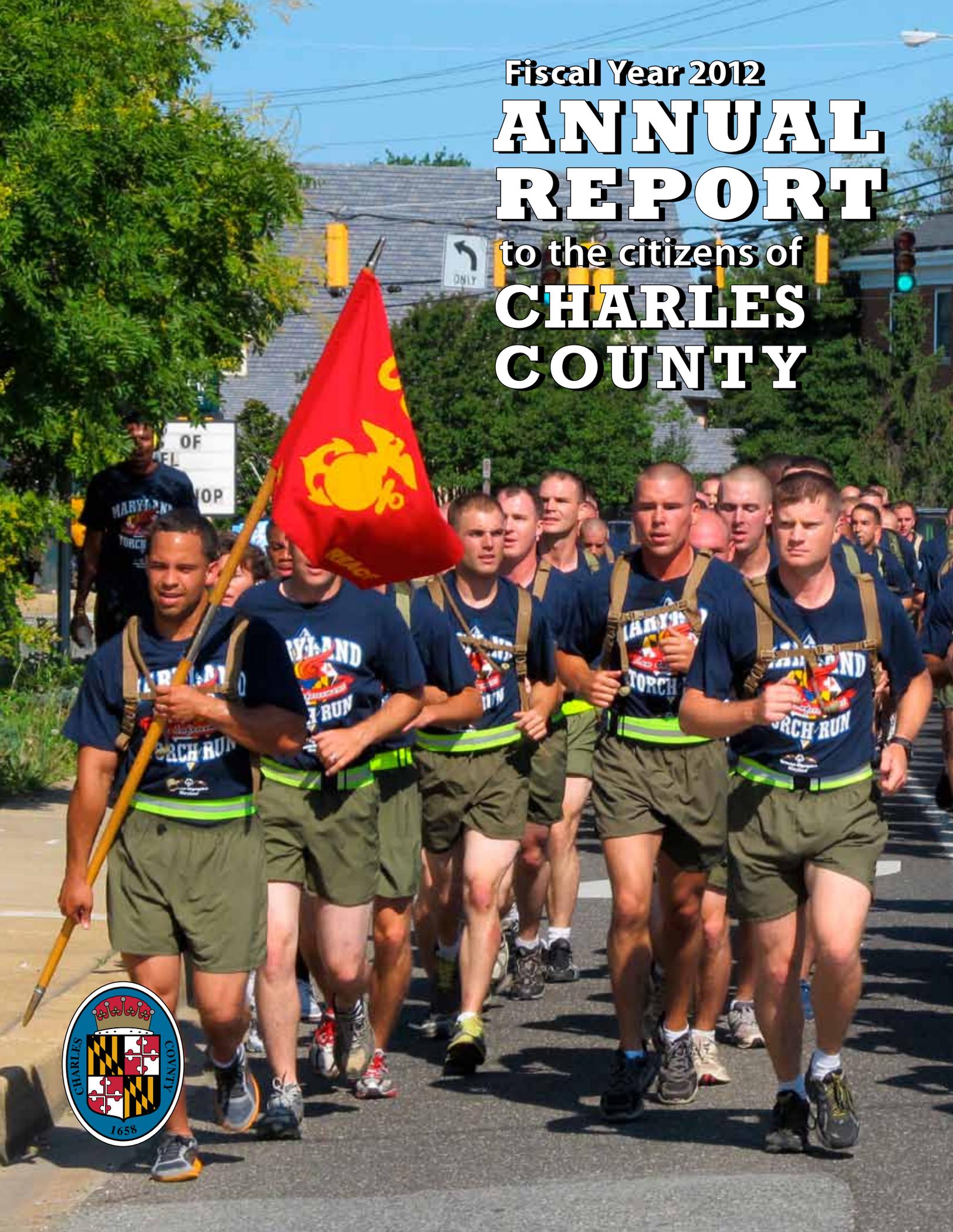


Fiscal Year 2012

ANNUAL REPORT

to the citizens of

CHARLES COUNTY



WHAT'S INSIDE

- Get Connected!.....3
- Safe Communities4
- Public Health6
- Educational Achievements.....8
- Quality of Life..... 10
- Recreational Opportunities12
- Tourism.....13
- Safe and Affordable Housing.....14
- Economic Development16
- Environmental Awareness17
- Infrastructure..... 18
- Planning and Smart Growth..... 20
- Government Efficiency and Accountability.....21
- Financial Stewardship..... 22
- Operating and Capital Budgets 23



Front Cover:
Charles County Government partnered with the Charles County Sheriff's Office in the 2012 Law Enforcement Torch Run/Walk to benefit Special Olympics Maryland.



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. We support and encourage efforts to grow a diverse workplace.

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 at 200 Baltimore Street in La Plata. The meetings are aired on the Charles County Government website, www.CharlesCountyMD.gov, as well as on **CCGTV**, Charles County's local government cable television station broadcast on Comcast channel 95 and Verizon channel 10.



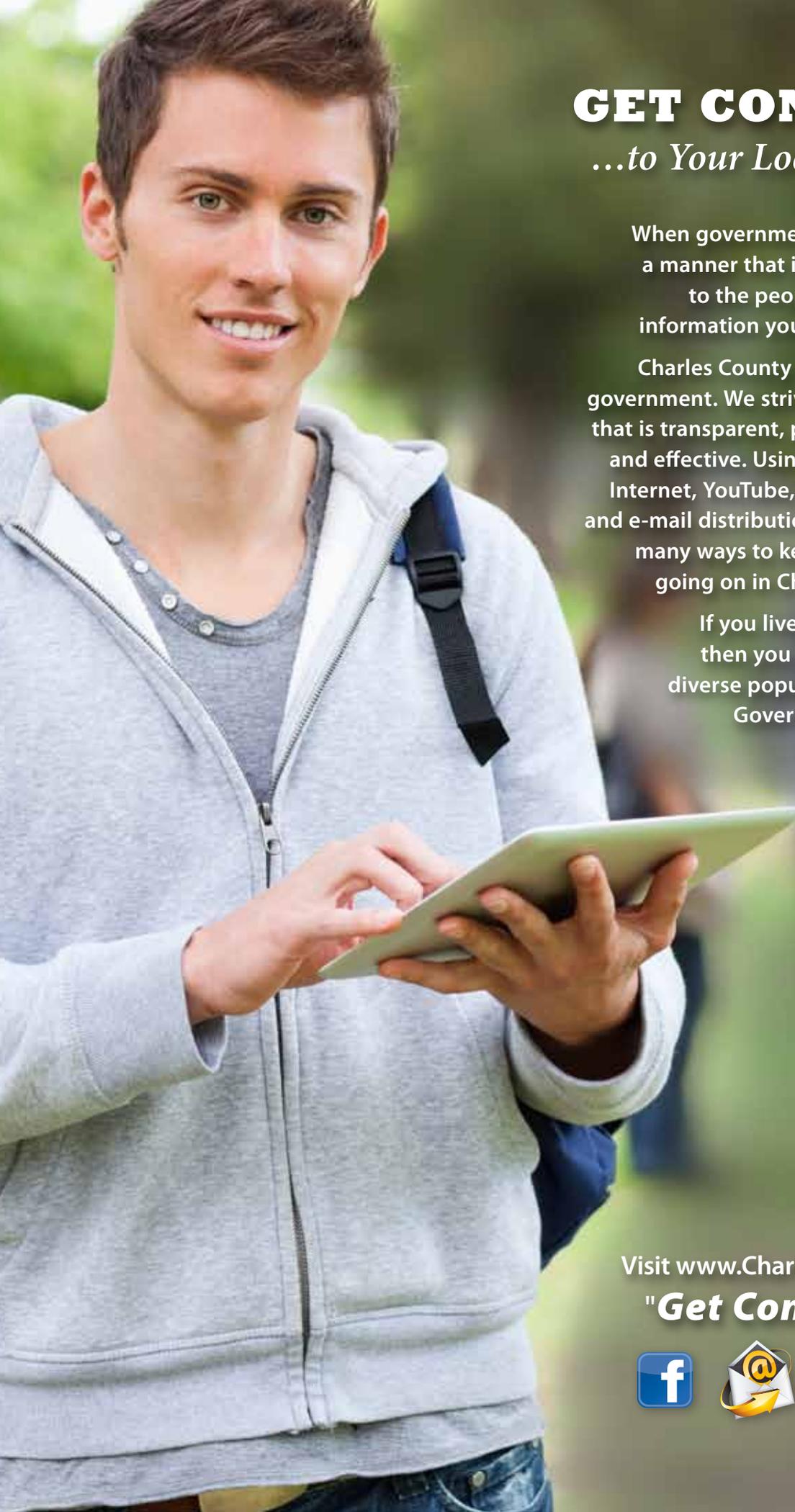
Debra M. Davis, Esq.
District 2

Advisory Committees, Boards and 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. Vacancies are announced in the local media, on the county government website, www.CharlesCountyMD.gov and on **CCGTV**.



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.CharlesCountyMD.gov and "**Get Connected**" today!



SAFE COMMUNITIES

Protecting Citizens and Enforcing the Law

The Charles County Sheriff's Office is led by Sheriff Rex W. Coffey, and with more than 600 police officers, correctional officers and civilian personnel, is one of the largest employers in Charles County. 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 the Maryland State Police and the La Plata Town Police, who also provide police services in Charles County, and with the Charles County Department of Emergency Services and Calvert and St. Mary's County Sheriffs' Offices. Mutual aid agreements ensure allied agencies work together effectively and efficiently to address cross jurisdictional public safety issues. The Sheriff's Office's chief responsibilities are maintaining law and order and restoring peace when public safety is threatened. Backed by a strong alliance with citizens, businesses and government officials, the Sheriff's Office accomplishes its mission by ensuring high visibility of its patrol contingent and by offering effective community programs that engage citizens in public safety efforts. The Sheriff's Office lowered crime in Charles County by 13 percent in 2010 and has since lowered it slightly more each fiscal year.

Charles County citizens participate in Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, Citizens on Patrol and other successful crime prevention programs. Other community initiatives, including an officers in schools program and an Explorers post, help young people learn to make good choices. Many of the Sheriff's Office's programs are recognized nationally for their success and innovation. Each year since 1988, the Sheriff's Office has earned the Maryland Governor's Crime Prevention Award for its success in coordinating these programs. The Sheriff's Office also helps coordinate a highly successful safe driving program for teens, which has helped significantly reduce teen traffic fatalities. In fiscal 2012, the Sheriff's Office 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, Wounded Warriors, breast cancer awareness month and other charitable causes.

The Sheriff's Office has been accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) — the premier credentialing authority for law enforcement agencies worldwide — since 2001. In January 2012, the Sheriff's Office received designation as a flagship agency, following a CALEA audit the previous August. The designation recognizes the Sheriff's Office as one of the best law enforcement agencies in the world. When other agencies begin seeking accreditation, CALEA refers them to the flagship agencies for guidance.

Regulating the Animal Population

The Department of Emergency Services' Animal Control Services Division presented to the Board of Commissioners recommendations for changes to the Charles County Animal Regulations. The County Commissioners approved the revisions to become effective in February. Notable changes to the regulations include: a requirement for cats and dogs to be licensed annually; inclusion of an animal fancier licensing category, which is a non-commercial category for keeping more than 10 adult animals; a restriction on the outdoor tethering of dogs to no more than four hours a day; a provision establishing minimum sizes for kennels used to house dogs outside; increased fines for violations; and inclusion of animals considered dangerous and prohibited by state law.





Responding to Natural Disasters

Devastating winds and rain from Hurricane Irene impacted Charles County from Aug. 24 through Sept. 5. Irene left county responders with critical roadways blocked by toppled trees, flooded drainage structures and power distribution wires and poles damaged by fallen trees, resulting in the largest power outage in Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative's history (108,000 outages). Massive quantities of debris blanketed the county. Responded has just begun clearing roadways when the outer bands of Tropical Storm Lee entered Maryland.

Tropical Storm Lee's torrential rains washed away freshly cleared roads. Sewer and storm drainage pipes collapsed, flooding nearby homes. Several water and sewer systems were compromised countywide. Entire neighborhoods were stranded, cut off from essential services such as electricity, water, sewer and accessible roads for days at a time. Large sinkholes were found throughout the county. Both storms created severe threats to the health and life safety of Charles County residents.

Charles County emergency responders answered the call of duty following these severe weather events with a well-coordinated, organized and executed storm response. Both events earned a presidential disaster declaration due to the severe fiscal impact on the county and state. Despite the catastrophic impact on county infrastructure, responders mitigated the situation effectively and deactivated safely the emergency operations center a week later. The storm response cost Charles County Government \$2.1 million.

Answering Calls to Serve

The Charles County Department of Emergency Services' EMS Division responded to 12,000 calls for service, including a hurricane, an earthquake and a flood. In addition to the traditional call volume, the special operations team was requested to support myriad special events across the state, including the Patuxent River Air Show, the G-8 Presidential Summit and the recent 200-Year Anniversary Sailabration in commemoration of the War of 1812. It was also an inaugural year for the department as a full member of the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Fire/EMS Committees. Participation in COG enhances Charles County's public safety perspective as it provides the County with a plethora of assets and information-sharing outlets.

Enhancing Emergency Communications

In fiscal 2012, the Emergency Number Systems Board (ENSB) approved \$2.2 million in funding for the 9-1-1 Tech Refresh/Enhancement project. The ENSB manages the 9-1-1 Trust Fund, which is used to fund 9-1-1 infrastructure projects. The scope of the project included adding: four new call-taker positions; a new, IP-capable PBX phone switch with redundant servers; new functionality rich Geographic Information Systems mapping software, which includes the ability to plot calls for service and display unit location (automatic vehicle location tracking); new hardware and software for 17 workstations; 9-1-1 status reader boards; dispatcher status lighting; monitor racks; and 9-1-1 reporting software.

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. The Charles County Government Safety Manual was updated to become a more comprehensive document that reinforces regulations established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The county received a loss control incentive of \$1.5 million in workers compensation premiums and continues to hold safety as a top priority.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Meeting the Health Needs of Residents

The diverse nature of Charles County requires the Department of Health employ a wide variety of medical and health services to accommodate residents. The Department of Health's dental treatment program visited all Head Start centers and Title I elementary schools in Charles County to provide dental screening and fluoride varnish to children less than five years of age. A total of 356 children received prevention services. The Division of Substance Abuse Services is now part of a statewide recovery-oriented system of care, and offers continuing care that allows clients to move easily within the continuum of care.

During the first full year of the Core Service Agency being managed by the Department of Health, a wide range of projects were implemented, including: transportation education, employment assistance and service provider transition for clients. The HIV/AIDS program expanded its testing services. Off-site test locations now include: St. Charles Towne Center, College of Southern Maryland, Charles County Department of Social Services, Charles County Fair, as well as community fairs and events.

The Department of Health continues to provide immunization against influenza to school children. More than 1,800 children from pre-kindergarten to fifth grade received the nasal spray vaccine in public elementary schools, an increase of more than 14 percent from the previous year.

The Department of Health piloted the first Maryland Healthy Stores project. Four stores in the county participated in the program. The goal was to decrease obesity in low-income areas through environmental change in corner/convenience stores by stocking healthy foods, providing nutrition education to consumers and using signage to identify healthy choices at the point of sale.

Providing Quality Health Care

Civista Health is a regional, not-for-profit, integrated health system serving Charles County and the surrounding areas of Southern Maryland. Civista Medical Center opened in 1939 as Physician's Memorial Hospital to provide care for Charles County citizens in response to a devastating tornado. The hospital, now known as Civista, completed an expansion of the medical center, doubling the size of the facility and increasing services and capacity. Civista Health is a member of the University of Maryland Medical System.

The Civista Health Foundation board of directors announced that the former Physician's Memorial Hospital building has been renamed The Eva Irene Davis Pavilion honoring the estate gift made by the late community philanthropist. A former employee of the hospital's foundation, Davis was a beloved member of the Charles County community. Civista and Greater Baden Medical Services, Inc. worked collaboratively with the Southern Maryland Delegation to secure bond funding for \$650,000 to renovate the facility. Greater Baden Medical Services will lease the first floor of the building, relocating their current health services from Nanjemoy to the more centralized location. Greater Baden Medical Services, a Federally Qualified Health Center, offers care to those who are uninsured or under insured. The ground floor houses Civista's human resources department and the second floor will house Civista's community development and planning foundation, auxiliary offices and a new satellite incident command center for emergencies.

Years of planning the multi-phase project came to fruition as Civista's numerous laboratories were renovated into a modern, open "core lab" configuration allowing space for the technicians to function more efficiently and more effectively. Additionally, the newly expanded microbiology area provides capacity for increased volumes and the redesigned histopathology area improves work flow and overall safety.





Planning for Community Health Improvement

Under the leadership of Civista Health and the Charles County Department of Health, through the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County (PHCC), a comprehensive Community Health Improvement Plan was developed to respond to all areas within the Charles County health needs assessment. This plan was developed by utilizing a best practice approach toward community improvement. The plan reflects the top 11 needs identified by the needs assessment, sets objectives from the Maryland State Health Improvement Process vision areas and healthy people 2020 targets, and contains an action plan as determined by PHCC's six new implementation teams.

A number of key areas have been targeted for health improvement in the county, including: behavioral health, chronic disease, access to health care, cancer, injury and violence-free community and reproductive health. A variety of strategies will be employed to assist and engage the residents to move toward healthier living. Plan activities include: acceptance of Electronic Benefit Transfer cards at local farmers' markets; cancer prevention programs and screenings; childhood obesity intervention programs; prevention education activities for senior citizens; prenatal education programs for underserved populations; and increased access to dental health screenings for school-aged children.

Recruiting Qualified Health Professionals

Together with the University of Maryland Medical System physician recruitment program, Civista developed and implemented a robust physician recruitment plan that yielded successful searches and placements for both community and employed physicians in the following specialties: obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, general surgery, orthopedic surgery, gastroenterology and otolaryngology.

Promoting Health and Wellness

Civista was selected to receive the Workplace Excellence Award, as well as the Health and Wellness Trailblazer Award this year for the eight consecutive year. These awards recognize Maryland businesses that promote professional fulfillment and personal wellness at work, at home and in the community. Winners are selected for excellence in workforce demographics, management practices, employee engagement, corporate social responsibility, diversity and inclusion. Civista is proud to have received this special recognition, and remains committed to creating and maintaining a healthy workplace for all Civista employees.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Providing a Quality Public Education

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is recognized (nationally) for educational excellence in areas like closing the academic achievement gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics 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, arts, business and a extracurricular activities. CCPS is composed of 35 caring community schools, with 21 elementary, eight middle and six high schools. Additionally, CCPS maintains four specialized learning centers that round out the offerings for a school system that continues to see student growth each year.

As one of the county's largest employers, CCPS has 3,457 dedicated professionals working together for the education of more than 26,700 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.



Opening Doors to Higher Education

The fifth-largest community college in Maryland, the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is an open-admissions, comprehensive regional college serving more than 25,900 students annually at its three campuses (in La Plata, Leonardtown and Prince Frederick) and its four centers, (Trades and Energy Training and the Center for Higher Education in Waldorf, Transportation Training in La Plata and Nuclear Energy Training in Prince Frederick).

During the past year, the college celebrated its first graduates in its new associate degree in Nuclear Engineering Technology: Instrumentation and Control. The program is a result of partnerships with the Nuclear Energy Institute, Constellation Energy Nuclear Group, LLC, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other industry organizations to train area workers for high-paying career opportunities.

CSM was designated a National Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance 2-Year Education by the National Security Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, joining an elite group of 13 out of the more than 1,200 community colleges across the nation to receive this honor. CSM also was awarded a National Science Foundation grant to provide scholarships and support services in STEM-related programs. The newest health care training asset was dedicated, the clinical simulation lab, a high-fidelity lab that provides a direct learning environment for students to practice procedures, skills and techniques. Additionally, the college has launched the Digital Media Production degree program, and opened a cable studio for use by the academic program as well as for community use as a public access studio.

CSM was awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide trade skills training for juvenile ex-offenders. The Juvenile Offenders Building Skills project, a collaboration between CSM and more than 30 strategic partners from Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties, will provide a variety of skills training in HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) and plumbing to 96 young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 years old who have been involved in the juvenile justice system.

CSM continues to expand its partnerships (<http://www.CSMD.edu/Academics/FourYear.html>) with bachelor-degree institutions to provide a seamless transition to local and statewide bachelor degree programs. Students who begin at CSM enjoy significant savings as they pursue higher education,

particularly when they ladder their associate's degree to a bachelor's degree. Students earning their associate's degrees at CSM and then transferring to complete their baccalaureate degrees can save an average of \$28,000. CSM students transferred successfully, both in-state and out-of-state, to 110 different colleges and universities in 31 states and the District of Columbia by the end of the 2010-2011 academic year.

At the La Plata campus, major renovation on one of the original structures, the Business (BU) Building, was completed and includes seven classrooms and four computer labs. Through the college's new turf management program, the La Plata campus soccer field was widened, graded and leveled; a zone irrigation system was added to conserve water; and a maintenance plan was created to keep the field in great shape for years, resulting in a professional-quality, state-of-the-art playing surface that is considered among the top soccer fields in the conference.

One of eight higher education centers statewide, the Waldorf Center for Higher Education 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 first county LEED-certified public building, Waldorf West Library, will be completed in October 2012. Customers will be welcomed into expanded space, a public art gallery, quality programming and state of the art technology. Radio Frequency Identification will be used for materials to more easily locate resources, as well as touch screen catalogs. Art depicting the historical buildings of Charles County will be exhibited as part of a special Library of Congress project.

Charles County Public Library was awarded the Technology Business of the Year award at the 12th Annual Leading Edge Awards. Through the auspices of the La Plata vision team, La Plata mayor and La Plata Town Council, as well as through volunteer support, the Citizens for Charles County Public Library and the Newcomb Hart Library Foundation, the library was afforded the opportunity to grow needed services such as the municipal Wi-Fi.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Serving Senior Citizens

The Department of Community Services Aging and Senior Programs Division operates four senior centers (Waldorf, Indian Head, La Plata and Nanjemoy) that collectively served 2,837 older adults with a wide array of activities, including recreational and leisure programs, educational and personal enrichment classes, fine arts, health promotion programs, daily meals, fitness classes and volunteer opportunities. Among the array of senior center offerings were 32,130 units of health promotion and fitness activities aimed at keeping older adults active, healthy and well as they age.

The division is proud to administer more than 20 state and federal grants that provided direct benefits and services for more than 3,835 older adults in Charles County. Senior information and assistance personnel provided general information, benefits coordination and application assistance, as well as public outreach and education regarding aging programs and services on 26,195 occasions for persons who contacted the division for aging services.

To provide support for family caregivers and frail elderly, the division administers the National Family Caregivers Support program, long-term care Medicaid waivers, senior assisted living subsidy programs, resident advocacy/ombudsman services for the institutionalized population, and in-home care programs such as Senior Care and federally funded respite and supportive care programs. In partnership with approximately 165 dedicated community volunteers, 38,852 daily meals-on-wheels were provided to hundreds of seniors at nutritional risk in our community who are no longer able to shop or prepare meals for themselves. These programs and services assure that older adults can live independently with dignity and choice in Charles County.

Expanding Resources for Older Adults

The Department of Community Services serves as the designated Area Agency on Aging for Charles County, and provides programs and services to promote independence, dignity and quality of life for older adults. The Area Agency on Aging joined the U.S. Administration for Community Living's nationwide movement — known statewide as Maryland Access Point — to transform successful senior information and assistance programs into an enhanced interagency network in an effort to better serve the information and referral resource needs of disabled adults, older adults and their caregivers.

In collaboration with community partners, the Aging and Senior Programs Division launched a wide-reaching advertising campaign for Maryland Access Point, conducted community outreach, established a toll-free number, reorganized service delivery models to fit the Maryland Access Point goals, hosted an interagency training and achieved national certification from the Alliance for Information and Referral Specialists. With the help of the Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, the division designed and installed four self-service, publicly accessible, benefit screening kiosks in Waldorf, Nanjemoy and Port Tobacco.



Maryland Access Point
Charles County





Special Olympics • Charles County and Special Populations Programs

Special Olympics Maryland and the Department of Community Services, in a joint partnership, offer a year-round program for athletic conditioning, training and competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities who are at least eight years of age. There is no maximum age limit. All Special Olympics sports activities are free of charge to athletes. Currently, Special Olympics Charles County offers a chance to compete in 11 Olympic-style sports throughout the year.

The Special Populations program area offers a variety of recreational classes and programs designed to meet the needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Not all programs in this area will meet the needs and interests of all residents with special needs. Programs continue to be developed for those with physical disabilities such as arthritis, minor injury rehabilitations and more.

Serving Our Youngest Citizens

The Local Management Board is responsible for developing a comprehensive array of human services for all children, youth and families in Charles County as well as monitoring and evaluating contracts for services, outcomes and results provided by the county and private human services. Through grants from the Governor's Office for Children, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Social Services and the Department of Education, more than 2,000 youth and families were served. More than 6,000 summer meals were provided to youth in communities that have been identified as, "area-eligible" by the Department of Education. Through a cooperative effort with the Charles County Public Schools and the Department of Community Services Recreation Division, summer camp scholarships were offered to homeless families. Other programs for youth aged infant to 18 years include: middle school summer programs; individual, group and family therapy programs; and programs for first-time, at-risk and teen parents. A one-click consolidation of information was added to the Charles County Government website, with links to area agencies providing services to at-risk youth.

Based on increasing awareness and concern over bullying, the Local Management Board partnered with Charles County Public Schools to send five staff members to the National Conference on Bullying. These staff persons presented bullying awareness presentations in community settings including elementary to middle school "transition dinners," public service announcements posted on the Board of Education website and parent/teacher/student organization meetings in an effort to increase awareness and reduce the incidence of bullying in schools.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Offering Activities for Youth

The Department of Community Services' Recreation Division provides quality sports, recreation and leisure activities for citizens of all ages. The division consists of aquatics, community centers, trips and tours, gymnastics, sports and a summer camp program. With a focus on youth activities and programs, the community centers' expanded program offerings resulted in an increase in participation in the afterschool programs, drop-in programs and other leisure and fitness activities. Organized youth sports leagues also enjoyed an increase in participation. Through continued involvement with the Partnership for a Healthier Charles County, the division took the lead in spearheading youth programs and activities to help combat childhood obesity. In partnership with the Local Management Board and Charles County Public Schools, summer meal and send-a-kid-to-camp programs were implemented.

Supporting Public Parks and Open Spaces

New improvements at Gilbert Run Park were opened for public enjoyment. This nature-based park, located on Route 6 nine miles east of La Plata, features a freshwater lake, fishing, boat rentals, playground activities, hiking trails and group picnic pavilions. It is one of the original facilities in the county's park system; being nearly 40 years old, the infrastructure of the popular park was in need of upgrades and rehabilitation. Using matching funds from the county and the state's Program Open Space, a new visitor center, boat rental/concessions building, an amphitheater restroom facility, two fishing piers and a sea wall were added to the park. All new construction is compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines and takes advantage of new energy efficient standards. Gilbert Run Park improvements have been well received by the community, and will allow the county to better serve the public with quality and up-to-date park facilities.

The County Commissioners committed to continuing with phase two of construction for the Indian Head Rail Trail, a 13-mile paved recreational trail that traverses from the Town of Indian Head to White Plains. Phase two construction comprises development of trail-side amenities, many of which were completed during fiscal 2012, including: a mid-trail rain shelter; design and development of several interpretive panels; construction of an event pavilion; installation of sponsor benches; the design and construction of stone arch entranceways at each end of the trail; and development of a ¼-mile path connecting Bensville Park in White Plains to the trail. The connection with Bensville Park provides parking and access to restroom facilities, water fountains and a playground area. The Indian Head Rail Trail was recognized as the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's National Trail of the Month in July 2011.

Pisgah Park, a 234-acre park located off of Mason Springs Road in the Pisgah community, officially opened for public use. The park was planned and developed in response to a demonstrated demand for more parks and sports-related facilities in the western portion of Charles County. 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's sports fields accommodate the local community's need for play facilities, serve a growing demand for countywide sports league play and contain the necessary infrastructure to be an adequate youth sports tournament venue.

TOURISM

Making Charles County a Tourist Destination

The County Commissioners approved a tourism destination plan recognizing the importance of this viable industry in leisure and hospitality areas and as an economic engine that contributes to the economy in visitor spending and job support. Also, the county's tourism destination plan identifies ways to support and retain agriculture in Charles County. As part of the plan, a new marketing slogan and brand — "Celebrate Charles!" — was developed for tourism office events.

More than 500 events took place in the county throughout the year ranging from weekly farmers' markets, summer concert series, live plays, church concerts, sports tournaments, birding and fishing tournaments to hiking, biking, fairs, festivals, bazaars and flea markets.

An element of the tourism destination plan is expansion of the county's cultural arts presence. The Tourism Office worked with the Charles County Government local cable television station, CCGTV, to produce commercials promoting various arts features, including the Mattawoman Creek Art Center; Celebrate Charles; Chautauqua, MD; and the War of 1812. The commercials aired on CCGTV and the county's YouTube channel. Regency Furniture Stadium aired the commercials during home game public service announcements. Additionally, a television show featuring the Mattawoman Creek Art Center and the Centerville Band of Piscataway Indians was developed to promote programs and experiences offered by both groups.

celebrate *Charles!*

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 waterfowl, including Great Blue Herons.



Welcoming Travelers

The Crain Memorial Welcome Center, located in Newburg, is open daily from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and offers valuable assistance to travelers as they enter Charles County and the state of Maryland. In fiscal 2012, Welcome Center travel counselors provided information and services for a positive trip experience to approximately 30,000 citizens and visitors.

While at the Welcome Center, citizens and travelers enjoyed visual displays, such as the oldest elevator in Charles County (1939), removed from the original Physician's Memorial Hospital building (now part of Civista Medical Center), which has been relocated to the Welcome Center.

SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Providing Housing Assistance to Families

The Charles County Department of Community Services' Housing Authority administers programs that provide assistance to low- and moderate-income citizens. The Housing Authority's county-funded programs provide assistance in several different areas.

The Rural Housing Initiative resulted in outreach to more than 1,000 citizens. The initiative provides housing replacement and rehabilitation assistance to homeowners needing housing and plumbing repairs, including the installation of indoor plumbing. Outreach included mail-outs to more than 900 residents, distribution of program fliers and community meetings. Additionally, brochure stands with informational fliers were placed at community water supply systems. More than 360 fliers are retrieved annually from the brochure stands. Seven rehabilitation loans were executed for home repairs.

The Charles County Settlement Expense Loan Program (SELP) provides direct financial assistance of up to \$6,000 for settlement expenses to qualified low- and moderate-income first-time home buyers in Charles County. The loan is secured by a second mortgage, repayment of which is deferred until such time as the property is resold, transferred, refinanced, or the buyer discontinues occupancy of it as a principal residence. Nine SELP loans were processed totaling in excess of \$50,000 in assistance.

A new vendor was selected to operate the Robert J. Fuller Transitional House in Waldorf, a 21-bed facility for men providing emergency beds and transitional housing. The vendor provides individualized case-management services to assist the participants in obtaining permanent housing.



Leveraging Federal and State Housing Funds

The Housing Authority administers the Housing Choice Voucher program. This program, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides ongoing assistance to families to ensure that rental housing is affordable based on family income, and is decent, safe and sanitary based on housing quality standards. With more than \$8 million in annual funding received, approximately 830 households received monthly rental assistance through the program. In fiscal 2012, more than 90 new participants enrolled in the Housing Choice Voucher program. One program participant became a first-time homeowner. For program participants able to obtain mortgage financing through an independent lender, housing choice voucher funds may be used toward mortgage payments.

More than 200 citizen inquiries were received on the State Special Loans program, which provides low- and no-interest loans to eligible homeowners to finance housing rehabilitation projects and, in extreme cases, complete home replacements. In cases where there is no affordability on the part of the homeowner to repay a loan, the loans may be completely deferred until the property is sold or transferred. The Housing Authority processed more than \$450,000 in loan applications, and a total of seven loans were settled.

The state of Maryland awarded the Housing Authority \$24,000 in Emergency Shelter Grant funding, which was dispersed to local homeless shelters for operating and client assistance expenses. An additional \$18,000 in Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program funds were awarded to the Housing Authority to provide rental and utility assistance to needy families on the brink of homelessness.

The Housing Authority managed several Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) aimed at addressing the region's foreclosure crisis. In partnership with the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, the Housing Authority received \$90,000 to provide foreclosure prevention counseling to more than 145 families. An additional \$375,000 in CDBG grant funding was used to provide down payment assistance to low- and moderate-income home buyers purchasing foreclosed and vacant homes to be used as their principal residence.

A \$100,000 community legacy grant from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development provided partial funding for a newly built Waldorf Jaycees' Field of Dreams baseball field at Laurel Springs Park. The field was designed for use by persons with disabilities as a barrier-free ball field. The field is open to the public, and it is estimated that more than 4,800 people will utilize the ball field annually.

Maintaining Property Standards

The Property Standards Task Force started monthly meetings, and reviewed options for improving residential property standards, possible rental housing registration, foreclosure issues, and homeowner association concerns. The task force presented recommendations to the County Commissioners for improving property maintenance standards and homeowner association issues. 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.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Supporting a Thriving Business Climate

The County Commissioners approved the creation and core structure of a full-service Department of Economic Development to ensure Charles County's competitiveness in the attraction of new firms, as well as growth of its existing business base.

The department engaged in a number of recruitment activities such as assisting in the location of a new firm to the county's sole Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone in Waldorf, and developing detailed economic and demographic data sets for Charles County and Waldorf. Information gathered was in response to requests from upscale grocery chains as well as select brokers and consulting firms assessing the market outlook for investment activity and location alternatives in Charles County.

Assisting Local and Minority Businesses

The department successfully developed a Small Local Business Enterprise Program designed to grow locally based businesses by providing vendor preferences to Charles County firms doing business with county government. The development of a comprehensive list of local and regional resources for assisting small business was developed and implemented. Partnerships with the department's sister agencies were established, and a system of cross referrals initiated.

Economic Development, in partnership with the Small Business Development Center at the College of Southern Maryland, hosted an MBE/DBE Application Assistance Workshop presented by the Maryland Department of Transportation's Office of Minority Enterprise — the state's official certification office. The program was designed to help small minority- and women-owned businesses identify and connect with private and public sector contracting opportunities.

Among the department's other recruitment activities, it assisted in the location of a new firm to the county's sole HUB Zone in Waldorf, and developed detailed economic and demographic data sets for Charles County and Waldorf in response to requests from upscale grocery chains as well as select brokers and consulting firms assessing the market outlook for investment activity and location alternatives in Charles County.



The 2011 Economic Development Summit — a gathering to feature local businesses, professionals, entrepreneurs and angel investors — was held on October 26 at the Greater Waldorf Jaycees Community Center. The 2011 theme “Harvesting Our Own” was designed to appeal to various business types — startups to established businesses; from the ones that are already growing to those poised and positioning to scale. The keynote speaker, Robin Phelps (Denver, Colorado) is a national specialist with the Edward Lowe Foundation's National Center for Economic Gardening. Ms. Phelps spoke on the topic “Economic Wither or Wealth: The Imperative for Harvesting Your Own.” The event was sponsored by 18 separate local businesses.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Protecting Sensitive Waterways

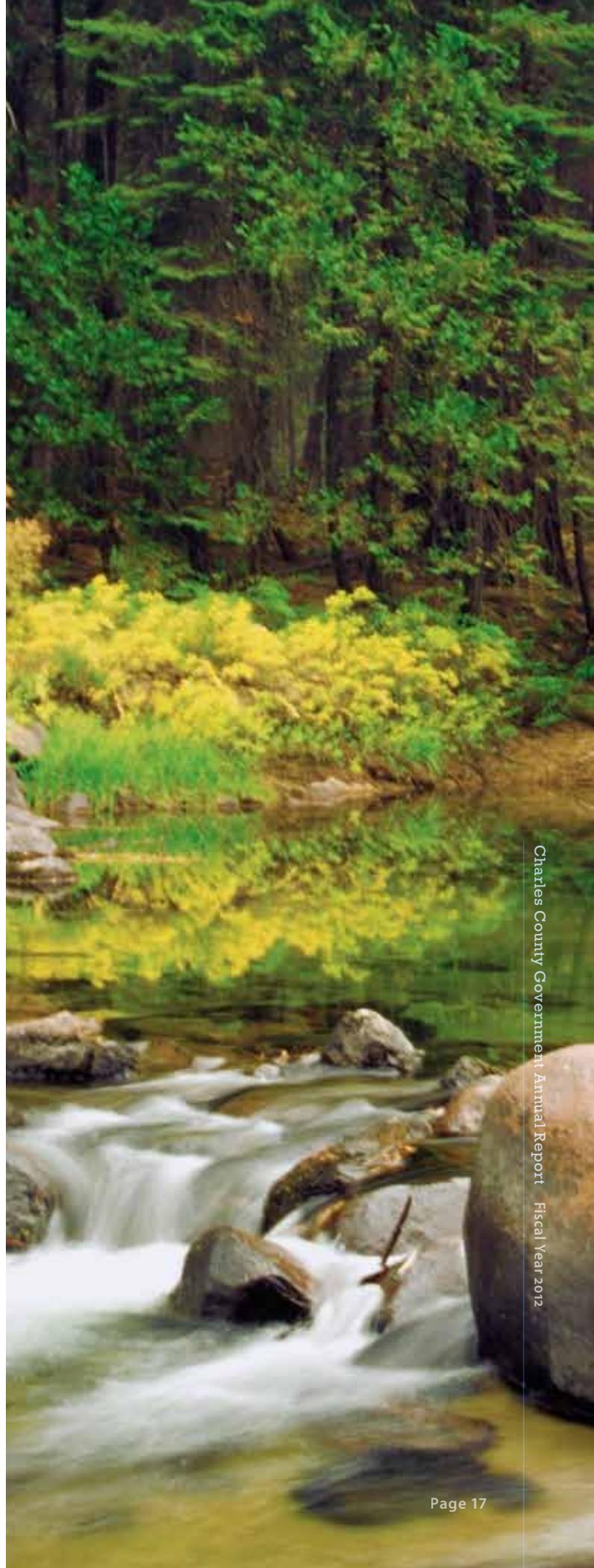
The Department of Planning and Growth Management's Planning Division administers the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems permit, which lasts for five years and contains numerous conditions to improve stormwater quality. The department hired a consultant to evaluate costs and propose additional projects to meet the Watershed Implementation Plan requirements. The department developed a two-year work program with specific milestones, including development of a stormwater utility fund, a new requirement of House Bill 987.

Preventing Cross Connections

Charged with maintaining the quality of Charles County's drinking water, the Department of Public Works' Utilities Division began a comprehensive program — one of the first of its kind in Maryland — that exists to protect citizens and addresses cross connection control issues. Other municipalities have requested to use Charles County as a model for program development. Annually inspected and tested backflow prevention devices and assemblies ensure that potential contaminants cannot flow back through household or commercial plumbing systems. Irrigation systems are the greatest concern. Potential cross connections involving fertilizers, chemicals and animal excrement may be back-siphoned into a home's drinking water without proper backflow prevention. Installation of backflow preventers is required to be completed by a plumber registered with the county. Registered plumbers must have a backflow permit.

Maximizing Energy Efficiency Efforts

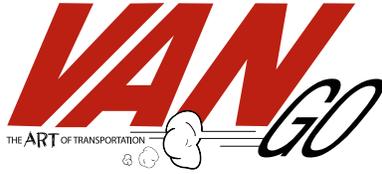
One of the projects funded through the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant is the review of existing codes to consider changes to promote energy efficiency. The consultants for this project completed a report titled, "Green Codes and Standards for Charles County." The report makes a series of recommendations for future codes for buildings, lighting, zoning and stormwater design. The department briefed the County Commissioners on the "Green Codes and Standards" report. Consultants and staff began work on a draft of specific code changes and commenced the legislative review and approval process.



INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION

Getting Citizens Where They Need to Go

VanGO public transit provides transportation opportunities within Charles County, and serves many desired primary destinations, with routes covering the Waldorf, St. Charles, La Plata, Indian Head, Charlotte Hall, Newburg, Bryans Road and Nanjemoy areas. Most routes operate Monday through Saturday on hourly schedules. During fiscal 2012, the VanGO fixed-route services transported 743,321 passengers, a nine percent increase from the previous year; and 29,636 specialized door-to-door trips for elderly and disabled residents, an eight percent increase. The transit service logged in excess of 1.5 million miles providing 78,000 hours of service.



The Maryland Transit Administration, based on very high commuter ridership levels from Southern Maryland, added six new express trips to the Washington metro area from Waldorf and Accokeek. These new trips are helping to relieve overcrowding on other routes and the increasing demand for park and ride space in Waldorf by utilizing the available parking at Regency Furniture Stadium.

Saving Transportation Funding Dollars

The VanGO advertising program is continuing into its third year with the new agency, which is promoting primarily “wraps” that cover entire sides of buses. This program has been highly successful and is producing revenue not previously realized. The advertising program reduces the county’s reliance on public funds to conduct operations. Also, Charles County received a planning grant for a feasibility study examining the possibility of establishing a county-owned transit maintenance facility. Construction of such a facility for the use by the operations contractor would permanently reduce transit operating costs, potentially saving the county millions of dollars over the life of the building.

Enhancing Public Transportation Services

The Department of Planning and Growth Management’s Capital Services Division manages projects aimed at improving and expanding the transportation infrastructure for Charles County. One such project involves the primary operating hub and transfer point for VanGO, the county-owned park-and-ride lot at the intersection of Route 301 and Smallwood Drive. The Route 301 park-and-ride project consists of constructing an information office with a bathroom, curb and gutter, sediment erosion control, pavement overlay, signage, striping of the Route 301 park-and-ride and several additional enhancements and passenger amenities.

Setting the Framework for High-Capacity Transit

The County Commissioners took the first major step in making high-capacity transit service a reality by applying for discretionary funds through the Federal Transit Administration, which would fund the completion of a federal alignment evaluation process, which includes extensive public involvement and evaluation. With the fastest-growing commuter bus service in the state of Maryland, Charles County is developing quickly a demand for high-capacity transit service, such as light rail. Based on studies completed by the Maryland Transit Administration, an alignment corridor has been identified from the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station in Prince George’s County to Waldorf and White Plains.



INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER SUPPLY AND ROADS

Upgrading Pedestrian Walkways

The Department of Planning and Growth Management's Capital Services Division evaluates pedestrian needs throughout the county, and manages the sidewalk design and intersection improvement projects with the State Highway Administration's (SHA) right of way. Projects revolve around hiker and biker trails, as well as sidewalk improvements. Through the SHA's sidewalk program, the division made progress toward installing sidewalks along state highways in Charles County. Approved projects include: a proposed sidewalk and curb along Route 228 (from Chestnut Drive to Marsh Hawk Drive), which will provide safer accessibility for pedestrians; a sidewalk and curb project near the Route 288 and Western Parkway intersection to install pedestrian crosswalks, handicap-accessible ramps, push-button pedestrian signals and connection with existing hiker and biker trails; and installation of 1,743-feet of sidewalk on Route 210 (Wooster Drive to Ruth B. Swann Drive) for safer pedestrian accessibility.

The Department of Public Works' Roads Division removed and replaced damaged sidewalks throughout the county. Repairs were completed to more than 3,400 feet of sidewalk. Additional funding was allocated to repair or replace damaged 240 feet of curbs and gutters.

In Hampshire and Pinefield neighborhoods, a precision concrete cutting method was used to repair 1,600 feet of sidewalk. The precision concrete cutting method eliminates trip hazards in concrete that has lifted ¼-inch to two-and-a-half inches in depth. This method prevents dust and debris runoff, and resulted in cost savings of approximately \$25,000.

Regulating Neighborhood Parking

The Department of Planning and Growth Management initiated revised regulations pertaining to commercial parking in residential neighborhoods. The commercial parking issues addressed concerns with parking on public streets in neighborhoods and the unsightliness of these vehicles. The road ordinance was updated to create a process for signage to be placed by a developer during the initial construction phase. An additional ordinance was approved to create a system for community associations and residents to petition the county to place "no parking" signs along certain roads, which the Charles County Sheriff's Office could enforce by use of parking tickets.



Charles County Government Annual Report Fiscal Year 2012

Updating Water and Sewer Standards

The Department of Planning and Growth Management commenced a comprehensive update to the design provisions of the Water and Sewer Ordinance. The Water and Sewer Ordinance update created new design provisions for water lines, sewer lines, pumping stations and well sites. This update was vetted with the development industry, and is intended to improve the design of these important utility facilities. These standards have been better defined, consistent design criteria have been established, and a reduction in long-term maintenance issues is expected based on the updated standards.

Improving Water Lines

The county completed the Bryans Road water infrastructure improvement project. This newly installed water line serves existing residents along the Route 227 corridor, and the expansion of the Maryland Airport.



Charles County's
Benedict
WATERFRONT VILLAGE

PLANNING AND SMART GROWTH

Enhancing Waterfront Communities

The County Commissioners approved recommendations for several waterfront planning areas, including Aqualand marina, Port Tobacco and Benedict. The Aqualand site is an important site for the county. It provides opportunities for redevelopment of the waterfront, enhancing public access and serving as an entry way development project when entering Maryland from Virginia — for those crossing the bridge on the Potomac River. Aqualand has been targeted (along with other potential sites in southern Charles County) for further study as a part of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Department of Planning and Growth Management moved forward a Port Tobacco Village plan to partially re-create the historic “town square” area. Work began on a joint county/federal grant-funded project to develop an entryway into Port Tobacco Village to help commemorate the anniversary of the War of 1812 and the associated activity that occurred in Benedict in 1814. The project includes an analysis of the historic Stagg Hall residence and potential re-use options for it and other facilities.

Planning with the Public in Mind

The Department of Planning and Growth Management conducted extensive redevelopment planning, incorporating public outreach as a vital part of the process. The Planning Division pursued several neighborhood revitalization plans and implementation programs, including the Waldorf Urban Design Study. The Economic Development Department participated in a stakeholder interview with consultants conducting an on-site planning workshop for the Waldorf Urban Design Study phase one development analysis. Other redevelopment plans include the Benedict and Hughesville revitalization plans and improvements for the historic Port Tobacco Village area.

The Benedict Waterfront Revitalization Plan was developed with extensive community input and support. The Economic Development Department worked with the Department of Planning and Growth Management to connect a kayak rental company with a waterfront restaurant in Benedict for the purpose of creating a partnership for kayak rentals at Benedict. The department identified USDA grant and loan programs to benefit infrastructure improvements in Benedict.

The department had extensive, ongoing dialogue with citizens throughout the county as a part of the Comprehensive Plan update efforts. Land use map scenarios were developed for the Planning Commission’s consideration. Alternative maps were created outlining ways to limit density and concentrate development.

The Economic Development Department and Planning Division met with representatives from Benedict to explore a possible state enterprise zone feasibility study.

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Promoting an Employee-Friendly Workplace

Based on feedback from employees, the Department of Human Resources established an employee committee to serve as a communication outlet for employee recommendations and input. Recommendations from the employee committee resulted in a number of employee-friendly efficiency enhancements, such as: establishing e-mail account access for all Department of Emergency Services employees; disseminating county news releases to all county employees; and implementing a leave sell-back program.

The committee analyzed the results of an Employee Satisfaction Survey and presented recommendations to the County Commissioners based on survey data. The Commissioners reinstated a merit pay system for employees, offered employees paid legal resources, allowed employee access to the carwash bay, added an Internet café and quiet area in the employee lunch room and approved closing early the day before and the day of several holidays.

On Sept. 30, the employee committee hosted an employee picnic. Approximately 500 Charles County Government employees and family members attended the event. In December and January, the employee committee encouraged Departments to host dessert receptions at various county facilities.

Managing Take-Home Vehicle Use

The Department of Planning and Growth Management initiated a GPS system to track “take-home vehicles” used in the Charles County Government motor pool. The GPS system tracks vehicle location, speed, idle time and hours of service. The collected data assists the county with dispatching personnel, enhancing safety, minimizing fuel usage and allocating vehicles.

Increasing Diversity in Upper Management

The Department of Human Resources analyzed demographics for exempt positions, both managerial and professional. Of the candidates who voluntarily provided demographic information, the average percentages of female and minority applicants were approximately 32 percent and 29 percent, respectively. In May 2012, the department began tracking demographics for all positions. From May to June, of the applicants who applied for positions and provided demographic information, 32 percent were female and 40 percent were minorities.

The department advertised in a variety of local and regional news sources, including: the Afro American, the Washington Hispanic, the Washington Post, the Maryland Independent and numerous educational and industry-specific publications. Employment opportunities were advertised with agencies such as the National Association of Black Engineers, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Association of Counties.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

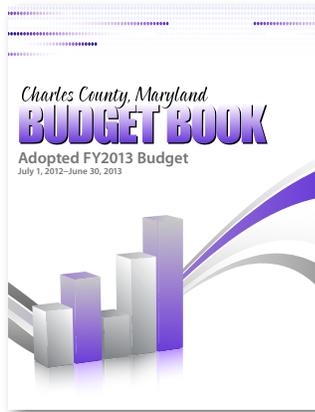
The Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services is responsible for the financial and technological administration of the County. The department's goal is to effectively and efficiently manage the fiscal operations within the county government, based upon sound, comprehensive, short-term and long-term fiscal policies. The long-standing principles and practices of Charles County Government have been the hallmark of our solid financial planning and management.

The Department is responsible for five divisions, all of which are integral and contribute to the financial success of the County: Accounting, Budget, Information Technology, Purchasing and Treasury.

FY2012 Department Accomplishments

The Accounting Division has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 10 consecutive years by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada.

The Budget Division received the Certificate of Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 16th consecutive year from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Book. The certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental budgetary reporting. In order to receive the award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets the program criteria as a policy document, operation guide, financial plan and communication device.



The budget book contains nearly 500 pages, and is available as a resource document in our local public libraries as well as on our county's website. The book provides the reader with information on all county programs and the amount of funds dedicated to the programs. It also contains facts, figures and interesting historical information on the county.

Key Fiscal Statistics

Bond Credit Rating

Fitch	AAA
Moody's	Aa1
Standard and Poor's	AA

Fiscal Year 2013 Budgets

General Fund	\$325 Million
Capital Project Fund	\$ 73 Million
Special Revenue Funds	\$ 54 Million
Enterprise Funds	\$ 40 Million

Tax Rates

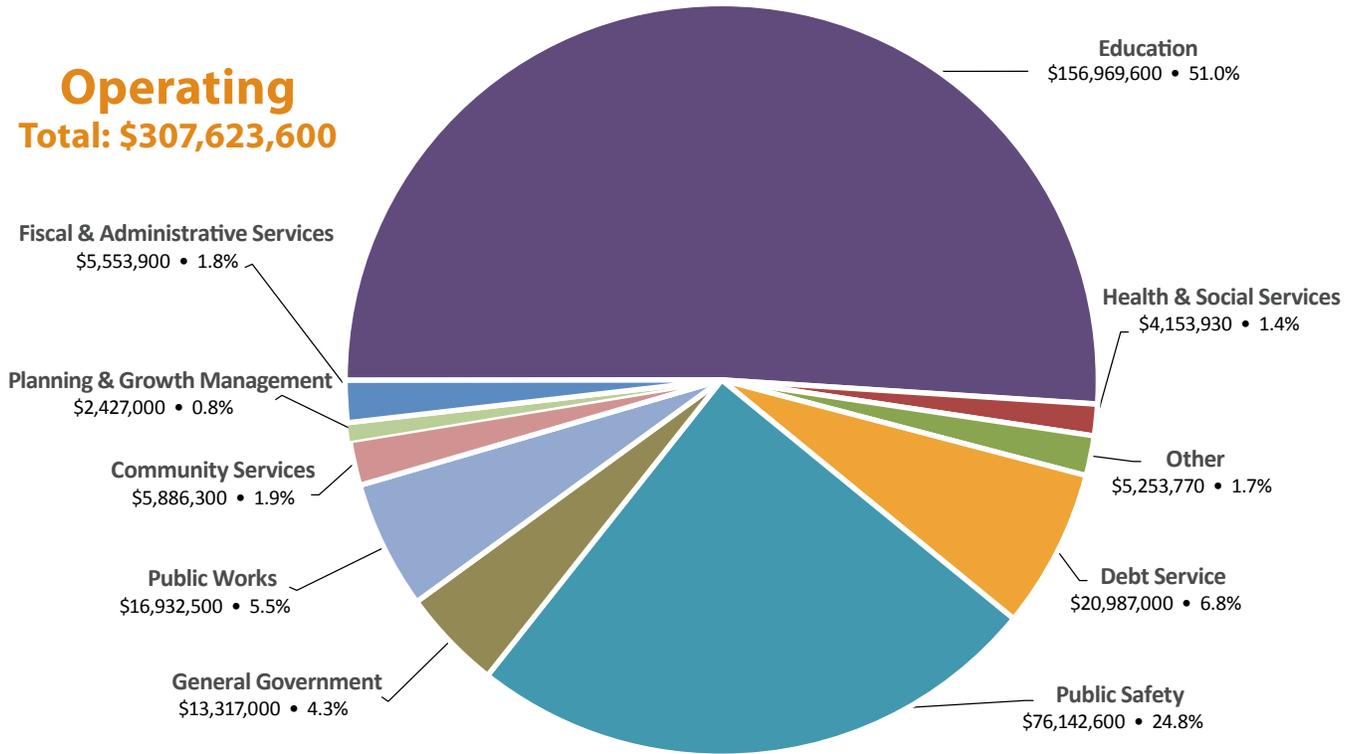
Property Tax Per \$100 of Assessed Value	\$1.233
(State and County Rate Combined)	
Income Tax29%

The Information Technology Division was recognized as "The Nation's Most Digitally Advanced County" by receiving first place in the Digital County Survey for counties in its population range. E.Republic's Center for Digital Government and Digital Communities program, in partnership with the National Association of Counties, identifies best technology practices among counties nationwide. The data collected showed that Charles County is rising to the challenge of finding impressive and innovative ways to use technology to deliver affordable public service. The division has been recognized for its technology practices by the Center for Digital Government for the last 10 consecutive years.

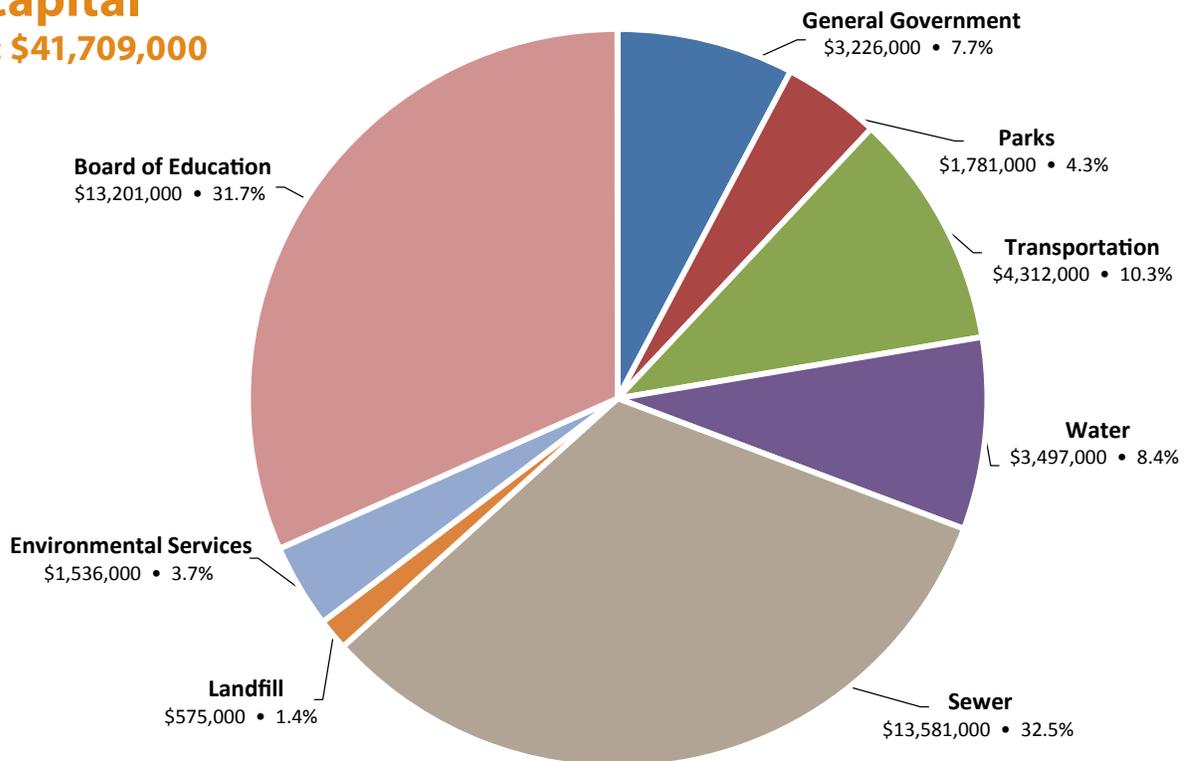
OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

Fiscal Year 2012

Operating Total: \$307,623,600



Capital Total: \$41,709,000



Charles County Government



Roy E. Hancock
Acting County Administrator

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

EDITOR

Crystal Hunt
Public Information Office

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tina Kozloski
Media Promotions Office

WEB MASTER

Janet Sferrella
Fiscal and Administrative Services

CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT

DIRECTORS

Peter Aluotto

Planning and Growth Management

Stephen Brayman

Human Resources

Kwasi Holman

Economic Development

Deborah Hudson

Fiscal and 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

www.CharlesCountyMD.gov

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...

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.

Charles County's official tree is the Dogwood. The Dogwood tree produces beautiful flowers each spring. The 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 one- to three-foot stems and lacy flowers that do not blossom until their second year.