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## **CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Cecil County Citizens:

This week marks the first anniversary of my election to the position of Cecil County Executive. As I reflect on the past year, I must admit that I am truly amazed and gratified. There is so much positive activity taking place that the momentum is truly something we Cecil County citizens have not experienced in many a year, and possibly not ever. The visual evidence of new businesses brings a tremendously positive aura that is acknowledged not only locally but across the state and region.

We have made many strides in the effort to make positive changes for Cecil County. The collaboration with Cecil County Public Schools on the turf field project at Perryville High School was a huge step in opening up the resources available to families and students in the County. Our Parks and Recreation Department has been successful in hosting various athletic tournaments. Just this past weekend over 10,000 visitors came to our county associated with lacrosse tournaments held at Calvert Regional Park. We are also preparing to develop more than 120 acres of land, previously occupied by Bittersweet Golf Course on Route 213, into a recreational walking park with numerous amenities.

Economic development in Cecil County is booming with the acquisition of new distribution centers to the Principio Business Park on Route 40. Lidl and Amazon are in their new facilities. They are in the process of hiring and will soon be fully operational. We expect up to 1,100 jobs provided by these two companies as they develop over the next several years. What we are calling "Project Melo" will soon be identified and promises to create another 450 full time jobs over the next few years. Other businesses are now considering Cecil County as the place to locate from our eastern border at the Delaware line to the western boundary on the Susquehanna River.

Long time infrastructure improvements are now visible with the installation of natural gas lines from North East to Perryville soon to be extended from Route 40 in North East, north on Route 272 to Bayview, the home of Cecil College. Sewer lines are being expanded and will close gaps between Elkton and Perryville on Route 40 which is our growth corridor. Focusing our growth within the Route 40/I-95 corridor will allow us to maintain our rural character along our northern border next to Pennsylvania and below Route 40 on Route 213 to Kent County.

Included in the FY 2018 Operating Budget was Cecil County's first Public Information Officer. Jen Lyall is now in this position and is up and running as we create a formal communication plan to ensure that relevant information is gathered and shared in a timely manner through a variety of mediums. Follow us on our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CecilCoGov/>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/CecilCoGov>) accounts. Check these sites out for news, press releases, legislation, events, job openings, photos, employee highlights – everything associated with Cecil County Government and the community we live in!

Recent visits from our two bond rating agencies (Moody's and S&P Global) were extremely beneficial as we took them on a tour and shared our new budget philosophy to balance our budget with the revenues received and NOT use the unassigned portion of fund balance to cover normal operating expenses. We are pleased to announce that our bond ratings remain unchanged. Both agencies expressed an optimistic outlook on the County's bond rating future if the fiscal and management practices that have been established within the framework of the FY2018 budget are executed and ultimately successful. The County sells bonds to fund capital projects such as the new Gilpin Manor Elementary School and the bridge replacement project on Razor Strap Road. Improving our future bond ratings will save Cecil County taxpayers millions of dollars in bond interest expense over the life of the bonds.

Not all is rosy however. Our challenges associated with the abuse and misuse of drugs punctuated by the crisis with opioid and heroin use and abuse is far too often resulting in overdoses and death to our citizens. The havoc experienced by these involved families is beyond calculation. You will hear much more about our collective efforts with multiple agencies, organizations and citizens to stop this devastating disease.

Nevertheless, we have accomplished much in the last eleven months. Cecil County Government is developing, growing and creating opportunities for the betterment of our citizens and we will strive to work even harder to *move Cecil County forward*.

Your Public Servant,



Alan J. McCarthy  
County Executive