

Fiscal Year 2011

# ANNUAL REPORT

to the citizens of

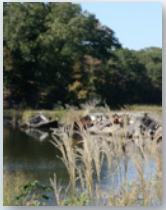
# CHARLES COUNTY



# WHAT'S INSIDE

- Get Connected .....3
- Environmental Awareness.....4-5
- Tourism.....6
- Planning & Smart Growth .....7
- Educational Achievements.....8
- Public Health .....9
- Safe Communities ..... 10
- Quality of Life.....12
- Infrastructure.....14
- Government Efficiency & Accountability .....16
- Economic Development ..... 18
- Financial Stewardship ..... 18
- Operating & Capital Budgets.....19

**Front Cover:**



Mallows Bay Park, located in Nanjemoy, provides nature-based, eco-tourism venues, and provides paddling enthusiasts direct access to the historic "Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay," an aquatic ship graveyard.



## Mission Statement

The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service possible in a timely, efficient, and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, our government must be operated in an open and accessible atmosphere, be based on comprehensive long- and short-term planning, and have an appropriate managerial organization tempered by fiscal responsibility.

## Vision Statement

Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where the preservation of our heritage and environment is paramount; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the best in the nation.

# CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Candice Quinn Kelly  
President

Charles County is a Code Home Rule County governed by a five-member Board of County Commissioners. The five Commissioners are elected at-large to four-year terms of office. The President is the presiding officer of the Board at meetings and hearings. The President may reside anywhere in the county. The other four Commissioners must each reside in a Commissioner District.

## Board Responsibilities

The Charles County Commissioners are responsible for:

- Generating revenues to fund the county's capital and operating budgets, as well as other county departments and agencies
- Providing for the public health, safety, and welfare of Charles County residents and visitors
- Adopting and updating the Charles County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Plan, and Zoning Ordinance
- Overseeing the development process
- Establishing, promulgating, and enforcing County rules, regulations, ordinances, policies, and procedures
- Appointing boards, commissions, and task forces
- Fulfilling the mission of Charles County Government



Reuben B. Collins, II  
Vice President



Ken Robinson  
District 1

## Regular Board Meetings

Meetings of the Charles County Board of Commissioners are scheduled each week and held in the Charles County Government Building. Meetings are aired on the Charles County Government website, [www.CharlesCounty.org](http://www.CharlesCounty.org), as well as on CCG-TV, Charles County's local government cable television station broadcast on Comcast channel 95 and Verizon channel 10.



Debra M. Davis, Esq.  
District 2

## Advisory Committees, Boards & Commissions

The Charles County Commissioners appoint more than 65 commissions, boards, committees, and task forces, which advise them on topics ranging from land use and development to housing. Through this system, civic-minded citizens can get involved in county government. The county, in turn, benefits from the knowledge, experience, and advice of its own citizens. Vacancy announcements appear in the local media, on [www.CharlesCounty.org](http://www.CharlesCounty.org), and on CCG-TV.



Bobby Rucci  
District 4

# GET CONNECTED!

*...to Your Local Government*

When governments provide information in a manner that is immediately more useful to the people concerned, you get the information you want the way you want it.

Charles County fully supports openness in government. We strive to enable a government that is transparent, participatory, collaborative, and effective. Using technologies such as the Internet, YouTube, Facebook, text messaging, and e-mail distribution, Charles Countians have many ways to keep up-to-date with what's going on in Charles County Government.

If you live or work in Charles County, then you are part of the vibrant and diverse population that Charles County Government serves. Citizens and employees, kids and teens, seniors and families—you are our customers.

Visit [www.CharlesCounty.org](http://www.CharlesCounty.org) and "**Get Connected**" today!



# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

## Investing in Renewable Energy Sources

Charles County Government received two grants to purchase a wind turbine, which is planned to provide sustainable electrical power to the Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg. The Maryland Clean Energy Center awarded \$50,000, and the Maryland Energy Administration awarded \$25,250 for the turbine. This will be the county's first public wind turbine project and an important step in the county's environmental sustainability and renewable energy initiatives.

## Lowering Greenhouse Gas Emissions

ChargePointAmerica, a program made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the U.S. Department of Energy, awarded Charles County Government a grant to fund three electric vehicle charging stations in an effort to facilitate the establishment of an electric vehicle infrastructure network. Charging stations are planned for installation at the following locations: the Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg, the P.D. Brown Memorial Branch Library in Waldorf, and the Potomac Branch Library in Bryans Road.

## Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

Charles County Government hosted its second Green Expo at North Point High School in Waldorf. More than 300 residents attended the event. There were more than 60 exhibitor displays featuring "green" vehicles, state-of-the-art, alternative energy technologies, and ways citizens can minimize their carbon footprint.

## Leveraging Funds for Energy Efficiency

Charles County continued its work on five major areas funded by the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant. These areas included: upgrading energy efficiency in county building; education and outreach; a new energy conservation element for the Charles County Comprehensive Plan; a county-wide geothermal heat system delivery study; and updating codes and ordinances to maximize energy efficiency.

## Implementing Environmental Design Practices

The County Commissioners approved significant revisions to the Charles County Stormwater Management Ordinance. These revisions require the implementation of Environmental Site Design (ESD) practices for stormwater management consistent with state of Maryland standards, and establish a review process to implement the ESD criteria. The county also created a separate Storm Drainage Ordinance, which produced additional environmental practices to address storm drainage issues.

## Protecting Sensitive Waterways

The county installed pollution controls on its green vehicle wash pad. The newly constructed wash pad is environmentally compliant, and meets Clean Water Act requirements and state and local regulations. The facility reduces operating and maintenance costs by recycling water through state-of-the-art technology that removes oils, heavy metals, and suspended solids. In addition to all of the environmental attributes, it also reduces cleaning time and allows for increases in production. The facility allows up to three vehicles to be washed at a time, while using less water than a garden hose! The green wash facility is an example of how technology is being used to address environmental issues and reduce operating costs, while benefiting taxpayers and the environment.

## Improving Water Quality through Landscaping

The County Commissioners were awarded a Bay-Wise Certification for their successful participation in the Maryland Bay-Wise Landscape Program. An initiative promoted through the Charles County Master Gardeners and the Maryland Extension Office, the program focuses on improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay region through promoting proper landscaping techniques.

## Preserving the County's Critical Areas

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law is designed to foster more sensitive land use and development activity along the shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay, Atlantic Coastal Bays, their tributaries, and tidal wetlands, and to ensure the implementation of long-term conservation measures to protect important habitats. The update incorporates new state legislation, and several amendments that will consolidate the program. Some of the major program amendments include: increasing the buffer within the Resource Conservation Overlay Zone; requiring non-structural methods for shoreline erosion control; establishing civil penalties for violations; having the Planning Commission review for the use of individual piers or community piers for new major subdivisions; allowing minor fill for lawn repair; and acknowledging the bald eagle's habitat as a habitat of local significance. The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission will review the suggested amendments.

## Highlighting Best Practices in Sustainability

Charles County Government hosted its first Green Symposium at the College of Southern Maryland in La Plata. There were 125 participants and sponsors in attendance. Former Governor Parris N. Glendonning provided a keynote address highlighting smart growth. News anchor and Emmy Award-winning NBC4 journalist, Wendy Reiger, moderated a lunch time roundtable, which addressed the barriers and opportunities of adopting and profiting in sustainability. Other moderated session topics included smart growth, sustainability, energy efficiency, conservation, and clean energy.



# TOURISM

## Making Charles County a “Tourist Destination”

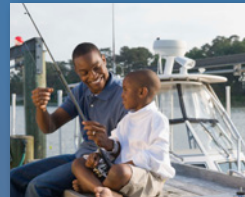
The County Commissioners approved a resolution recognizing the importance of establishing a museum for the enjoyment of our citizens and visitors alike. The Charles County Museum will house and care for a collection of artifacts and other objects of scientific, artistic, or historical importance, and make them available for public viewing through permanent or temporary exhibits. The Charles County Museum will be located at the Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg. The Office of Tourism is responsible for the daily management of the Charles County Museum.

## Welcoming Visitors to Charles County

The Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg is open daily from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and offers valuable travel assistance to Charles County citizens and visitors as they enter Charles County and the state of Maryland. The Crain Memorial Welcome Center travel counselors provided information and services for a positive trip experience to approximately 30,000 citizens and visitors.

Hiking, biking, kayaking, golfing, fishing, birding, hunting, dining, farmers markets, plays and concerts, shopping...

Charles County still retains a natural beauty in one of the fastest growing areas in Maryland. With 300 miles of spectacular shoreline, the county’s forested areas serve as havens for birds and bird watchers alike. Bald eagles, barred owls, and vibrantly colored songbirds co-exist with wood ducks and other water-fowl, including Great Blue Herons.



# PLANNING & SMART GROWTH



## Creating an Urban Town Center

The Waldorf Urban Town Center study was adopted in 2010 to create a cohesive, attractive, and walkable urban environment with a unique sense of place that serves as a hub for regional transit and light rail in downtown Waldorf. The Waldorf Urban Design Study project includes the development of attractive and functional streets, public parks, open spaces, and pedestrian bicycle facilities. A request for proposal to determine future infrastructure improvements needed in Waldorf was issued.

## Planning with the Public in Mind

The 2012 Comprehensive Land Use Plan includes an enhanced public outreach and participation process with a series of regional and countywide meetings, an online community survey, stakeholder interviews, an extensive marketing campaign, and a project website. Sixty stakeholders were interviewed, in excess of 680 online surveys were completed, and more than 350 people attended public meetings in fiscal 2011.

## Investing in Public Amenities

Charles County was awarded a \$70,000 grant from the Maryland Heritage Area Authority to support planning and land acquisition in the Port Tobacco Historic District. The undeveloped parcels targeted for acquisition include several key properties within the historic district such as the southeast corner of the historic Courthouse Green, land adjacent to the Courthouse Green, and the original early 19th century jailhouse lot. Uses for the properties will be determined after a feasibility study. As one of Charles County's earliest port towns and the site of an earlier Native American village, Port Tobacco is rich in historic and archaeological resources. The village of Port Tobacco was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

## Analyzing Housing Supply & Demand

A housing study report to the County Commissioners examined the supply and demand for various levels of household income in Charles County matched with housing prices. The purpose of the study was to determine if there is adequate housing supply to meet demand. The findings of the study indicate that there is adequate supply to meet demand, with the exception of households making less than \$45,000 annually.



# EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

## Providing a Quality Public Education

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is nationally recognized for educational excellence in areas like closing the academic achievement gap in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. Superintendent James Richmond was the 2011 winner of the prestigious Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award from the Astronauts Memorial Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Space Foundation.

CCPS has a strong commitment to academic achievement, career readiness, and personal responsibility, and offers a multitude of courses and programs, including Advanced Placement, honors, the arts, business, and a wide range of extracurricular activities. CCPS is composed of 35 caring community schools, with 21 elementary, eight middle, and six high schools that serve children from age three through grade 12. Additionally, CCPS also maintains four specialized learning centers that round out the offerings for a school system that continues to see student growth each year. Charles County's schools also serve as centers for a wide variety of community activities.

As one of the county's largest employers, CCPS has 3,469 dedicated professionals working together for the education of more than 26,800 students.

Charles County's newest high school, St. Charles High School, is scheduled to open in August 2014. St. Charles will be the county's seventh high school, and will be one of the anchors of a new, green community in St. Charles. The school will contain several specialized features available for use by all CCPS students in grades pre-Kindergarten through 12. The specialized features include a digital classroom, science on a sphere technology, and telepresence distance-learning technology. The school will house more than 70 classrooms, a 600-seat auditorium, a 2,000-seat gymnasium, a cafeteria, media center, and administrative areas. Athletic features include a football stadium with an eight-track lane, 14 sports fields, and eight tennis courts.

## Pursuing Higher Education

The fifth-largest community college in Maryland, the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) has served Charles County for more than 50 years. CSM partners with four-year institutions to provide a smooth transfer to local and statewide bachelor degree programs. CSM students transfer successfully, both in-state and out-of-state, transferring to 88 different colleges and universities in 29 states and the District of Columbia in the last year. CSM serves more than 24,350 students annually at its three campuses and five centers.

The Waldorf Center for Higher Education, one of eight higher education centers statewide, combines the educational talents and resources of CSM, University of Maryland University College, and other higher education partners to provide comprehensive, high-quality associate, bachelor, graduate, and professional programs and specialized workforce development training to the residents of Southern Maryland.

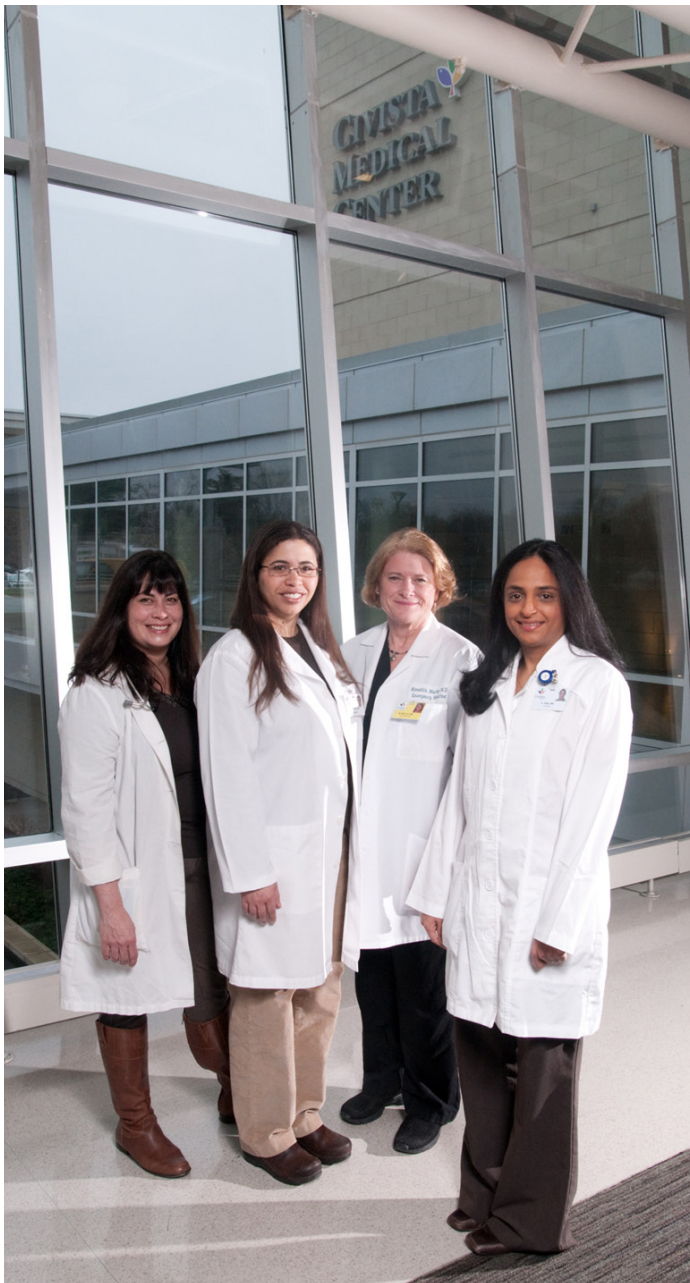
## Expanding the Public Library System

The Waldorf West Library will be approximately 30,200 sq. ft., and will have some unique features, such as a multi-purpose room and a convenient drive-through window for dropping off and picking up borrowed items. The building will be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified through the U.S. Building Council, and is scheduled to be completed in May 2012.





# PUBLIC HEALTH



## Assessing the Health Needs of Charles County Residents

Civista Medical Center, in partnership with the Charles County Department of Health, conducted a health needs assessment for Charles County. Questionnaires and focus groups were used to collect input and information from a cross-section of more than 650 county residents. Residents were polled on issues ranging from accessible health care to obesity. Results of the health needs assessment are available online at [www.Civista.org](http://www.Civista.org) and [www.CharlesCountyHealth.org](http://www.CharlesCountyHealth.org).

## Expanding the Scope of Public Health Operations

The Charles County Department of Health annex building opened in October 2010 to accommodate additional staff needed to support the department's efforts. In response to rising community needs, the Department of Health expanded services in critical areas. The dental clinic performed more than 8,000 units of service during the past year. The department unveiled a mobile clinic that serves as an immunization clinic, mobile command center, educational station, and a basic medical testing facility. Through the cooperative efforts of the department and the Charles County Public Schools, elementary school students received nasal spray flu vaccines administered by department nurses.

## Providing Quality Health Care

Civista Health announced its membership in the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS), effective July 1, 2011. Relative to population, Charles County is underserved in terms of physicians. With the assistance of the UMMS Physician Recruiting Division, and in partnership with the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Civista successfully recruited a number of new physicians to the area. Civista increased the size of its campus through several land and building acquisitions, growing by 40% during the past two years, including the addition of the new Eva Irene Davis Pavilion. Formerly the Physicians Memorial Hospital Building, the county landmark is being restored and renovated to house the federally qualified health center, Greater Baden Medical Services, as a tenant, as well as the offices of Civista Health Foundation, and the Human Resources and Community Development & Planning Divisions.

# SAFE COMMUNITIES



## Protecting Citizens & Enforcing the Law

The Charles County Sheriff's Office is led by Sheriff Rex W. Coffey, and comprises more than 600 police officers, correctional officers, and civilian personnel. It is headquartered in La Plata with district stations in La Plata, Indian Head, and Waldorf. As a full-service law enforcement agency, the Sheriff's Office provides police protection for the entire county and operates the Charles County Detention Center. The county maintains a ratio of one police officer for every 500 citizens.

The Charles County Sheriff's Office has mutual aid agreements with other public safety and law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction in Charles County, including the Maryland State Police, the La Plata Town Police and the Charles County Department of Emergency Services. The Sheriff's Office is also part of Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley's Maritime Strategic Security Plan, a mutual aid agreement between the marine units of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. The Sheriff's Office is establishing mutual aid agreements with the Calvert and St. Mary's counties sheriffs' offices. The Maryland State Police and the La Plata Town Police also provide public safety services to the citizens of Charles County.

Backed by a strong alliance with citizens, businesses, and government officials, the Sheriff's Office reduced crime in fiscal 2011 with a combination of a highly visible patrol contingent and effective community programs. Charles County citizens take an active role in public safety by participating in Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, Citizens on Patrol, and other programs. Other community initiatives, including

an officers-in-schools program and a teen driving safety program, help young people learn to make good choices. Many of the Sheriff's Office's programs are recognized nationally for their success and innovation.

The Sheriff's Office received designation as a flagship agency following an audit by the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the premier credentialing authority for police departments and sheriffs' offices worldwide. Flagship agencies are considered examples of "best practices." When agencies begin seeking accreditation, CALEA refers them to the flagship agencies for guidance.

Charles County Sheriff's Office introduced a medication disposal program to prevent prescription drug abuse and protect the environment. The Sheriff's Office also raised more than \$20,000 for community outreach programs including Special Olympics Maryland, Shop with a Cop, March of Dimes, United Way, the Spring Dell Center, breast cancer awareness month, and other charitable causes.

The new District 3 Sheriff's Station, serving the Waldorf district, was constructed. The building is 27,387-sq. ft. in total, which includes: special operations; interview rooms; four detention cells; showers; 25 work stations, and other designated operations.

## Finding Homes for Furry Friends

The Tri-County Animal Shelter in Hughesville has a colony-style cat room where adoptable cats and kittens are housed in a community setting, awaiting adoption. The Tri-County Animal Shelter introduced a webcam for cat adoptions. Utilizing a live camera feed at the shelter, users access the Internet to view the adoptable cats in the shelter's colony cat room.

## Maintaining Safe Workplaces

The Charles County Safety Office manages and coordinates all aspects of occupational safety and health for county employees, as well as manages compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act for Charles County Government. The Charles County Government Safety Manual was updated to become a more comprehensive document that reinforces Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations. The county received a loss control incentive of \$1.5 million in workers compensation premiums, and continues to hold safety as a top priority.

## Promoting Public Safety Communications

The southern Maryland region was awarded the Interoperable Emergency Communications grant to develop an executive governance body for interoperability in the southern Maryland region. As a direct result of this award, managed by the Department of Emergency Services, the Southern Maryland Interoperability Executive Committee (SMIEC) was created. The SMIEC works with first responders to facilitate cooperation, planning, and development of interoperability strategies in the southern Maryland region.

## Celebrating Longevity in Service

The Charles County Department of Emergency Services celebrated 10 years of proud service to the community this year. July 1 marked the tenth anniversary of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division, which provides 24-7 advanced and basic life support services to Charles County citizens and requesting jurisdictions. The EMS Division started with two employees from 9-1-1 Communications and Public Works; these two positions were combined to create the county's first career paramedic ambulance. Today, the EMS Division provides continuous, around-the-clock services to seven stations across the county.





## QUALITY OF LIFE

### Funding Public Parks & Open Spaces

Pisgah Park is a 234-acre park located on Mason Springs Road in the Pisgah community. Amenities include eight sports fields (six of which are lighted for extended evening play), a playground, picnic facilities, a ¾-mile, paved exercise trail, and a restroom/concessions building. Pisgah Park's sports field accommodates both the local community's need for play facilities, as well as serves a growing demand for countywide sports league play.

Mallows Bay Park, located on Route 224 in Nanjemoy, provides nature-based, eco-tourism venues. Mallows Bay Park amenities include a single-lane boat launch, a 50-ft. boarding pier, a kayak launch, interpretive signs, and vehicle/trailer parking. The park presents a wonderful opportunity for hiking, shoreline fishing, and bird watching. The facility gives paddling enthusiasts direct access to the historic "Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay," an aquatic ship graveyard that includes scores of World War I wooden merchant ships. Mallows Bay also provides anglers with immediate access to some of the nation's best tidal fishing. In addition to its recreational value, Mallows Bay Park supports the local fire department's efforts to improve emergency responses along this section of the Potomac River.

The Commissioners approved the creation of a Citizens Task Force to assist in planning for Friendship Farm Park development. The committee will provide important input regarding the overall vision of this Nanjemoy park as well recommending specific amenities that are consistent with the recreational needs of community. Friendship Farm

Park is a 369-acre natural area that sits along the shores on Nanjemoy Creek. Plans include creating a nature-based park that will feature a nature/ interpretive center, special events venue, amphitheater, hiking trails, picnic area, and access to the Nanjemoy Creek.

### Making Recreational Opportunities Available

The Department of Community Services' Recreation Division consists of aquatics, community centers, trips and tours, gymnastics, sports, and summer camps, and provides support to Special Olympics Charles County. During the spring and summer months, the division offers discounted amusement park admission tickets to residents. Also, adult sports leagues, drop-in programs, and Zumba fitness classes are offered.

As the needs of Charles County's youth increase, youth programs continue to expand. The division partnered with local agencies, including the Charles County Department of Health and Civista Medical Center, on several youth programs, including the nationally recognized We Can!™ child and adolescent weight management program. Through We Can!™, which stands for Ways to Enhance Childhood Activity and Nutrition, the division partnered to provide healthy lifestyle programs for youth, such as the "Jump with Jill" concert at Regency Furniture Stadium and the inaugural We Can!™ Youth Triathlon. Additionally, youth programs such as winter sports leagues; youth tennis activities; afterschool programs; summer camps; and youth drop-in programs had significant increases in overall participation.

## Housing Assistance for Families

The Department of Community Services Housing Authority administers the Housing Choice Voucher, Rental Allowance, Community Development Block Grant, State Special Loan, and Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing programs. The Housing Authority received \$8.2 million in funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Housing Choice Voucher program, resulting in 812 individuals and families assisted, of which more than 600 were applicants from the waiting list. The program makes monthly rental payments totaling in excess of \$800,000 per month to landlords for the 825 households participating in the program. HUD recognized the Housing Authority as a “high performer” for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

## Revitalizing Communities

The County Commissioners established the Property Standards Task Force to obtain recommendations related to property standards and maintenance of County residential properties. The task force assists with the collection of data and research, and advises on the current County Nuisance Ordinance and Livability Code including enforcement and the appeal process.

## Eliminating Substandard Housing Conditions

An independent consultant completed the Nanjemoy Housing Needs Assessment. The assessment, funded by a Community Development Block Grant, found that nearly three-quarters of respondents described their homes as being in good or excellent condition.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development named the Housing Authority as the state’s top producer for the State Special Loan program, with nearly \$1 million in loans for Charles County. Projects included 14 complete home replacements and housing repairs. The Maryland Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the Housing Authority \$292,000 to repair additional substandard housing units. To further assist homeowners, the Charles County Commissioners directed staff to implement the County Intervention Team, which will provide door-to-door outreach and develop individualized plans to improve housing conditions.

## Serving the Senior Citizen Population

The Department of Community Services serves as the designated Area Agency on Aging for Charles County, and provides programs and services to promote independence and improve the quality of life for older persons. The division operates four senior centers (Waldorf, Indian Head, La Plata, and Nanjemoy) that served 2,768 older adults from activities to daily meals. A new, 8,000-sq. ft. addition to the Richard R. Clark Senior Center was completed.

The Senior Information & Assistance staff provided information, benefits coordination, application assistance, public outreach, and education for aging programs and services to 24,221 persons. In partnership with approximately 170 community volunteers, the division provided 38,751 daily meals-on-wheels to hundreds of nutritionally at-risk seniors. The division has operated the National Family Caregivers Support program since its inception in 2001, providing 3,352 units of respite and supportive services to family members who lovingly care for their elders at home.



# INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION

## Expanding Maryland Airport

In 2009, Maryland Airport received a permit for a runway expansion. Construction on phase one was completed in October 2010. Phase one included eight acres for modern stormwater management practices, and storm drainage work. Phase two is scheduled for fall 2011, pending financing approval from the Federal Aviation Administration.

## Seeking Transportation Alternatives for Commuters

The County Commissioners approved support for funding a proposed study examining the feasibility of a commuter ferry between the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division, and Fort Belvoir and Quantico Marine Bases in Virginia. The study, to be undertaken by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission under the direction of a Maryland/Virginia commuter ferry stakeholders' committee, will determine the extent of a market for such commuter service, as well as the possibility of off-peak use for leisure and tourist trips to other up-river, Washington-area destinations.

## Getting Citizens Where They Need to Go

VanGO public transit provides transportation opportunities within Charles County, with routes covering the Waldorf, St. Charles, La Plata, Indian Head, Charlotte Hall, Newburg, and Nanjemoy areas. Most routes operate Monday through Saturday from 5:30 a.m. – 10 p.m. on hourly schedules.

VanGO fixed-route services provided 27,343 specialized, door-to-door trips for elderly and disabled residents, and transported 681,742 passengers, an 18% increase over the previous fiscal year. VanGO transit service traveled in excess of 1.3 million miles.

A major fleet upgrade in 2011 included replacement to larger capacity buses, and wheelchair-accessible features. Completing the fleet modernization, VanGO will transition to fully electronic fare boxes and front bumper-mounted bike racks.



# INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER SUPPLY & ROADS

## Working to Solve Community Issues

The County Commissioners approved funding for a Strawberry Hills project that installs approximately 2,470 linear feet of new, high-density polyethylene storm drain pipe to stabilize stream erosion. The Carrington Drainage Improvements Study identified drainage problems within the Waldorf neighborhood and examined areas where drainage could be improved through routine inspections and maintenance of the existing systems.

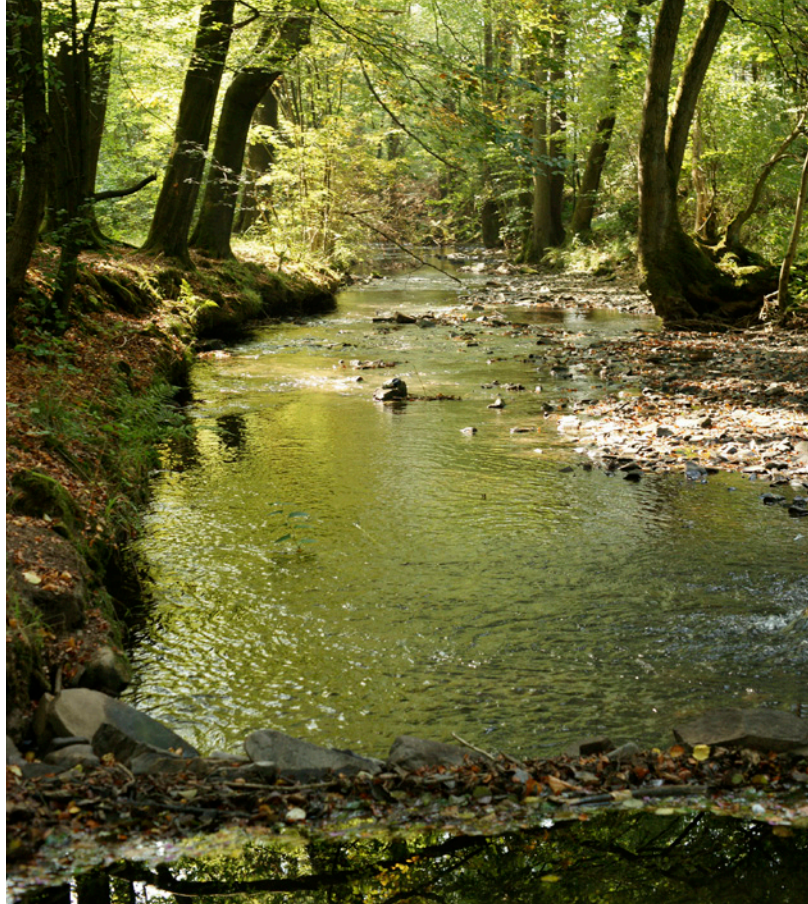
## Managing Traffic Flow

In August 2010, the Department of Planning & Growth Management activated a newly-installed traffic signal at the intersection of Acton Lane and Western Parkway in Waldorf. The Acton Lane Traffic Signal project included installation of a four-way traffic signal, a 135-foot acceleration lane, and a 750-foot deceleration lane on Western Parkway. The completion of this signal provided the north side of Western Parkway with two through lanes and dedicated left- and right-turn lanes.

## Focusing on Transportation Priorities

Charles County continues to have the fastest growing commuter bus ridership in Maryland, indicating the continued demand for public, mass transit services. To ensure a comprehensive approach to transportation, the county has undertaken several new efforts to incorporate all modes of mobility, including: a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; the development of a local road program; the development of urban road standards that accommodate motor vehicles, transit vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians; and the adoption of transit alignment based on the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study.

The county has a renewed focus on transit services and high-density development around proposed transit hubs. Through coordinated efforts with local government and developers, strategies are under evaluation to encourage transit-oriented development through zoning regulations and other techniques. The county not only rezoned the core section of Waldorf to allow higher densities and encourage greater commercial job growth, but also developed the first portion of the implementation plans to bring the transportation network to reality.



## Improving Public Roadways

The Department of Public Works, Roads Division, received \$1.3 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus funding during fiscal 2011. The funds were used to make necessary road improvements include pavement resurfacing, replacing traffic loop sensors, upgrading pavement markings, and installing recessed, reflective pavement markers. Western Parkway, St. Charles Parkway, Smallwood Drive, Rosewick Road, Rose Hill Road, Mitchell Road, and Washington Avenue were improved.

Charles County's road ordinance had changes related to implementing urban road standards as proposed by the Waldorf Urban Design Study and Bryans Road Sub-Area Plan. Urban road standards allow for the creation of alleys, public parking along public roads, and mixed uses of roadways. Parking signage and restrictions, improved road design practices to facilitate emergency vehicles, standards of placement of United States Postal Service cluster mail boxes, and technical clarifications were also addressed.

## Protecting Natural Resources

The Charles County Comprehensive Plan Water Resources Element (WRE) was approved on May 24, 2011. The WRE ensures that growth plans are consistent with water supply, wastewater treatment capacity, and absorptive capacity of local water bodies to accommodate stormwater runoff.

# GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

## Promoting an Employee-Friendly Workplace

The Department of Human Resources revised the leave donation program allowing employees to receive leave donations to provide medical care for a spouse, parent, or dependent children. During the year, flexible and compressed work schedules were instituted, and both casual business attire and Friday jeans days were adopted. Also, the department formed a DHR Employee Committee comprising a cross section of employees from each department. The committee organized an employee picnic and will analyze a number of initiatives, including reviewing the Employee Satisfaction Survey results.

The Department of Human Resources received the "Best in Category" award for personnel management during the 2011 National Association of Counties Achievement Awards for the Early Retirement Incentive Program. Charles County was one of only 16 counties nationwide (and the only county within Maryland) to receive the "Best in Category" distinction.

## Increasing Diversity in Upper Management

The Department of Human Resources recruited 10 executive-level management positions. Of the applications received, 54% were minority or female. The department advertised in a variety of local and regional news sources, including: The Washington Post, The Baltimore Sun, The Maryland Independent, The Washington Hispanic, The Afro-American, and in industry-specific publications. Employment opportunities were advertised with agencies such as the National Association of Counties, the Maryland Association of Counties, and the Maryland Municipal League.

## Training Managers and New Employees

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) presented the first of a series of "Supervisor Boot Camp" trainings to 23 supervisors, which covered performance management and communication techniques. In June 2011, 121 employees attended customer service training. In the same month, 21 Department Heads and senior managers were trained in working with the news media. Also, DHR conducted new employee orientations throughout the year, and began a pension training program to train the participants of both the Charles County Pension Plan and the Sheriff's Office Retirement Plan on their existing benefits. Overall, county employees attended approximately 7,655 hours of training.

## Rewarding Outstanding Work

A television screen was installed in the lobby of the Charles County Government Building that showcases "Employees of the Month," "Charles County Heroes," "Years of Service Award" recipients, and retiring employees. The screen is located outside of the Commissioners Meeting Room, and allows the public to note the outstanding work of county employees.





## Strengthening Community Partnerships

The County Commissioners started Vision in Teamwork and Leadership (VITAL) in 1992 as a forum for leaders to coordinate activities to more effectively address the needs of the community. VITAL was reinvigorated in 2010 following a multi-year period of dormancy. A team of 25 community leaders participate in VITAL. The mission of VITAL is to enhance communication and coordination, and to maximize resources between the public and private sectors. The purpose of VITAL is to provide opportunities for building strong relationships and trust; promote understanding of community issues; make recommendations to the Commissioners; and maximize organizational resources.

## Improving Communication with Citizens

Under the direction of the County Commissioners, a Citizens' Liaison Office (CLO) was established within the Commissioners' Office in January 2011. Hundreds of e-mails, phone calls, and letters have received immediate attention and timely responses. The CLO Director researches citizen concerns, coordinates data with staff, and provides responses to citizens.

## Improving Functionality & Automation

The Department of Public Works, Utilities Division, continued to make advancements in information technology and automation. The goal of the division's multi-year Integration Technology Improvement Program is to enhance the efficiency of operations in order to reduce the cost of materials, equipment, and labor, while the county's population grows and infrastructure ages. The department completed the first phase of comprehensive GIS mapping, which supports field operations from utility locating to infrastructure management, maintenance, and operation.

## Did you know...

For an unprecedented ninth year in a row, Charles County was selected by the Center for Digital Government as one of ten "most digitally advanced counties" nationwide for counties with populations of less than 150,000?

This award recognizes Charles County as a leader in its use of information and communications technology and in its efforts to find cost effective, innovative ways to leverage technology to deliver services to its citizens.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Supporting a Thriving Business Climate

The County Commissioners recognize an aggressive economic development program is essential to the overall fiscal and economic health and quality of life in Charles County. The Commissioners opened an Economic Development “transition” office in Waldorf. The office serves as an initial point of contact within the government, helps with space and site searches, and makes referrals to partner agencies. The office has established solid relationships with business, workforce development, and marketing agencies such as: the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Maryland Economic Development Association, and the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development.



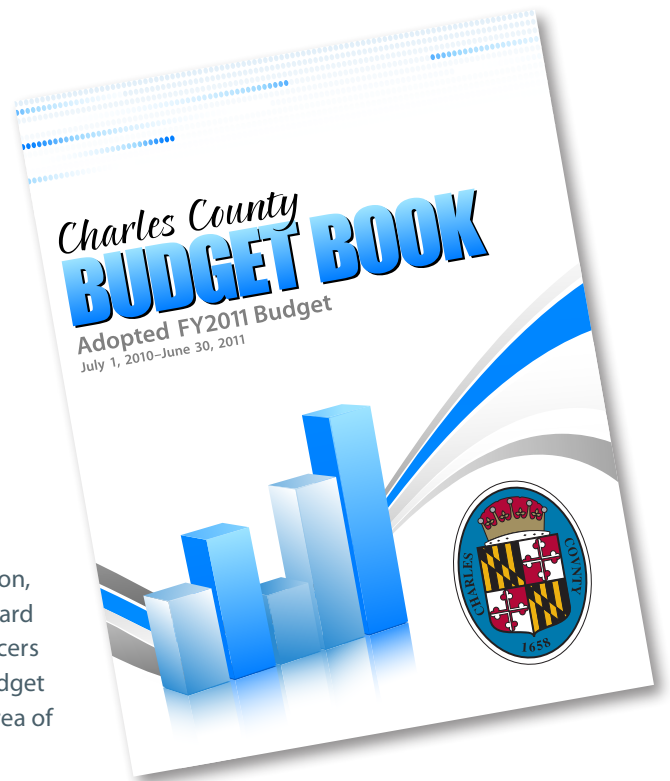
# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## Demonstrating Fiscal Responsibility

The County Commissioners approved a capital projects budget of \$54 million in general obligation bonds. The capital projects budget supports the construction of: St. Charles High School, College of Southern Maryland campus buildings, the new Waldorf West Library, and others. The county received bond ratings of AAA, Aa1, and AA, respectively from each of the three major bond rating agencies—Fitch Ratings, Moody’s Investors Service, and Standard & Poor’s, which is evidence of the county’s fiscally responsible financial management.

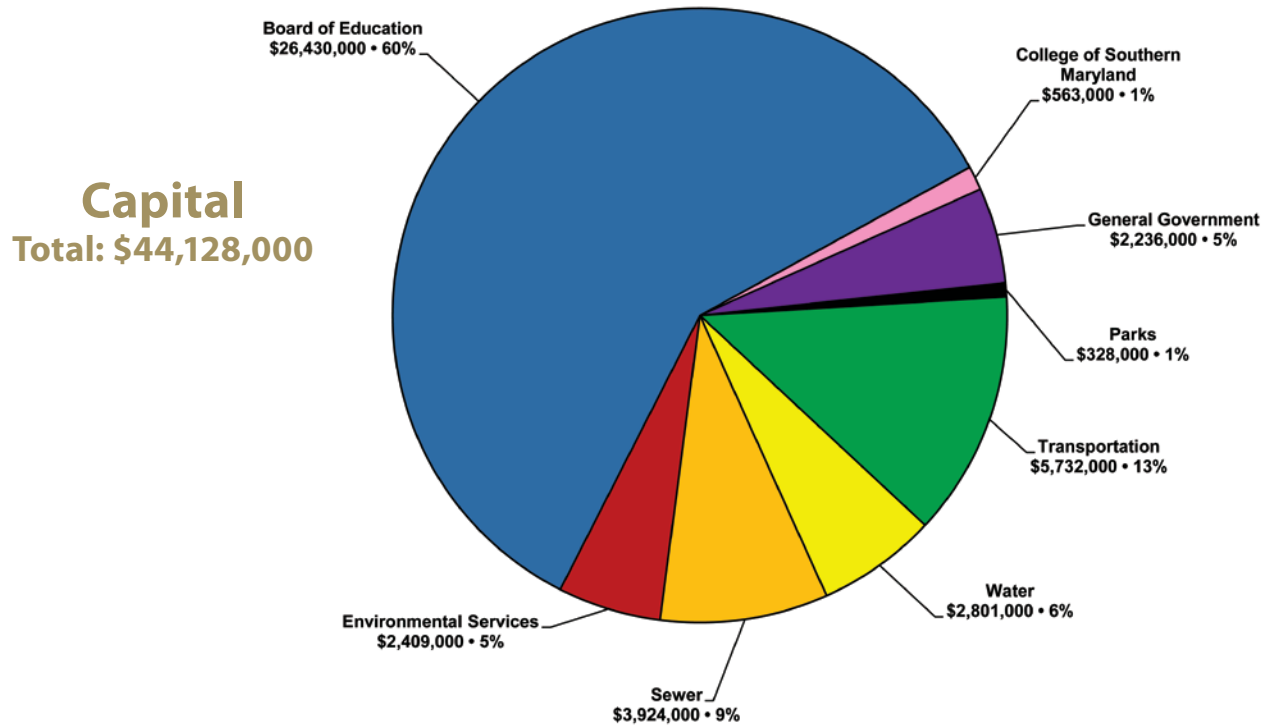
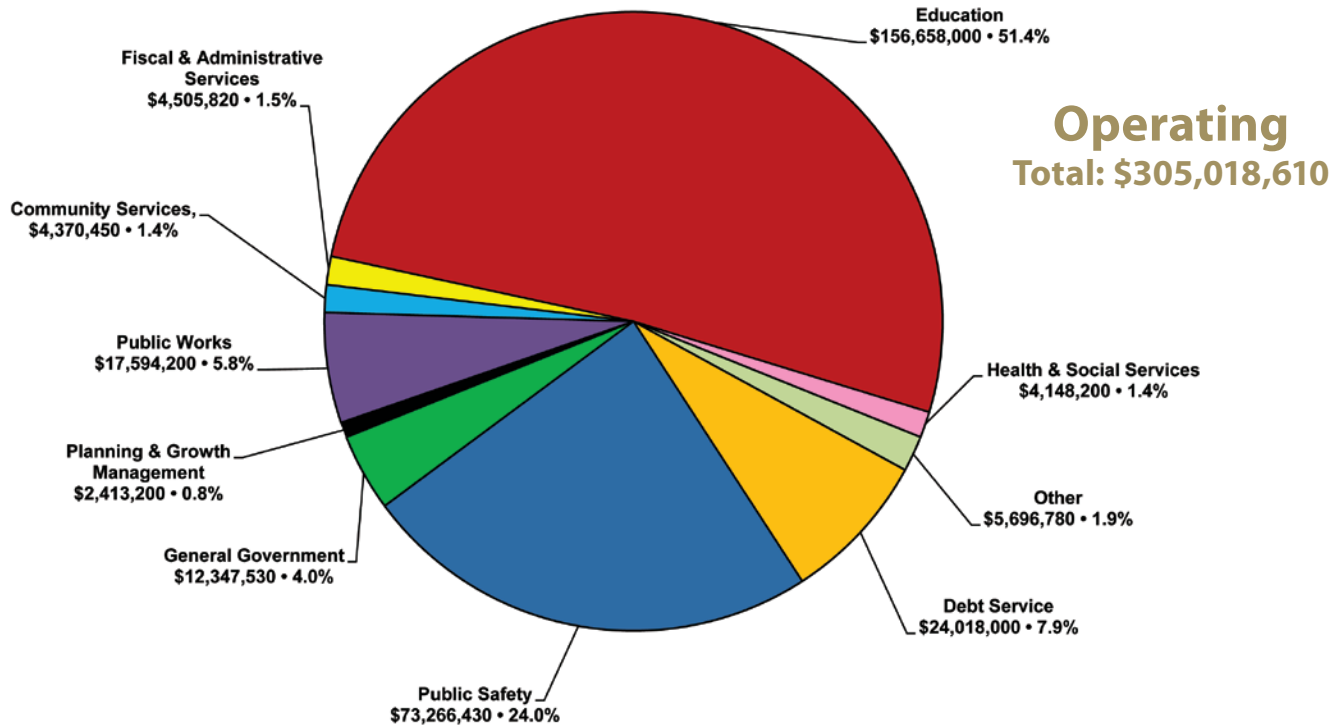
## Achieving Excellence in Financial Reporting

The Department of Fiscal & Administrative Services, Budget Division, received the Certificate of Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the fiscal 2011 budget book. The certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental budgetary reporting.



# OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGETS

Fiscal Year 2011



# Charles County Government



**Dr. Rebecca Bridgett**  
County Administrator

The Charles County Government is responsible for the writing, production, and distribution of this publication.

## EDITOR

Crystal Hunt  
Office of Public Information

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tina Kozloski  
Media Promotions Office

## WEB MASTER

Janet Sferrella  
Fiscal & Administrative Services

## CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**Roy Hancock**  
Deputy County Administrator

## DIRECTORS

**Peter Aluotto**  
Planning & Growth Management

**Stephen Brayman**  
Human Resources

**Deborah Hudson**  
Fiscal & Administrative Services

**Eileen B. Minnick**  
Community Services

**William Shreve**  
Public Works

**William "Bill" Stephens**  
Emergency Services

## CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT

P.O. Box 2150 | 200 Baltimore Street  
La Plata, MD 20646

301.645.0550 | 301.870.3000  
Fax 301.645.0560

e-mail: [Commissioner@CharlesCounty.org](mailto:Commissioner@CharlesCounty.org)

[www.CharlesCounty.org](http://www.CharlesCounty.org)

## The Charles County Seal

The Charles County seal incorporates a part of the Maryland State seal, which is designed from the First Lord Baltimore's escutcheon. Charles County was established on May 10, 1658, and named for Charles Calvert, England's Third Lord Baltimore.

The coronet is a silver gilded band, covered with yellow lacquer. The five spheres on top of the crown are plain silver balls. The brim is white with small strawberry leaves.

The cross of red and white on the shield symbolizes the arms of the Crossland family, which was the family of the mother of the First Lord Baltimore.

The black and gold design on the shield is that of the Calvert family. It was given to Calvert as a result of storming a fortification in battle.

The date of 1658, which is on the bottom of the Seal, is the date when the order of erection was approved by the Colonial Governor.



## Did You Know...

Charles County's **official tree** is the **Dogwood**. The Dogwood tree produces beautiful flowers each spring. These flowers are usually small and have four or five petals. The berries that appear in the fall are commonly eaten by birds in the winter.

**Queen Anne's Lace**, also called wild carrot, is commonly found along roads and through fields, and is Charles County's **official flower**. Queen Anne's Lace is a biennial with 1 to 3 foot stems and lacy flowers that do not blossom until their second year.

The **Great Blue Heron** is the nation's tallest bird and is Charles County's **official bird**. The bird is abundant along rivers and creeks and is a superb fisherman.