

St. Mary's County Maryland

Board of County Commissioners

2010

State of the County Report August 31, 2010

THE STATE OF THE COUNTY IS SOUND, WITH A CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY PRIORITIES DESPITE A HISTORIC ECONOMIC DOWNTURN. DURING THE CURRENT TERM OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR ST. MARY'S COUNTY (2006-2010), THE COUNTY'S WORKFORCE REMAINED FOCUSED ON THE COUNTY'S MISSION:

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT WILL:

- BE RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THE COUNTY'S CITIZENS;
- PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY, COST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SERVICES;
- PRESERVE THE COUNTY'S ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND RURAL CHARACTER; AND
- FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, WHILE REMAINING FOCUSED ON RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

The county commissioners, President Jack Russell, Kenneth R. Dement, Lawrence D. Jarboe, Thomas A. Mattingly and Daniel Raley, moved ahead on key initiatives and projects while dealing with budget cuts and revenue reductions on the local and state level.

MAINTAINING CRITICAL SERVICES IN TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES

The FY11 balanced budget of \$189,663,970 was achieved without an increase of the property tax rate of \$.857 per \$100 of assessed value. This budget is \$9.6 million less than the budget of FY10, due to revenue shortfalls from state cuts, lower state income tax receipts and other revenue sources.

Yet, the county commissioners approved a balanced budget which reflected the community priorities of education and public safety. The budget funds a school system recognized as one of the best in the state. The budget included \$76 million for public schools, up \$8.2 million over the past four years, despite economic hard times.

The Sheriff's Office received \$30,971,745 and our community continues to see a decrease in crime. The sheriff, deputies and civilian corps work tirelessly to ensure a safe community for our residents. Funding for the Sheriff is up \$8.4

million over the past four years.

Although funding for other services has been limited, there have been no services eliminated or county employees furloughed. The significant bond funded projects in the FY11 budget include the Expansion of the Adult Detention Center (\$7.6 million); Roads (\$5.7 million, including the Patuxent Park Redevelopment); and \$2.1 million for school projects (including the Margaret Brent wastewater treatment facility and the renovation of Leonardtown Middle School to provide a better learning environment).

The approved budget for Fiscal Year 2011 has been posted to the county's website at www.stmarysmd.com (click on Finance under Departments) and distributed to all county libraries. This approved budget began July 1, 2010 and ends June 30, 2011.

OPENNESS

Meetings of the St. Mary's County Board of Commissioners are scheduled for Tuesdays at 9 a.m. each week in the Chesapeake Building, 41770 Baldrige Street in Leonardtown. Board of Commissioners meetings, Public Forums and many other public meetings and hearings are broadcast live on St. Mary's County government cable television Ch.



THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR
ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Seated, l to r, County Commissioner Kenneth R. Dement and County Commissioner President Jack Russell

Standing, l to r, Commissioner Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Commissioner Daniel H. Raley, and Commissioner Lawrence D. Jarboe.

95 or by clicking Ch. 95 on the county's website at www.stmarysmd.com. They are rebroadcast on Ch. 95 and are downloadable for viewing from the county's home page.

St. Mary's County Government can be found at

www.stmarysmd.com

More than 7400 pages of information are at your fingertips....

Click on E-Notices on the home page to sign up to receive news releases, procurement bids, agendas, minutes, Ch. 95 schedule, the Dept of Economic Development weekly e-newsletter, emergency notifications, FEMA notifications, Finance Audit Documents, Finance Budget Documents, Web Page Updates, Library Announcements, MD Amber Alerts, Public Safety Announcements, Recreation and Parks announcements, Sheriff's

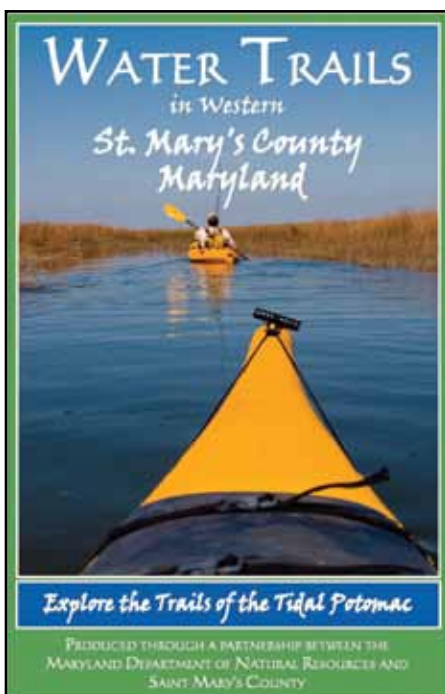
Announcements, Tourism News, and Vacancy Announcements.

The county commissioners want and need your input. Please email bocc@stmarysmd.com or mail Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County, PO Box 653, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650.

The St. Mary's County commissioners appoint members to more than 40 commissions, boards, committees and task forces. These citizen-led groups advise them on topics ranging from land use and development to housing. Through this system, civic-minded citizens can be involved in County Government and the local government can benefit from the knowledge, experience and expertise of the citizens. Vacancies are announced through media releases and more information can be found on the county's website at www.stmarysmd.com. Click on Volunteer Boards under the Government box.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

County Government is organized into 12 departments. Departments each have a webpage on the county's website and department heads can be contacted with questions, concerns and suggestions.



Tourism efforts continue to attract visitors to St. Mary's County. A new brochure encouraging residents and visitors to explore the county by water was produced in July.

DEPARTMENT OF AGING Director: Lori Jennings Harris Lori.harris@stmarysmd.com 301-475-4200, x1050

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging provides a wide variety of programs and services to the county's senior residents. Activities range from social and recreational programs to the direct support of essential services, such as nutrition, health, and in-home services. Whether you attend one of our senior activity centers on a daily basis or use some of our many services and programs on a more occasional basis, the St. Mary's County Department of Aging provides the county's senior residents with an ideal way to stay in contact with friends and remain involved with their community. Demand for programs and services are expected to increase from this department as the senior population increases.

—Operated three vibrant senior activity centers for programs, exercise, and meals.

—The privatization of Medical Adult Day Services resulted in significant budget savings while keeping this valuable service in our community

—The St. Mary's County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers provide volunteer service to local community organizations. Over 250 volunteers gave more than 40,000 hours of service participating in activities such as driving for meals on wheels, mentoring children and adults, serving at soup kitchens and food banks and many other activities across the county.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Director: Robert Schaller, Ph.d. Bob.Schaller@stmarysmd.com 301-475-4200, x1400

The staff of the St. Mary's County Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) work on behalf of all citizens and businesses to secure a sound resilient economy.

The Department's four divisions; Housing, Tourism, Agriculture & Seafood, Business Development and the Executive Director of the Community Development Corporation (CDC) work with citizen-led boards and commissions to expand markets and encourage investment. The department produces an

annual Technology Handbook, a listing of available office/building/land sites; tourism brochures written for many audiences; and listings of available rental properties.

—Partnered with the Town of Leonardtown and the Winegrower's Cooperative to open the county's first winery—the Port of Leonardtown Winery. This facility opened in May 2010 and allows many farmers to keep their land in agriculture by developing a scale up facility for their grape crops.

—Affordable Housing initiatives were moved forward with the opening of The Gateways, an affordable housing rental complex in Lexington Park. Hunting Creek apartments on Willows Road were developed by the Southern Maryland Tri County Community Action Agency with the assistance of Impact Aid Waivers on County Government land and Hunting Creek homes are also being built by homeowners and partnering families on this site. Victory Woods, an affordable housing 75-unit complex for Seniors, was recently begun on land donated by the Archdiocese of Washington. The Patuxent Habitat for Humanity has dedicated two homes in the Fenwick Ridge subdivision on land donated by St. Mary's County Government.

—Maintained and Strengthened Relationships with NAS Patuxent River.

- A Cooperation Agreement was signed in April 2007 between the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County and the U.S. Navy to establish cooperative encroachment mitigation and prevention measures. As a result the County and the Navy have met twice yearly, identified encroachment threats, reviewed existing and proposed development in the AICUZ and nearby areas, and adopted changes to the AICUZ, Comprehensive Plan and local zoning ordinances.

—Continued agricultural land preservation efforts through MALPF, Rural Legacy, TDRs, and other programs. St. Mary's County has preserved more than 20,000 acres throughout the County.

—Developed award-winning tourism development initiatives to attract visitors. The Celebrate 375 Marketing Campaign in 2009 included events, promotions, literature, memorabilia, and a dedicated website. As a result, visitation to sites and attractions increased 5% in 2009;



A new Wellness and Aquatics Center opens September 2010 at the College of Southern Maryland Leonardtown Campus. The new 32,000-square-foot center was built to promote healthy living and expand exercise opportunities for students and the community.

visitation to the St. Mary's County Welcome Center increased by 21% in 2009; and visitation to events increased 6% in 2009. Accommodations tax receipts also increased in 2009.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Interim Director: Cynthia Brown
Cynthia.brown@stmarysmd.com
 301-475-4200, x1680

This department is the county government component of a system of care that integrates human services assistance for individuals and their families. Citizens have access to a broad array of services and supports that is organized into a coordinated network. This unified system addresses the health, mental health, housing, training, employment, and transportation needs across all segments of the population: children and adults, individuals with disabilities, senior citizens, and their families.

--Partnered with the faith-based community to coordinate and provide transportation for the WARM pilot program where area churches provided shelter and meals for homeless individuals during hypothermia months.

--Developed the Three Year Strategic Plan Addressing Homelessness in St. Mary's County.

--Teen Court Program is a juvenile crime-deterrent program allowing first time, non-violent offenders the opportunity to have their case heard in front of a jury of their peers.

--Adult Drug Court. A collaborative partnership concluded its first year by developing a comprehensive program and resources.

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Director: Derick Berlage
Derick.berlage@stmarysmd.com
 301-475-4200, x1500

The Land Use and Growth Management Department exists to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations through protection of the natural environment balanced with orderly growth, while ensuring our customers both guidance and effectiveness of the land use regulations.

--The Board of County Commissioners updated and adopted the 2010 Comprehensive Land Use Plan that protects rural character in most of the county while supporting dynamic, well-planned growth centers in Lexington Park, Leonardtown, Charlotte Hall and elsewhere.

--Adopted new Transferable Development Rights (TDR) program to preserve rural land and support continued farming.

--Adopted County's first Growth Policy, so that the pace of private development does not exceed our capacity to provide needed public infrastructure.

--Adopted new Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to provide for orderly, cost-effective expansion of community water and sewer service and protect public health.

--Established strong consultation process with the Navy to coordinate land use decisions and reduce conflicts with naval flight operations.

--Significantly upgraded the County's geographic information system (GIS), an electronic mapping tool used by county residents, businesses, public safety agencies, and other entities for research, planning and construction activities.



County Commissioners join residents from Carver Heights to celebrate the addition of the new playground at Carver Heights Park in June.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Director: David Zylak
David.zylak@stmarysmd.com
 301-475-4200, x2111

The St. Mary's County Department of Public Safety is a multi faceted agency that provides 9-1-1 services through Emergency Communications, disaster preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery through its Emergency Management Division, and enforcement of animal regulations through the Animal Control Division. The Department of Public Safety works hand in hand with all county and state law enforcement agencies and the St. Mary's County Volunteer Fire and EMS departments.

--Earned Storm Ready Certification from National Weather Service. St. Mary's County is one of seven counties in Maryland to earn this certification. .

--Conducted two successful drills with the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Plant. Both drills were evaluated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

--Implemented Severe Weather Warning System through Code Red. 10,000 residents are registered for this service which gives immediate notification for Tornado Warnings, Severe Thunder Storm Warnings and Flash Flood Warnings via cell phones.

--Established the Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) and trained over 50 volunteers. CERT members can assist during and after disasters to staff Commodity Points of Distributions, organize their neighborhoods, perform basic first aid and provide a volunteer base for many other functions in disaster management.

--Currently evaluating the Emergency Communication System to develop better interoperability with region and state.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION

Director: George Erichsen, P.E.
george.erichsen@stmarysmd.com
 301-863-8400

The Department of Public Works & Transportation is organized into County Highways Division, Construction & Inspections Division, Engineering Services/Development Review, Transportation, Airport Operations, Administration, Solid Waste and Recycling and Building Services.



Evergreen Elementary School, the county's newest elementary school, earned a Silver LEED certification and is integrating energy conservation into the daily curriculum for the students.

**RECREATION AND PARKS
DEPARTMENT**
Director: Phil Rollins
Phil.rollins@stmarysmd.com
301-475-4200, x1800

Recreation and Parks provides programs, facilities, and parks for citizens and visitors. Programs include sports leagues, after school programs, summer camps, leisure classes, theater, and special events. The 1,500 acre park system consists of twenty parks with athletic fields, picnic pavilions, nature trails, tennis and basketball courts, a skatepark, sprayground, disc golf course, and dog park. Other facilities include several recreation centers, a gymnastics center, a swimming pool, and hiking/biking trail. Fifteen public landings with piers and ramps provide opportunities for boating access, fishing and crabbing.

R&P also provides public golfing, dining and entertainment opportunities at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course. The Museum Division also offers opportunities to experience the history, culture, and heritage of St. Mary's County at the St. Clement's Island Museum, the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park, and the Drayden African American Schoolhouse.

The department has recently opened several new parks including a popular dog park and Disc Golf Course and Fitness Trail at Lancaster Park. The Seventh District Park was expanded by adding a new restroom, basketball court, playground and additional parking. Cecil Park received two new tennis courts and two courts were renovated. A new playground and additional parking were added to the Carver Heights Community Park. The Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse opened in 2007. Many residents and visitors are enjoying the new phases of the Three Notch Trail in Charlotte Hall and the next three mile phase was begun in 2010 at Baggett Park.

Additional parks are needed for our growing community and a 76 acre property on Indian Bridge Road has been purchased for a future central County park. Three new multi-purpose athletic fields will soon be under construction in Charlotte Hall.

The mission of the county's museums was advanced with the construction of a museum collections management facility at St. Clement's Island Museum

and completion of the Potomac River Maritime Exhibit at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park. Additional construction at the Piney Point Museum is underway to add parking, new pedestrian walkways, landscaping and other site enhancements

A Model for Youth Football was adopted with administration by the Recreation and Parks Department and will begin in our community in 2010.

John Savich
County Administrator

Derick Berlage, Director
Land Use and Growth Management

Cynthia Brown, Interim Director
Human Services

George Erichsen, Director
Public Works and Transportation

Karen Everett
Public Information Officer

Lori Jennings Harris, Director
Aging

Bob Kelly, Director
Information Technology

Elaine Kramer
Chief Financial Officer

Phil Rollins, Director
Recreation and Parks

Susan Sabo, Director
Human Resources

George Sparling
County Attorney

Bob Schaller, Director
Economic and Community Development

David Zylak, Director
Public Safety



The county's recycling effort increases each year due to outreach efforts to increase awareness of the importance of solid waste reduction.

—Implemented Single Stream Recycling at the Convenience Centers. This has improved our recycling rate and has reduced amounts going into landfills.

—An Energy Management and Conservation Joint Resolution with the Board of Education is helping to preserve the environment and resources of St. Mary's County for present and future generations.

—Completed Phase 1 of the Patuxent Park Neighborhood Preservation project in collaboration with the Metropolitan Commission. This project is upgrading and replacing aging infrastructure to revitalize the 1940's Patuxent Park neighborhood in Lexington Park and preserve this traditional workforce neighborhood.

—Began planning for Adult Detention Center Minimum Facility Addition and Booking / Inmate Processing Expansion project. This critical project will provide additional capacity, safety & security improvements and a more efficient inmate processing area.

—The St. Jerome's Creek jetties will benefit the boating public by providing a long term corrective measure to the federal navigational channel and Southern Prong by precluding re-shoaling / sediment deposition and the need to repeatedly dredge the channel. This project has been undertaken with the Army Corps of Engineers.

—Updated the Stormwater Management, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance to meet state mandates to further prevent soil erosion from development projects, protect receiving streams and channels, minimize pollutants from entering the Chesapeake Bay.