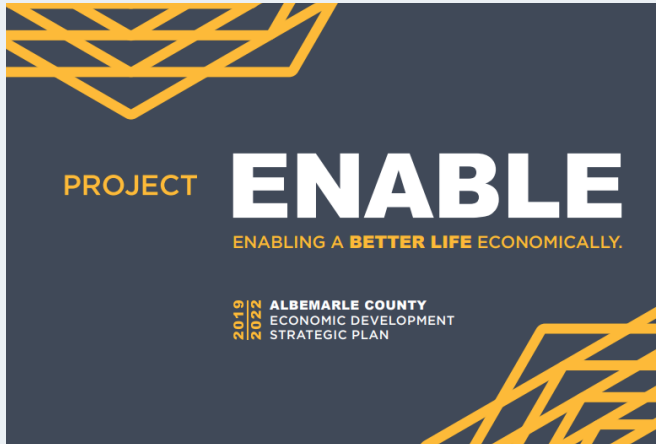
Albemarle County has worked to meet the community’s needs and preferences for recreational amenities. Highlights include opening the Brook Hill River Park boat launch, creating six dedicated pickleball courts at Darden Towe Park through a partnership with the Central Virginia Pickleball Club, and completing the Simpson Park Perimeter Pathway project. Enhanced playgrounds at Western Park, construction of ADA-accessible pathways at Ivy Creek Natural Area, and an upgrade to the off-leash dog area at Darden Towe Park were other key accomplishments over the past several years. In spring 2023, the Western Park shelter and trail, Crozet Elementary School QuickStart Tennis Court resurfacing, and Woodlands Boat Launch bank stabilization were completed.

By the Numbers

- 7.6 million park visitors.
- 8,658 participants in recreation classes and camps.
- 73 new park acres.
- 107 trees planted.
- 10 miles of new trails built (includes Biscuit Run 7, Preddy Creek 2.5, Simpson Park .5)
- 4,231 volunteer hours.

GOAL 3: DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Economic Development program, Project ENABLE, will implement strategies that create an economy driven by business, industry, and institutions in a way that complements growth management reliant upon cross-functional internal teams and external partnerships.



The Board of Supervisors adopted Albemarle County's first comprehensive economic development strategic plan in December 2018, which was developed in parallel with the Fiscal Year 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan. Goal 3: Develop an Economic Development Program, then, intended to implement Project ENABLE, which covers seven key activity areas:

- strengthen existing Business Retention and/or Expansion (BRE) to help existing businesses be successful.
- improve the business climate.
- lead the County's readiness to accommodate business.
- seek private investment to further the public good.
- educate the community and enhance the visibility of economic development.
- lead external efforts to create strategic partnerships with economic development institutions.
- partner to expand efforts to build the County's tourism sector.

Business Retention & Expansion Focused on Target Industries

An economic development program relies on established practices and procedures and leverages relationships and partnerships to provide solutions quickly and effectively. The Economic Development Office (EDO) has developed a Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program to provide customized services to target industries looking to remain or grow here in Albemarle County. This effort has led to successes such as connecting rapidly-growing technology company WillowTree with the developer of the Woolen Mills factory to build the new headquarters for software development; negotiating a sub-lease and coordinating with utilities for a sub-metering of the State Farm campus to retain Bonumose's production research and development facility; and pilot testing locally-created autonomous vehicle technology on public roads, which helped attract a \$10 million investment for Perrone Robotics to continue their growth.

RIVANNA FUTURES

Rivanna Futures: Readiness in Practice

A 2012 study identified Defense & Security as a target industry for Albemarle County, in large part due to the presence of Rivanna Station, a sub-installation of Fort Belvoir that is home to three federal defense/intelligence agencies, the National Ground Intelligence Center, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. A steady and growing partnership with Rivanna Station leadership, through the Defense Affairs Committee of the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, identified that there was interest in growing Rivanna Station to allow the mission of the agencies to continue to thrive. As the anchor of the \$1.2 billion defense sector in the region, growth of the Station has ripple effects across the local economy. Albemarle County identified an opportunity to be a durable partner by negotiating a contract to purchase 462 acres of land surrounding Rivanna Station – what is now referred to as Rivanna Futures. The work of the EDO over the next several years will be to ready the site for further development by federal and state government partners, academic institutions, and the private sector to ensure America's safety and prosperity can continue to flourish.

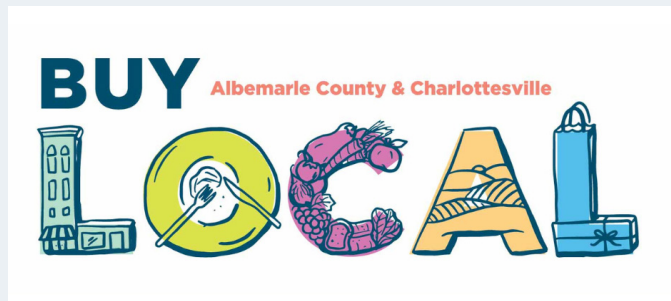
GOAL 3: DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

Organizational Collaboration

Albemarle County is open for business. An important tool that the County has added to its toolkit through the development of the economic development program is Public-Private Partnerships. This approach uses a Performance Agreement to manage how the County will provide financial support to advance a private project that will produce a public good. The EDO has worked cross-departmentally to develop a templated approach that meets legal, financial, and liability requirements. Each partnership requires performance/milestone tracking and payment protocols that allows Albemarle County to move at the speed of business, which has benefited a diverse range of projects, including the Southwood Mobile Home Park Redevelopment, the Barnes Lumber/Downtown Crozet Initiative, and Albemarle Business Campus; it has also been used to support other strategic priorities, including broadband infrastructure deployment with Central Virginia Electric Cooperative.

Partnerships: Economic Development is a Team Sport

Project ENABLE identified several areas where partnerships could advance its goals and objectives. Albemarle County is now a Partner in Trust of the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce and is participating in several programs that build and sustain a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. The County is also on the Executive Board of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, and the Central Virginia Small Business Development Center. In partnership with the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle has supported the GO Cook program, a workforce development program in the culinary industry, the Charlottesville Investment Collaborative, an incubator program for under-resourced businesses, and founded Venture Central, an entrepreneurial accelerator, Catalyst, CvilleBioHub and ENVISION. The City and the County collaborated to award matching funds for a shared-use kitchen to incubate and benefit local culinary entrepreneurs that will be opened by the Black Entrepreneurial Advancement and Community Opportunity Network (BEACON).



Buy Local

In partnership with the City of Charlottesville, a “Buy Local” campaign for Albemarle-Charlottesville launched featuring the unique goods and services provided by local business and an educational campaign for residents and businesses to understand the impact of shopping locally on the economy.



By the Numbers

- 291 jobs created with support from state programs like the Virginia Jobs Investment Program (VJIP) and Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) grants.
- \$106 million committed in capital investment with support from state programs like the Commonwealth Development Opportunity Fund.
- 11 Governor’s announcements.
- \$3 million leveraged in site readiness dollars with support from the University of Virginia Foundation through the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP).

GOAL 4: SCHOOL SPACE NEEDS

Establish and implement strategic direction including appropriate public engagement, or school space needs (e.g., preschool, school capacity, modernization of facilities).

Albemarle County's School Division has made substantial progress addressing space needs in and around the facilities of Scottsville Elementary, Red Hill Elementary, and Crozet Elementary. Facilities for the district with additions to the buildings, along with modernization of interior and exterior learning spaces, were improved. The current-year capital budget and next five years of the Capital Improvements Program include continued investments for School Capacity, as well as maintenance for current investments.

School Enhancements

Substantial facility improvements have been the focus for this strategic plan period. Since the launch of the FY20-23 Strategic Plan, funding was provided for building additions at four key elementary schools: Red Hill, Scottsville, Crozet, and Mountain View. These expansion projects not only added learning space to buildings, but also substantially renovated existing spaces to modernize the building as a whole. Exterior renovations are also included in these projects, in line with other division goals and standards. Also funded was the High School Center II project, as well as modernizing renovations throughout the division.



Red Hill Elementary School Addition and Improvements

At Red Hill, construction has been completed on a gym addition of approximately 7,000 square feet, adding brand new space to the facility for both student and community usage. Major interior renovations were also completed, to modernize classroom space. 5,000 square feet of the existing building was majorly renovated, and minor renovations occurred in another 8,000 square feet. Site work improvements were completed on the campus as well.

Scottsville Elementary Addition and Improvements

Similarly, Scottsville Elementary underwent a significant transformation, featuring a 16,500 square foot addition. The new space added a new gymnasium, four classrooms, and additional support spaces to the school. Renovations were also done in the existing building, modernizing approximately 26,000 square feet of the school. The existing gym was updated, converting into instructional and office spaces. The renovation also included ADA upgrades to restrooms and existing classrooms. Outside, the campus received a new bus loop, as well as new landscaping around the addition which included sidewalks and a new entrance canopy.

Crozet Elementary Addition and Improvements Design and Construction

The Crozet Elementary addition project added an estimated 28,000 square feet to the building, with 17 classrooms, three smaller resource classrooms, two offices, a faculty workroom and various support spaces, as well as an expanded cafeteria and media center. Plans for future improvements throughout the existing building, modernizing exiting classrooms, along with landscaping renovations and added classroom space outdoors were made.

Funding Provided

Since the launch of the FY20-23 Strategic Plan, funding was provided for all of the following:

- Red Hill Elementary Addition and Improvement.
- Mountain View Elementary Addition and Improvements Design, Construction.
- Scottsville Elementary Addition and Improvement.
- Crozet Elementary Addition and Improvements Design, Construction.
- High School Center II Design, Construction.
- School Renovations across the district.

GOAL 4: SCHOOL SPACE NEEDS (CONTINUED)

Approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The planned CIP includes continued school renovations in each year. The CIP also includes design and construction of two new feeder pattern elementary schools – one to be located in the Mountain View Elementary School District, and the other is planned to be located in the Northern Feeder Pattern.



GOAL 5: INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Determine desired levels of service for water resource protection programs based on drainage infrastructure video assessment and pilot watershed restoration program development; and recommend continuing resource requirements to fully implement those programs at varying service levels.

The intent of this goal is to invest in the long-term operation and maintenance of drainage infrastructure that, while lying on private property, serves a public purpose. The exploratory work completed between FY20 and FY23 provided insight on the state of drainage infrastructure in the urban areas and of the necessary scale of a program to properly maintain the infrastructure. The first bundle of repair projects completed in FY24 enabled staff to exercise and test all aspects of a drainage infrastructure management program and then transition to continual implementation and improvement of the program. This FY20-23 Strategic Plan objective and resulting work have served as an instructive primer to objective 3.3 of the FY24-28 Strategic Plan: “Determine the level and extent of services necessary to create a public works department for enhanced maintenance of public rights of way and other infrastructure of public use.”



App Development

Staff-developed GIS web applications were pivotal in the collection and management of data necessary to advancing this initiative. One app served as a comprehensive platform for tracking public inquiries related to drainage, capturing issue detail, and recording the outcomes of these inquiries. Another application assisted staff with the documentation of the condition of urban channels. In addition to these applications, various mapping and data tools were used to manage underground infrastructure data, encompassing critical attributes such as location, size, condition, and assessments conducted by contractors. The data collected and analyzed from these apps drove the decision-making process, aiding in the identification and prioritization of the most crucial infrastructure maintenance and repair projects.

Assessments of Underground Infrastructure

The County engaged specialized contractors to conduct comprehensive cleaning and video assessments of approximately 11 miles of underground infrastructure of pipes and associated features, representing roughly 30% of the applicable urban drainage infrastructure. These assessments yielded insights into the condition of these components. Findings of the assessments were reviewed to prioritize identified deficiencies, recommend corrective measures, and estimate probable costs.

Defining Program Extent of Service

Staff worked to establish a clear definition for the Program Extent of Service (EOS), which will be applied to all types of conveyance infrastructure, including underground systems and channels. The EOS criteria include conveyance infrastructure within the Development Areas, areas beyond the Virginia Department of Transportation's right of way (ROW), and systems responsible for conveying runoff from more than two properties. This definition now provides a comprehensive framework for drainage infrastructure management efforts.

Implementing Repairs

Staff implemented the first bundle of repair projects with a budget of roughly \$500,000. Staff also worked with a contractor to finalize the project list, identify a best repair method for each project (for instance, cast-in-place pipe or dig and replace), seek permissions to work within private properties, establish repair logistics, and perform the repair work. Several projects

GOAL 5: INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (CONTINUED)

involved lining or replacing old, corrugated metal culverts in the vicinity of the County-maintained ponds in the Four Seasons neighborhood.

By the Numbers

- \$96,261 grant awarded from FEMA through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to assess flood risks within the Branchlands watershed and to identify capital projects and other initiatives to reduce those risks.
- 59,500 linear feet of underground infrastructure (about 20% of all urban infrastructure that meets the program definition).
- Approximately 10% of underground infrastructure was found to have issues requiring maintenance or repairs.
- Approximately 11% of drainage channels were in degraded condition (i.e., experiencing erosion).
- 145 inquiries related to drainage from 2019 to 2022.

GOAL 6: REVITALIZE AGING URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Implement improvement actions developed from neighborhood inventory data to address neighborhood level needs. Apply the county's Transportation Project Prioritization Process to plan, identify funding, and implement bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure improvements within and serving our Aging Urban Neighborhoods. Continue the partnership with Habitat for Humanity using the Team Approach with a focus on quality community and non-displacement and until the completion of the build out for Phase 1 of Southwood.

Through partnerships, securing external funding, and carrying out improvements, Albemarle County made significant progress towards revitalizing aging neighborhoods with regards to housing, infrastructure, and planning. The infrastructure improvements and ongoing redevelopment occurring in the County's aging urban neighborhoods have been effective in addressing many of the deficiencies previously found there. Continued work to provide both necessities and amenities will be needed to continue to create thriving neighborhoods that meet the needs of the community that live in these urban neighborhoods.



Affordable Housing Initiatives

Albemarle County partnered with Habitat for Humanity on the redevelopment of the Southwood Mobile Home Park into an inclusive, mixed-income community. More than 400 units have been built or approved in Southwood Phases 1 and 2, including over 120 low-income tax credit units, 86 Habitat-built units, and other affordable models. The County also co-funded a mobile home weatherization program to help homes across Albemarle become more energy-efficient and comfortable, and ultimately reduce living expenses.

Infrastructure Improvements

The County accomplished several significant transportation improvements, including new sidewalks along Avon Street and Ivy Road, with progress made on the Commonwealth Drive/Dominion Drive sidewalks project. Pedestrian crossings were introduced at Greenbrier Drive and at Mountain View Elementary School. Additionally, bicycle and pedestrian enhancements for Berkmar Drive were designed. Smart Scale grants were successfully secured for major projects such as Hydraulic Road/Route 29 operations and safety upgrades, as well as transforming the 5th Street/Old Lynchburg Road intersection into a roundabout. During this strategic plan period, the County concluded the Rio Road Corridor Study and submitted Smart Scale grant applications for the addition of a roundabout at Hydraulic Road & District Avenue and improvements at the intersection of Belvedere Boulevard and Rio Road with a [Continuous Green-T](#).

Planning and Partnerships

The County engaged in extensive collaborative efforts with partners to shape these initiatives. A regional transit plan was jointly developed with Charlottesville, fostering improved transit connectivity. Albemarle County partnered closely with Habitat for Humanity to advance the Southwood redevelopment project. Additionally, plans were laid for the implementation of microtransit to serve the 29 North and Pantops areas. Through the Broadway Blueprint planning effort, the County aimed at enhancing connectivity between the corridor and neighboring communities, along with funding a small area plan for the same region. To inform these planning endeavors, comprehensive neighborhood infrastructure surveys were conducted.

GOAL 7: EXPAND AND UPGRADE THE GENERAL DISTRICT COURT AND CIRCUIT COURT

With established location decision and completed design, start the construction phase by December 7, 2020 to expand the General District Court.

After decades of discussion and planning, the renovation and expansion of the [Courts Complex Project](#) officially broke ground in June 2023 for the first of two phases of construction: a new General District Court that will house courtrooms and administrative operations for Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. This phase also includes the renovation of the historic Levy Opera House to serve as the offices of the Albemarle County Commonwealth's Attorney. Following the completion of phase one, the historic Albemarle County Courts complex will be completely renovated to serve the long-term needs of our Circuit Court.



Stakeholder Relationship Building

The successful progress of the General District Courthouse project has been a testament to the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders. Led by staff from Albemarle County's Facilities and Environmental Services Department, this endeavor engaged personnel from eight different County departments, six departments from the City of Charlottesville, and a diverse group of design professionals, consultants, an archeological team, and management consultants. This collaborative approach has been instrumental in overcoming complex challenges and ensuring the project's alignment with the community's needs and goals. The commitment to building strong relationships among stakeholders has been paramount in moving this project forward.

Planning and Implementation of Construction

The development of the General District Courthouse project progressed through the conceptual, schematic, and design development phases during the past four years. The construction document phase for the General District Court began in June 2023. This multi-year effort encountered several challenges, including unanticipated state legislative requirements for the relocation of the General District Court, adjustments necessitated by the pandemic, and budget considerations influenced by escalation and inflation. Despite these obstacles, the project persevered, demonstrating the County's commitment to delivering a vital facility for our community.

Key Takeaways and By the Numbers

- An archeological study was completed in the vicinity of Court Square uncovering thousands of specimens. Some of the artifacts included Moravian pressed pipe bowls, antique glass bottles, and more.
- At completion, the Courts Complex Project will create a court experience that is safe, secure, and accessible for all users. These new and renovated buildings will have modern IT infrastructure that will allow staff to leverage the best technology to support Courts operations. The new General District Court will also have secure underground parking with a sallyport for prisoner transport.
- The new General District Court building will be 54,348 square feet.

GOAL 8: REDEVELOP RIO/ROUTE 29 INTERSECTION AREA

Present draft ordinance to implement Rio29 vision and encourage by-right implementation of desired urban land use form by December 2019. Leverage existing and planned public investment to enhance place making in Rio/Route 29 by January 2021. Economic Development Office will develop processes, policies, and/or resources to attract private capital to fulfill the small area plan vision by June 2022.

The work completed over the last four years to redevelop the Rio29 area has laid the groundwork for future changes that will benefit the entire region. Although the impacts of this work may not be apparent on the ground, over the next few years, work on several development projects will begin to reshape the area into the vision described in the [Rio 29 Small Area Plan](#) which set the vision for the redevelopment of the Rio29 area. The creation of the [Rio29 form-based code \(FBC\)](#) overlay regulations not only provides new opportunities for development that will meet the needs of the area residents and visitors, but also provides a blueprint for similar development in the future.

Planning and Code Development

During this strategic plan period, Albemarle County diligently worked to transform the Rio29 area in alignment with a comprehensive vision.

In 2020, the County endorsed a draft framework for a form-based code, signaling a commitment to create a more organized and coherent zoning ordinance for the area. This effort was further solidified in 2021 when the form-based code ordinance and an updated zoning ordinance were approved. These milestones laid the foundation for a more structured and efficient development process.

Redevelopment and Investment

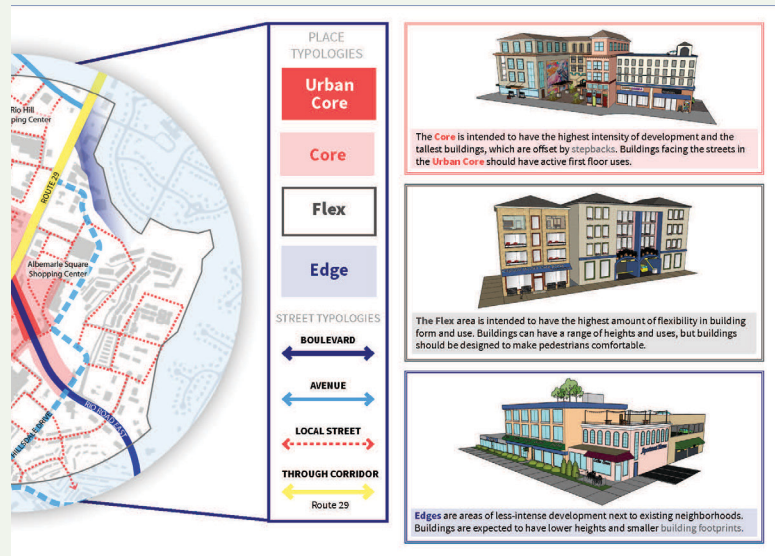
In 2022, Albemarle County continued its commitment to the Rio29 area by engaging in discussions with property owners and developers to explore redevelopment options. Resources were allocated to further refine the form-based code and explore the potential realignment of Hillsdale Drive. The County made its own significant investment in the area with \$3.1 million to establish a Public Safety Operations Center at the former JC Penney site, which provides logistical space for the Police and Fire Rescue Departments.

Future Focus

To achieve successful redevelopment in the area, development proposals began the submission and approval process. A site development plan and special use permit were submitted for a new Home Depot, which is planned at the Fashion Square Mall, one of the primary redevelopment sites in the Rio29 Area. The developers and property owners collaborated closely with staff to ensure that the development of this site and its surrounding properties, all of which shared the same ownership, align with the County's vision for the area.

By the Numbers

- \$3.1 million investment in Public Safety Operations Center at the former JC Penney site.



GOAL 9: EXPAND BROADBAND

Establish and implement strategic direction to expand broadband affordable access to under-served, rural communities.

Since 2017, Albemarle County supported the expansion of broadband internet to rural communities through partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies and innovative and forward-thinking program initiatives. Each year of the strategic plan, the Albemarle Broadband Authority (ABBA) received funding from the state to increase state-of-the-art fiber infrastructure technology available to many rural communities in the county. Recognizing the increased reliance on the internet during the COVID-19 pandemic, the fiber construction effort was accelerated in 2020. At the end of this strategic plan, nearly 75% of rural community members have access to fiber service and the County has a plan in place to fund fiber construction for 100% of rural communities in Albemarle County by the end of 2025.

Broadband Expansion and Connectivity Initiatives

Over the past several years, Albemarle County made significant progress in expanding broadband access and affordability. The County successfully met its goal of creating a plan to achieve universal fiber broadband availability. This included ongoing work on major fiber broadband deployment projects, both grant-funded and private sector initiatives, which resulted in over 3,000 new locations with fiber broadband options, a crucial step in bridging the digital divide.

Affordability and Accessibility

Albemarle County initiated multiple broadband affordability initiatives, positively impacting more than 1,000 households. These initiatives included securing competitive federal grants aimed at increasing regional enrollments in programs like the [Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#). The County also established a community-wide coalition, collaborating on a regional digital equity plan to address digital disparities, which is set to be included in the state's mandatory digital opportunity plan.

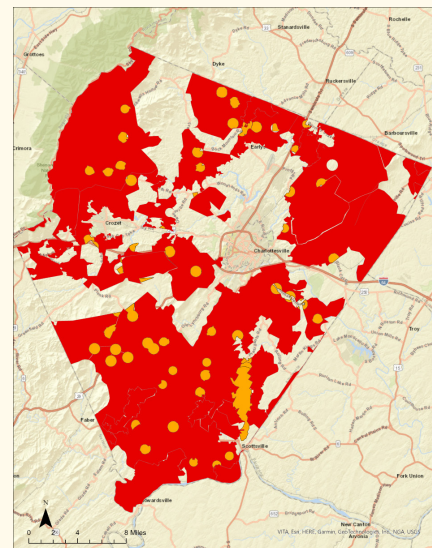
Strategic Planning and Partnerships

The [Albemarle Broadband Authority \(ABBA\)](#) adopted a strategic plan in 2020 and actively worked on goal-setting and funding plans; the plan set expectations that universal broadband access could be achieved by 2028. Local, state, and federal investments in public funding opportunities, along with private investments from the seven fiber broadband providers in our area, drastically sped up the timeline to universal access, now projected to be achieved in 2025. Partnerships with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's Broadband Office, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, Firefly Fiber Broadband, Brightspeed, Comcast, FiberLync, Nelson Cable, Ting, and Lumos have been vital to reaching this milestone.

Broadband Affordability and Public Awareness

The County established the Broadband Accessibility and Affordability Office (BAAO) to take steps toward achieving affordable broadband for all residents. This included supporting public awareness campaigns for programs like the Emergency Broadband Benefit and the Affordable Connectivity Program, as well as launching a first of its kind municipal broadband affordability supplement, expanding the Federal ACP benefit by providing up to an [additional \\$20 per month to ACP beneficiaries in the county](#).

Partnerships undergird this work, as well; the coalition convened by BAAO is made up of representatives from the City of Charlottesville, Charlottesville City Public Schools and Albemarle County Public Schools, the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, the Jefferson Area Board For Aging, the Center for Civic Innovation, Network2Work and TJACE at Piedmont Virginia Community College, and the Equity Center at the University of Virginia. These organizations are essential for supporting, developing, and providing outreach to programs that address barriers to digital access.



By the Numbers

- 75% of rural community members have access to fiber service
- \$12 million grant funding secured for fiber infrastructure
- Over 7,000 new locations have fiber broadband options

QUALITY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

At the foundation of the strategic plan is “Quality Government Operations.” Investing in organizational well-being allows us to advance the plan’s priorities. This includes investments in business processes, financial management, workforce stabilization, and customer service enhancements.

Albemarle County is committed to sustaining a resilient and dedicated workforce, while delivering exceptional services to the community we serve. From enhancing customer service experiences and optimizing business processes to fortifying our financial management, we have undertaken transformative initiatives to be a responsive, efficient, and forward-thinking local government.

Customer Service Enhancements

During this strategic period, the County took significant steps to improve customer service. These initiatives include the transition to a new virtual public engagement platform to expand access to the public process, the development of a Facilities Master Plan aimed at optimizing spaces for teleworking opportunities, the launch of a Community Development Applications Submission System to streamline community development application processes, and the implementation of a Microsoft online appointment system to make connecting with County staff easier for customers. These measures collectively contributed to a more streamlined and efficient customer service experience for our community members.

Business Processes

Albemarle County successfully executed a range of initiatives designed to modernize and optimize our systems. The deployment of updated time and attendance systems for both Local Government and the Schools Division, along with a comprehensive restructuring of the Departments of Finance and Human Resources, led to the establishment of a specialized Local Government-focused HR Department in 2021. The newly established Local Government HR Department introduced Business Process Management training, enhancements to payroll systems, a transition to a biweekly pay system, and the successful implementation of a new HR Information System. These collective actions have significantly strengthened the efficiency and effectiveness of our day-to-day operations.



Financial Management

The County achieved notable milestones in financial management during the last four years, including the maintenance of AAA credit ratings from major agencies, the establishment of a dedicated grants unit to ensure regulatory compliance, and leadership in conducting analysis to establish a regional cigarette tax board. These initiatives have significantly contributed to the County’s strong financial position and its commitment to effective fiscal stewardship.

Workforce Stabilization

Government services are primarily provided by people. To optimize workforce stabilization while meeting the needs of our community, the County achieved several significant milestones to safeguard the stability and effectiveness of our workforce. The completion of a comprehensive Compensation & Classification Study, with associated pay adjustments and market pay increases in both 2021 and 2022, ensured staff are paid at competitive and fair market rates. The addition of 62 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in our police, fire rescue, and social services departments led to a stronger workforce ready to support to the community’s well-being. To address the nationwide decrease in applications to public safety fields, bonus programs and a minimum salary of \$50,000 for public safety positions were implemented, ultimately helping to keep our police and fire rescue departments at or near full staffing levels.