

Benefits of forming a County Police Department

- ◆ Provides fast, efficient service to residents through a unified law enforcement system.
- ◆ Guarantees that a professional, not a politician, leads law enforcement efforts.
- ◆ Eliminates \$1 million annually in administrative fees to Maryland State Police.
- ◆ Reduces the duplication of support personnel in information technology, human resources, and budget services.
- ◆ Aligns the County Government's obligations for both funding and providing public safety for Carroll's residents.



Communications would be centralized under a county police department.



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CARROLL COUNTY
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Forming a County Police Department



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Why form a county police department?

After hearing from residents about how slowly police officers were responding to calls, the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to gather information on the financial and policy implications of three options:

- ◆ Keep the current system, which uses both Maryland State Police resident troopers and Carroll County Sheriff's Office deputies;
- ◆ Move to a unified program by expanding the Sheriff's Office; or
- ◆ Move to a unified program by establishing a County Police Department.

This wasn't the first time the issue had been studied. Groups dating back more than 15 years have looked at various options. With the resident trooper program costing more (122% of actual costs), and the number of resident troopers holding steady, something had to change.

- ◆ As an interim measure, nine years ago the Sheriff's duties were expanded to 24/7 law enforcement coverage.
- ◆ Last fall, the Commissioners decided the time had come for a County Police Department.

Police Chief vs. Sheriff

- ◆ A police chief must meet specific job requirements. The chief MUST be a certified police officer with a law enforcement background.
- ◆ An elected sheriff, by definition, must campaign to get elected. There is no legal requirement that the sheriff have law enforcement experience.
- ◆ If an appointed chief is not responsive to the community's needs, he or she can be replaced.
- ◆ An elected sheriff keeps his or her position until the four-year term ends.



Cost Comparisons

When the County compared how much money was spent by neighboring counties, we found that the type of law enforcement — police department or sheriff's office — was not a factor in how much each county paid.

We looked at law enforcement spending per capita:

- ◆ Charles (sheriff) \$324
- ◆ Howard (police) \$295
- ◆ Harford (sheriff) \$232
- ◆ Baltimore (police) \$229
- ◆ Frederick (sheriff) \$176

We also looked at law enforcement's percent of overall budgets:

- ◆ Charles (sheriff) 11.69%
- ◆ Harford (sheriff) 9.33%
- ◆ Frederick (sheriff) 8.30%
- ◆ Howard (police) 7.86%
- ◆ Baltimore (police) 7.13%

Transition

A transition team is being formed to facilitate a smooth change-over from the resident trooper program to the County Police Department. Invitations have been sent to:

- ◆ Maryland State Police
- ◆ Sheriff's Office
- ◆ State's Attorney's Office
- ◆ Town police chiefs
- ◆ Other law enforcement agencies from outside Carroll County

The County will save \$1,000,000 a year in overhead costs from the resident trooper program. That savings will more than make up for the one-time transition expenses — less than \$300,000 — to cover items such as uniforms, badges, stationery, and new decals for the cars.

As the resident trooper positions are brought into the new police department over the next few years, the County projects annual savings of \$1.4 million by fiscal year 2012.

Email PublicComments@ccg.carr.org



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