

Appointed Officials

Steven D. Powell
Chief of Staff

Kathryn L. Rauschenberg
County Clerk

Robert M. Burk
Comptroller

Carole V. Hammen
Director of Human Resources

Kimberly A. Millender
County Attorney

Jolene G. Sullivan
Director of Citizen Services

Ted Zaleski, III
Director of Management and Budget

J. Michael Evans
Director of Public Works

Jeff R. Degitz
Director of Recreation and Parks

Steven C. Horn
Director of Planning

Lawrence F. Twele
Director of Economic Development

Ralph Green
Director of General Services

Board of County Commissioners



Julia W. Gouge
President



Dean L. Minnich
Vice President



Michael D. Zimmer
Secretary

Carroll County Board of Commissioners

Vision and Mission Statement

A Message from the Board of County Commissioners

Growth, water and education top the list of issues facing the 58th Carroll County Board of Commissioners as we embark on our four-year journey together.

The Board of County Commissioners took office on December 4, 2006. As Carroll's governing executive and legislative body, we define local policies and direct the county's budget. These policies affect the day-to-day life of all of us who live or work in Carroll County.

Vision

Carroll County offers a safe environment in which all its residents may live, work, and play. The rural character of our county is preserved through measures that protect our natural and cultural resources, minimize future residential sprawl, and save farmland. Carroll County is enriched by sustainable agriculture and agribusiness as well as responsible, productive business and industry that offer family-wage jobs and employ the county's skilled workforce.

Mission Statement

The mission of Carroll County Government is to provide excellent, efficient service to our residents in a courteous, friendly manner. We conduct business openly. We encourage each resident to play a role in keeping Carroll County a great place to live, to work, and to play.

Carroll County Government Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Message

Over the past several years, we have focused our efforts on “catching up to keep up” by adopting aggressive Community Investment Plans. We have accelerated the construction of needed schools, contributed toward state highway projects to get them done faster, added space to cramped senior centers, planned several regional parks, installed water tanks and dry hydrants to assist fire fighters, and preserved nearly 50,000 acres of farmland by the end of 2006. In addition, our operating budget includes an annual increase in the number of law enforcement officers to keep pace with the growing population and maintain our goal ratio of 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents.

As we entered the Fiscal Year 2008 budget process, and looked beyond, we focused on providing you, the citizens of Carroll County, with needed services and facilities. We focused our efforts on the following priorities:

- ❑ Water - expanding water sources and improving water quality
- ❑ Education – providing an adequate number of seats for the growing number of students as well as maintaining existing schools
- ❑ Growth
 - Expanding the County’s economic base
 - Maintaining and expanding transportation networks
 - Preserving farmland through our agricultural land preservation program, and
 - Providing adequate coverage of law enforcement and emergency services.

The County has been reexamining its long-term planning tool, the comprehensive plan, named “Pathways”. The plan contains guidelines for where and how Carroll will grow. Pathways will enable the County to implement policies and create tools so growth can be directed to those areas that can best absorb the impact.

One of the key elements affecting the comprehensive plan is water. Many towns within Carroll’s borders are finding that accelerated growth and evolving state regulations have challenged their abilities to ensure adequate water supplies. The major county-owned water system, while sufficient, has projects underway to expand these facilities. But we know that each jurisdiction must have enough water for its commercial and industrial land in order for economic development to continue. Because a collaborative approach is essential, Carroll’s Department of Planning brought together town officials for a water summit. Our employees have been working with State and local agencies to identify solutions to both immediate and long-term concerns. We are working with the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Maryland Department of the Environment to establish reservoirs at Gillis Falls in the southwest and Union Mills in the north-central areas of the county. Changes in state regulations are so new that planned funding for building two new reservoirs were not even included in our FY 07–12 Community Investment Plan. We have estimated the cost of land acquisition, engineering and

construction to be approximately \$165 million, of which \$45 million is planned in the FY 08–13 CIP.

Maintaining or improving the quality of our water is also a priority in our FY 08–13 Community Investment Plan, with planned expenditures of over \$9.2 million. Numerous projects, including the construction of new storm water management ponds, the rehabilitation of existing storm water ponds, new stream crossings structures, and stream restorations are planned to eliminate flooding conditions, roadway deterioration, and improve the quality of our water.

The Agricultural Land Preservation program continues to be one of our top priorities with over \$62 million planned in FY 08–FY 13. Preserving farmland with permanent easements helps to maintain the rural character of Carroll County, enables agriculture to remain a viable industry and reduces the amount of residential development taking place outside of targeted growth areas. The Agricultural Land Preservation program reduces the strain that would be put on our existing infrastructure and helps to avoid major investments in new infrastructure, such as schools, roads, water, and wastewater facilities.

As Carroll's population has grown, so too grows the need for space - space on our roads, space for our law enforcement and court functions, in our landfill, and in our schools. In the FY 08–13 CIP, nearly \$48 million is planned for the maintenance of our existing roads and \$15 million for the construction of new roads. In order to maintain our ratio of 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents, our law enforcement and court functions have grown and will continue to grow with population. \$25 million is planned for a new Criminal Justice Building and \$4.7 million for a minimum security detention center to alleviate overcrowding at our existing facility and postpone the need for a major investment in a new medium security facility.

Five new schools have opened in the county since 2000 and a sixth is under construction. As planners expect 2,700 more students by 2020, and an additional 5,000 in the following decade, we will need more facilities. Three new schools are included in the FY 08–13 CIP with a projected cost of nearly \$165 million as well as a new Classroom Building at our Community College at a cost of nearly \$37 million. Price tags for new schools range from \$30 million for an elementary school to nearly \$80 million for a high school. The Board of County Commissioners provides the primary funding for these construction projects, however, agreement from the Board of Education and approval by the state are keys to building new schools.

In addition to new construction, existing schools must be maintained. And we must make room for twice as many kindergarteners as before, as the state now requires all-day classes. This year's FY 08 budget includes nearly \$4.1 million for additional kindergarten classrooms at Freedom Elementary School. Other renovations are needed, too. Replacing the original 37-year-old heating and air-conditioning system at Westminster High School, for example, is expected to cost \$27.8 million. Modernizing South Carroll High School could mean another \$95 million in coming years, not counting the \$24.7 million planned in FY 08–FY 09 for a fine arts addition.

Carroll County Public Schools currently rank No. 2 in the state for test scores while ranking 19th out of 24 in per-pupil spending. These numbers reflect Carroll County's fiscal efficiency and our continuing commitment to providing a top-notch education to our students.

As we look at our past and to our future, fiscal responsibility remains paramount. We retained our solid credit rating with all three rating agencies (Moody's, Fitch and Standard and Poor's) this year. And for the 21st straight year, we earned a Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Our pension liability is fully funded, our reserve funds are on target, our debt is being retired at an accelerated rate, and in FY 08 we are contributing to our Other Post Employment Benefits liability.

Recognizing that accountability is essential to establishing trust, we have made a concerted effort to open our actions for greater review and participation by the public. During 2005, we launched a cable television station that airs numerous public meetings. We began publishing a monthly newsletter that lists every vote taken by the Commissioners. We started a speaker's bureau so community groups can learn more about county government. We redesigned the web site so that the most requested pages could be found easily and surveyed residents on services the county offers and potential services that are under review. We participated in open budget sessions from the Recommended Budget to the Adopted budget. All of the sessions were open, available on the web, and on the local government channel, keeping the citizens of Carroll County informed on the issues and giving them the opportunity to participate.

Difficult decisions were made during the budget process. Our goal is to listen carefully to you, the citizens of Carroll County, as we evaluate all the information brought to us as well as our available resources, so that we make every effort to do what's best for Carroll County. Thank you for your interest in the budget. We hope that you will take the time to understand the budget and the choices that have been made.