

Fiscal Year 2013

# ANNUAL REPORT

To the Citizens of Charles County



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# CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Candice Quinn Kelly  
President

Charles County is a code home rule county governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners. The five Commissioners are elected at large to four-year terms of office. The Commissioner President is the presiding officer of the Board at meetings and hearings. The Commissioner 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  
District 3



Ken Robinson  
District 1

## Regular Board Meetings

Meetings of the Charles County Commissioners are scheduled each week and held in the County Government Building at 200 Baltimore Street in La Plata. The meetings are aired on the Charles County Government website, [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov](http://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.

## 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 [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov), and on CCGTV.



### 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.



Debra M. Davis, Esq.  
District 2



Bobby Rucci  
District 4

# GET CONNECTED!

## To Charles County Government!

### *Get Connected through Social Media!*

Keyword: "Charles County Government" • Links are also on our website.



*Did we take your photo, or were you part of a CCGTV video?  
Feel free to visit our YouTube or Flickr sites to download copies.*



**"Get Connected" directly to your in-box and on the  
Charles County Government TV Station!**

Register for E-News and CNS on our website.  
You can also watch CCGTV live online!





# *Remembering Their Ultimate Sacrifice*

## **POW/MIA FLAG PROJECT**



The POW/MIA Flag Project is supported by the County Commissioners, and holds special meaning for Commissioner President Candice Quinn Kelly, who spearheaded efforts to fly the POW/MIA flag in Charles County. Commissioner President Kelly's vision stemmed from a request by a local member of the Rolling Thunder, Maryland Chapter, to remember Private First Class (PFC) Frances DeSales Wills, Charles County's only listed MIA. The POW/MIA flag now flies year-round at the Charles County Government Building and at the Charles County Sheriff's Office headquarters in La Plata in dedication to all POWs and in remembrance of PFC Wills.

On Sept. 25, 2012, Charles County began flying the POW/MIA flag. From this event, a movement took shape. Answering a call to action presented by Commissioner President Kelly, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, every county in Maryland committed to flying or continuing to fly the POW/MIA flag in their respective county.

The POW/MIA flag is a symbol of our willingness to join their families in faithfully hoping for and remembering those who gave up their freedom protecting ours. The newly opened Maryland Veterans Museum in Charles County will display each county flag and establish a memorial listing of POW/MIAs throughout Maryland. The importance of actions taken by counties throughout the state lies in the continued visibility of the POW/MIA flag as a symbol, bringing truth to the motto: "You are Not Forgotten."

*In Remembrance of Francis DeSales Wills, E3, U.S. Army's 10<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division, Charles County's only listed MIA from the Vietnam War.*





# Waldorf Beautification Project

*With Pride, We Prosper • Help Keep It Clean!*

## Restoring a Sense of Community Pride

The Waldorf Beautification Project is an ongoing initiative about creating a better community. The project gives local businesses, homeowner associations, neighborhood representatives, civic and charitable organizations, students, and distinguished elected officials opportunities to join together to make a difference and beautify Waldorf. In 2012, CNN's Money Magazine designated Waldorf number 20 on its list of the Top 100 Best Places to Live based on the city's offering what American families care about most — strong job opportunities, great schools, low crime, quality health care, and plenty to do.

Building on Waldorf's strong history and strong appeal as a desired place to live, Commissioner Vice President Reuben B. Collins, II (District 3) presented the Waldorf Beautification Project concept to the Board of Commissioners. The project kickoff realized a longtime goal of Commissioner Vice President Collins to restore and renew community pride in the area. The multi-phase project includes a student poster contest, neighborhood and common area cleanup days, an anti-littering campaign, and an educational component for school children.

Signs posted along Waldorf roadways remind residents and visitors of the Waldorf Beautification Project slogan, "With Pride, We Prosper...Help Keep It Clean!" The slogan delivers a powerful message about healthy communities and neighbors helping neighbors. The County Commissioners sponsored a poster contest to showcase the creativity and talent of students in grades K-8 and encourage their participation in the Waldorf Beautification Project. Hundreds of Charles County students crafted posters expressing what the project slogan means to them. A total of three winners were selected, one in each of three categories (grades K-2, grades 3-5 and grades 6-8). Winners appeared live on CCGTV during a special presentation by the County Commissioners.



# CHARLES COUNTY VISION 2020

A mission to fight poverty.

## Realizing a Vision for a Brighter Future

The Charles County Vision 2020 Pilot Program is Commissioner-driven and administered by the Department of Community Services. Vision 2020 is geared towards assisting those citizens most in need, specifically targeting more rural areas in Charles County. Commissioner Debra M. Davis, Esq. (District 2) conceived the idea, which moved forward with the Board of Commissioners' support, as she envisioned a holistic approach to reach out to impoverished residents. The program assists individuals and families with achieving long-term stability, with an emphasis on transportation, health, housing, employment, and education. In January 2012, an advisory committee was formed, with members representing local agencies with shared goals of assisting those in need.

Ten individuals and/or families are selected each year to participate in the program for two years. During the two-year period, participants receive weekly intensive case management services from a licensed social worker to work toward meeting established goals. In fiscal 2013, selected participants included 25 children aged six months to 16 years and 16 adults aged 25 to 88. Program participants reside throughout the county with one or more individuals/families residing in each of the four Commissioner districts.

Vision 2020 is based on the premise that resources and support already exist in the generosity of Charles County's citizens and programs. The County Commissioners held the first Vision 2020 Pilot Program partnership event in fiscal 2013. This event was an opportunity for the department to reach out to the community and educate and inform citizens, agencies, and businesses about this new effort to end the cycle of poverty. This event strengthened current partnerships, and helped to find and form new partnerships.

# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

## Renewable Energy Center

The Charles County Board of Commissioners held a dedication ceremony for the Renewable Energy Center at Crain Memorial Welcome Center (12480 Crain Highway, Newburg) Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2013.

The Renewable Energy Center features an electric vehicle charging station, and a 12-kilowatt wind turbine which are part of Charles County Government's green initiatives. The wind turbine, the first public wind turbine in Charles County, provides sustainable electric power to reduce the Welcome Center's reliance on the public utility grid, and provides power to the Welcome Center's electric vehicle charging station.

"This renewable energy center is an important component in Charles County Government's green initiatives. It is a step forward in reducing our carbon footprint. I am proud that Charles County is a leader in implementing environmentally responsible energy solutions for its citizens," said Commissioner President Candice Quinn Kelly.

"...I see this as just another example of Charles County's commitment to a cleaner, renewable future. In addition to this wind turbine, we can boast the SMECO solar farm in Hughesville as well as charging stations all over the county for electric vehicles," said Commissioner Ken Robinson (District 1). "Also, the center ... is only in its embryonic stage. It is our hope it will develop into an interactive exhibition for all of our citizens but especially for our students to whom we hope to leave a brighter legacy."





## Protecting Sensitive Waterways

In fiscal 2013, the county advanced important policy plans for water quality protection. These efforts included adopting Watershed Implementation Plan milestones for the next three years. Detailed mapping work began to determine where improvements are needed to clean stormwater runoff. The Department of Planning and Growth Management completed an alternatives analysis to ensure the county is pursuing the most cost effective measures. The County Commissioners committed to funding the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems permit program, which mandates activities to improve water quality and protect the Chesapeake Bay. These important projects will help protect Charles County's precious water resources.

## Building a Sustainable Water Supply

The County Commissioners remain at the forefront of ensuring a sustainable drinking water supply. Consistent with recommendations from the Commissioners' Water Resources Advisory Committee, a panel of water professionals and interested citizens, the Department of Planning and Growth Management initiated the Patuxent Aquifer Study in spring 2013. The study is evaluating this deep groundwater aquifer as a future water supply source for Waldorf, the county's largest public water system. Currently, the Patuxent Aquifer is not used in central and eastern Charles County. If found to be a viable water source for these areas, the county may incorporate it into its diverse portfolio of drinking water resources to create a more sustainable water system for citizens and the environment.

## Maximizing Energy Efficiency

In September 2012, the County Commissioners approved legislation to adopt the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code, mandating a 15 percent increase in energy efficiency for building construction activities. The Department of Planning and Growth Management's Codes, Permits, and Inspections Services Division proposed code amendments regarding residential construction, road construction, and stormwater management. The division reviewed proposed legislation relating to street lighting, solar-related construction, subdivision planning, and design. Also, the division contributed to the draft energy conservation element in the Charles County Comprehensive Plan, and completed code revisions, including new standards for solar and wind energy.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Helping Small, Local, and Minority Businesses

The County Commissioners enacted Bill #2012-05, establishing the Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) program. The SLBE program's goals are to educate small businesses in Charles County regarding the program and to enhance their success when competing for procurement of goods and services. The Purchasing Division, in partnership with the Department of Economic Development, hosted two large-scale SLBE community seminars attended by 126 small, local businesses, stakeholders, and government officials. More than 1,000 small, local, and minority-owned businesses were contacted regarding the SLBE program. A total of 108 businesses inquired about the program, 51 of those completed their program registration, and the remaining 57 initiated the registration process. Of the 51 firms registered, 61 percent are owned by men, 39 percent are owned by women, and 74 percent are minority. Payments to SLBEs exceeded \$171,000 in fiscal 2013, with the majority of payments resulting from procurements valued under \$25,000.

In the fiscal 2013 budget, the County Commissioners approved adding an ombudsman position in the Department of Planning and Growth Management. The department filled the position in January 2013. Since January, the ombudsman has been the point of contact for 329 commercial building permits. The ombudsman is available to help small businesses with the application and inspection process including applying for a Use and Occupancy permit, which is required for all businesses operating in Charles County.

## Generating Dialogue

The 2012 Economic Development Summit theme was "Charting Our Future: Setting a Course in a Time of Change." This theme reflected national economic recovery, ongoing growth in Charles County, and re-establishment of the county's economic development program. More than 250 community and business leaders came together to make connections and hear about programs and opportunities for Charles County's economic future. The event included county program reports and presentations on entrepreneurship, tech transfer, and the impacts and status of a light rail connection to D.C. Ever-popular economist, Anirban Basu, addressed the audience, and U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin was the keynote speaker.

## Supporting a Thriving Business Climate

Department of Economic Development Director Kwasi Holman took the helm at the start of fiscal 2013, and implemented a new organizational structure approved by the County Commissioners. The department moved into office space in White Plains Corporate Center Business Park, a location central to the county's businesses and business service partners. With new leadership, office space, and the addition of two new staff positions, the department continued to establish and build business attraction and retention programs to strengthen the county's commerce, economy, and quality of life.

Charles County's commercial vacancy rate remains the lowest among peer and adjacent counties in the D.C. metropolitan area. The department approved a permit expedite for a medical industry firm projected to create 85 new, full-time equivalent, well-paying jobs. Working closely with commercial real estate brokerage firms and other industry professionals, the department generated and responded to new business leads. The department increased its online presence with an information-rich website tailored to businesses and site selectors.



# TOURISM



## Bringing Tourists to Charles County

The County Commissioners approved a Tourism Destination Plan Study to recognize the importance of the tourism, leisure, and hospitality industry as an economic engine. This industry contributes to the economy by supporting jobs and creating visitor spending. Recent tourism economic statistics identify Charles County as an economic generator. Tourism in Charles County generated 3,208 jobs and \$187.8 million in industry sales. The tourism and sales consumer tax revenue generated \$7.1 million and \$8.9 million, respectively. In addition, tourism and hospitality assets in the admission and amusement category generated \$750,000, and room taxes generated more than \$1 million. More than 700 tourism-related events take place every year in Charles County ranging from weekly farmers markets, summer concert series, live plays, church concerts, sports tournaments, birding, fishing tournaments, hiking, biking, fairs, festivals, bazaars, and flea markets. These events are advertised on the tourism e-calendar on the Charles County website and on the region's heritage area e-calendar.

The Tourism Office's strategic plan includes state, regional, and local marketing campaigns. The State of Maryland marketing campaign features the tagline "Maryland. Land of ...," and is used within the co-operative grant program. It is featured in print and web advertisements targeting national and international travelers. "Destination Southern Maryland – Where Time & Tide Meet" is a regional marketing campaign created for the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium. This marketing effort is used by Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's counties to target heritage and byway travelers.

celebrate *Charles!*

The third campaign, aimed at local citizens, is called "Celebrate Charles!" This campaign emphasizes events and activities happening within Charles County. The "Celebrate Charles!" brand continued into its second year. "Celebrate Charles!" signature events included "A Fun Filled Fourth," "FallFest," and "Restaurant Week". Approximately 9,000 people attended these signature series events, which helped build awareness and appreciation for Charles County's attractions and facilities. Regency Furniture Stadium acted as the host venue for two of these events.

The Tourism Office worked to support and retain agriculture in Charles County through a fall marketing package including agricultural and agritourism locations for farm and educational experiences. The Celebrate Charles: FallFest event highlighted local farms and cultural arts. The event attracted approximately 2,000 citizens and travelers who enjoyed local music and food in addition to a marketplace featuring local artists and crafters.

Charles County continued to expand its cultural arts presence by promoting the arts through attractions and events. CCGTV produced and aired commercials promoting Mattawoman Creek Art Center, Celebrate Charles, and the Nanjemoy Heritage Bike Ride commercials. The commercials are on YouTube and aired on the jumbo screen at Regency Furniture Stadium during Southern Maryland Blue Crabs home games. CCGTV produced a Charles County Update Show for the Mattawoman Creek Art Center and Centerville Band of Piscataway Indians. Three cultural arts and tourism assets received county grants: Charles County Arts Alliance, Mattawoman Creek Art Center, and Indian Head Center for the Arts.

## Crain Memorial Welcome Center

The Crain Memorial Welcome Center offers travel assistance to more than 30,000 citizens and travelers each year, and is managed by the Tourism Office. The Crain Memorial Welcome Center in Newburg is open daily from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and offers valuable travel assistance as visitors enter Charles County and the state of Maryland. Travel counselors provide information and services for a positive trip experience. Citizens and travelers enjoy visual displays at the Charles County Museum, such as the oldest elevator (1939) removed from the original Physician's Memorial Hospital building, which is now part of the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center campus on Garrett Avenue in La Plata. Also, Welcome Center visitors enjoy energy displays, including a wind turbine and electric charging station.

\*Figures are from the Tourism Economic Satellite Account: The Economic Impact of Tourism in Maryland 2011; and the Office of the Comptroller, FY 2012.

# 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 (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 (AP), honors, arts, business, and 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 3,481 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 prekindergarten through 12. The specialized features include a digital classroom, Science on a Sphere, and Telepresence distance-learning technologies. 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

With more than 27,000 annual enrollments, the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is an open-admission, comprehensive, regional community college committed to fostering academic excellence and enhancing the lives of Southern Maryland residents. The college has campuses in La Plata, Leonardtown, and Prince Frederick, the Center for Trades and Energy Training (CTET) and the Center for Transportation Training in Charles County, and accelerated learning options at the Waldorf Center for Higher Education. The Center for Nuclear Energy Training is housed within the newest building at the Prince Frederick campus. New programs include digital media production, nuclear engineering technology, and hospitality management. Students choose CSM for its career-focused, transferrable programs of study, its outstanding and experienced faculty, great support services and connections for success, and its value. Students can save more than \$29,000 when they complete their freshman- and sophomore-level classes at CSM.

A two-time, silver-level Maryland Quality Award recipient, CSM is progressive in its delivery of high-quality courses, programs, and services to a growing number of students of all ages. CSM is a leader among Maryland community colleges in offering courses that meet the busy schedules of working adults with flexible learning options, including web-based courses, self-paced courses, web-hybrid blended courses, and mini-sessions.

CSM continues to expand its partnerships with bachelor-degree institutions to provide a seamless transition to local and statewide bachelor degree programs. CSM students transferred successfully, both in-state and out-of-state, to 125 different colleges and universities in 36 states and the District of Columbia in the last year. Destinations include Maryland's universities and other top schools, such as East Carolina University, Pennsylvania State University and The Ohio State University. The college offers local access to bachelor's degree opportunities through partnerships with Maryland colleges and universities. These opportunities allow students to transfer easily from CSM to the partnering university while saving thousands of dollars on tuition, fees, housing, and transportation.

CSM is the first-choice provider of workforce development in Southern Maryland. More than 22,000 enrollees started, maintained credentials, and/or advanced in a career during the past three years. The college's CTET is a thriving facility,





offering training that enables students to gain skills quickly to enter the workforce. In preparation for emerging energy careers, the center integrates renewable energy technologies into its curriculum.

CSM formed two community institutes to address critical individual and community needs within the region. With funding from the Charles County Commissioners, the college coordinates the efforts of the newly formed Diversity Institute, and with support from the Charles County and St. Mary's County Commissioners, the college coordinates the Nonprofit Institute. For information, visit [www.csmd.edu](http://www.csmd.edu).

### **Offering Places to Read and Learn**

The first LEED-certified public building in Charles County, Waldorf West Library, opened in November 2012. Waldorf West Library welcomed customers into expanded space, a public art gallery, quality programming, and state-of-the-art technology. Radio frequency identification and touch -screen catalogs are used to easily located resources. Art depicting Charles County's historical buildings is exhibited throughout the library.

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 able to grow needed services such as the municipal Wi-Fi . With four library locations throughout the county, the Charles County Public Library's mission continues to be "to acquire and make available information, books, and other library materials that most closely match the needs of our service community, the residents of Charles County."

# PUBLIC HEALTH

## Growing with the Community

In the last year, UM CRMC continued to expand to meet the needs of the community it serves. Joining University of Maryland Charles Regional OB/GYN, the University of Maryland Charles Regional Surgical Care and University of Maryland Charles Regional Ear, Nose, and Throat opened in fall 2012. Working with UMMS Physician Recruitment Services, UM CRMC recruited new physicians to these practices and to community physician practices. Major renovations expanded UM Charles Regional's laboratory to improve efficiency and meet patient volume growth. The hospital renovated numerous labs into a modern, open, "core lab" configuration allowing space for the technicians to function more efficiently and more effectively. The Emergency Department expanded also to improve the patient experience, reduce patient waiting time, and provide quicker access to lab and imaging services.

The Center for Wound Healing at UM CRMC opened in summer 2012. The center offers highly specialized wound care treatments for chronic wounds. Leading-edge treatments at the center include negative pressure wound therapy, bio-engineered tissues, biosynthetic dressings and growth factor therapies, and hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

## Expanding the Health Care Network

University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center (UM CRMC) is a regional, not-for-profit hospital serving Charles County and surrounding Southern Maryland areas. UM CRMC opened in 1939 as Physician's Memorial Hospital. The new name reflects the hospital's Charles County roots, the growing southern Maryland region, and access to a greater network of physicians and services in partnership with the University of Maryland.

In 2012, The Joint Commission recognized UM CRMC as a Top Performer in its Top Performers on Key Quality Measures™ program. The Joint Commission cited UM CRMC for achieving excellence in performance on quality accountability measures for heart failure, pneumonia, and surgical care. Also, UM CRMC received the Workplace Excellence and Health & Wellness Trailblazer Award for the ninth consecutive year. UM CRMC was one of only 71 businesses in Maryland to receive the awards.

## Developing New Health Initiatives

Dr. Dianna E. Abney, a local pediatrician, is the new health officer for Charles County, bringing a fresh perspective and energy to the department's operation. Among her first initiatives, she introduced an employee wellness program called "Walk Off Obesity With the Health Officer" (WOO-WHO). The program involves increasing and monitoring daily physical activity, eating healthy foods in moderation, and using incentives to sustain a healthy lifestyle. Other county and state organizations are considering adopting the program for employee wellness.

In collaboration with the Charles County Public Schools, the Charles County Department of Health placed wellness coaches in four county schools. These coaches demonstrate a healthy lifestyle, develop activities and programs, and provide leadership to students and school staff to improve health habits. The department plans to expand this program to other schools.

The Department of Health continued to implement the Healthy Stores Project to advance healthy eating habits in the community and decrease obesity in low-income areas. Four corner/convenience stores in Charles County participated in the program by stocking healthy foods, providing nutritional information and education, and using signage to identify healthy food options at point-of-sale.

The Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene provided grant funding to the Department of Health to start a primary care clinic in western Charles County. The clinic will be located in the Nanjemoy Community Center, and will follow the design of a Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH). PCMH is a health care setting that facilitates partnerships between individual patients and their personal physicians and, when appropriate, the patient's family.

The Departments of Health's Substance Abuse Services Division is now part of the statewide Recovery-Oriented System of Care, and offers this level of care to all clients. The program allows a client to move within the continuum of care quickly. The division's prevention program, in collaboration with the Charles County Drug and Alcohol Coalition, is now focused on environmental strategies that make a larger impact on local communities as it works to prevent substance abuse.



## Addressing Community Health Needs

UM CRMC and the Charles County Department of Health, through the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County, developed a comprehensive Community Health Improvement Plan in response to Charles County Health Needs Assessment results. The plan utilizes a best practice approach toward community improvement that reflects the top 11 needs identified by the needs assessment. Targeted health improvement areas include: behavioral health, chronic disease, access to health care, cancer, injury and violence-free community, and reproductive health.

## Enhancing Emergency Medical Services

The County Commissioners approved provisions to modernize an outdated fleet of first-line cardiac monitors/defibrillators. After 10 years of service, the Department of Emergency Services replaced the aging fleet with state-of-the-art Lifepak 15 cardiac monitors/defibrillators. The Lifepak 15 is the new standard throughout the state, and features enhanced life-saving technology, which gives the county's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers the best tools for the job.

The County Commissioners approved a measure to enhance Advanced Life Support (ALS) services in White Plains and Waldorf. The department placed a daytime ALS crew at the Charles County Mobile Intensive Care Unit in White Plains to enhance delivery of advanced EMS in the White Plains and Waldorf areas. This additional ALS resource reduced response times to calls for service and assisted with heavy call volume during identified peak call times.

# SAFE COMMUNITIES

## Preventing Crime and Protecting Citizens

Sheriff Rex W. Coffey leads the Charles County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), one of the largest employers in Charles County with more than 600 personnel including police officers, corrections officers, and civilians. The CCSO is headquartered in La Plata with district stations in La Plata, Indian Head, and Waldorf. As a full-service law enforcement agency, the CCSO provides police protection and other law enforcement services for the entire county, and operates the Charles County Detention Center.

The CCSO'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 CCSO ensures high visibility of its patrol contingent by offering programs that engage citizens in public safety efforts. The CCSO has mutual aid agreements with the Maryland State Police, La Plata Town Police, Department of Emergency Services, and Calvert and St. Mary's County sheriffs' offices, among others. Mutual aid agreements ensure allied agencies work together to address cross-jurisdictional public safety issues. Crime decreased in Charles County by 10.2 percent in 2012, following a 13 percent decrease in 2010, and a slight decrease in 2011.

The CCSO's community crime prevention programs include Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, and Citizens on Patrol. Other community initiatives, such as the officers-in-schools program and an Explorers post, help young people learn to make good choices. The CCSO helps coordinate a safe-driving program for teens, which significantly helped reduce teen traffic fatalities. Each year since 1988, the CCSO earned the Maryland Governor's Crime Prevention Award for its successful programs.

In fiscal 2013, the CCSO raised more than \$20,000 for community outreach programs including Special Olympics Maryland, Shop with a Cop, March of Dimes, United Way, Spring Dell Center, Wounded Warrior Project, and other charitable causes.

The CCSO is 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, CALEA designated the CCSO as a flagship agency. The designation recognizes the CCSO 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.



## Caring for Furry Friends

Pets are an important part of the community. The Department of Emergency Services' Animal Control Division educates pet owners and non-pet owners, and enforces county and state laws dealing with domestic animals. During fiscal 2013, the Animal Control Division assisted the FBI with a case in which the owner faced a Charles County grand jury for felony dog fighting charges. Initially, the FBI requested help from Animal Control officers to execute a search warrant off of Bowie Road in Nanjemoy. Law enforcement seized and removed from the property 21 pit bull-type dogs and various records and types of equipment indicative of illegal dog fighting ventures. The request turned into a yearlong investigation and successful prosecution involving 26 counts of felony dog-fighting activities.



## Coordinating Emergency Response Efforts

The County Commissioners adopted the revised Charles County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). This plan defines functional roles and responsibilities for those responding to emergencies or disasters impacting Charles County, its citizens, and visitors. The plan assists Charles County Government and associated agencies in maintaining a high level of public safety. The EOP has four sections: the basic plan identifies responsibilities of agencies that may be mobilized in an emergency; hazard-specific plans cover hazards and risks potentially affecting Charles County; group and unit functional plans define roles and responsibilities of groups or units involved in any of four emergency management phases; and annexes outline necessary components not covered elsewhere in the EOP.

## Enhancing Emergency Communications

The Department of Emergency Services teamed up with the Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services and Keystone, a computer-aided dispatch vendor, to collect and disseminate road closure information in graphic and text formats. The system makes real-time information and a Charles County Government-hosted Internet map available to 9-1-1, fire, and emergency medical service (EMS) dispatch and CCSO dispatch. When 9-1-1 communications or dispatch personnel find a road that is closed partially, completely, or is open only to local traffic, they are able to use the GIS mapping tool to push information simultaneously out to police, fire, and EMS first responders via mobile data computers, and to the general public via the Internet map. First responders and citizens may use the information to alter their travel route or avoid an impassable area.

## Maintaining Safe Workplaces

The Safety Office manages and coordinates all aspects of occupational safety and health, and manages compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Safety Office plans and implements new programs with loss control as a key element, responds to major incidents involving county vehicles and property, and resolves workers compensations claims. In fiscal 2013, Charles County Government became self-insured for workers' compensation. The Safety Office reviews county contracts for workers compensation insurance compliance, provides accident information to departments, and conducts loss exposure risk analyses.

# QUALITY OF LIFE

## Serving Our Youngest Citizens

The Local Management Board develops an array of human services for Charles County children, youth, and families, and monitors and evaluates contracts for services, outcomes, and results provided by the county and private agencies. Through grants from the Governor's Office for Children, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Social Services, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Local Management Board served more than 2,000 youth and families in fiscal 2013. Through the Summer Youth Jobs Employment program, in partnership with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, 27 youth were hired and worked 35-40 hours per week; 24 of the 27 participants secured permanent positions at the program's end.

Through a cooperative effort, the Local Management Board offered 22 summer camp scholarships for homeless families, making these opportunities available to families who may have otherwise not been able to participate. Also, in partnership with the Charles County Public Schools, the summer meals program provided lunches to youth in communities MSDE identified as "area eligible." The Local Management Board commissioned a triennial needs assessment in conjunction with the Charles County Department of Health. Focus groups and community outreach helped assess program needs. Needs assessment results will be released in fiscal 2014.

## Serving Senior Citizens

The Department of Community Services' Aging and Senior Programs Division operates senior centers in Waldorf, Indian Head, and La Plata, as well as the Nanjemoy Community Center, which provides recreational and community services for persons of all ages in the greater Nanjemoy area. Senior center attendance in fiscal 2013 totaled 3,351 older adults who participated in an array of programs including health promotion, fitness activities, recreational and leisure activities, educational and personal enrichment programs, daily meal programs, and nutrition education. The centers offered benefits coordination and supportive services for seniors with physical, socioeconomic, or cognitive needs. The division began exploring locations for a new senior center in Waldorf to meet the recreational and service needs of seniors in the most populated section of the county.

The Nanjemoy Community Center hosted several community events including the annual Heritage Day and the Heritage Bike Ride, which draws bicycle enthusiasts from the D.C. metropolitan area to enjoy the rural beauty of western Charles County. Individual, families, and community organizations used the center as a meeting location to collaborate on the county's Vision 2020 Pilot Program initiatives.

## Expanding Resources for Older Adults

The Aging and Senior Programs Division serves as the designated Area Agency on Aging in Charles County and the lead agency for Maryland Access Point (MAP). MAP is a statewide initiative for creating a "no wrong door" for long-term care options counseling and supportive services for aged and disabled adults. With federal, state, and county support, the division assisted more than 3,800 older adults in fiscal 2013, with approximately 245,000 units of service to senior citizens and their family caregivers.

The division applied for a state grant to improve the health of older adults with chronic diseases. This new funding enabled three personnel to be certified to offer the evidence-based "Living Well: Chronic Disease Self-Management Program" to western Charles County residents, and to purchase the Living Well curriculum to expand program access. In addition, the division used a portion of the grant funds to purchase gym-quality exercise equipment for the Indian Head Senior Center to facilitate continued positive lifestyle changes for participants.

Additional activities included hosting the 21st Annual Southern Maryland Caregivers Conference, in partnership with the University of Maryland Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research Program. More than 250 professional and family caregivers attended this full-day, regional conference. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Walk brought survivors and walkers to Indian Head to walk for a good cause. Senior center personnel received awards for outstanding programming by the Maryland Association of Senior Centers.

# RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Offering Youth and Family Activities

The Department of Community Services' Recreation Division delivers quality sports, recreation, and leisure activities for citizens of all ages. The Recreation Division consists of aquatics, community centers, trips and tours, gymnastics, sports, and a summer camp program.

With a focus on youth and family programs, the community centers, recreation centers, and pools expanded program offerings and increased participation in afterschool programs, aquatic programs, drop-in programs, summer camp programs, competitive and recreational gymnastics programs, and other leisure and fitness activities. The Youth Triathlon, hosted annually at North Point High School pool, enjoyed its highest turnout to date.

The division hosted new events, including a 5K for a Healthier Charles County race/walk, in cooperation with Partnership for a Healthier Charles County (PHCC); and Tot Olympics, an event for children aged three to six, focusing on fun, athletic events. The division continued its involvement with PHCC, Local Management Board, Special Olympics Charles County, Charles County Public Schools, and the Charles County Vision 2020 Pilot Program.

## Supporting Public Parks and Open Spaces

The Department of Public Works' Parks and Grounds Division strives to enhance the quality of life of residents through providing enjoyable leisure services. Friendship Farm Park is a 392-acre county park located on Friendship Landing Road, off of Route 224 in Nanjemoy. This nature-oriented park overlooks portions of Nanjemoy Creek, and offers some of the most scenic views in Southern Maryland. The park's mission is to provide unique outdoor recreational experiences, while making every effort to preserve the property's rich natural, historical, and environmental features. The county began adding enhancements for better public access and enjoyment of the park's outstanding natural resources.

Park planning and phase one development started, with direction from the Commissioner-appointed Friendship Farm Park Advisory Committee. Phase one included opening seven miles of recreational trails. Five separate trail loops offer varied experiences – mature forests, tidal marshes, agricultural fields, and abundant wildlife viewing opportunities. In addition to hiking, equestrian use of the trail is allowed from April through November. Interpretive signs, benches, and strategically located observation areas are amenities available along the trail. The park features active agricultural fields, antique farm equipment displays, a small performance amphitheater, a boat launch facility, a fishing pier, and picnic pavilions. A newly added, eco-friendly feature is a day-use parking area. Its pervious surface allows rain water to filter naturally and gently back into the ground.



# INFRASTRUCTURE: ROADS AND WATER SUPPLY

## Upgrading Pedestrian Walkways

The Department of Public Works' Roads Division spent \$150,000 in fiscal 2013 to remove and replace lifted and damaged sidewalk panels to eliminate trip hazards in the following neighborhoods (measured by number of sidewalk panels repaired): Pinefield 293, Carrington 167, Sentry Woods 55, Bannister 72, Strawberry Hills 52, Lancaster 160, Hampshire 145, Dorchester 36, Dorchester Mews 22, Charles Crossing 63, Springhaven Woods 20, Berry Valley 25, and Wexford Village 58.

The Roads Division used a new sidewalk repair technology called precision concrete cutting that allows trip hazards to be eliminated without removing the sidewalk. Precision concrete cutting saves 60 percent more than conventional remove and replace methods. The division used precision concrete cutting in the following neighborhoods (measured by the number of sidewalk panels repaired): Dorchester 190, Hampshire 181, Montrose Farms 55, High Grove 63, Huntington 117, Sentry Woods 71, Brawner Estates 145, North Indian Head Estates 82, Strawberry Hills 87, Springhaven 142, and Fox Run 39.

The Department of Planning and Growth Management continued to work within the guidelines of the Maryland State Highway Administration's (SHA) sidewalk program to install sidewalks along SHA roads in Charles County. The Capital Services Division managed the design of several sidewalk and intersection improvement projects within SHA's right of way, including installing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters along Route 228 from Chestnut Drive to Marsh Hawk Drive. The division designed plans to install sidewalks, curbs, and gutters near the intersection of Route 228 and Western Parkway, a project that involves installing pedestrian crosswalks, ADA handicap ramps, and push button pedestrian signals to cross Route 228 safely and connect the existing hiker/biker trails along Western Parkway.

## Reviewing Road Standards

The Department of Planning and Growth Management completed an inventory of all known private roads within Charles County. Staff worked with citizens to create updated standards for private roads. The new regulations are scheduled for presentation to the Planning Commission and County Commissioners in the upcoming fiscal year.

## Improving Road Safety

Resident concerns about crosswalk safety near the new Waldorf West Library prompted the County Commissioners to approve a feasibility evaluation of overhead street light installation to illuminate existing crosswalks in the area. The crosswalks are at the intersection of St. Patrick's Drive and Smallwood Drive. The Department of Planning and Growth Management's Capital Services Division coordinated with SMECO to have overhead street lights installed. The county provided funding for the lights through the safety improvement existing roads capital improvement project.

## Managing Stormwater Facilities

The Department of Planning and Growth Management is overseeing retrofit improvements for a community stormwater management pond in the Meadowlands subdivision. In fiscal 2013, the Meadowlands homeowners association petitioned the county after a compliance inspection revealed deficiencies with the stormwater management facility. The department coordinated with the community, solicited proposals to complete the improvements, and negotiated to include maintenance costs within the fee assessment that would provide funding for periodic facility maintenance.

## Continuing Wastewater Operations

The Department of Public Works placed a new Adams Crossing sewer pump station online. This station serves a growing development in the Waldorf area. The department conducted successful annual flushing of water hydrants in the Waldorf area water system. This annual maintenance procedure enables the county to provide citizens with safe, clean, potable water.

In October 2012, during Hurricane Sandy, the Department of Public Works' Utilities Division worked tirelessly to keep water and wastewater facilities operating, despite inclement weather. Department employees worked long hours to monitor sewer pump stations, minimize sewer overflows, and provide citizens with a safe water supply during this emergency event.

# INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION

## Connecting People and Places

VanGO is a countywide transportation system providing safe and reliable transit to citizens. During fiscal 2013, VanGO public transit services transported 787,137 passengers in combined fixed route and specialized, door-to-door services during fiscal 2013. VanGO operated more than 76,000 hours of service, traveling approximately 1.4 million miles. VanGO re-bid its operating contract through a competitive procurement process. The Department of Community Services' Transportation and Community Programs Division awarded the contract to First Transit, an international transit contracting firm. The new contract is projected to save taxpayers \$1.8 million in its first three years.

The Transportation and Community Programs Division worked on two major VanGO projects to improve service offerings and safety for VanGO customers. The first was a yearlong effort to connect Charles County's VanGO and Prince George's County's TheBus transit systems at Pinefield Shopping Center in Waldorf. This new service link provides residents with access to employment, shopping, and recreational opportunities in Prince George's County and points further north. Both counties requested funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom grants to make this project possible.

The second project, construction of a new transfer pavilion at the Route 301 park-and-ride location, started in fiscal 2013, and is slated for completion in 2014. The division worked with the Department of Planning and Growth Management to design and construct the

pavilion. The project involves upgrading the existing park-and-ride facility, building an information office with restroom facilities for bus drivers. The new facility, which features dedicated bus lanes for rider pick-up and drop-off, includes: six new bus shelters with 12 benches for seating; trash receptacles; security cameras; and increased street lighting for customer comfort and safety. The new site layout will facilitate all nine VanGO buses currently on this route – simplifying transfers, improving navigation for local VanGO buses and Washington, D.C. commuter buses. The FTA funded 80 percent of the project, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) funded 10 percent, and Charles County Government funded the remaining 10 percent.

## Paving the Way for High-Capacity Transit

The Maryland General Assembly passed revenue enhancements to improve Maryland's transportation system. Of these projects, Charles and Prince George's Counties were approved to initiate planning a high-capacity, fixed-route transit service, such as light rail, from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf and White Plains. This first-phase funding puts the project in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program, which is reserved for capital projects that are beyond the "conceptual" stage, and proposed for construction, or development and evaluation, during the next six-years.

Building on the state's Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study (2010), which evaluated conceptual alignments of light rail or bus rapid transit service along Routes 5 and 301, Charles and Prince George's counties partnered with MTA to begin preliminary design and detailed environmental impact evaluations. Based on recommendations from the public, elected officials, and governing agencies, this phase of the transportation planning process will include a formal transit mode selection and justify the alignment to be built. This forward progress brings high-capacity transit service in Charles County significantly closer to reality.



# PLANNING AND SMART GROWTH

## Preserving Historical Areas

Established in 1727, Port Tobacco's history spans three centuries. Today, the village includes three surviving 18th century buildings and a reconstructed courthouse and museum around the remnants of the former public square. The Department of Planning and Growth Management developed a Port Tobacco town square revitalization plan and, as part of the plan, the county acquired two vacant parcels in the village. The department recommended reusing one of Port Tobacco's key historic sites, the 18th century residence known as Stagg Hall, for potential public acquisition and tourism activities.

## Revitalizing Waterfront Communities

Located in far-eastern Charles County, Benedict has a storied past. The colonial port town was established in 1683, and was the site of the British landing before they marched to Washington, D.C. Today, Benedict includes grand views of the Patuxent River, two waterfront restaurants, a marina, post office, and a firehouse anchoring the community. In fiscal 2013, the County Commissioners began implementing the adopted Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan. Benedict revitalization will provide a greater opportunity for citizens and visitors to experience Charles County's waterfront and its rich past. A key goal of the plan is improving community access to and enjoyment of the water. Therefore, the Benedict design includes a detailed entrance plan, parking area, sign, and boardwalk.





# Quality Places Natural Spaces

## Crafting the County's Vision

The Planning Commission's update of the Comprehensive Plan neared completion. The Planning Commission prepared to make a recommendation to the County Commissioners on the Comprehensive Plan. The updated plan includes new data and analysis, including population and land use demand for the future and information on resource protection and development. The plan includes also an energy conservation element and new graphic concepts for villages. In fiscal 2014, the County Commissioners will consider the Planning Commission's recommendations on the Comprehensive Plan.

## Creating Walkable Communities

The Department of Planning and Growth Management's Planning Division continued to move forward Charles County's plan to create a cohesive, attractive, and walkable urban environment that is a hub for public transit in the Waldorf central core. The Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) lays out a plan for revitalizing downtown Waldorf. The WUDS encompasses an area stretching from roughly north of Acton Lane to south of Leonardtown Road, and between Route 301 and the CSX railroad tracks. The WUDS project includes developing a mix of uses and services, attractive and functional streets, public parks, open spaces, and pedestrian-bicycle facilities. The department completed an infrastructure needs analysis and a phase one development study to facilitate private and public county investment in the WUDS area. The outcome included recommendations for infrastructure improvements, including water, sewer, stormwater, and central parking, which would be a catalyst for redevelopment in the larger urban redevelopment corridor.

## Maintaining Vacant Properties

The Department of Planning & Growth Management played a major role in addressing property maintenance concerns. The General Assembly authorized the Charles County Commissioners to implement "clean and lien" standards for Zoning Ordinance violations. The "clean and lien" concept is when a property is identified in a condition that violates the ordinance, the county can come in and clean up the lot. The property owner is responsible for the cleanup expense. The County Commissioners requested authorization from the General Assembly to use "clean and lien" enforcement for Building Code violations, and legislation takes effect Oct. 1, 2013.

Amending the county's Nuisance Ordinance was a key accomplishment in fiscal 2013. The Property Standards Task Force recommended changes to the ordinance and encouraged the use of "clean and lien" for nuisance violation sites. The Codes, Permits, and Inspection Services Division initiated 15 projects for mitigation using the clean and lien provisions. Based on the amended Nuisance Ordinance, complaints increased significantly; the Nuisance Abatement Board meets monthly to address nuisance and property maintenance complaints.

## Enforcing Property Standards

As part of the county's adoption of the 2012 International Construction Codes as the Charles County Building Code, the county adopted the International Property Maintenance Code. This code is used to address property maintenance complaints in a quicker manner using the Nuisance Board instead of the lengthier court process.

The Codes, Permits, and Inspections Services Division created an abandoned properties list to establish a database for inspection work. The list helps with concerns about properties abandoned due to foreclosure or similar situations. Also, the division created a web-based complaint system for citizens to e-mail property maintenance, zoning, or drainage complaints to improve the county's response to these inquiries.

# SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING



## Leveraging Federal and State Housing Funds

The Housing Authority administers programs funded by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to help homeowners, home buyers, and local homeless shelters. The State Special Loans Program gives low-interest and no-interest loans to eligible homeowners for housing rehabilitation projects or total home replacements. In certain cases, loans may be deferred completely until the property is sold or transferred. Housing rehabilitation such as new plumbing, windows, or doors can be financed. In limited cases, grants cover indoor plumbing installation in substandard units. The Housing Authority assisted with settling more than \$300,000 in rehabilitation loans, and forwarded an additional \$268,000 in loan requests to DHCD for approval.

## Providing Housing Assistance to Individuals and Families

The Charles County Department of Community Services' Housing Authority administers programs to assist low- and moderate-income citizens. The Rural Housing Initiative resulted in outreach to roughly 600 citizens in fiscal 2013. The department distributed about 400 fliers and responded to more than 200 citizen inquiries. Staff informed citizens about programs that help pay for home repairs. The Settlement Expense Loan Program (SELP) pays up to \$6,000 in settlement expenses for first-time home buyers. The department processed 12 SELP loans totaling in excess of \$70,000.

The Robert J. Fuller House, a 21-bed emergency and transitional living facility for men owned by the county, provided more than 6,000 bed nights and assisted 46 men. The department contracted with an on-site vendor to manage Fuller House, and provided individualized case management to residents seeking permanent housing. Another county-owned property, Martha's Place in Waldorf, is a transitional house for women. A contracted vendor provides supportive living services to homeless women and children. Martha's House assisted nine families during the year.

The Housing Authority received more than \$60,000 in funding – a record amount – for the Emergency Solutions Grant program. The funds were used to manage two emergency and transitional housing facilities and one homelessness prevention program. The Housing Authority received a Community Development Block Grant of \$375,000 for low- and moderate-income home buyers' to make down-payments. A total of \$15,000 per household is available, and 10 home buyers received assistance equaling \$150,000.

The Housing Authority hosted DHCD's Office of Fair Practices, which presented a fair housing workshop for Tri-County area residents. Representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), DHCD, and local agencies attended the event. The County Commissioners, in partnership with CSM and the Housing Authority Board, welcomed DHCD for a foreclosure prevention workshop, held in conjunction with U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin. More than 100 local homeowners needing help with loan modifications, lender questions, and other foreclosure issues visited the workshop. Several banks, pro-bono attorneys, and HUD-certified housing counselors offered personalized assistance.

The Housing Authority administers a Housing Choice Voucher Program, funded through HUD. More than \$8 million is funded yearly to pay monthly rental assistance for approximately 850 low-income households. More than 40 new participants received assistance in fiscal 2013. A few Housing Choice Voucher program participants became homeowners under the program. Monthly assistance payments are made towards the homeowner's mortgage. Participants eligible for the homeownership program must have sufficient income to obtain mortgage financing through an independent lender.

# GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

## Streamlining Systems

The Department of Public Works' Buildings and Trades Division introduced a new maintenance management system called Infor EAM, which is hosted internally by the Information Technology Division. Infor EAM allows for necessary programming changes at a lower cost with greater flexibility. The division issued mobile devices to employees for accessing the system and for receiving and recording work orders in the field. By implementing this new technology, the division improved county maintenance processes, from building new facilities to fixing and replacing existing infrastructure.

## Creating an Employee-Friendly Workplace

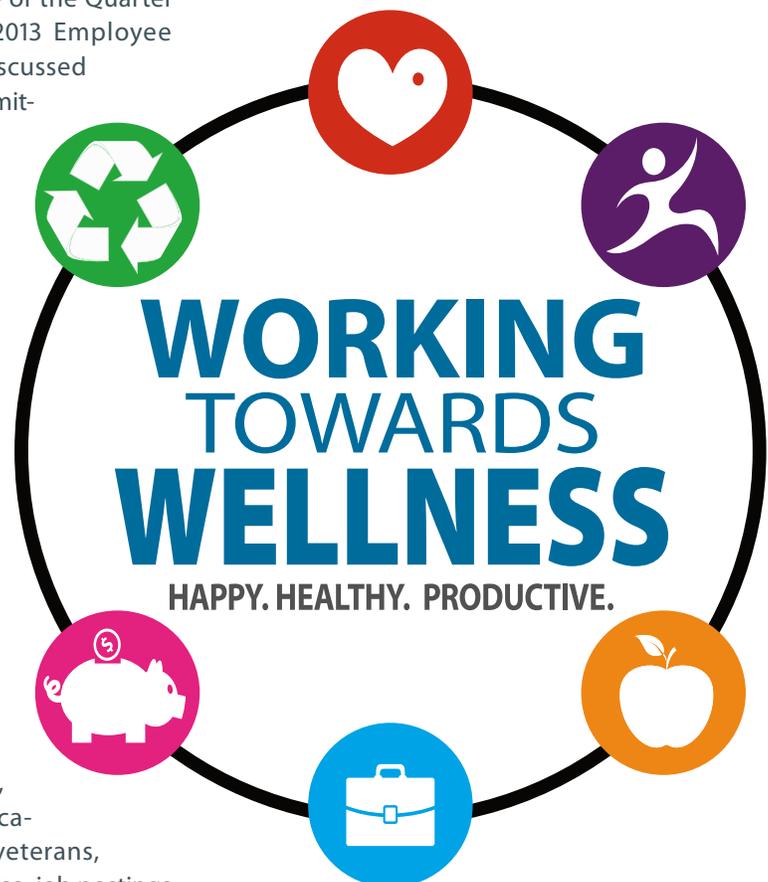
The Department of Human Resources established guidelines for its Employee Committee, including terms of service, participation requirements, and confidentiality rules. The committee, a cross-departmental team that reviews and makes recommendations about human resources policies, recommended changing the Employee of the Month program to an Employee of the Quarter program. The committee implemented the 2013 Employee Satisfaction Survey, analyzed the results, and discussed recommendations for improvements. Several committee members helped to plan the annual employee picnic. The County Commissioners approved committee recommendations to close Charles County Government on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, and competitive compensation for employees.

## Supporting Workforce Diversity

Charles County Government values a diverse workforce. The Department of Human Resources tracks and analyzes demographic data voluntarily submitted by job applicants. In fiscal 2013, the department received 3,271 applications, with 70 percent of those applicants submitting demographic information. Of the total applicant pool, 33 percent were minority and 47 percent were women. Open employment opportunities are routinely posted online at: [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Employment-Page](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Employment-Page). The department advertises using industry specific resources, social media, local and regional news outlets, diversity publications, and on electronic job boards targeting veterans, higher education, and state workforce initiatives. Also, job postings are sent to 45 additional agencies and associations.

## Encouraging Employee Wellness

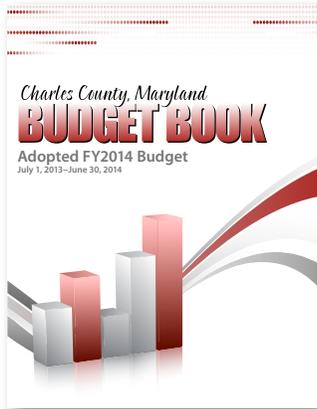
The Charles County Government Wellness Committee consists of employee representatives from all departments, including the Charles County Public Library and the Charles County Sheriff's Office. The committee, which meets monthly, worked diligently to establish its identity, including creating a vision and mission statement, logo, and formal program name — Working Towards Wellness. The committee's mission is to foster healthier lifestyle choices to reduce health risk factors, improve overall well-being, and maintain and productive, active workforce. The group offered a walking competition and participation in National Walk@Lunch Day, an extension of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association's WalkingWorks® program.



# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

The Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services is responsible for the county's financial and technological services. The department's goal is to effectively and efficiently manage Charles County Government's fiscal operations based on sound, comprehensive, short- and long-term fiscal policies. The department comprises five divisions: Accounting, Budget, Information Technology, Purchasing, and Treasury.

The Accounting Division is responsible for processing payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, risk management, and general accounting functions, including water and sewer billing. The Accounting Division received the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting for the fiscal 2012 Consolidated Annual Financial Report (CAFR), for the 11th consecutive year.



The Budget Division develops the annual budget and five-year capital improvement projects plan, and monitors revenues and expenditures. The Budget Division received the Certificate of Distinguished Budget Presentation award for the 17th consecutive year from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for the fiscal 2013 budget book. The certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental budget-

ary reporting. To receive the award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, operation guide, financial plan, and communication device. The budget book contains nearly 480 pages, and is available as a resource document in local public libraries and on the county's website, [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov). The budget book provides descriptions of county programs and dedicated funds, in addition to facts, figures, and historical information.

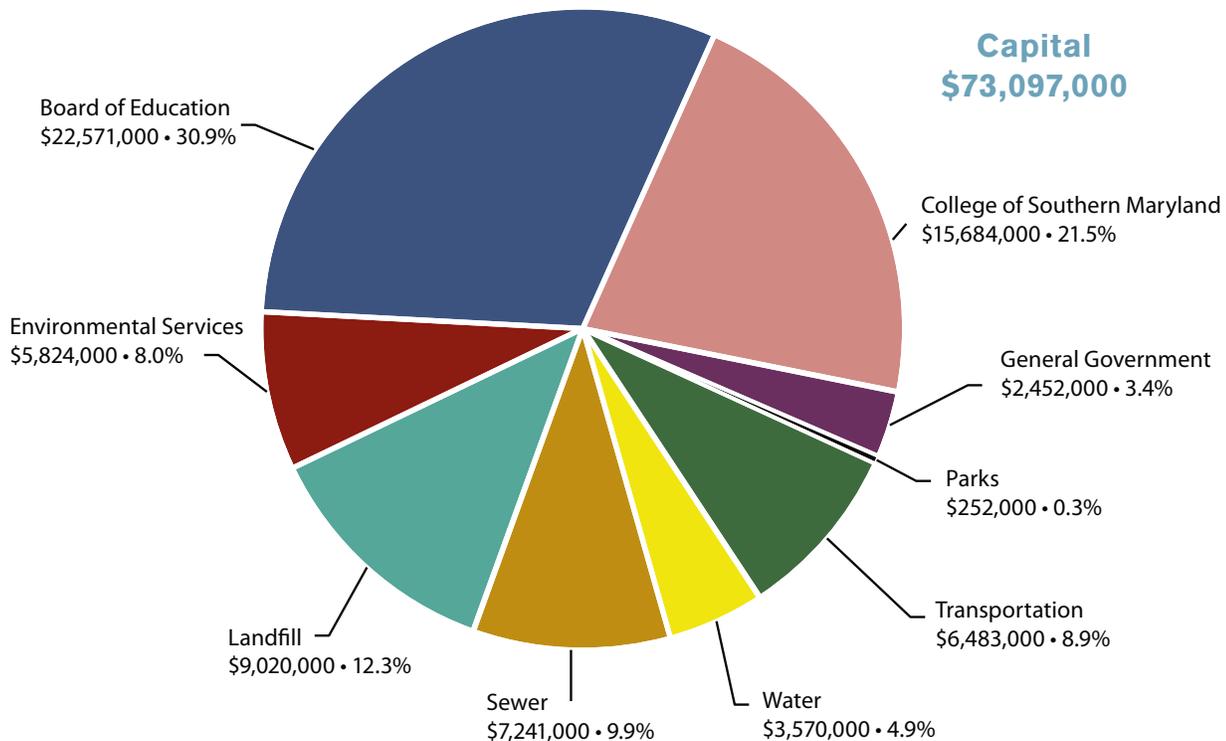
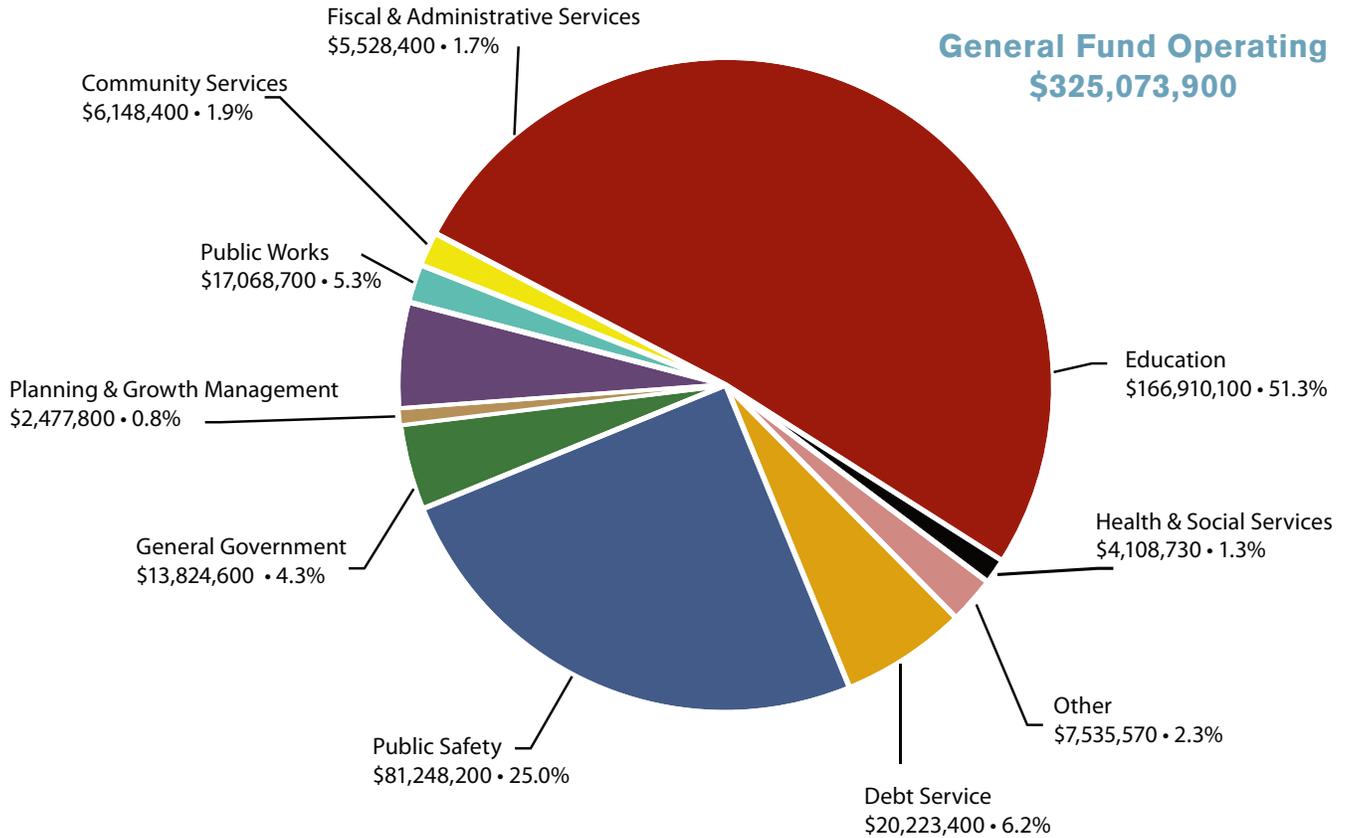
The Treasury Division collects and invests county funds, except pension plans. The division administers and collects county property taxes, and taxes for the incorporated towns of Indian Head

and La Plata and for the State of Maryland. The Treasury Division collects payments for county-sponsored services such as utility bills, tag-a-bags, liquor licenses, permits, dog tags, motor vehicle registrations, red light fines, and speed camera fines. A senior tax credit is available to qualified seniors residing in Charles County. The division is headquartered at the Charles County Government Building in La Plata, and has a satellite location in Waldorf adjacent to the Sheriff's Office District III station.

The Information Technology (IT) Division acquires, designs, develops, maintains, and enhances technology infrastructure, applications, and telecommunications to support county operations. In fiscal 2013, the division unveiled a redesigned county website where citizens are the focus. The website at [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov) is easy to navigate, and provides pertinent, timely information. All pages include links to the county's Get Connected program that links citizens quickly to social media, cable television, email alerts, and newsletters. The website front page includes a weekly resident-submitted photo and a rotating feature for emergency alerts. The redesigned county website reflects the County Commissioners' support for open government and includes a transparent government Web page with detailed reporting of county business transactions. Thanks to the IT Division's work, the Center for Digital Government selected Charles County as the "most digitally advanced county" for counties nationwide with populations of less than 150,000. The county earned this first place distinction an unprecedented nine times out of the past 10 years.

# OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

Fiscal Year 2013



# Charles County Government



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County Administrator

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# 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.