Keeping you informed is critical to a successful project. So in addition to public panel meetings, live streaming, podcasts and an interactive website, we’re providing this e-mail newsletter to expand our communications with the users of the Route 29 corridor. Here you’ll find the latest news, project updates and helpful facts.

**Rio Road utility work nears completion; bridge piling installation begins**

Construction crews have largely completed the relocation of utilities that were in conflict with the roadway construction. Overhead power lines and underground TV, fiber and telecommunications lines have been relocated. Work continues on an underground natural gas distribution line and a water main. Once these are in their new locations the utility work will be complete.

Motorists traveling near the Rio Road-Route 29 intersection will encounter multiple lane closures between 8:30 p.m. and 7 a.m. Monday through Friday through Nov. 24. After the Thanksgiving holiday nighttime lane closures will resume the 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. schedule. Rio Road traffic is also prohibited from crossing Route 29 during those hours because the crossover is closed. The closure is necessary while a large auger, several cranes and pile-driving equipment set the pilings that will support the bridge abutments and retaining walls for the grade-separated intersection.
Detours are in place and signs direct traffic through the work zone.

A utility relocation crew places steel plates to cover the excavation for a water line being installed across Rio Road East. Each night the trench is excavated, then backfilled and covered with asphalt or steel plates so the lanes can be reopened to traffic the next morning.

**Tourist-oriented directional signs installed at Rio**

Blue and white roadside signs directing drivers to businesses were installed around the Route 29/Rio Road intersection to help businesses with visibility during construction of the grade separation.

VDOT relaxed some criteria and waived all fees to encourage businesses to participate in the program known as Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS). The program targets primarily gas, food and lodging establishments. Among the 38 businesses that qualified, 35 are participating.

During the last week of October, the first phase signs were installed. In all, 24 sign structures – each with up to 5 signs – were placed to guide motorists around the four corners of the intersection. They will be modified during the 103-day intersection closure next summer to direct drivers to signed detours. They will again be
modified at the conclusion of the closure period in September 2016 to reflect new traffic patterns.

Upon completion of the construction, businesses that elect to continue to participate must meet the normal eligibility criteria and pay the associated fees.

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**Placemaking: What's in a name**

Southeastern Institute of Research Inc. (SIR) presented final recommendations on Placemaking at the Route 29/Rio Road intersection to the Project Delivery Advisory Panel. Based on opinions gathered from nearby businesses and residents in focus group meetings and in surveys, SIR recommends:

- Name the intersection and immediate area simply “Rio”

- Name the four intersection parts “corners” and include their respective geographic orientation such as Rio Northeast Corner, Rio Southeast Corner, Rio Southwest Corner, Rio Northwest Corner

- Include “descriptor terms” on roadway signs to help direct people such as Rio Northeast to Rio Road East and Downtown Charlottesville

The results have been shared with Albemarle County. The county developed an online Google survey about Rio Placemaking which was sent via e-mail to interested citizens on contact lists and posted on the county’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

The county will present its naming preferences to the advisory panel November 12. The panel will deliberate on names in December and make a recommendation to VDOT early next year.
**Project Updates**

**Berkmar Drive Extension**

- Progressing within the design-build project delivery process. Roadway construction begins in the late fall of 2015.

- A phase three archeological investigation is underway along the north bank of the South Fork Rivanna River in the area where the piers for the Berkmar Drive Extended bridge will be constructed. That area has been identified as a possible site of prehistoric artifacts and will be excavated and any objects will be catalogued and preserved.

An archeological survey is under way on the north bank of the South Fork Rivanna River in the area where the piers for the Berkmar Drive Extension bridge will be built. Any prehistoric artifacts found will be documented and preserved.

- 100 percent roadway plans, plus drainage and stormwater management reports, have been received. The 100 percent plans can be reviewed on the [project web page](#). Look under “Design Review Submissions.”

- Tree clearing and grading has begun, resulting in intermittent shoulder closures at Berkmar and Hilton Heights.
Route 29 Widening

- Progressing within the design-build project delivery process. Roadway construction has begun.

- Barriers have been set along both sides of the median from Polo Grounds Road north to North Hollymead Drive so crews can safely work in the median area. Their first task is to regrade the median prior to extending the pavement into the median on the southbound side.

- Nighttime travel impacts: Left lane closed in both northbound and southbound directions.

- 100 percent roadway design plans posted on the project website.

Lane-Corman is filling and grading the median of Route 29 north of Polo Grounds Road. Once the fill is placed and compacted the southbound lanes will be widened in preparation for switching traffic from the northbound lanes.

Rio Road/Route 29 Intersection

- Progressing within the design-build project delivery process.

- Major construction activities include drilling and abutment pile installation; wall pile installation, retaining wall construction at SunTrust, utility
- Nighttime travel impacts: Rio crossover closed to through movements and left turns; triple lane closures northbound and southbound on Rt. 29; Rio East westbound closed with access to businesses open.

- See the first news article in this newsletter for more details.

**Route 29/250 Bypass Interchange**

- The sidewalk and curbing between Angus Road and Morton Drive is complete and the median is being filled and graded to the final profile. Subgrade work on the new southbound lane of Emmet Street is under way.

- Construction of the retaining wall along the entrance ramp to the 250 Bypass is nearing completion. Once that is complete, construction of the new lane on the entrance ramp will begin.

- Travel impacts: Rt. 29 inside turn lane closures for curb and sidewalk construction, Rt. 29 southbound lane shoulder closed for sidewalk construction; nighttime shoulder closure and detour.

**Adaptive Signals**

- Reconstruction of the traffic signal at the intersection of Berkmar Drive and Woodbrook Drive is complete and the new signal is operating. This project was finished four weeks ahead of schedule.

**Hillsdale Extended**

- The City of Charlottesville and VDOT are teaming up to keep this project on schedule. The city will continue to manage engineering and construction, but VDOT is picking up the responsibility for acquiring all of the right-of-way. Information about the project can be found on the
• While the planned December construction advertisement date won’t be met, the project will be advertised for construction before the end of March 2016, and will remain on track to be completed by Oct. 30, 2017.

• A study using standards, known as warrants, concluded that current and projected traffic volumes do not justify a traffic signal at the intersection of Greenbrier Drive. An additional review of the study confirmed that conclusion. VDOT has agreed to install infrastructure for a possible future signal when the warrants are met.

• Acquisition of the right of way is under way.

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**Things You Should Know**

**Quadrant maps help customers find Rio-area businesses**

At the request of several businesses located in the vicinity of the Route 29/Rio Road intersection, VDOT developed maps depicting the new traffic patterns that were implemented Sept. 9. Four maps, one for each quadrant around the intersection, show the new traffic patterns and the allowable traffic movements. The maps were distributed to the businesses so they could show their customers the best route to their destination.

Businesses that need additional maps should call 434-529-6314 to request more copies. The maps are also available on the [project web page](http://hillsdaledrive.org) in PDF format. Look for “Information and Resources.”

**Time-lapse camera recording Rio project progress**

A camera located just south of the Rio Road intersection is recording the progress of construction. The time-lapse
camera takes a photo every 12 minutes. The images may be seen via a link on the Rio GSI project web page. The photo software allows the viewer to select any image since the camera was installed Oct. 7, select a particular time or date range, or view a slideshow of all images to date.

A time-lapse camera began recording the Rio Road GSI project on Oct. 7. Click the screen shot to view the images captured by the camera.

**County’s proposed temporary signing ordinance**

Albemarle County Board of Supervisors is considering proposed changes to the county’s temporary signing ordinance. The changes include allowing one additional sign per property (not per business) for the duration of construction. The board is scheduled to vote Nov. 11.

**Read Project Documents**

Important new project documents are posted on the project website:

- **Route 29 Widening**: Approved roadway design plans are posted on the project website.
- **Berkmar Drive Extended**: 100 percent roadway and cross-section plans are posted on the project website.

**On time. On budget.**
All the Route 29 Solutions projects remain on schedule and on budget. Below are some important dates:

- **Mid-May:** Utility relocations began at Route 29 and Rio Road. This phase of the project is now wrapping up with the final underground water and gas distribution lines being completed.

- **July 2015:** Utility relocation began on Route 29 widening between Polo Grounds Road and Towncenter Drive.

- **Sept. 9, 2015:** Crossovers and signals at Albemarle Square Court and Fashion Square Drive (north) were removed and temporary crossovers and signals at Berkmar Drive and the vicinity of Myers Drive were placed in service.

- **September 2015:** Construction began on Rio Road grade-separated intersection and Route 29 widening projects.

- **October 2015:** Land clearing and utility relocations began on Berkmar Drive Extended project. Archeology investigation also under way on north bank of the South Fork Rivanna River.

- **Late fall 2015:** Construction begins on Berkmar Drive Extended project.

- **May 21, 2016:** Route 29 / Route 250 Interchange construction complete.

- **May 23, 2016:** Rio Road intersection restrictions begin.

- **September 2, 2016:** Rio Road intersection reopens to all traffic movements.

- **December 2, 2016:** Rio Road project construction complete.

- **October 30, 2017:** All project construction complete.
Get Connected

Hotlines: We’re here for you

- Lane-Corman Joint Venture, the contractor for the three Route 29 Solutions design-build projects, has a toll-free telephone number, 844-220-5540. Calls with questions or comments about the Route 29 widening, Rio Road grade-separated intersection and Berkmar Drive extension projects will be returned within one business day.

- Those with questions about other Route 29 Solutions projects should call 434-529-6314 or email Route29Solutions@VDOT.Virginia.gov.

- All other VDOT-related questions or comments should be directed to 800-367-7623 (800-FOR-ROAD). VDOT’s Customer Service Center is staffed 24/7/365 and the contact will be directed to the appropriate field staff.

Don’t get delayed

Traffic alerts for the Route 29 Solutions projects are now available on the project website under News & Traffic Alerts. Sign up for alerts to be delivered to your e-mail on the News & Updates page.