

ST. MARY'S COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MISSION STATEMENT

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.

BUDGET: MAINTAINING SERVICES IN TOUGH TIMES

The FY2010 budget of \$199.3 million set spending at a level that is \$3.3 million below the FY2009 budget. As a part of this budget, the County absorbed more than \$4 million in State cuts. The property tax rate is maintained at \$.857 per \$100 of assessed value, the fourth lowest in Maryland. This balanced budget reflects the community's priorities of education and public safety. It includes \$79.9 million for public schools. This amount is \$5.8 million more than the State mandated maintenance of effort and was an increase of \$3.8 million over FY2009. County funding of the Sheriff's Office was increased by \$2.5 million, almost 10 percent more than FY2009. The funds allotted for county departments reflected a net decrease in funding and the elimination of eight positions.

While we did not fully anticipate the severity of this economic crisis, we intend to focus on managing our way through these difficult times without resorting to disruptive cuts in services. To avoid effects on public schools, public safety and other key priorities, the FY2010 budget reflects the use of fund balance to replace temporary revenue cuts, and this use is planned over the next three years.

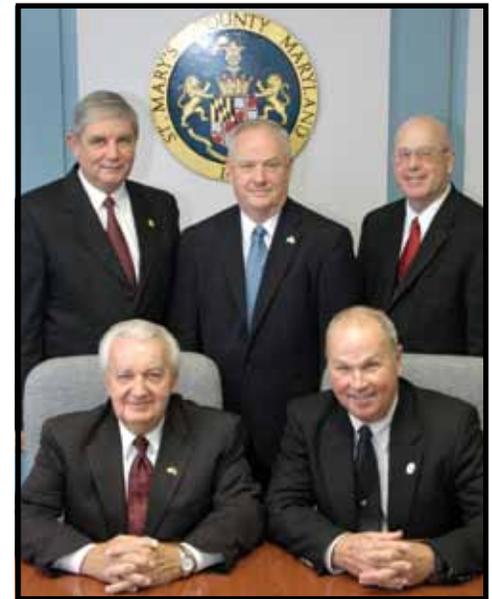
The state recently announced an additional \$210 million in budget reductions for local governments in the current fiscal year. The reduction to St. Mary's County is approximately \$4.3 million. This

brings the total decrease to the county's FY2010 budget from the state to over \$8 million. We have implemented a hiring freeze as an initial response to these significant new cuts and have scheduled a budget work session to consider the additional measures needed to maintain a balanced budget with the least possible reduction in services.

We believe that we have positioned the county's finances to be able to sustain services in the face of tough economic challenges. We are continuing to monitor events at the state and federal level and welcome your involvement and input. Our mission remains to align our county's budget to the needs and priorities of our community. Our FY2010 budget is available for review at the libraries as well as our Public Information Office and is posted to the website at www.stmarysmd.com. Click on Finance under the Government box.

LAND USE DECISIONS

A new growth policy, established in 2008, directs that residential growth not exceed 1.9 percent per year. The policy further requires that 70 percent of new homes be built in the Development Districts and only 30 percent of new homes in the Rural Preservation District. This policy is designed to preserve rural land. In FY2009, under the new policy, almost 80 percent of the county's growth occurred in the Development District, reversing the trend of the past several years. This, along with



*The Board of County Commissioners for
St. Mary's County*

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

Seated, l to r: County Commissioner Kenneth R. Dement and County Commissioner President Francis Jack Russell

changes in the TDR program and periodic text changes, has set the county on a course that will preserve our rural character while embracing the high-tech economy.

The county continues its commitment to the Encroachment Prevention and Mitigation Agreement signed in April 2007 with the Commanding Officer of NAS Patuxent River and works closely with the US Navy on all major land use decisions.

In response to the economic downturn, we took action to allow for the extension of time for development project approvals. This will benefit projects both large and small that are in limbo because of economic conditions. It will help ensure that there is a pipeline of projects as the economy recovers, and as a result, work for all of our neighbors in the construction industry.

Still underway is the deliberation about a new Comprehensive Plan. The Plan-

ning Commission held three widely attended public hearings and is currently working on its final recommendations. The public process has also included a Land Use and Planning meeting co-sponsored by the Patuxent Partnership and the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance to receive input from the defense contractor community and the U.S. Navy. The Board of County Commissioners intends to hold another set of public hearings before approving a final plan by December.

PROGRESS NOTED...

The Great Mills Road Streetscape Project is under construction.

This \$4.6 million project is reconstructing a heavily-used, 1.4 mile section from Coral Drive to the entrance of St. Mary's Square. A collaborative project shared by State Highway Administration, the Metropolitan Commission and County Government, the project will include the construction of brick-edged sidewalks, a median strip from Coral Drive to FDR Boulevard, the replacement of all sewer and water lines, landscaping and numerous other improvements to make Great Mills Road safer and more attractive for businesses, pedestrians and motorists.

The Patuxent Park Revitalization Project is underway.

Patuxent Park was built in the 1940's and remains a vital neighborhood. The improvements will enhance the quality of life for current and future residents and will preserve and revitalize Patuxent Park as a desirable place to live.

Phase 1 improvements underway include the reconstruction of roads and sidewalks, installation of a storm drainage system and stormwater management facility, and installation of new water/sewer lines.

Planning has begun on the expansion of the Adult Detention Center

Expansion is driven by the county's population growth and is needed to eliminate overcrowding and to create a safer facility for staff, community and the inmates.

Tourism is thriving during a tough economy

A collaborative Celebrate 375 campaign is continuing to draw visitors to mark

the 375th birthday of Maryland in St. Mary's County. Several new hotels and restaurants have opened and plans are already underway to encourage visitors to return in 2010.

Plans for two capital projects are underway—Patuxent River Naval Air Museum and Leonardtown Library.

St. Mary's County Library system has the 5th highest circulation per resident in the state. The Leonardtown Branch, for the last several years, has posted the largest increase in the county.

The new 22,000 square foot Museum will be funded by county government and donations to the Museum Association. The building is being redesigned so it will be constructed within the existing budget. A groundbreaking ceremony for this project is planned for 2010 during the 100th anniversary of Naval Aviation.

Property has been acquired for a new public facilities complex in Leonardtown.

This 172-acre site in the Leonardtown area will meet an immediate need for an elementary school and will also provide more flexibility in planning for future facilities.

Collaborated with Leonardtown to create the Port of Leonardtown Winery.

The first harvest of locally grown grapes was processed at the winery earlier this month. This county-funded facility will help to make grape growing a viable alternative crop and will help make our county and region a winery destination.

Promoted the Leonardtown Wharf

This waterfront park is accessible to all and has been the site for weddings, parties and family gatherings. We continue to work with the Town to increase awareness of this new park and know that great things will happen in this waterfront area.

Opened Hospice House in Callaway

The Hospice home, built on land donated by the county, will provide a six bedroom suite with private bathrooms and common areas for terminally-ill patients. The house will open later this month and will sit at the top of a hill in a serene, wooded area about six miles south of Leonardtown, in the vicinity of St. Mary's Lake.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Meetings of the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County are scheduled for Tuesdays at 9 a.m. each week in the Chesapeake Building, 41770 Baldrige Street in Leonardtown. Meetings are broadcast live on St. Mary's County government cable television Channel 95 or by clicking 95 Live 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

Click on Notifications on the home page to sign up to receive news releases, procurement bids, agendas, minutes, Channel 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 Board of County Commissioners wants and needs 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 Board of County Commissioners appoints 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 their 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.

Each department has a webpage on the county's website and department heads can be contacted with questions, concerns and suggestions.