

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

For The Fiscal Year Ended
June 30, 2006

Prepared by:

Department of the Comptroller
Carroll County, Maryland

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Introductory Section



THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CARROLL COUNTY
Westminster, Maryland

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
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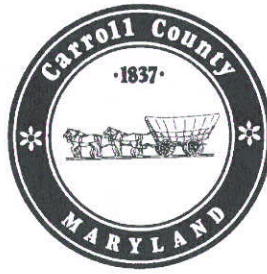
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November 20, 2006

The Board of County Commissioners and
The Citizens of Carroll County, Maryland

State law requires that all general-purpose local governments publish within six months of the close of each fiscal year a complete set of audited financial statements. Pursuant to that requirement, we hereby issue the comprehensive annual financial report of Carroll County, Maryland for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006.

This report consists of management's representations concerning the finances of Carroll County. Consequently, management assumes full responsibility for the completeness and reliability of all of the information presented in this report, based upon a comprehensive framework of internal control that it has established for this purpose. Because the cost of internal controls should not outweigh their benefits, Carroll County's comprehensive framework of internal controls has been designed to provide reasonable rather than absolute assurance that the financial statements will be free from material misstatement. As management, we assert that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, this financial report is complete and reliable in all material respects.

Carroll County's financial statements have been audited by Clifton Gunderson LLP, a firm of licensed certified public accountants. The independent auditor concluded, based upon the audit, that there was a reasonable basis for rendering an unqualified ("clean") opinion that Carroll County's financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006, are fairly presented in conformity with GAAP. The independent auditor's report is presented as the first component of the financial section of this report.

The independent audit of the financial statements of Carroll County was part of a broader, federally mandated "Single Audit" designed to meet the special needs of federal grantor agencies. The standards governing Single Audit engagements require the independent auditor to report not only on the fair presentation of the financial statements, but also on the audited government's internal controls and compliance with legal requirements, with special emphasis on internal controls and legal requirements involving the administration of federal awards. These reports are available in Carroll County's separately issued Single Audit Report.

Management's discussion and analysis (MD&A) immediately follows the independent auditor's report and provides a narrative introduction, overview, and analysis of the basic financial statements. MD&A complement this letter of transmittal and should be read in conjunction with it.

Profile of the Government

Carroll County was created pursuant to an Act of the General Assembly of the State of Maryland on January 19, 1837. Carroll County is situated in the north central part of Maryland lying south of the Pennsylvania state line, which is part of the historic Mason-Dixon line. It is bordered on the east by Baltimore County, on the south by Howard County and on the west by Frederick County. The County is 453 square miles in area and is approximately 27 miles both in length and width with a 2006 population estimate of 171,742. The County seat and principal city is Westminster. Carroll County is empowered to levy a property tax on both real and personal properties located within its boundaries. It also is empowered by state statute to extend its corporate limits by annexation, which occurs periodically when deemed appropriate by the governing council. During the last two decades, the basic character of the County's land and citizens has changed from predominantly rural to suburban and rural.

Carroll County has operated under the commissioner form of government since the County was formed by the State of Maryland legislature. The County is governed by an elected three-member Board of County Commissioners (the "Board"). The Board may only exercise such powers as are conferred upon it by the General Assembly of Maryland. The Board operates under the Code of Public Local Laws of Carroll County, 2004 Edition, as amended, being Article 7 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Maryland. Both the executive and legislative functions of the County are vested in the elected three-member Board of County Commissioners. The Board is responsible, among other things, for passing ordinances, adopting the budget, appointing committees, and appointing an Executive Assistant, a Clerk to the Board, and the directors of various departments. The Chief of Staff and Clerk to the Board are charged, generally, with the day-to-day management of the County. The commissioners are elected on a countywide basis and serve four-year terms.

Carroll County provides a full range of services including public safety (police, volunteer fire protection, and detention center), highways and streets, sanitation, planning and zoning, economic development, culture-recreation, education, a community college, libraries, and general administrative services. The County also operates, in conjunction with the state, services related to general community health and social services. In addition, the County operates a water and wastewater utility, a landfill, a septage treatment operation, an airport, and a firearms facility (shooting range) as Enterprise Funds.

Carroll County is also financially accountable for a legally separate board of education, community college, library, and economic development services to commercial enterprises, all of which are reported separately within Carroll County's financial statements. Additional information on these legally separate entities can be found in Note 1 of the notes to the financial statements.

The annual budget serves as the foundation for Carroll County's financial planning and control. All agencies of the County are required to submit requests for appropriation to the Department of Management and Budget in December of each year. Management and Budget uses these requests as the starting point for developing a proposed budget. Management and Budget then presents this proposed budget to the Commissioners for review prior to April 30. The Commissioners are required to hold public hearings on the proposed budget and to adopt a final budget by no later than June 30, the close of the County's fiscal year. The appropriated budget is prepared by fund, function (e.g., public safety), and department (e.g., police). Department heads may make transfers of appropriations within a department. Transfers of appropriations between departments, however, require the approval of the Board. A budget-to-actual comparison is provided in this report for the individual governmental funds for which a legal appropriated annual budget has been adopted. The general fund comparison is presented on page 31 as part of the basic financial