



# Charles County

*on the Grow in the New Millenium*



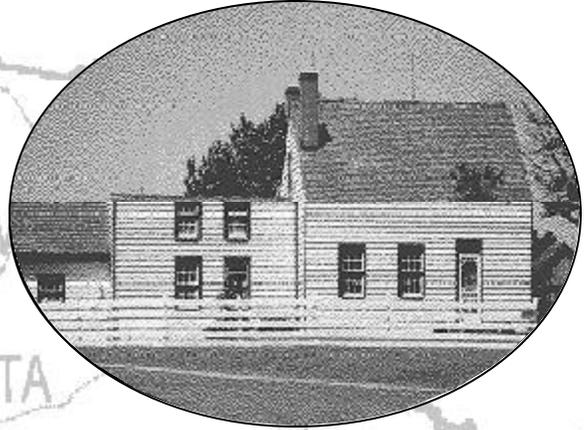
  
**In Memory of  
those Charles County Citizens  
who lost their lives  
at the Pentagon  
September 11, 2001**

Kris Bishundot	Angela Hantz
Donna Bowen	Shelley Marshall
Sharon Carver	Capt. John Yamniacky



2001-2002

# History



**C**aptain John Smith first explored the area that was eventually to become Charles County in 1608. He encountered the Indian settlement of Potopaco, which was colonized by the English as early as 1634, and later become the town of Port Tobacco, a major seaport in the 1600's and the original seat of County government.

Charles County's boundaries as known today were established on May 10, 1658, and named for England's Third Lord Baltimore. In 1895, the County seat was moved to La Plata.

Located 23 miles south of Washington, D.C., Charles County is known as the Gateway to Southern Maryland with more than 150 miles of shoreline, world famous bass fishing, and a wealth of history, which is preserved through numerous historic buildings and museums throughout the County, including the American Indian Cultural Center in Waldorf, the Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Museum outside of Waldorf, Smallwood's Retreat near Marbury, St. Ignatius Church at Chapel Point, Port Tobacco Courthouse, and the Thomas Stone National Historic Site, among others. The small town of Benedict on the Patuxent River is where the British troops landed during the War of 1812, marched to Washington, D.C., then burned the city. Also located on the Potomac River in Charles County is Mallows Bay, home of one of largest graveyards of wooden ships, dating from the Revolutionary War to World War I and after, from the U.S. Shipping Board Emergency Fleet.

According to the U.S. Census, the County's population remained stable from 1790 until 1940, when the construction of the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge and the opening of U.S. 301, the County's major north-south corridor, spurred growth. In 1940, the population was 17,162. Sixty years later, the 2000 Census climbed to 120,546.

*Charles County has Maryland's fourth highest median household income (\$62,199) and third highest effective buying income, or after tax income.*



*Charles County has the second largest bald eagle population in the State of Maryland.*

# Dear Citizens:

The future of Charles County depends upon creating and sustaining a solid foundation of quality public education, public safety, economic development and comprehensive planning, which will enable our County to thrive and prosper.

To achieve these goals, we concentrate our funding in these areas. Our highest priorities are public education and public safety, which receive the majority of new revenue that is available to the County. However, there are other critical functions that government must perform, from emergency services to road maintenance to parks and recreation to social programs. Adequate resources for these and programs and services are required for quality of life for all of our citizens.

During the last two years, we have instituted public/private partnerships and policies to attract business and industry that will bring quality, high-paying jobs to the County and provide the needed infrastructure to improve our economic base; adopted new standards for development to improve property values and enhance neighborhoods, as well as assure that adequate public facilities are available to accommodate growth, i.e., schools, water and sewer services, and roads. We developed a comprehensive transportation strategy to expand, improve, and expedite the construction of the County's road system over the next five years to complement the decision on the upgrade of U.S 301 through Waldorf and a future Western Bypass of Waldorf within the County. In addition, we have added several recreational amenities, including a state-of-the-art Skatepark, begun construction of a new public safety communications system, broken ground on a new comprehensive high school, and consistently increased the number of sworn officers in the Sheriff's Office.

Through prudent, conservative, long-range fiscal management policies, the County is on sound financial footing. We have been able to receive financial upgrades from Wall Street, maintain a healthy fund balance, meet our long-range financial commitments, and maintain current programs in spite of economic downturns and unforeseen tragedies that have had negative economic effects at both the national and local levels, including the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the April 28, 2002, tornado, which wreaked havoc across 24 miles of the County.

We invite you to review our efforts to reach our goals: to improve economic development, infrastructure, the effectiveness and efficiency of government, and comprehensive planning; to support the achievement of educational benchmarks, and maintain a high level of public safety to make Charles County a great place to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,  
*The Charles County Commissioners*



Courtesy-Office of Tourism

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*By better than 2-1 (59% vs 28%), respondents to a 2001 perceptions survey believe Charles County is moving in a positive direction.*



*25% of the County's population age 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher, 32.4% have an associate's degree or some college. (Source Census 2000)*

# The Board of County Commissioners

Charles County is governed by a board of five County Commissioners who are elected countywide to four-year terms. They are responsible for:

- \* raising the revenues to fund the capital and operating budgets of County departments and agencies;
  - \* providing for the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of the County;
  - \* adopting and updating the Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance and overseeing the development process;
  - \* establishing, promulgating and enforcing County rules, regulations, ordinances, policies and procedures;
  - \* appointing boards, commissions, and task forces to advise them and make recommendations;
- fulfilling the mission of Charles County government and serving on various board and councils in the County, region and State.



Commissioner  
President  
**Murray D. Levy**

The President presides at meetings and hearings of the Commissioners. The President serves full-time, and may reside anywhere in the County. The other four commissioners are part-time. Each of them resides in one of four Commissioner Resident Districts, which are realigned every 10 years following the Census.



Commissioner  
**Wm. Daniel Mayer**  
District 1

**District 1** covers: election districts 1, 4, 5, and 8-1 and 9. This includes La Plata, Port Tobacco, Bel Alton, Cobb Island, Newport, Bryantown, Malcolm, Hughesville, Benedict, and part of Brandywine.



Commissioner  
**Wayne Cooper**  
District 2

**District 2** covers election districts 2, 3, 6-1, 6-3, 7, and 10. This includes the Bryans Road, Indian Head, Nanjemoy, Bensville, and Marbury communities.



Commissioner  
**Allan (Al) R. Smith**  
District 3

**District 3** covers election districts 6-5, 6-10, 6-11, 6-12, 6-13, 8-2, and 8-3. This includes northern Waldorf and parts of St. Charles.



Commissioner  
Vice President  
**Robert J. Fuller**  
District 4

**District 4** covers election districts 6-2, 6-4, 6-6, 6-7, 6-8, 6-9, and 8-4. This includes St. Charles, White Plains, and part of Waldorf.

## How to Communicate with the County Commissioners

The administrative offices of the Charles County Commissioners are open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The Commissioners are in session on Mondays and Tuesdays between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. They convene in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, located on the first floor of the County Government Building. Their weekly agenda is published every Friday in the *Maryland Independent*, recorded on the County's 24-hour Automated Response System, (301) 645-0600, and listed on the County Government's Web site: [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).

Sessions are open to the public unless personnel or legal issues are under discussion. Town meetings are held annually in each of the Commissioner Residents Districts to accommodate citizens who are unable to meet during regular business hours to discuss issues with the Commissioners.

To schedule an appointment with a Commissioner, call (301) 645-0550 or (301) 870-3000, 1-877-807-8790 (toll-free), or send e-mail to: [commissioner@govt.co.charles.md.us](mailto:commissioner@govt.co.charles.md.us). The Maryland Relay Service TTY/TDD is 711 in Maryland or 1-800-735-2258 outside of Maryland. To be placed on the Commissioners' meeting agenda, call **Linda Rollins**, Clerk to the County Commissioners, at voice phone (301) 645-0554, via the Maryland Relay Service or send e-mail to: [rollinsl@govt.co.charles.md.us](mailto:rollinsl@govt.co.charles.md.us).

*The official flower of Charles County is the Dogwood, the official bird is the Great Blue Heron, and the official flower is the wild carrot, Queen Anne's Lace.*



*During the 2002 Potomac River Clean-up, 572 volunteers removed 26.5 tons of debris from our waterways, compared to 15.3 tons removed the prior year by 379 volunteers.*

# Improving Public Safety

## Law Enforcement

The County Commissioners maintain a positive working relationship with County, State, and municipal law enforcement. The County's steady and consistent increase in funding of sworn personnel in the Sheriff's Office has resulted in a decline in crime, as well as support of a number of Sheriff's Office initiatives to reduce and prevent crime, including Community Policing, Citizens on Patrol, Teen Court, and juvenile intervention programs.



The Sheriff's Office received its accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies in 2001, one of only 600 agencies internationally to have been accredited since the Commission was created in 1979.

In January 2002, the Detention Center became the first correctional facility in Maryland to score 100 percent on its initial state compliance audit.

## Emergency Services

In July 2001, the County initiated its first paid staff of paramedics and emergency medical technicians (six teams of two, each with a paramedic and EMT) to supplement and support the volunteer services throughout the

County. They add a crew to ensure round-the-clock coverage at the Charles County Mobile Intensive Care Unit, while other crews work weekday shifts at other stations where the volume of daytime calls has outpaced the availability of volunteers.

Before September 11, 2001, the County had begun the update of the County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for response to acts of terrorism. The annex was completed in February 2002, integrating and updating scenarios into existing standard operation procedures. The EOP is exercised and activated as needed by the Charles County Local Emergency Planning Committee, which include representatives of public/private agencies, which would respond to natural and man-made disasters.

## New Public Safety Communications System

In October 2002, the County Commissioners finalized the contract with Motorola for the construction of a new \$17 million County-wide 800 MHz public safety communications system that will provide more than 1,500 advanced portable and mobile police, fire/ems radios, dozens of channels to accommodate several thousand callers in case of an emergency, a fire/ems paging system,



Fire, EMS, and Sheriff's Office representatives hold mobile radios that will be part of the new 800 MHz public safety communications system.

interoperability with neighboring jurisdictions, a simulcast mutual aid radio system, and radio systems for other County Government departments. Included also is a critical microwave backbone.

The new 911/Fire/EMS/Police Dispatch Communications Center will be housed in the newly built 12,000-square-foot Emergency Services Center, located at 10425 Audie Lane, off Radio Station Road in La Plata.

The administrative offices of Emergency Services (Animal Control, False Alarm Reduction Unit, and Emergency Medical Services) moved into the new facility during November 2002.

When the Emergency Services Center is complete in 2003, it will also house the Emergency Operations Center and state-of-the-art communications and computer equipment to handle all types of disaster response.

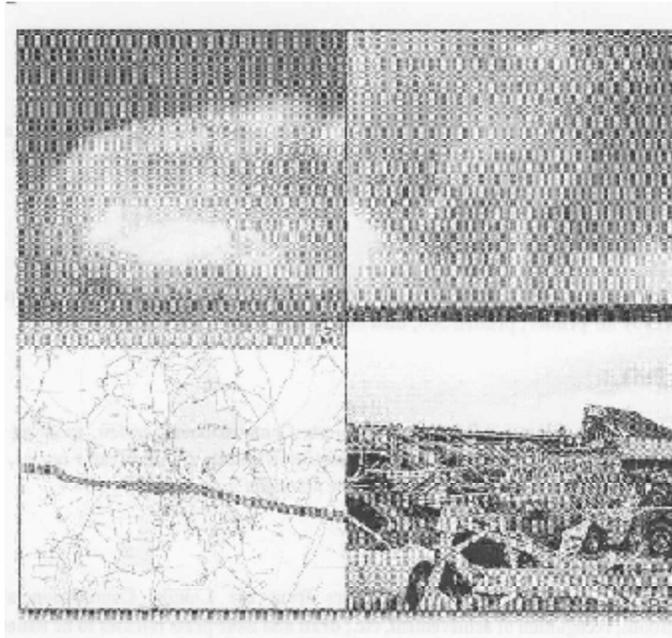
*At the end of calendar year 2001, there were 215 sworn officers in the Charles County Sheriff's Office.*



*In November 2002, the Tri-County Animal Shelter set a record for animal adoptions: 22 dogs and cats and one neutered rabbit.*

# Tornado -- April 28, 2002

Shortly after 7 p.m. on April 28, 2002, the worst tornado in the history of Maryland left a path 24 miles long and 400 yards wide, touching down west of La Plata near Marbury and going east to Benedict, where it crossed the Patuxent River into Calvert County. The Category 4 (up to 260 mph) winds damaged nearly 1,000 homes, farms, and businesses, and untold numbers of vehicles; resulted in three deaths and more than 120 injuries; devastated the central business district of La Plata; destroyed Archbishop Neale School; and toppled hundreds of acres of trees.



**Tornado photo collage from the NOAA website:  
[www.nws.noaa.gov/om/assessments/index.shtml](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/assessments/index.shtml)**

The County was declared a Federal disaster area, eligible for both individual and public assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). At the time of this publication, the damage was estimated at \$4.7 million. FEMA determined that only \$1.8 million of that amount was eligible for their 75% cost-share assistance.

Individual assistance from FEMA, to those without insurance or other eligible unmet needs, has yielded 65 grant awards totaling \$164,869. The average award amount was approximately \$2,536, with four maximum grants of \$14,800 made.

During the peak of the response, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) had 25% of its heavy equipment fleet assisting in the cleanup. By the end of November, MDOT reported assisting 428 properties, resulted in removal of 510,000 tons of debris; removal of 1,506 uprooted stumps, and grinding of 3,260 in-ground stumps.

In the aftermath of the tornado, the County was blessed by an outpouring of manpower and resources from the emergency response through the ongoing recovery phase. The spirit of cooperation has been tremendous. Counties and cities throughout the

State of Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia provided emergency management, law enforcement, fire, emergency and public works manpower and resources. The staffs of local, State, and Federal agencies, non-profit organizations, and Charles County Government employees worked hand-in-hand with the victims to ensure that their needs were met. Thousands of volunteers within our County, our State, and from across the country, answered phones, ran errands, made photo

copies, delivered meals, cleared debris, or stepped forward to willingly perform any task requested. Untold numbers of citizens and businesses donated food, and supplies. Further, the County established a disaster relief fund for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the tornado victims.

By the end of 2002, more than \$510,000 had been donated, with \$355,250 of the receipts disbursed, providing direct aid to 454 families and properties. Checks ranged from \$100 to \$1,000. Victims with unmet needs will be eligible for additional funds, if available, once all applications have been reviewed and provided initial assistance.

*Nearly \$6 million has been by the County in the clean-up from the April 28 tornado.*



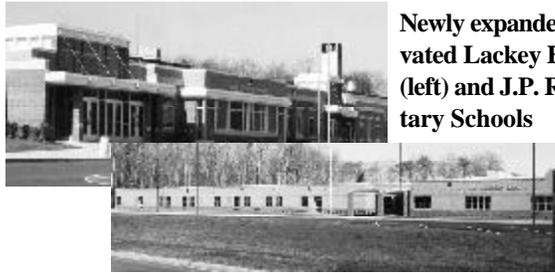
*The April 28, 2002, tornado followed the same path through La Plata of the deadly schoolhouse tornado of November 9, 1926, that resulted in the deaths of 14 children.*

# Promoting Education

Another goal of the County Commissioners has been to support the achievement of education benchmarks to improve our schools. Good schools are essential to the economic development of a growing community. Through a close, working relationship with the Board of Education, the County provides financial resources and adequate public facilities to achieve established benchmarks and other school system academic achievement and personal responsibility goals, which are part of the Charles County Public Schools' 5-year plan for improvement in academic achievement and career readiness by 2005. For Fiscal Year 2001-02, the County provided approximately 55% of annual County revenue, excluding restricted County grants and dedicated taxes, to fund the Charles County Public Schools.

The County Commissioners continue to work with the Board of Education to attract and retain quality teachers and assure they are adequately compensated. The Commissioners have supported state-of-the-art technology in County schools, and adopted an adequate public facilities ordinance to assure school capacity is adequate to promote a positive learning environment, while providing a financing mechanism for new schools construction and expansion.

During the 2002 General Assembly,



Newly expanded and renovated Lackey High School (left) and J.P. Ryon Elementary Schools

the County Commissioners secured passage of the Fair Share Excise Tax, in lieu of impact fees, to be levied against new home construction to finance bonds for the construction of new school capacity.

In 2002, the Board of Education and the County Commissioners broke ground on the new North Point High School, a comprehensive high school which will offer both career and technology programs, as well as traditional academic programs and a convocation center. The school is located on a site southwest of the intersection of Route 228 and Middletown Road. The site will also provide for a future middle school and elementary school, and community center complex, including a library, police substation, and fire and rescue station.

The County and Board of Education also broke ground on the new Henry E. Lackey High School indoor swimming pool that will be used year-round by the community and high school swim teams.

## Notable Achievements

→ The average SAT scores for 2001 were **516**, verbal, 8 points above the state and national averages; and **523**, math, 13 points above the state average, and 9 points above the national average.

→ **Composite scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills** for Grades 2, 4, and 6 improved from **51.6** in 1998 to **55.6** in 2001.

→ The Charles County Public Schools were nationally recognized by the **NAACP** for improvements in the area of **minority achievement**.

The County also supports the College of Southern Maryland (CSM), which is among the top community colleges in the State with one of the highest four-year transfer and graduation rates. CSM includes Associate Degrees, Bachelor Degree programs in partnership with area universities, and professional development and training courses.

*At the end of 2001, there were more than 24,00 students in our public schools, with the expenditure at \$6,868 per pupil during July 1, 2001-June 30, 2002.*



*Charles County Public Schools include 5 high schools, 8 middle schools, and 19 elementary schools.*

# Improving Economic Development

## Incentives\$

To attract business, the County has incentives to promote Economic Development:

**\$ Revolving Bank Loan Guarantee** – provides full faith and credit to guarantee loans.

**\$ Permit Expedite Program** – Halves processing time for up to 10 permit expedite applications per year for non-retail commercial and industrial parks.

**\$ Business Bounty program** -- pays County residents \$500 when they tell the Economic Development Commission about businesses that are considering relocating to the County.

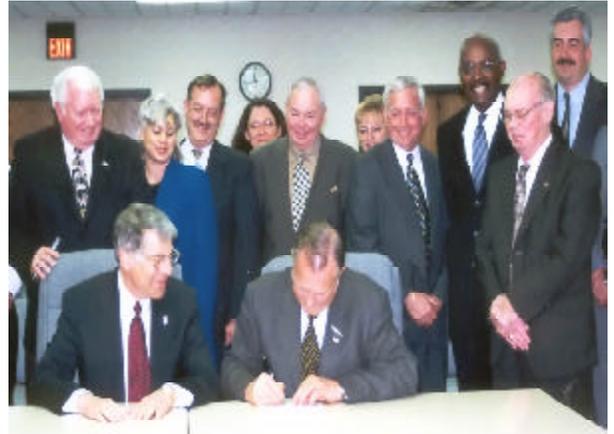
**\$ Marketing Assistance Program** – provides two days of free introductory marketing consultations to nonretail commercial and industrial business.

**\$ Charles County Technology Council** -- acts as a cooperative alliance dedicated to the advancement of people, technology, and ideas.

Directing County spending to those areas important to maintaining a thriving business climate and high quality of life (education, law enforcement, recreational and cultural opportunities) and technology, go hand-in-hand with the County's ongoing goal to improve economic development. By developing and implementing cost-effective, innovative business retention, expansion and location policies, and a favorable regulatory climate to enhance the commercial/industrial assessable base, the County has begun an aggressive program to bring high-paying jobs to the County, thus increasing personal income and average County wages.

During 2001-2002, the County Commissioners worked in cooperation with the Economic Development Commission to develop the necessary partnership/development agreements for water/sewer service and road improvements to target industries that will bring jobs to the County that meet or exceed 80% of the State's average weekly wage rate (excluding retail).

The County has completed agreements for the White Plains Corporate



**Henry A. Mienhardt, Jr. (right) signs an agreement for the development of an office campus in White Plains that is now under construction off U.S. 301 next to the SMECO building.**

Plaza (office campus), the development of a hotel/conference center/golf course and business and industrial park in Waldorf, the Waldorf Technology Park, and Kelson Ridge Power Plant.

In addition, the County Commissioners have facilitated the development of high quality office building development along U.S. 301 and Route 228 through rezoning, provision of infrastructure, permit expediting, and similar incentives to target markets. The County is currently completing the necessary partnerships/agreements for water/sewer service and road improvements in other areas of the White Plains Commercial Park area, as well as rezoning of parcels to accommodate business park development.

*Charles County has an unemployment rate of approximately 3.1%, one of the lowest in the State of Maryland and the Metropolitan Washington region.*



*The average house sale price was \$167,945 in 2001 in Charles County.*

# Improving Government Efficiency

Charles County continues to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government through structural improvements; use of productivity enhancing technology, equipment and incentives; cooperative agreements with sister institutions, and maintaining a well-trained, fairly compensated, highly motivated work force.

In concert with the extensive customer service training program for County Government employees, the County has developed a survey form that is available on the County's web site or in departments throughout County government buildings where citizens can rate their satisfaction with government programs and services. Production of a customer service charter is underway.

*Code Home Rule is one of two forms of home rule permitted by State Law.*

## Code Home Rule

Voters passed the initiative to change the County's current Commissioner form of government to Code Home Rule during the November General Election in 2002. Code Home Rule is one of two forms of home rule afforded Maryland counties by State law. It maintains the board of commissioners and gives them the power

to pass a number of purely local laws that previously would have needed approval by the General Assembly. Code Home Rule enables residents to be more closely involved with the passage of local legislation. Under Code Home Rule, the Commissioners have 45 days a year to introduce and enact local laws. A public hearing is required for each bill, drafts of the legislation must be posted and advertised, and each bill must be introduced by at least one commissioner. Residents who oppose a law can obtain the signatures of at least 10% of the registered voters on a petition, then take the legislation to referendum.

## Cable Franchise Agreement.

The Charles County Commissioners adopted a Cable Franchise Agreement with Comcast in June 2002. The Franchise Agreement provides many tools and opportunities for the County to help assure that Charles County residents, schools and economic development centers receive appropriate benefits and communication advances so important to a growing community. It is also the authority which allows jurisdictions to collect appropriate compensation from a private company for the use of taxpayer owned rights-of-ways. In part, the Franchise provides: higher standards for customer service and quality

☑ *Four local PEG (Public, Educational, and Government) channels are included in the Cable Franchise Agreement, plus two training channels for education and emergency response and public safety.*

☑ *The I-NET will link 80 public service agencies with high speed data, video, and voice communication capabilities.*

of service accountability; an upgraded system with the latest technology; and the construction of a fiber optic Institutional Network (I-NET), which will link over 80 schools, police, fire, emergency services, other agencies and offices with high speed data, video and voice communication capabilities. Long distance learning for schools and classrooms and enhanced public safety and emergency response system applications are just a few of the benefits of an I-NET. An additional four channels for local programming were also acquired. There are two for education and one each for County government and for the community. These local channels, called PEG (Public-Educational-Government) channels, can carry everything from local school sporting events, to public hearings and Commissioner meetings, greatly increasing the availability of community information to citizens.

*Presidential and General Election results are available online on the County's website, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org), after polls close.*



*Citizens can now pay for a number of County services by credit card either in person at County facilities or online on the County web site, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).*

# Improving Transportation

## Guiding Principles

In March 2002, the County Commission adopted a Transportation Strategy to:

- ➔ Provide timely transportation infrastructure to accommodate the County's growth
- ➔ Coordinate transportation planning with land use planning as described in the 1997 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and Sub-Area Land Use Plans.
- ➔ Create a transportation network which maximizes citizens' choices of transportation options.
- ➔ Minimize negative impacts of transportation projects on existing neighborhoods and businesses.

## The Transportation Network Strategy

### State Roads

#### Upgrade US Route 301

- ➔ Support option Alternative 1A which upgrades key intersections along U.S. 301 in Waldorf without denying access to local businesses between interchanges, with the first interchange built at the intersection of U.S. 301, Route 5 and Western Parkway at the northern end of the U.S. 301.
- ➔ Support a western bypass of Waldorf that begins and ends in the County, developing strategies to

minimize the road's impact on existing neighborhoods and businesses.

- ➔ Support construction of an interchange east of Waldorf at Route 5, Route 5 Business and St. Charles Parkway, which would allow traffic flow on the County's Waldorf/La Plata Parkway.

### County Roads

- ➔ Complete the Waldorf/La Plata Parkway, with the extension of dualized St. Charles Parkway southbound in cooperation with the developers of St. Charles, to connect to Rosewick Road, and extend Rosewick westward to connect to U.S. 301 north of La Plata.

**Result:** *An eastern bypass of Waldorf for those entering the County via Route 5 at the northern boundary.*

- ➔ Construct all four lanes of Western Parkway from Route 228 northward to the U.S. 301 northern-most interchange in Waldorf. **Result:** *A western bypass of northern Waldorf from north U.S. 301.*

- ➔ Construct all four lanes of Middletown Road southward from Route 228 in Waldorf to the Cross County Connector.

- ➔ Reconstruct Acton Lane from U.S. 301 westward to the County's boundary with Prince George's County.

- ➔ Complete the unconstructed portion of the Cross County Connector between Route 5 in Waldorf and

Route 210 in Bryans Road, which will cross the entire County from east to west to connect the Bryans Road area to Waldorf.

### Mass Transit

- ➔ Support expedition of construction of a rail line from the Branch Avenue Metrorail station in Prince George's County through Waldorf to White Plains, with preservation of the rights-of-way for the rail line, stations, and parking preserved once the line is identified. Additional studies should be undertaken to determine suitable locations for future transit stations to support the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan.

- ➔ Support expansion of the daily Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Agency Metrobus service to Branch Avenue Metrorail station from Indian Head, Waldorf, and other points in the County.

- ➔ Support expansion of the Maryland Transit Administration

commuter bus service from the County to Washington, DC, and provision of additional park-and-ride lots to increase the ability of citizens to use public transportation.

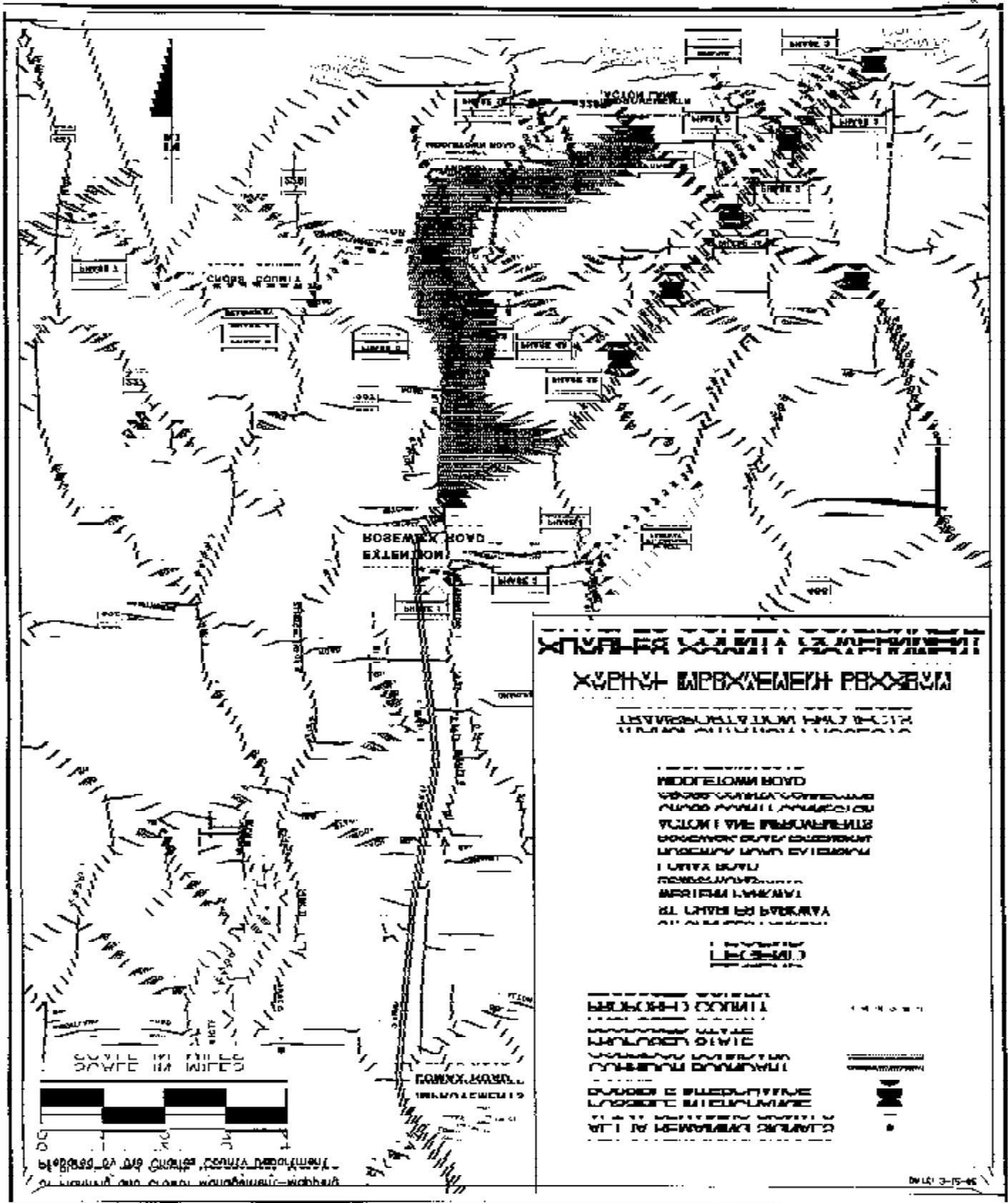
- ➔ Support expansion of the County's intracounty bus service, VanGO, to maximize people's access to the Metrobus and commuter bus public transportation.



For more information on the Transportation Network Strategy go to the Planning and Growth Management section of the County web site, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).



The County adopted a \$100 million program in 2002 to put county road improvements on the fast track in the Fiscal Year 2003-2007 Capital Improvement Program.



The County is working closely with the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Tri-County Council to expedite the completion of the Hughesville Bypass.



There are 82 County roads, totalling 109 miles of roadway, in the Adopt-A-Road program.

# Community Services

The Department of Community Services provides a myriad of services for every segment of the population through its three divisions: Aging and Community Centers, Housing and Community Development, and Recreation.

*During 2001, Senior Nutrition Programs served 13,702 meals to 876 eligible participants at the four senior centers, and 30,963 meals to homebound persons in the Meals-on-Wheels program.*

The Aging and Community Centers Division is the designated Area Agency on Aging for the County, providing a wide range of programs and services to promote independence and improve the quality of life for older persons. Direct services, as well as referrals, cover areas such as emergency assistance for food, fuel, and prescriptions, energy assistance, health insurance, housing and assisted living programs, income tax preparation, nutrition services, fitness and recreational activities, senior clubs, veterans benefits outreach, caregiver support programs, and more.

There are four senior centers: the Richard R. Clark Center in La Plata, the Nanjemoy Senior Center, the Waldorf Senior Center at the Jaycees Community Center, and the Indian Head Senior Center.

There are nine Community Centers, where a variety of programs, services, and recreational opportunities are offered for all ages. Seven are located in the County's middle schools, Hanson, Mattawoman, Piccowaxen, Somers, Henson, Smallwood, and Stoddert. One is at Wade Elementary School. The other is at the Nanjemoy Community Center, which also houses a Head Start Center, Health Clinic, and Senior Center.



*VanGO set a record in 2001 with more than 200,000 passenger trips, a 75% increase over the prior year.*

Housing and Community Development administers, provides, and coordinates a number of programs to assist low- and moderate-income families, the elderly, and handicapped individuals with securing safe and sanitary housing. The Division administers transportation services: VanGO, the County's public transportation service, and specialized services for special needs residents, all of which are designed to help citizens reach employment, shopping, medical,

senior centers, and recreational facilities. Community Development services encourage the development of affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization through a number of programs that are supported and/or coordinated by the Charles County Housing Commission and funded by the County, Federal and State governments.

This Division also administers the County's cooperative partnerships with EdSolutions and Children's Center for Discovery for before and after care programs in County elementary schools during the school year, and on-site day care programs, for infants through school-age weekdays, from 6 a.m.-6 p.m. year-round at the Department of Community Services building in Port Tobacco.

The Recreation Division offers trips and tours, aquatics programs at the County's high schools, therapeutic programs for developmentally dis-

*Certificates of participation and trophies were presented to 1,400 youth enrolled in winter basketball and indoor soccer leagues in 2001.*

abled youth and special needs adults, youth basketball and soccer sports programs, amusement park discounts, and gymnastics and dance programs at the County's state-of-the-art gymnastics and dance recreation center.

*In 2001, the Settlement Expense Loan Program leveraged \$132,000 in loans with \$4 million in first mortgages to make owning a home a reality for 43 families.*



*Rental Subsidy programs served an average of 509 clients per month during 2001.*

# Planning and Growth Management

While promoting economic development and improved infrastructure in the development district, in the northern portion of the County, the County is preserving productive agricultural land, woodlands, and ecological resources through Agricultural Land Preservation, the Rural Legacy Program, Critical Area Program, and Forest Conservation Programs.

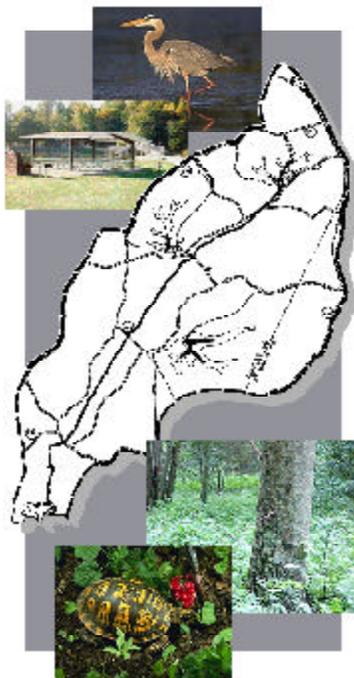
## Preservation

As of June 30, 2002, the County had 116 Agricultural Land Preservation Districts, totaling 16,832 acres of productive farmland.

Through the State's Rural Legacy Program, the County Commissioners have protected 1,183 acres (nine properties) within the Zekiah Swamp Watershed, with \$5.5 million in grants. The Watershed is the habitat for numerous rare and endangered plant and animal species, forms the headwaters of the Wicomico Scenic River, and has some of the most productive agricultural land in the County.

In FY 2002, 79 building permits, 8 record plats (adding four new dwell-

ing units), one grading permit, and three variances for buffer impacts were handled under the Critical Area Program. The Critical Area Program is designed to protect the habitat and water quality of tidal waterways by maintaining and improving the pollutant filtering ability of land within 1000 feet inland of mean high tide mark.



## Historic Sites Survey

By the end of 2002, the Department of Planning and Growth Management had completed the third phase of the Charles County Historic Sites Survey. This phase covered the southeastern section of the County, resulting in the documentation of

95 historic properties. Phase 1 covered the north-central section of the County, and resulted in documentation of more than 190 historic resources. Phase 2 focused on the northeastern section of the County. The result was the documentation of 80 sites containing more than 150 individual resources. Resources include numerous dwellings, commercial buildings, schools, churches, and cemeteries ranging in date from the

mid-1700s to the early 1940s. Phase 4 will cover the western section of the County. The survey, to be completed by 2005, will be used to develop a historic preservation program, promote sensitive growth, stimulate heritage tourism, and educate the public about the County's history.

## Comprehensive Planning

The County Commissioners approved the Bryans Road Sub-Area Plan and began public information meetings on the draft Waldorf Sub-Area Plan, received a report on the ongoing Mattawoman Watershed Plan, and approved the implementation of the illicit discharge program that will retrofit 13 failing storm water management systems, restore eroding streams, and provide new storm water management sites.

## Design Standards

After adopting 1,650 square foot minimum and design requirements for townhomes and single family detached dwellings to assure quality home construction, the County Commissioners appointed a Site Design Architectural Review Board to develop standards and guidelines to bolster single family residential and commercial development.



*The County issued 1,240 building permits for homes (1,036 single-family, 205 townhomes) in FY 2002, compared to 1,179 (977 single family, 202 townhomes) in FY 2001.*



*Of the 1,030 acres planned for development in FY 2002, 384 acres of 671 existing acres of forest were retained, and an additional 14 acres were planted.*

# Public Facilities

The CIP/Buildings and Trades, Parks and Grounds, Roads, Solid Waste and Vehicle Maintenance, and Administration Division of the Department of Public Facilities includes more than 211 full-time equivalent employees who provide front-line service to the citizens of Charles County through the park system, road system, solid waste services, environmental and recycling programs and sports programs, as well as providing construction, renovation, and maintenance of County and other governmental agency facilities.



mowing, trimming, landscaping, trash removal, tree/shrub planting and care, snow removal around County buildings, certain Board of Education athletic field renovations and maintenance, and other outdoor construction projects. In addition, this Division plans, develops, and operates the County's parks, and is charged with programming and management of all outdoor sports leagues and the overall operation of Gilbert Run Regional Park and the regionally acclaimed 18-hole White Plains Golf Course. During 2001-2002, Parks and Grounds opened a new running/walking trail at Laurel Springs Park, a Dog Park and Skateboard Park at White Plains Park, and constructed the Hatton Creek Boat Launch facility.

Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance does routine repairs and preventive maintenance on approximately 500 County-owned vehicles and pieces of equipment, as well as annual vehicle safety inspections.

The Roads Division maintains more than 1,730 lane miles of County roadways, including a variety of services from patching and overlay and storm drain repair and replacement to cleaning rights-of-way.

**Recycling Rates**

2000-31%  
2001-30%  
2002-32%



Solid Waste services include the operation of the landfill, litter control, and recycling and environmental programs. It operates four permanent recycling centers and composting facility, serves more than 30,000 households with curbside recycling service, and administers the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program, Adopt-A-Road, and Potomac River Clean-up.

**Tonnage Brought to the Charles County Sanitary Landfill**

2000 - 42,175  
2001- 47,748  
2002-69,859\*

**\*includes 10,580 tons of tornado debris**

The CIP/Building and Trades Division is responsible for in-house construction of new facilities and additions to existing structures, and is divided into four specialized work areas: building maintenance and HVAC, Electrical, Construction, and Custodial.

Parks and Grounds maintains 26 building sites, 20 County parks, and 109 utility sites, including grass

*New business management practices begun in 2001, resulted in a profit at the White Plains Golf Course in 2002 despite hail damage from the April 28<sup>th</sup> tornado.*



*Christmas trees and yard waste collected by the County are transformed into mulch that is available free of charge to County residents.*

# Utilities

The Department of Utilities is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and compliance monitoring of all water and sewer facilities owned by the County Commissioners, including: wells, booster stations, storage tanks, water mains, fire hydrants, water meters, manholes, pump stations, sewer mains and wastewater treatment plants. Their primary responsibility is to ensure a healthy environment and safe drinking water supply for County residents.

Staff perform design and construction review of capital improvement projects and developer projects for operability in the County's public

water and sewerage system, as well as around the clock coverage to respond to service problems.

Utilities maintains and operates the Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Facility, the largest facility of its type on the Potomac River in Maryland, which has the capability to treat 15 million gallons of wastewater per day. It has phosphorus removal and sludge handling capabilities, accepts septic tank and holding tank wastes, as well as sludge, from other sources throughout the County. Planning and design is underway for a bio-nutrient (nitrogen) removal upgrade of the Plant as part of the Chesapeake Bay initiative.



The Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment facility and laboratory

## The 'GreaseBusters'



During 2000, nine of the 18 sanitary sewer overflows that occurred were attributable to grease accumulation in sewer lines, with the two largest overflows occurring in the

County in high density residential areas. The costs associated with cleaning sewer lines, as well as cleaning up a residence if there is backup of raw sewage, can total tens of thousands of dollars.

In 2001, the County Commissioners adopted the Department of Utilities' cooperative effort among County departments, the board of education, and private sector to develop a grease public education program, called the "GreaseBusters," a unique, ongoing program to target elementary school children as well as adults on the importance of keeping sewers and septic systems grease-free.



### Utilities staff daily check:

- 61 well sites
- 57 pump station sites
- 7 water tower sites
- 2 water standpipe sites
- 4 booster station sites
- 7 wastewater treatment plant (wwtp) sites
- 78 wells
- 7 water towers
- 2 water standpipes
- 4 water booster stations
- 57 pump stations
- 6 wastewater treatment plants
- 20 community water systems
- 4 wwtp water systems
- 5 county park water systems
- 6 private water systems
- 9 community sewage systems
- 3 county park sewage systems
- 4 private sewage systems
- 1 private sewage plant
- 29 private holding tanks pumped

*The Department of Utilities maintains 194 miles of water lines and 227 miles of sewer mains, and periodically flushes more than 2,500 hydrants.*



*On average, more than 9,600 mgd (million gallons per day) of wastewater is treated at Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Plant, and leaves as 7,400 mgd of treated effluent.*

# Recognition

## Emergency Services

☆ **Susie Spalding**, 911/Fire/EMS Communications Dispatcher Supervisor, earned the Dr. Henry Burke Award for Outstanding EMS Person of the Year for 2001.

☆ **Tony Rose**, Chief of 911/Fire/EMS Communications, earned the Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association Outstanding Service Award for 2001 and Mid-Eastern Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, International Telecommunications Center Director of the Year Award.

☆ **George Hayden**, 911/Fire/EMS Communications Supervisor, earned the Mid-Eastern Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, International Telecommunications Center Supervisor of the Year Award.

☆ **William "Butch" Frazier**, 911/Fire/EMS Communications Assistant Chief and member of the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), earned an award for setting up the Department's computer program. Frazier earned the County Volunteer Firemen's Association Outstanding Service Award in 2000.

☆ **Lynn Gilroy**, 911/Fire/EMS Communications Dispatcher, who is the treasurer of the La Plata VFD, received the Department's Samuel McCarthy Award for his dedication to getting La Plata's new station constructed and operational.

## Tourism

☆ **Joanne Roland**, Director, received *The Friends of the Potomac Local Recognition Award* for the promotion of the BASSMaster programs.

☆ The **BASS Tournament**, hosted by the Office of Tourism, earned a *Friends of the Potomac Award*, which honors public/private partnerships for conservation and restoration of the Potomac River and its watershed, and the *Beyond the Border Marketing Award* from the Maryland Tourism Council.

## Fiscal Services

☆ The **Budget Division** of the Department of Fiscal Services has received the prestigious *Distinguished Budget Presentation Award* for seven consecutive years from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. This is the only national awards program in government budgeting.

## Planning and Growth Management

☆ **Etheline Green**, Permits Technician, earned the *Quality of Life Award* from the Maryland National Capital Building Industry Association, which recognizes an individual in the public sector who demonstrates genuine concern for

quality of life in Charles County and fosters an atmosphere of partnership with the building industry. Past recipients in the Department have been **Glen Strobel**, Water/Waste-water Permit Technician, Development and Capital Services Chief **Melvin C. Beall, Jr.**, Department Director **Roy Hancock**, and Planner **Karen Lee**.

☆ Zoning Technicians **Ray Buckler** and **Charles Quade**, Site Plan Reviewer **Cynthia Cooksey**, and Zoning Administrator **Mary Vance** were recognized by the Maryland Chapter of the American Planning Association for their development and enforcement of an amendment to the County's sign ordinance regulating the placement of real estate signs advertising developments.

☆ The **Planning Office** received a National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award for its School Capacity Allocation Policy.

## Community Services

☆ **VanGO** earned *Most Improved Paratransit Service* from the Transportation Association of Maryland and a *NACo Achievement Award* for its partnership with the Department of Social Services to develop transportation alternatives for clients in the welfare to work program.

☆ Other *NACo Achievement Awards* went to Community Services' **SELP** loan program and the **"Beyond Basics"** training program for summer camp counselors.

*The County has received \$8.2 million in Community Development Block Grants for 47 projects since 1975.*



*The Charles County Government work force includes more than 800 full- and part-time employees.*

# Operational Budget

FY 2002 General Fund Revenues \$171,108,600

## Where the Money Comes from

49.9%	Property Taxes	-	\$94,909,700
32.6%	Income Taxes	-	\$62,056,100
5.8%	Other Local Taxes	-	\$11,070,300
3.4%	Highway User Tax	-	\$6,492,100
2.3%	State Grants	-	\$4,316,300
2.3%	Services and Charges	-	\$4,297,300
1.6%	All Other Revenues	-	\$3,137,700
1.5%	Interest Income	-	\$2,800,000
.6%	Fund Balance	-	\$1,174,100



**Income Taxes**  
32.6%



**Property Taxes**  
47.7%



**Other**  
17.5%

## Where the Money Goes



**Board of Education**  
50.1%

50.1%	Board of Education	-	\$85,680,500
20.3%	Sheriff's Office & Detention Center	-	\$34,762,100
6.7%	Debt Service	-	\$11,389,700
5.5%	Public Facilities	-	\$9,432,200
4.7%	General Government	-	\$8,099,900
3.7%	College of Southern Maryland	-	\$6,396,600
1.7%	Health and Social Services	-	\$2,894,300
1.6%	Community Services	-	\$2,787,500
1.4%	Other Public Safety	-	\$2,320,700
1.2%	Planning and Growth Management	-	\$2,105,400
.9%	Library and Other Education	-	\$1,514,500
.7%	Fiscal Services	-	\$1,242,700
.6%	Economic Development	-	\$981,600
.3%	Conservation of Natural Resources	-	\$458,700
.4%	Capital Projects	-	\$674,000
.2%	Contingency	-	\$368,200



**Sheriff's Office & Detention Center**  
20.3%



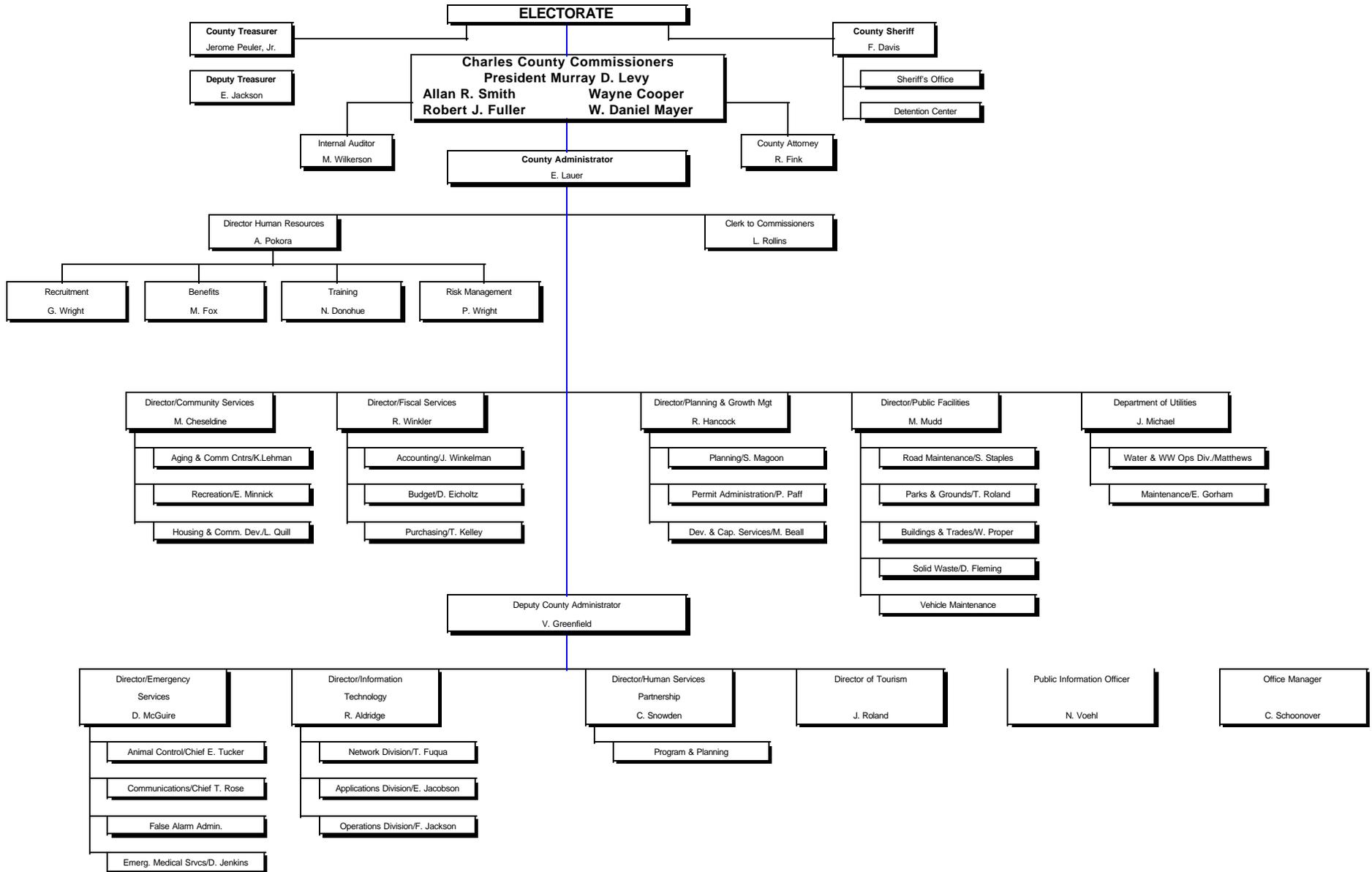
**Remainder of Government,**  
29.6%

The property tax rate is \$.952/\$100 assessed valuation, and \$.064/\$100 assessed valuation for fire and rescue tax.



The County's Adopted Fiscal Year 2003 budget is available online in the Department of Fiscal Services section of the County web site, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).

# CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# Frequently Called Numbers

(All have 301 area code unless otherwise indicated)

## County Departments

Clerk to the County Commissioners	645-0554
County Administration	645-0550, 301-870-3000
County Attorney's Office	645-0555, 870-2260
Gamblings Permits	
Liquor Board	
Community Services	934-9305, 870-3399
VanGO	609-7917
Emergency Services	609-3400
Fiscal Services	645-0570, 870-2542
Human Resources	645-0585, 870-2681
Human Services Partnership	609-9016
Information Technology	645-0545
Planning and Growth Management	645-0627, 870-3935
Public Facilities	932-3440, 870-2778
Public Information	645-0580
Tourism	645-0558
Treasurer's Office	645-0685
Utilities	609-7400, 753-8270

## Other Agencies

Chamber of Commerce	932-6500, 870-3089
Civista Medical Center	609-4000
Clerk of the Circuit Court	932-3202, 870-2659
College of Southern Maryland	934-2251, 870-3008
Consumer Affairs Office	1-888-743-0023
District Court	932-3300, 870-3980
Economic Development Commission	934-7632, 870-2309
Education, Board of	932-6610, 870-3814
Elections, Supervisors of	934-8962, 870-3167
Health Department	609-6900
Juvenile Services	705-1994, 870-6754
Libraries (main office, La Plata)	934-9001, 870-3520
Maryland State Police, La Plata	392-1200, 753-1200
Motor Vehicle Administration	1-800-950-1682
Orphan's Court, Register of Wills	932-3345, 870-3879
Sheriff, Office of the	932-2222, 870-3232
Social Security Administration	449-7578, 1-800-772-1213
Social Services	392-6400, 1-877-871-1177
State's Attorney	932-3350, 870-3413
State Office of Assessments & Taxation	932-2440, 870-2619
Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland	274-1922, 870-2520



## Boards & Commissions

The following boards and commissions, appointed by the County Commissioners, meet twice monthly or monthly in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Charles County Government Building in La Plata. The County Commissioners make appointments to more than 30 other boards and commissions, which meet in other locations throughout County Government on varying schedule. For more information on boards and commissions, contact the Clerk to the County Commissioners at 301-645-0554 or the Public Information Office at 301-645-0580.

**Animal Control Board** First, third Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

**Board of Appeals** Second, fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

**Board of Fire and Rescue** Third Thursday, 7 p.m.

**Cable Advisory Commission** First Thursday, 6 p.m.

**Housing Commission** Fourth Thursday, 4:30 p.m.

**Liquor Board** Second Thursday, 10 a.m.

**Planning Commission** First, third Mondays, 7 p.m.

The quarterly Demographic Trends newsletter and demographic information from Census 2000 is available online at [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).



A Citizen's Guide to Emergency Preparedness is available in County public libraries or can be downloaded from the County web site, [www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org).

**Charles County Commissioners  
Charles County Government Building  
200 Baltimore Street**

**P.O. Box 2150**

**La Plata, MD 20646**

**Voice Phone Numbers: 301-645-0550 or 301-870-3000**

**Toll-Free: 1-877-807-8790**

**Fax Number: 301-645-0560**

**Maryland Relay Service TTY/TDD: 711 or 1-800-735-2258**

**e-mail: [commissioner@govt.co.charles.md.us](mailto:commissioner@govt.co.charles.md.us)**

## **Our Goals**

- ➔ Improve Economic Development
- ➔ Improve Infrastructure
- ➔ Improve the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Government
- ➔ Improve Comprehensive Planning
- ➔ Support the Achievement of Educational Benchmarks
- ➔ Maintain a High Level of Public Safety

### **Vision Statement:**

Charles County is a place where:

- Private initiative is rewarded and businesses grow and prosper, while the preservation of our heritage is paramount,
- Government services have reached the highest level of excellence, and
- The quality of life is felt by its citizens to be the best in the region and its government is recognized as a leader in support of these expectations.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service in a timely, efficient and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, 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.

**Visit Us on the World Wide Web  
[www.charlescounty.org](http://www.charlescounty.org)**



**Equal Opportunity County  
Say No to Drugs**