



Commissioners of St. Mary's County State of the County Executive Summary September, 2014



Vision

It is the responsibility of St. Mary's County Government to preserve and enhance the quality of life by recognizing and protecting the unique character of St. Mary's County as a rural Chesapeake Bay peninsula; foster economic growth and create an atmosphere of excellence by focusing and managing growth to create vibrant, attractive communities; by protecting the rural character and economy of the countryside, nurture the shoreline and adjacent waters and preserve and capitalize on the other natural resources and historical qualities of the County.

Responsible and Accountable to the County's Citizens

Budget: The approved \$220.4 million budget reflects no increases in County tax rates. Both the operating and capital budgets clearly demonstrate the Commissioners' priorities of public safety and education. The Sheriff's Office received an increase of nearly \$2.1 million. This included 8.5 new positions as well as promotion within ranks. The Department of Emergency Services & Technology received four (4) Communications Specialists for the 911 Call Center. The NextGen Radio System capital improvement project was accelerated for completion in FY 2015. St. Mary's Public Schools received a funding increase of \$4 million, bringing the total allocation to \$93.9 million. When combined with state funding, the Schools realized an overall increase of nearly \$7 million. County funding also increased for the College of Southern Maryland and the St. Mary's County Public Library. The St. Mary's County Health Department received an increase in funding for two (2) positions: epidemiologist and accreditation coordinator, as well as a special \$100,000 allocation to lead the community initiative for substance abuse and treatment needs.

Provide High Quality, Cost Effective and Efficient Services

Department of Economic Development: A re-organization provided efficient service delivery for the County's Economic Development department.

Sheriff's District 4 Office: Received \$125,000 in grant funding to purchase the former Lexington Park Volunteer Rescue Squad property to re-develop as a new Sheriff's Office to enhance the Sheriff's presence in the Great Mills corridor.

Sustainable Energy Audits & Facilities Condition Assessments: The Commissioners approved energy efficiency audits as well as facilities and systems conditions assessments to help guide infrastructure investment decisions. In addition, a space needs assessment for the Departments of Aging & Human Services and Recreation & Parks, Sheriff's Office, and the Health Department are underway.

NextGen and Emergency Communications: The NextGen radio system, first activated on August 5, 2013, provides the County's first responders with unprecedented interoperability with the state and neighboring counties. Commissioners combined Phases II & III to begin July 2014. Remote radiological monitoring equipment was installed along the Patuxent River to monitor radiation levels along our border with Calvert County.

St. Mary's County Airport Master Plan: Federal grants for continued development of the Airport were executed and a concept plan for new private sector development for over 100,000 square feet of hangar space and 8 research and development office buildings was approved. Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment: A Drug Summit for Parents was held March 2014 with key partners: Aging and Human Services, Public Schools, Sheriff's Office, Walden, and the Health Department. Nearly 600 people attended the summit which was featured on NBC4.

Preserve the County's Environment, Heritage and Rural Character

Fireman's Heritage Museum: Funding was approved for the design and construction of a 4,200 square foot museum in Leonardtown to enable a permanent preservation of the historic 1930s vintage Allen Herschell Carousel, a 1937 restored Seagrave fire engine and communicate the story of the role they have played in the development of today's modern fire service.

Preservation: The County preserved 817.4 acres in land conservation easements to support local agriculture.

Patuxent River Naval Air Museum & Visitors Center: The scheduled opening of the new 20,860 square foot center that is utilizing over \$3.37 million in federal and state grants as well as private sector funding is February 2015.



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Raiders and Invaders: The County commemorated the War of 1812 with many activities for visitors over a weekend in June. Nearly 7,000 visitors came to St. Mary's County, increasing our hotel usage and showcasing our County.

St. Jerome's Creek: \$77,500 in State funding was obtained and supplemental local funding was used for an emergency dredge of the creek's Southern Prong to relieve the channel of excessive shoaling.

Three Notch Trail: Design and engineering of the next section of the trail – from MD 5 to MD 236 in New Market – has been completed. When completed, this 10 ft. wide multi-use trail will be nearly 11 miles long.

Foster Opportunities for Future Generations

Citizens Academy: The Commissioners approved the Citizens Academy program which offers the community a peek inside their County government operations, programs and services.

Economic Development: The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process was approved by the Commissioners. Experts supporting the initiative include: Regional Economic Studies Institute of Towson University, University of Maryland, Sage Policy Group, and the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance BRAC-analysis. The County recognizes that the Navy is the key economic engine. The CEDS will chart the course for diversifying the local economy. To oversee the process, a 13-member Economic Development Commission was appointed.

Leonardtown Library Renovations: The design is near completion for the \$3 million renovation of the 19,500 square foot library which will improve programmatic spaces for patrons, create quiet study rooms, separate teen and children's areas, improve circulation and shelving, incorporate technology and wireless upgrades and provide elevator access to the second floor with added classroom spaces.

Spring Ridge Middle School: After suffering a fire in the spring 2013, Commissioners immediately approved funding for \$10 million in renovations. The project includes 77,792 square foot reconfigured space for instructional enhancements and system upgrades.

Wicomico Shores Pavilion: A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the beautiful new restroom facility at the Wicomico Shores wharf.

Unmanned Aircraft Test Site: The University of Maryland, as part of the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership, cut the ribbon on the research and development arm of an Unmanned Aircraft Test Site at St. Mary's Regional Airport. The site will help the Federal Aviation Administration integrate unmanned aircraft into the national airspace.

Dr. Rebecca Bridgett,
County Administrator

Tony Jones,
Public Information Officer

Sue Sabo,
Chief of Staff and
Director,
Human Resources

George Erichsen, P.E.,
Director
Public Works and
Transportation

Bob Kelly,
Director
Emergency Services and Technology

Phil Shire,
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Robin Finnacom,
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Economic and Community
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Elaine Kramer,
Chief Financial Officer

George Sparling,
County Attorney

Lori Jennings-Harris,
Director
Aging and Human Services

Brian Loewe,
Director
Recreation and Parks



Commissioners of St. Mary's County

Front: Todd B. Morgan, and Commissioner President Francis "Jack" Russell. Standing: Daniel L. Morris, Cynthia L. Jones, and Lawrence D. Jarboe.

