

# Charles County 2010



2010 Annual Report to the Citizens of Charles County

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**Front Cover:**

The new Charles County Courthouse was completed in June 2010. The \$17.4 million dollar project will serve as home to the County's District Court.



## 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

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.



Edith J. Patterson, Ed.D.  
 Vice President  
 (District 2)

## 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



Samuel N. Graves, Jr.  
 (District 1)

## Regular Board Meetings

Meetings of the Charles County Board of Commissioners are scheduled each week in the Charles County Government Building. The meetings are broadcast 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.



Reuben B. Collins, II  
 (District 3)

## 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. Vacancies are announced in the local media, on the County Government website, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org), and on CCG-TV.



Gary V. Hodge  
 (District 4)

# Celebrating Our History...

## The Courthouse at Moore's Lodge

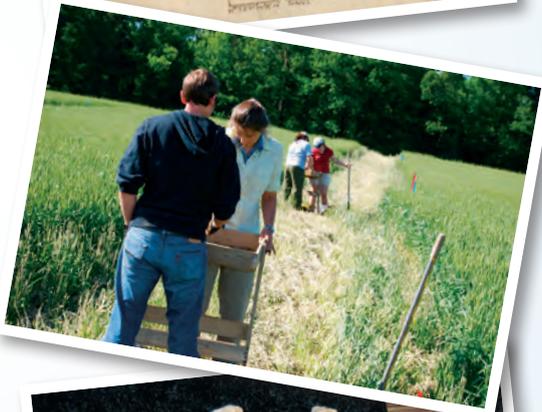
In June 2008, anthropology students from St. Mary's College of Maryland discovered what had seemed nearly impossible to locate – Charles County's first courthouse at Moore's Lodge. The oldest government building in the county, and one of the oldest in Maryland, the courthouse at Moore's Lodge was established in 1674 and served the county's residents until 1727. Functions of the court included reviewing colonial laws, taxing or transferring property (including slaves and indentured servants), providing a place for colonists to interact socially, and even providing a prison for colonists who broke the law.

The team who discovered the site was assembled and led by Michael J. Sullivan, a businessman and Charles County historian. Mr Sullivan's team included Kevin Norris, a registered Maryland surveyor with Lorenzi, Dodds, & Gunnill, Inc., and Diane Giannini, a genealogist. Dr. Julia A. King led the students from St. Mary's College.

The team had a few important clues, including a 1697 plat depicting the three-acre parcel with the courthouse, stocks, ordinary tavern, orchard, and fences. Using old-fashioned shoe-leather sleuthing, Norris and Sullivan discovered that the 150-acre tract called "Moore's Lodge" had been absorbed by a more recent, larger tract, and Giannini discovered that the chain was broken when a female heir's second husband inherited the property. King and her students tested the Sullivan-Norris-Giannini model, pinpointing the courthouse site and nearby public house. Concentrations of glass, ceramics, tobacco pipes, and many other artifacts revealed the accuracy of the model.

The discovery of this historic location provides an opportunity to better understand how Charles County citizens functioned in colonial times. The Courthouse at Moore's Lodge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history and yielded information important to Charles County's history.

Today, the Courthouse at Moore's Lodge is on land owned by the family of Xavier W. Garner, Sr. and Mary R. H. Garner, descendants of the long-ago, original inn-keeper, Thomas Hussey. Their interest, enthusiasm, and sense of stewardship mean that the old courthouse site will be preserved for a long time to come.



# Investing in Our Future...

## Blue Crabs Stadium



Regency Furniture Stadium offers a full range of family-friendly features and attractions, including a large catered picnic area overlooking the field and an amusement area for kids of all ages. The stadium also serves as a multi-purpose facility accommodating football, soccer, lacrosse, and other sporting events. The stadium offers family fun and professional baseball under the direction of Maryland's own legendary hall-of-famer Brooks Robinson. Regency Furniture Stadium is located in Waldorf - St. Charles just south of Billingsley Road, the new East/West highway connecting U.S. Route 301 and MD Route 5.

## Energetics Technology Center



The Energetics Technology Center (ETC) is a spin-off of the Center for Energetic Concepts Development at the University of Maryland College Park. The ETC is currently located in La Plata. The plan for the ETC is to be located in the Charles County Science & Technology Park near the Indian Head Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center. The facility will engage in research and development of energetics systems and related technologies. Customers of the ETC include: the Department of Defense, the Office of Naval Research, the Department of Homeland Security, companies involved in energetics activities, private industry, and educational institutions.

## Courthouse



The development of the new Charles County Courthouse began in April 2008 and was completed in June 2010. The \$17.4 million project will serve as home to the County's District and Orphans Courts, and also will house the County's Register of Wills and Land Records offices. The courthouse is a 75,781 square foot, two-story building with an underground parking garage, four courtrooms, four judges chambers, multiple office areas, a two-story lobby, and holding cells. The building also offers enough space for future expansion. The general contractor for the project, Facchina Construction, secured \$6 million in subcontracts from local businesses in the Tri-County area, of which 75% went to Charles County businesses.

## Waldorf Satellite Office



Charles County residents now have an alternate location to pay property tax bills and other fees. The Waldorf Satellite Office, an extension of the Charles County Treasurer's Office, Building Permits Division, and Water/Sewer Utilities Division offers residents a convenient place to handle payments and fee collections that were serviced previously only at the Charles County Government Building in La Plata. The office is accessible and open to all Charles County residents from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A drop box is available for after-hours payments.

## Waldorf West Library



The Waldorf West Library will be a state-of-the-art community learning facility, which will integrate modern technology to serve the needs of a diverse community. The library is designed to be certified as a green building through the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design third-party certification program. Construction is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2012.

## Indian Head Rail Trail



The Indian Head Rail Trail is located just 18 miles south of our Nation's Capital in Southern Maryland. The trail has a gentle grade that is perfect for trail users of all skill levels. From the town of Indian Head, the trail quickly transitions into a very unique natural outdoor experience with surroundings of mature forests, natural wetlands and farmland. The trail continues for 13 miles ending on Theodore Green Boulevard in White Plains.

## VanGO Transfer Station



The transfer pavilion will provide a designated area for all transfers, will have established locations for each route, will provide adequate amenities for passengers, will provide for an area from which VanGO staff can disseminate information and assist passengers, and will provide restroom facilities. Maryland Transit Administration previously awarded VanGO a design and engineering grant related to this project.

## Light Rail Alignment



In an effort to improve mobility for Charles County citizens, the Commissioners, in conjunction with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, the Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation

Needs, and the Prince George's County Council, endorsed light rail transit through Waldorf as a regional priority. The Commissioners look forward to working with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to implement long-term transit solutions for Charles County and Southern Maryland, and fully support light rail as a long-standing project of interest for the County and the region.

## Sidewalks Improvements



The Commissioners completed the Pedestrian Safety Demonstration Project by constructing five-foot wide concrete sidewalks at Smallwood Drive West and at Western Parkway in Waldorf. These improvements provide safe pedestrian

access for citizens traveling to and from shopping centers and local businesses. On Smallwood Drive, sidewalk improvements were completed along the north side of Smallwood Drive from the U.S. Route 301 commuter park-and-ride lot to the Mall Circle and to the O'Donnell Lake development area. The Western Parkway sidewalk project stretched along the west side of Western Parkway from the intersection at MD Route 228 to the intersection at the Millbrook Neighborhood.

## Road Improvements



The north-south Rosewick Road/St. Charles Parkway extension is a vital link between Waldorf and La Plata. The opening of this extension improved local traffic circulation and serves an alternate route to Crain Highway (Route 301). County staff constructed traffic signals at the intersections of St. Patrick's Drive at Billingsley Road and Rosewick Road at Washington Avenue, to reduce accidents at these busy intersections. The Middletown Road Extension from MD 228 to Billingsley Road, a \$17.2 million project, and the Western Parkway road extension, which opened to traffic in October 2007, improved access and maneuverability on Charles County roadways.

## St. Charles High School



Charles County's newest school, St. Charles High School, is slated to open in 2013. St. Charles will be the County's seventh high school, and will be one of the anchors of a new green community already underway in St. Charles. The

school will contain several specialized features, available for use by all Charles County Public School students in grades Pre-K through 12, including a digital classroom, Science on a Sphere, and Telepresence. The school will house traditional classrooms, a 600-seat auditorium, a 2,000-seat gymnasium, a cafeteria, a media center, and administrative areas. Athletic features include a football stadium with an eight-lane track, 14 sports fields, and eight tennis courts. The school will be located on Billingsley Road adjacent to the Regency Furniture Stadium in White Plains.

## Waldorf Urban Design



The Commissioners initiated the Waldorf Urban Design Study in 2008 to create a cohesive, attractive, and walkable urban environment with a unique sense of place that serves as a hub for public transit and supports the incorporation of

regional transit—light rail—in Downtown Waldorf (areas north of Acton Lane to south of Leonardtown Road, and between U.S. Route 301 and the Pope's Creek Rail Line). The project includes the development of attractive and functional streets, public parks and open spaces, and pedestrian bicycle facilities. An eleven-member Waldorf Citizens Advisory Committee was appointed by the Commissioners to guide land use and development in Waldorf.

## Maryland Airport Runway Extension



Maryland Airport is a 380-acre, privately owned, public use general aviation facility. Seventy percent of Maryland Airport users are primarily Charles County residents. Under the airport master plan, upgrades will include new taxiways, navigational aids, a new 4,250 square foot terminal, and support facilities. The new facility will become also a medical helicopter support center for the region. Maryland Airport is located just south of Pomomkey near the Energetics Technology Center and the Indian Head Science & Technology Park under development.

# Educational Achievements



## Providing a Quality Public Education

Charles County offers quality public education that focuses on the needs of children and helps each child reach his or her potential. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is nationally recognized for educational excellence in areas like closing the academic achievement gap to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. 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, there are four specialized educational centers that round out the offerings for one of the fastest growing school systems in Maryland. Charles County's schools also serve as centers for a wide variety of community activities.

As one of the County's largest employers, Charles County Public Schools has 3,397 sincere, dedicated professionals who work together for the education of nearly 27,000 students. In fiscal year 2010, the Commissioners voted to provide \$145.4 million to the Charles County Board of Education for the general operation of CCPS. The school system met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at all levels – elementary, middle, and high school – which is the rigorous yearly improvement required by the State and nation for student proficiency in reading and math.

## 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. More than 67% of recent high school graduates in Southern Maryland who attend undergraduate higher education institutions choose to start their futures at CSM.

CSM serves more than 23,000 students annually at its three campuses and four centers and is continually evolving to meet community needs with new facilities and programs. The average class size is 19 students.

The Waldorf Center for Higher Education combines the educational talents and resources of the College of Southern Maryland (CSM), University of Maryland University College (UMUC), 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. One of eight higher education centers Statewide, the Center serves more than 3,000 credit students annually.



College of Southern Maryland



Waldorf Center for Higher Education

## Increasing Capacity for Learning

The seventh high school in Charles County, St. Charles High School, is scheduled to be built in the Fairway Village neighborhood of St. Charles in Waldorf.

St. Charles High School will be built on a 98.95 acre parcel to include: 14 sports/recreation fields; a stadium including an eight-lane track and bleachers; and related outdoor activity areas, including environmentally sensitive stormwater management practices. The school will support a 1,600 student capacity within a 285,000 square foot, four-story structure planned to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. Green design features include geothermal heating/cooking, ENERGY STAR-rated equipment, and a digital classroom. The school is anticipated to open in fall 2013.



Artist's Rendering of St. Charles High School

## Expanding the Public Library System

The Waldorf Library, as designed, will be a 32,000 sq. ft. two-story regional library built in the O'Donnell Lake Restaurant Park located between Smallwood Drive and St. Patrick's Parkway in Waldorf. The new Waldorf Library branch will be a multi-faceted, state-of-the-art facility, allowing visitors to experience a new level of excellence in public library services. The library will offer users new models for scholarly pursuits and scientific inquiry, expanded community programs, and an introduction to transformative technologies like the World Wide Web and new approaches to information. The design and construction of the facility will incorporate measures that will allow the building to obtain a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. Construction is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2012.



Artist's Rendering of Waldorf West Library Community Literacy Center

# Safe Communities

## Protecting & Enforcing the Law

The Charles County Sheriff's Office is led by Sheriff Rex W. Coffey and is comprised of 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 Sheriff's Office is accredited internationally by the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies.

Of the many achievements the Sheriff's Office celebrated in fiscal year 2010, the most notable is the 13.2% reduction in crime. Such a steep decline is particularly remarkable considering not only the year's economic challenges but also the continued increase in Charles County's population.

The Sheriff's Office coordinates public safety campaigns that encourage safe driving, good decision making and taking responsibility for personal safety.

The Charles County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with The Chemical People of Charles County, Charles County Substance Abuse Advisory Coalition, Civista Medical Center, and Charles County Health Department, offers a Prescription Disposal Program for citizens to safely dispose of medications.

The Maryland State Police and the La Plata Town Police also provide public safety services to the citizens of Charles County. The Sheriff's Office takes pride in its alliance with these police agencies.



## Passing Laws that Save Lives

In November 2009, the Charles County Sheriff's Office Traffic Operations Unit conducted a school zone speed survey and found 38% of vehicles traveling in school zones between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. were traveling at or above 12 miles over the speed limit. Research shows that speed cameras in school zones offer an effective, efficient means to protect children. State law allows counties to use speed cameras in school zones, but the local jurisdiction must enact local legislation authorizing their use.

In fiscal year 2010, the Commissioners worked with the Charles County Sheriff's Office to take swift action to reduce these violations and prevent tragedies. The Commissioners approved Bill 2010-10, permitting the use of speed monitoring systems in designated school zones. This significant legislative action authorized the Charles County's Sheriff's Office to take steps toward implementation of speed monitoring systems to keep the roads around schools safe for students.

## Protecting Those Sworn to Serve

Sheriff Coffey and the Commissioners believe that it is in the best interests of the public to maintain the most experienced, professional, and well-trained police agency possible. Therefore, in fiscal year 2010, the Commissioners worked with Sheriff Coffey to draft and approve a Sworn Employee Retention Supplemental Agreement to protect the salaries of Charles County Sheriff's Office deputies. State law in the Charles County Code establishes the salaries of the Sheriff's deputies. In 2009 and 2010, due to reductions in the State budget, State police officers and Sheriff's deputies were subject to salary reductions pursuant to this law. The agreement ensures that the salaries of Sheriff's deputies would remain constant.

## Upgrading the 911 System

The 911 Communications Division received a \$2,350,000 grant from the Maryland Emergency Numbers System Board (ENSB) to fund a comprehensive, technical refresh of the center's 911 equipment. The grant will fund additional furniture, servers, computers, and monitors and four additional 911 call taker positions; replace the center's telephone system and associated components; and update and enhance the geographic information systems mapping interface with the center's computer-aided dispatch system. These changes will also enhance the center's capability to receive and process essential 911 information from an ever-evolving variety of communication platforms.

## Keeping the Roadways Safe

From December 2009 to February 2010, Charles County battled seven winter storms. Snow accumulation totaled slightly less than six feet for the season. These storms required the Roads Division to use up to 65 County staff, 180 pieces of contract equipment, and 11,000 tons of solar salt to keep the roads passable for motorists.

This unprecedented pattern of weather in the area was so severe and protracted that the Commissioners elected to close local government operations, and a state of emergency was declared. The Department of Emergency Services opened the emergency operations center and shelters, and requested resources from the Maryland National Guard to ensure continued operations of essential facilities such as Civista Medical Center. The Department also provided emergency transportation and assistance to citizens stranded in their homes without power or in need of medical assistance who were unable to travel in the blizzard conditions.

## Safety in the Workplace

The Department of Human Resources and the Safety Office continues to pursue a variety of customer service and supervisory skills training programs for employees. Employees completed training on topics such as financial wellness, CPR/First Aid, Defensive Driving, Bloodborne Pathogens, and other safety topics.

The Department developed a Training Catalog outlining independent study opportunities for employees to pursue. The catalog emphasizes the use of free resources, both locally and online.

Department of Utilities staff received 5,895 hours of safety training, including classroom training and weekly safety tailgate sessions. The safety topics offered were comprehensive including health issues and updating or creating new safety policies. Also, staff received 8,475 hours of technical training to improve or update skills and meet certification requirements.

## Making Safety a Priority

The Charles County Safety Officer manages and coordinates all aspects of occupational safety and health for County employees. During fiscal year 2010, an aggressive Return-to-Work Program was instituted and, due to the safety/loss control program, the County received a Loss Control Incentive of \$1.2 million in workers compensation premiums.

## Helping Citizens in Crisis

The Charles County Housing Authority's Rental Assistance Program funds are being used to provide rental assistance to families in need. Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, LifeStyles of Maryland Foundation, Inc., and the New Revival Center of Renewal are using the funds to provide rental, utility, and other housing related assistance to persons experiencing homelessness or to those in danger of becoming homeless.

In fiscal year 2010, the Housing Authority obligated \$117,160 to eight separate families in Charles County through rental assistance. The assistance provided is for rental assistance up to 18 months for each family, and up to \$850 per month.



During fiscal year 2010, Charles County activated its County Animal Response Team (CART). The mission is to provide care and housing of personal pets during evacuation and sheltering operations. Comprised of personnel from the Division of Animal Control, local veterinarians, and other community volunteers, CART is equipped and trained to provide an integrated and comprehensive shelter and care for animals during emergencies or disasters. The Charles County CART program is the first of its kind in the State of Maryland.



# Public Health

## Maintaining a Quality Health Care System

Civista Medical Center, the County's only hospital, is now managed by the University of Maryland Medical System. Civista had an excellent inspection by The Joint Commission, the national organization that establishes quality standards and inspects hospitals and health care organizations for accreditation. This achievement resulted from the hard work and dedication of Civista's voluntary board members, medical staff and employees.

With the assistance of the Charles County Government, there is now enhanced coordination between the hospital, Charles County Department of Emergency Services, and the Charles County Volunteer Fire & EMS Association. Improved processes decreased emergency room wait times and increased patient satisfaction, while accommodating increases in both the Emergency Department visits and admissions to the hospital.

A significant addition to the hospital's campus resulted from the Commissioners' donation of the original hospital building to the Civista Foundation. This historic building will be used for primary care and hospital support functions.

## Preparing for a Health Emergency

As was the case across the country, Swine Flu (H1N1) impacted Charles County during fiscal year 2010. The Commissioners, in partnership with the Charles County Health Department and the Department of Emergency Services, conducted a series of ongoing H1N1 advisory briefings for public and private community leaders to ensure the dissemination of timely and accurate information about the scope, timing, and impact of a pandemic. The Commissioners also ensured residents received public health advisory information necessary to make informed personal health decisions regarding the threat posed by H1N1.

To ensure continuity of operations during an influenza outbreak, the Commissioners approved an addendum to the Charles County Government Personnel Policy & Procedures Manual. The addendum outlines specific measures that would enable the County to function at varying levels of operations, depending upon public health concerns. To assist in identifying any potential patterns of an epidemic/pandemic within County Government, the Department of Human Resources worked with the Information Technology Division to develop an Unscheduled Leave Tracking Application.



## Using Life-Saving Techniques

The Emergency Medical Services Division received a \$40,000 grant from Southern Maryland Hospital in support of the STEMI (ST Elevated Myocardial Infarction) program. This exciting initiative provides communication platforms and equipment used by Advanced Life Support (ALS) field personnel to electronically transmit electrocardiogram readings from the ambulance directly to the emergency department enabling the facility to be prepared for the patient's condition prior to arrival.

## Making Health Care Affordable

In response to an overwhelming need to provide assistance to uninsured and underinsured populations, the Charles County Commissioners, in conjunction with the National Association of Counties, launched the Charles County Prescription Discount Card program.



Administered by CVS/Caremark, this free program to Charles County residents provides discounts on prescriptions not covered by medical insurance. On average, consumers can receive a 22% discount off of the retail price of commonly prescribed medications.

The cards can be used by all Charles County residents, regardless of age, income, or pre-existing health conditions, and are accepted nationwide at more than 60,000 participating retail pharmacies – 30 of which are in Charles County.

# Quality of Life

## Recreational Opportunities

Recreation consists of aquatics, community centers, trips and tours, gymnastics, sports, summer camps, and provides support to Special Olympics Charles County. During the spring and summer, Recreation offers discount amusement park admission tickets to residents.

Continuing with the County's green initiatives, Recreation launched online registration for recreation classes and activities. Since the launch in July 2009, there have been more than 2,800 online registrations, which represent 20% of all registration transactions. The registration office implemented the use of electronic mail for 90% of all registration receipts.

Fiscal year 2010 marked the Port Tobacco Recreation Center's first full year of use by the public. Attached to the Department of Community Services building, this stand-alone recreation gymnasium offers numerous public programs including basketball, volleyball, youth sports, instructional classes, drop-in programs, and Jazzercise®.

Elite Gymnastics & Recreation Center offers gymnastics, karate, dance, cheerleading, parent/child classes, grant-supported special needs/inclusion classes, summer camps, home school programs, and birthday parties. The facility is self-supporting through programs, classes, and lease agreements with private organizations.

The Capital Clubhouse, operated by Rink Management Services Corporation, is a 90,000 square foot year-round sports center with programming for individuals and families of all ages. Each year, approximately 65,000 people visit the Center. Rink Management Services is the largest operator of ice skating facilities in the United States.

## Serving the Senior Citizen Population

The Charles County Department of Community Services serves as the designated Area Agency on Aging for Charles County and provides a wide range of programs and services to promote independence and improve the quality of life for older persons.

Programs and services include: coordinating and accessing adult day care; benefits outreach and coordination; home-delivered Meals-on-Wheels and congregate/senior center meals which served 1,200 seniors over 46,000 meals; energy assistance; emergency assistance for food, fuel, and prescriptions; family caregiver support; health insurance assistance and consultation, visit-the-nurse programs which served over 290 seniors; housing and assisted living which assisted almost 100 seniors; information referral and assistance which provided general information to 2,420 seniors and their families and responded to over 10,000 inquiries; income tax and consultation which served 637 persons; in-home services; legal services; loan closet; protective services; senior centers; special events; social security outreach; veterans benefits; and much more. Overall, these programs served 3,374 unduplicated seniors, providing 237,819 units of service.



Community Services/Recreation Division 2010 Summer Camp Program



Elite Gymnastics & Recreation Center



Richard R. Clark Senior Center

# Economic Development



SMECO Complex Project



Maryland Airport Extension Project



Artist's Rendering of Indian Head Science & Technology Park Project



Crain Memorial Highway Welcome Center

## Fueling the Local Economy

Charles County's economic development outreach capitalized on the central location in the heart of the Baltimore/Washington/Richmond corridor, a region with more than nine million people. More than 300 business people gathered for the 12th Annual Charles County Economic Development Summit to hear about the County's economic development programs and progress. The theme of the Summit, "Creating Our Recovery," centered on information relevant to Charles County creating its own recovery as the nation worked to stabilize the economy during one of the country's worst financial crises. The Commissioners joined with local, regional, and international business representatives to address issues about commercial development, new markets for tourism, sports marketing, energetics workforce, and the economic outlook.

The General Development Plan for the Indian Head Science & Technology Park received final approval from the County and is ready to begin final design and construction. Construction of the 277-acre science and technology campus is a public-private partnership with the Joint Venture of Corporate Office Properties Trust and Facchina Development and part of the ongoing strategy to target defense contractors and related industries to support the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Indian Head Naval facility and bring more high paying jobs to the County.

In fiscal year 2010, the Minority Business Enterprise program continued to reach its goal of 15% with more than \$4.5 million in procurement awards. Also, the "Entrepreneur of the Month" program recognized locally owned businesses who contributed to the diversity of our local economy by creating jobs in various industry sectors. The Commissioners presented proclamations to these recipients – Adams Communication & Engineering Technology Inc, OutsourcelT, Chick-fil-A, SmartSite, and Secure Mitigation Group, LLC.

## MeetCharlesCounty.com

[MeetCharlesCounty.com](http://MeetCharlesCounty.com) is a new website developed in 2010 to promote economic development and tourism for Charles County. It is an interactive website that encourages visitors to search the many facets of the County for business information, enhancement or planning for a visit.





## Living, Playing, & Working in Charles County

Tourism events in 2010 brought our first half-marathon to the region, as well as a summer American Softball Association national tournament. The Commissioners appointed a Tourism Advisory Board to promote Charles County's tourism efforts; to advise the Tourism Office on local issues, data, trends, and concerns; and to provide input into the annual tourism plan for Charles County.

## Keeping the Welcome Center Open for Business

Due to state budget cuts, Charles County's Welcome Center, along with other welcome centers across the State, was slated to be closed. Matching a State grant from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Office of Tourism, the Commissioners committed \$50,000 to ensure the Welcome Center would remain open. The Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg is open and continues to offer valuable travel assistance to Charles County citizens and visitors as they enter Charles County and the State of Maryland. During the Independence Day 2010 holiday weekend, approximately 1,800 travelers visited the Welcome Center.

## Preserving & Enhancing Waterfront Property

The Department of Planning & Growth Management initiated a Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan to identify the types of development and physical improvements necessary to enhance the image of Benedict as a unique waterfront area in Charles County. Particular attention will be given to design criteria, improved access to the waterfront, facilities for historic resource interpretation, cultural events and recreation activities, and protection of view corridors.

The Commissioners set a goal of prioritizing public and private waterfront properties for preservation and protection, public access, and/or development opportunities. In December 2009, the Commissioners reviewed a report entitled, "Charles County Waterfront Development Concepts," which included preliminary analysis and conceptual graphic representations for seven waterfront sites throughout the County.



# Planning & Smart Growth

## Keeping Neighborhoods Community-Friendly

In April 2010, the Charles County Commissioners adopted Bill 2010-06, Superior Design Criteria for Cluster Developments and Planned Development Zones, as an amendment to the Charles County Zoning Ordinance. These criteria apply to all cluster subdivisions, planned employment, mixed use, or planned residential development floating zone projects. The criteria are divided into two sections, addressing the unique characteristics of Rural Development Projects and Development District Projects separately. Projects in both the rural areas and the development district include provisions for open space, forest conservation design, shared pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails, and environmental stewardship. Rural Development Projects must also address criteria for agricultural use lots, scenic views, and historic features. Development District Projects must also provide for a mix of housing, diverse architectural design, an inner-connected street network, and community gathering facilities.

## Giving Working People Access to Housing

By resolution, the Commissioners adopted definitions for affordable and workforce housing, as recommended by Charles County's Housing Authority Board.

The Housing Authority Board completed several workforce housing initiatives. The board identified goals for 2010, which include utilizing County-owned property in a Priority Funding Area in Waldorf for the development of workforce and/or affordable housing. Additionally, the board endorsed an affordable/workforce senior housing project in Waldorf called Astor House.

## Addressing Rural Housing Needs

The Department of Community Services continued working on the Commissioners' Rural Housing Initiative aimed at assisting homeowners in obtaining loans to install indoor plumbing in their residences. Through State loan programs administered by the County, eligible homeowners may obtain low- or no-interest loans for home repair and installation of indoor plumbing.

Home replacements were built and housing rehabilitation projects were completed in fiscal year 2010. Additionally, a grant application for federal funds to support the Rural Housing Initiative was completed, requesting \$270,000 to finance installation of indoor plumbing.

## Working to Create an Urban Town Center

The Commissioners approved the Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) in April 2010. The project included extensive public participation over several years, and was developed to create a town center in Waldorf and to promote Transit-Oriented Development, including light rail transit to the metropolitan Washington D.C. area.

The Commissioners approved the Vision and Architectural Design Criteria and associated graphics, two new Zoning Districts, Zoning Map Changes and various development criteria as part of the implementation of the WUDS. The project envisions mixed-use development projects, which integrate open space and a variety of residential and commercial uses where people can live, work, and play and have access to transit without the need to use an automobile.

## Making Housing Affordable

Through the Neighborhood Conservation Initiative (NCI) program, the Commissioners worked to encourage affordable housing in Charles County neighborhoods most affected by foreclosures and sub-prime lending. Charles County was awarded \$971,766 for the NCI program.

First-time homebuyers and individuals participating in the Charles County NCI Down Payment Assistance Program were invited to submit an application for additional financial assistance under the Charles County Settlement Expense Loan Program (SELP). The NCI program, administered by the Charles County Department of Community Services Housing Authority, received 47 applications.



# Infrastructure



## Executing a Transportation Network Strategy

The Commissioners continued to enhance traffic circulation and reduce congestion within the County. The Department of Planning & Growth Management coordinates the components of the Commissioners' Transportation Network Strategy, initiated in March 2002, which includes roadway improvements, commuter transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

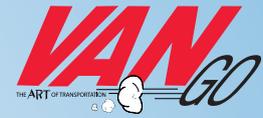
Recent roadway completions include the extension of Rosewick Road/St. Charles Parkway from DeMarr Road to U.S. 301, and the extension of Western Parkway from MD 228 to Acton Lane. In addition, several traffic safety improvements were completed or are under construction, including installing traffic signals at Billingsley Road and St. Patrick's Drive, and the intersection of Western Parkway and Acton Lane.

In order to prepare the commuter corridor for light rail services from Waldorf/White Plains to the Branch Avenue Metro station, the Commissioners: completed the Transit Corridor Preservation Study with the Maryland Transit Administration and Prince George's County; adopted the County's preferred alignment for the light rail in order to secure the right-of-way for future service; and adopted the Waldorf Urban Design Study and associated rezoning, which provides the ridership to receive federal funding to build the light rail.

A series of improvements to the County's bicycle and pedestrian network provide an alternative means of transportation and additional recreational opportunities for County residents. The Department of Planning & Growth Management completed a Pedestrian Safety Demonstration Project by constructing concrete sidewalks at Smallwood Drive West and Western Parkway in order to provide safe pedestrian access and greater mobility to citizens. These improvements provide safe pedestrian access along Smallwood Drive for travel from this popular transit stop to our shopping centers and places of business.

## Getting Citizens Where They Need to Go

VanGO public transit provides transportation opportunities within Charles County and serves several desired primary destinations.



VanGO routes cover the Waldorf, St. Charles, La Plata, Indian Head, Charlotte Hall, Newburg, and Nanjemoy areas. In fiscal year 2010, VanGO served approximately 574,548 fixed route passengers and 32,825 demand response passengers; which translates to almost 2,000 unduplicated passenger trips per day. The transit service logged more than 1.1 million miles.

In fiscal year 2010, the Department of Community Services' Transportation Division disbursed \$1.9 million in capital grant funds previously received as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This grant allowed for improvements to the VanGO transit service. Of the \$1.9 million grant, \$229,523 was used to purchase an electronic "Smart Card" fare system for VanGO that integrates all passenger fare payment and fare media options into one convenient, secure device.

The Transportation Division purchased seven new transit buses, using \$1,443,517 of the grant funds. The new buses came factory-equipped with the above-referenced electronic fare boxes. All of the new, fixed route buses have larger capacity to accommodate the increasing ridership.

## Managing Assets

All maintenance of public utilities is monitored through the new Asset Management program to develop accurate equipment histories. This information is used to identify which equipment is more reliable, least cost for maintenance, and to develop specifications to ensure that future equipment meets minimum standards for efficiency.

## Maximizing Water Allocations to Meet Demands

The Waldorf Distribution Study evaluated the water infrastructure needs to deliver water from the southeastern side of the County, where groundwater supply is plentiful, to the northwestern section of the County where groundwater has greater limitations. The Waldorf Water Distribution Study enabled the Commissioners to determine future water system improvements that will provide adequate water services into the future, and also plan a robust system of infrastructure to ensure a sustainable water supply to those areas with limited capabilities. This additional effort helps to preserve water supplies for public water systems and private well water customers.

# Environmental Awareness

## Sharing Information on "Green" Ideas & Initiatives



On April 17, 2010, Charles County Government hosted an Environmental Summit & Green Expo at North Point High School in Waldorf. This environmental gathering showcased pertinent environmental information and products that benefit consumers and, in the process of going green, save them money. The attendance for this first annual summit was 1,248.

Multiple displays featuring "green" vehicles, state-of-the-art technology in alter-

native energy and ways citizens can minimize their carbon footprint, stretched throughout the hallways of the school. Sixty-two presenters demonstrated source reduction and conservation with the use of rain barrels, energy-saving light bulbs, solar panels, and other green technologies that homeowners and businesses can use to minimize their impact on the earth, while at the same time reducing Charles County's carbon footprint.

Vendor representation included, but was not limited to: Charles County Government, Charles County Public Schools, Coca-Cola Enterprises, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, and American Community Properties Trust, featuring its "green city" initiative for environmentally friendly development in Waldorf.

A County Government informational table offering resources pertaining to "going green" initiatives was available. Among these initiatives were Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) facility construction and energy conservation efforts, as well as a host of recycling practices, such as the numerous recycling barrels at the event that were made from Coca-Cola containers that had previously held syrup.

Promotional items made from recycled materials were handed out to residents and environmentally friendly door prizes, donated by the County Commissioners and participating businesses, helped to make this a very successful event.

## Making Projects Environmentally Friendly

In fiscal year 2010, Charles County received a federal stimulus grant from the U.S. Department of Energy for green initiatives. Department of Planning & Growth Management staff began several projects that will utilize these revenues over the next two years. These projects include drafting an Energy Conservation Element to become part of the County's Comprehensive Plan, and working on a Geothermal Heat Pump Systems Design and Distribution feasibility report to utilize energy efficient heating and cooling technology in new subdivisions.

The Commissioners instructed staff to begin the process of obtaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. Projects that incorporate energy efficiency improvements into their design are eligible to receive this certification.

## Transitioning to a Paperless Environment



A Payroll Web Portal (PWP) was created allowing secure electronic viewing access for employees to see their individual payroll information – including pay history, deductions and benefits, and leave balances. This "green" initiative reduced the amount of paper, printer ink, and computing power used to print Payroll Direct Deposit statements every two weeks. Development of the web-enabled PWP enabled the County to continue its goal to move towards a paperless environment and online payroll information. The significant savings was seen in the elimination of printing more than 28,000 special direct deposit forms annually.

The County began its implementation of Laserfiche, an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS), in 2009. To date, four areas have implemented EDRMS: Accounting, the Department of Human Resources, the County Administrator's Office, and the Department of Planning & Growth Management. Accounting now processes all of its invoices through Laserfiche; the Department of Human Resources has begun scanning employee information; and the County Administrator's Office has interfaced their mail log application with the Laserfiche solution in order to handle documents one-time only.

# Government Efficiency & Accountability

## Making Government More Transparent



One of the top goals of the Commissioners is to keep residents informed by maintaining an open and transparent government. To achieve this goal, Charles County Government's Transparency Portal, called "TransCharlesCo" was developed. The portal is live and available online at [www.CharlesCounty.org/Transparency](http://www.CharlesCounty.org/Transparency).

## Improving Functionality & Automation

The Department of Public Works/ Utilities increased automation and remote monitoring of operating facilities updating information technology to efficiently operate and maintain the County's water and sewer systems.

Fiscal year 2010 marked the first year of a five-year Integrated Technology Improvement Program. A major milestone of the program is the improvement of the core of the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system by installing new servers and updated software. The Department purchased and installed Automatic Chlorine Residual monitoring equipment to work with the SCADA system. Over time, these units will improve the reliability of drinking water disinfection processes while decreasing staff time required for system operation.

Additionally, fiscal year 2010 was the first year of a multi-year automation project at the Mattawoman Water Reclamation Facility, the county's largest treatment facility. Required hardware and software were installed to form the backbone of a fully functional in-plant SCADA system and to automate the phosphorus removal process. As this system is expanded, operations staff will have the ability to more effectively monitor plant operations in less time than is currently required.

## Staying Ahead of the Digital Curve

Charles County was awarded the distinction of the Nation's Most Digital County First Place Award by the National Association of Counties for eight years. The survey data collected showed that Charles County is rising to meet the current economic challenge, by finding impressive new ways to use technology to deliver affordable public service at the very time many people expect and need more from their government.

## Conducting Internal Reviews & Assessments

The Internal Audit Office (IAO) performs audits and nonaudit services for the Commissioners. Audit objectives generally include assessments of effectiveness, efficiency, internal control, and compliance. All audit work is performed in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Nonaudit services provided by the IAO include, but are not limited to, providing information for decision making, responding to requests for advice or assistance, following up on prior audit recommendations, and conducting investigations. Management can use the information provided by the IAO to improve performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision making, initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

## Working Smarter

The Charles County Commissioners expanded efforts to offer employees teleworking options in fiscal year 2010. The Department established a partnership with the Tri-County Council and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MwCOG – Commuter Connections) to coordinate a Telework Pilot Program. Through a grant provided by MwCOG, a private consultant presented training sessions for supervisors and employees. Since implementation in April 2009, Charles County employees have teleworked a total of 430 hours.



Charles County Government Annual Report Fiscal Year 2010

# Financial Stewardship

## Issuing County Bonds

The Commissioners continued financing the capital projects budget by issuing \$30 million in General Obligation bonds in April. The infrastructure that will be constructed as a result of the bond sale includes roads, school improvements, college buildings, a health facility annex, and other facilities such as the courthouse expansion and park improvements.

The Commissioners were successful in maintaining their current bond rating with Wall Street and as a result, were rewarded with a AAA rating due to the rating agencies' recalibration of public sector ratings. The Commissioners were again rewarded for their excellent rating and financial management by receiving some of the lowest interest rates on record, thereby saving taxpayers from higher interest costs on the money borrowed.

## Developing Money-Saving Programs

The Charles County Commissioners prepared for declining revenues in fiscal year 2010 by approving an Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) for eligible employees. Employees were given three retirement dates to choose from and, in order to be eligible employees had to be at least 52 years old with at least five years of service as of their retirement date. Employees were given up to three additional years of credited service and up to three years of age towards their pension calculation. This allowed eligible employees to receive an increased pension benefit. ERIP proved to be a large budget savings initiative, providing more than \$2.5 million in overall salary savings across all funds within the Charles County budget.

## Collecting Taxes, Fees, & Fines

The Treasurer's Office is responsible for the collection and investment of all County funds, except pension plans. The Office collects County property taxes, as well as taxes for the incorporated towns of Indian Head and La Plata, and for the State of Maryland. The Treasurer's Office also collects payments for County-sponsored services such as utility bills, tag-a-bags, liquor licenses, permits, dog tags, motor vehicle registration stickers, red light fines, and other various fees and fines. The Treasurer's Office has the ability to accept credit and debit cards, as well as e-checks, for the payment of County bills.

During fiscal year 2010, the Treasurer's Office had 24,779 visitors to the main office in the County Government Building in La Plata and 9,509 visitors to the Waldorf satellite office, for a total of 34,288 visitors for the fiscal year. The total number of Treasurer's Office transactions in fiscal year 2010 was 277,647, and the use of credit cards resulted in 35,718 transactions.

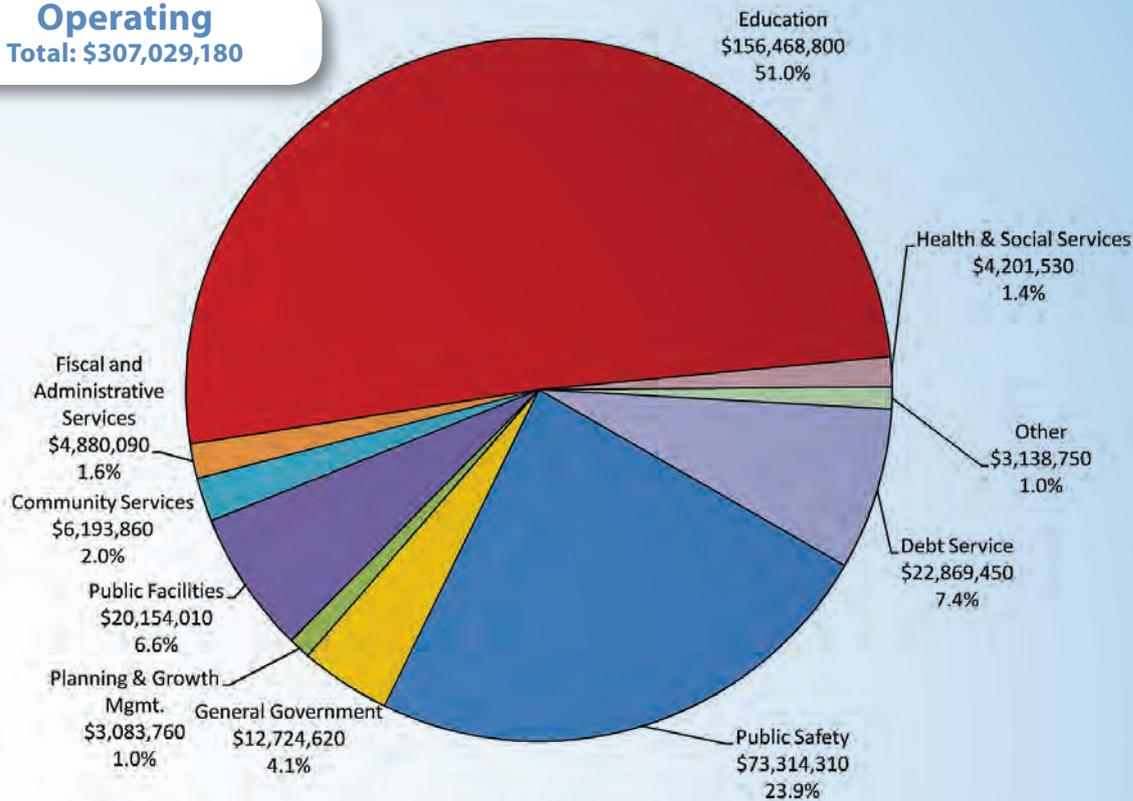
## Reporting Financial Data

The Department of Fiscal & Administrative Services' Accounting Division received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its fiscal year 2009 Consolidated Annual Financial Report. The certificate of achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

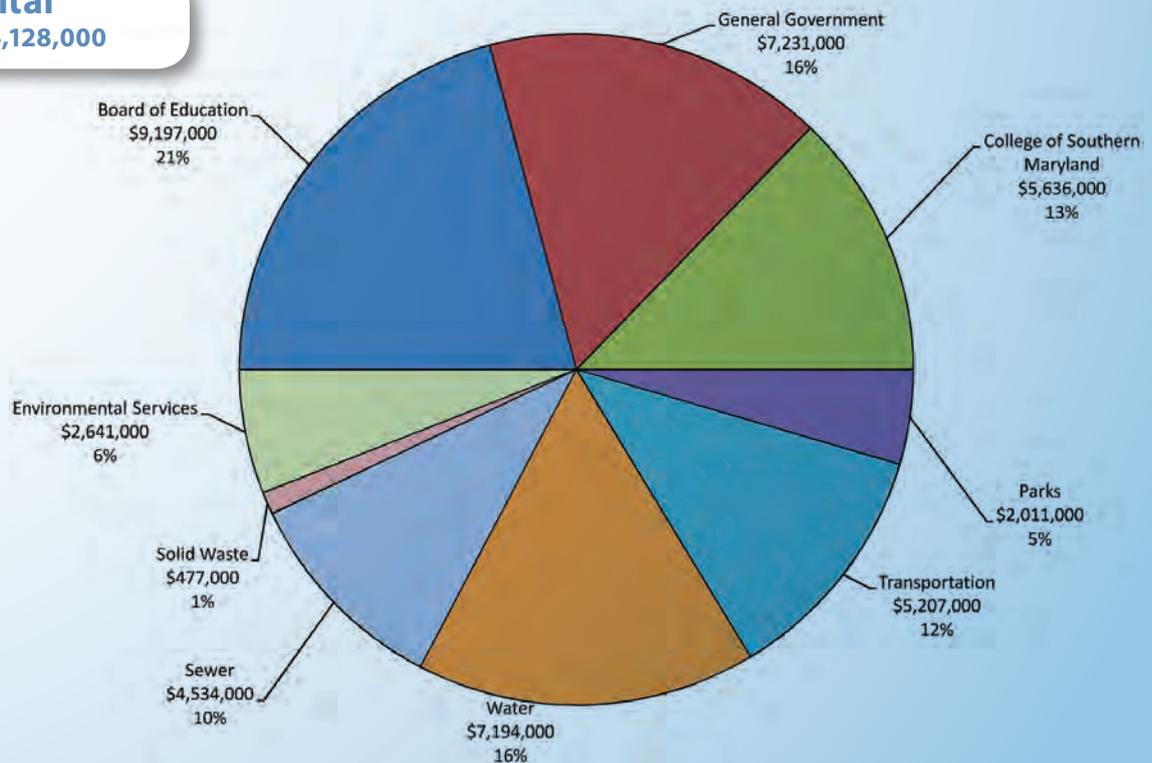
# Operating & Capital Budgets

Fiscal Year 2010

**Operating**  
Total: \$307,029,180



**Capital**  
Total: \$44,128,000



# Charles County Government



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County Administrator

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

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## Did You Know...

### Official Flower...Queen Anne's Lace

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

### Official Bird...Great Blue Heron

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

### Official Tree...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.

## 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.

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.

Charles County was established on May 10, 1658, and named for Charles Calvert, England's Third Lord Baltimore.

