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Manager's Message



It has long been my priority as your County Manager to preserve the quality of life that we have together built and come to expect in Henrico County. I have held fast to this commitment to you.

The economy—even as it showed signs of recovery—provided county budget planners with a high hurdle during 2003-04. World events and rising oil prices strained interest rates and consumer prices, while state lawmakers again passed their own budget struggles along to the localities.

Despite these challenges, careful planning again allowed us to preserve and improve upon the valuable services our residents expect. We maintained our historically low property tax rate of 94 cents. We welcomed new jobs and businesses, and further added to our county's reputation as one of the state's most robust and resilient economies.

But this year's most unpredictable adversary was not the economy. Mother Nature proved far more fickle than our financial fortunes. Hurricane Isabel ravaged many areas of Central Virginia last September, but the storm also provided opportunities. Henrico residents and county employees worked together to rebuild, discovering that our county is the common ground that unites us.

Our accomplishments also garnered broad national attention. The National Association of Counties (NACo) has again recognized Henrico County as holding its place among the outstanding local governments in the country. Henrico County's 13 NACo awards are recognition of where our ingenuity and initiative can carry us.

Ours is a reputation built upon shared strengths. Thanks to the leadership of our Board of Supervisors, we boast nationally accredited police and fire divisions; the best possible bond rating according to all three major national bond rating agencies; and a school system that remains the benchmark for 21st century education. These are achievements in which I find personal pride. I share credit with all of Henrico County's residents.

These achievements show that Henrico County has risen above the storms of the past year. We emerge

with renewed confidence, with new resolve and with a greater understanding of our strengths that will carry us forward.

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Board of Supervisors

Henrico County comprises five magisterial districts, Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe and Varina. Each district elects one representative to the county's Board of Supervisors. The board appoints the county manager, who is the chief administrator of the county, overseeing 35 agencies and the county's daily operations. In addition, the board appoints members to 40 local boards and commissions to ensure the best possible administration of the county.



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Division of Police

Isabel made FY04 a remarkable year for the Henrico Division of Police—a year during which the skills and dedication of the county’s officers were proven time and again.

Along with showing their abilities, police demonstrated the effectiveness of the division’s Unusual Occurrence Plan. This plan, developed decades ago and revised just prior to Sept. 11, provides a detailed response structure for police. Rather than losing time or resources assigning emergency duties during the heat of the situation, police deferred to the plan’s set response structure, instantly assigning leadership roles to individuals whose functional responsibilities best corresponded with the emergency needs at hand.

Never before has the Unusual Occurrence Plan been so integral to the division’s successful emergency response as it was during Hurricane Isabel. Widespread damage and long-term power outages that afflicted Henrico in Hurricane Isabel’s wake posed no challenges beyond what the division was prepared to meet and overcome.

Handling issues of high water, downed live power lines, thousands of felled trees—and tired residents who wanted nothing more than to enjoy air conditioning, hot food and a warm shower—police remained calm, alert and willing to answer any call for help.

And calls were in no short supply. With each tree that blocked a road, county communications officers received dozens of calls. In just one week following the storm, communications took 19,872 emergency and non-emergency calls from residents. Communications officers waded through every call, identifying duplicates, and dispatching officers.

Police officers busily manned scores of intersections where stoplights lost power; though traffic control duties are typically routine, very little was routine after Isabel. Dealing with drivers confused by an intersection without lights is a chore—dealing with drivers confused by an entire county without lights is a challenge.

Between FY04’s tests, the division also took time to mark milestones. Mary Ellen Fahed’s promotion to the rank of major makes her the first woman promoted to the division’s executive command staff.

The county also received recognition as a Certified Crime Prevention Community from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. This feather in the cap recognizes the county’s commitment to safety and gives Henrico preference when applying for state criminal justice grants. The distinction may also mean insurance premium reductions for residents similar to those given for deadbolts and fire detectors in homes.



Division of Fire

An unusually varied assortment of destructive natural disasters kept the Henrico Division of Fire engaged for many long hours during FY04. The division's extensive training in the wake of world events post-Sept. 11 made each disaster a test for which the county's first responders were well prepared.

Their training included a regional joint exercise hosted by Henrico in February and held during demolition of the old Ridge Theater. The exercise tested nearly every aspect of the division's ability to handle a major structural collapse, as well as Henrico's ability to work with its regional counterparts. The drill required use of equipment recently procured by the division using Homeland Security grants.

A second major training exercise allowed rescue companies from around the state to match lifesaving wits in competitive training activities. The 10th annual Rescue Challenge in May set competitors against each other in unusual rescue scenarios. The event, during which Henrico firefighters performed admirably, emphasized the importance of training firefighters to work and save lives even when the unlikely occurs.

Henrico Fire also took steps to better handle more common life-threatening scenarios. Respiratory failure and the importance of stabilizing emergency patients' breathing is the target of the county's Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI) program. Certification to perform this cutting-edge therapy—during which conscious patients are sedated before a tube is inserted down their throat to relieve breathing difficulties—involves an extensive training program. The program developed by Henrico officials has been adopted as the regional standard. Thirty Henrico paramedics currently are accredited, and the 10 RSI procedures performed last year were all successful.



Skills like these helped Henrico Division of Fire maintain a select place among its international peers. In FY04, the county earned recertification with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Initially accredited with CFAI in 1993, Henrico County is one of fewer than 90 fire departments in the country—and one of just six in Virginia—that have earned the distinction. Certification indicates that the division endured strict evaluation, review and testing by its peers. It serves to ensure Henrico residents that they may expect service that meets and exceeds goals for a professional, modern fire department.

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Planning

For four days in June and July, the Department of Planning took a lead role in the county's Growth Retreat, an all-encompassing examination of the county's growth needs that will help chart a course for Henrico's future. The retreat assembled nearly every elected official and department head—including newly appointed Planning Director Randy Silber—to review the county's progress and examine the pressing growth issues that must be addressed in coming years. Officials discussed the potential adoption of voluntary cash proffers to help fund infrastructure needs as development occurs. Asking for cash proffers may affect the attitudes of prospective developers as they bring new cases to Planning, and could significantly change the face of future development.

A major realignment in the Department of Planning during FY04 indicated the county's commitment to facing its future as an urban center with increasingly urban issues. In May, the formation of the Department of Community Revitalization split Planning in two. The division acknowledges the increasingly proactive role Planning has taken to preserve aging residential and commercial corridors, helping to reinvigorate these vital and established micro-economies. The split allows Planning to return to its core mission, guiding comprehensive planning issues and evaluating rezoning requests and design

reviews.

Also in FY04, Planning helped steer to a conclusion issues surrounding the adoption of amendments to the Church/Pump Land Use Plan. Adopted in March by the Board of Supervisors, this plan is critical to future development at the intersection of Church and Pump roads with John Rolfe Parkway once completed. The adopted plan allows better coordination of future land-use development in the area.

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Community Revitalization

The Department of Community Revitalization is part of a countywide commitment to business and property owners interested in preserving and enhancing older commercial and residential areas.

Though new in FY04, Community Revitalization already has affected significant change on the county's landscape. Key staff were still part of the Department of Planning when, led by new Revitalization Director John Marles, they helped steer the county through the April 2003 application and approval process for the county's first Enterprise Zone. The zone provides state and local incentives aimed at encouraging business investment in older commercial areas. The zone was integral to sealing a deal that convinced tobacco giant Philip Morris to move its headquarters to Henrico County and has since aided more than 100 businesses in the zone.

Community Revitalization is now working to capitalize further on that success by seeking to double the zone's size and incorporate areas of Lakeside Avenue, Staples Mill and Brook roads.

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Economic Development

Seeking new opportunities on far-off horizons, the Economic Development Authority opened Virginia's first trade development mission in China during FY04.

Championed by Gov. Mark Warner during a June unveiling, the Chinese office is tangible proof of Henrico's commitment to encouraging and diversifying investments made by global companies in the local economy. The move also acknowledges a future in which China likely will be the world's biggest economy. Already, Henrico's storefront office in Shanghai has helped convince two Chinese distribution companies to open plants in the county. Officials are working with two more companies, both in manufacturing, toward the possible location of plants here.

Meanwhile, FY04 found many of Henrico's economic development opportunities generated from within, with the announcements of two significant expansions by companies with interests already established in the county.

In December, Wachovia Securities added 700 new jobs at its Henrico location, and in April, Infineon Technologies announced a \$1 billion expansion of its semiconductor plant at White Oak. The White Oak expansion will create as many as 800 new jobs added to a plant that currently employs 1,750 people.

Want to be part of the business action? Economic Development is encouraging new businesses with a CD Rom tutorial unveiled by the department in April. This interactive guide for prospective new business owners walks users through the steps of creating a business plan and the basics of marketing. It also streamlines the process of applying for permits and business licenses. So far, more than 1,400 of the disks have been distributed.

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Building Construction and Inspections

Developing further on a responsibility to keep area contractors educated on current requirements, Building Inspections' staff conducted ongoing regional training last year. In addition to classes that review recent changes to the Statewide Building Code, staff also conducted classes on requirements for receiving building permits. The classes focused on permit application requirements and commonly forgotten items that might slow down the granting of permits. The classes—which conform with agreed upon regional standards developed by Henrico, Hanover and Chesterfield—aim toward speeding the permit process to benefit the end users, homeowners.

Another education initiative undertaken this year by Building Inspections was creation of a video profile of the department. The video, produced by Public Relations & Media Services, first aired this past June and focuses on consumer issues. The program addresses common concerns of the home-buying public—both real and myth. The video's detailed look at the county's inspection process aims to alleviate consumers' concerns about home construction techniques and assure them that the county looks out for

their best interest.

Recognizing the volume of permits and inspections that the department conducted in FY04, it's easy to see the importance of education in ensuring that the process is free flowing. Last year, Building Inspection staff conducted 88,631 site inspections, and granted 20,535 permits and 2,411 certificates of occupancy.

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The Permit Center

Continuing a tradition it has pioneered since opening in August 2001, the county's Permit Center makes getting approval for building, electrical and plumbing permits easy.

The Permit Center couples innovative use of technology with a customer-service focus to simplify what was once a complex chore for county homeowners and builders.

Rather than taking days, securing many construction-related permits often now requires less than an hour. Other more complicated permits have been streamlined to take just hours to approve. The center attracted more than 11,560 walk-in customers during FY04.

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Public Utilities

Henrico still relied on neighboring Richmond for all of its drinking water when Hurricane Isabel blew through last September. When the Richmond water treatment plant lost power and went off line during the storm, Henrico Public Utilities made do using storage tank water. This water supply maintained limited services in some areas of the county before the Richmond plant returned to operations 36 hours later.

But Public Utilities had more on its mind than fresh water after Isabel.

The storm dropped a record number of trees and did untold damage to area residences. Many residents undertook their own cleanup efforts, and for six months after the storm Public Utilities provided a free

place for residents to bring the debris they collected. Nearly 4,500 customers delivered storm debris to the county's two designated public use areas and one landfill within a month of the storm. For residents unable to transport storm debris, Public Utilities suspended the \$43 bulky waste pick-up fee.

In that six-month period, the county received more than 23,000 tons of hurricane debris at public use areas, compared to the typical total yearly average of 30,000 tons of bulky waste. Public Utilities employees committed more than 3,000 hours in overtime to keep up with public demand.

Future storms face a tougher time shutting off the county's drinking water supply. Henrico's new Water Treatment Plant opened in April. Rated to produce 55 million gallons of fresh water daily, the plant currently is producing 15 to 20 million gallons per day. An existing contract with Richmond requires that the remaining 18 million gallons the county uses daily still come from the city.

The new plant boasts important power supply safeguards, including redundancy in the electrical feed from Dominion Virginia Power to minimize the chances of losing power. If both feeds lose power, generators will keep water flowing and allow 40 million gallons a day to be pumped and treated.

The new plant includes other improvements. Using ozone as its main water-purifying disinfectant, the resulting treated water contains fewer chemicals. Ozone is a colorless, water-soluble gas that is a strong oxidizing agent.

Keep Henrico Beautiful, through collaborations with Public Relations & Media Services and several other county staff developed and implemented initiatives that garnered several awards. The programs took home a 2003 Keep Virginia Beautiful Award, a 2003 Keep America Beautiful Award and a 2004 NACo award.



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Isabel knocked out virtually every stoplight in the county as it tracked northward. Flooding closed some roads and—as in the case of a portion of Lakeside Avenue—washed out others. Public Works crews worked 12-hour shifts during the days immediately following the storm to put things right. They rebuilt the damaged portion of Lakeside in record time.

Just when the worst seemed over, a tornado ripped through the Azalea Avenue area a week after Isabel, leaving crews to do it all again. Destruction enveloped this small neighborhood, contained to just a few blocks bracketed by Azalea Avenue, Wilmer Road, Chamberlayne Road and Henrico High School. Dozens of homes were damaged or destroyed and giant, old-growth hardwood trees blocked many roads.



In the end, crews worked 10,700 hours of overtime throughout the county, resetting and repairing stoplights, fixing roads, clearing obstructions from creeks and streams, and moving nearly 386,000 cubic yards of debris and 4,000 tree stumps from county rights of way.

The high winds that felled trees across the county pulled many up by their roots. These downed trees left behind huge holes, increasing concern about standing water—and new breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The county’s standing water and West Nile virus abatement program focuses on eliminating standing water issues on county property. It also puts heavy emphasis on educating residents about the relative ease with which many mosquito populations can be controlled.

In FY04, 742 calls were entered into the county’s West Nile virus/standing water database. Officials used the database to track mosquito hotspots as well as to identify potential problems. The importance of such a tracking system becomes obvious in light of the 334 dead bird reports received in FY04 by the standing water/West Nile hotline. Birds often carry the virus, and can transport the disease from one population of mosquitoes to another. Of the nearly 200 birds collected by staff during FY04, 57 tested positive.

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The County Attorney's Office acted aggressively and successfully on behalf of Henrico during FY04, collecting \$730,000 in revenue from bankruptcy cases. In these cases, the county sought unpaid—and otherwise potentially lost—personal property, real estate and business license taxes.

The office walked a fine line in negotiating the end to long-time questions over the boundary between Goochland and Henrico counties. The newly agreed upon boundary conforms to existing property lines. It brings subdivisions fully inside of a single county boundary, doing the same for a number of individual, previously transected parcels. The boundary, which becomes effective in January 2005, will provide residents who previously straddled county lines with a single county tax bill.

The Attorney's office also prepared legal documents and aided in negotiating a payment to the county of \$5 million after department store Lord & Taylor backed out of its promise to locate at Short Pump Town Center. The agreement, which protected county interests at the mall, resulted in replacing the retailer with the Cheesecake Factory restaurant and other high-end tenants.

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Office of the General Registrar

The Registrar's office marked a leadership change at the end of FY04, when former Registrar Janet Coon retired. Her replacement, Mark Coakley, assumed the reins in early July.

You're never too young to join the political process, and the Registrar's election page program used the 2003 Board of Supervisors election as an ideal teaching tool for county high school students. The program placed high school seniors at various county polling locations where they provided assistance to voters.

Better voter involvement is also the focus of the Americans with Disabilities Act compliance survey that will be completed this fall. Conducted by the State Board of Elections, surveyors are visiting county polling places to ensure all county voters are given equal access. The review is part of the Help America Vote act of 2002.

Also in FY04, the registrar completed geo-coding registered voters by district. Completed in March, the program used GIS software to clean up congressional voting districts and polling place attendance lines.

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General District Court

Beginning in February, Henrico General District Court switched to segmented dockets, allowing for shorter wait times before defendants' cases are heard. Additional dockets were added to both traffic and criminal court allowing police officers working evening shifts to better coordinate their court appearances.

Waiting in line—or even licking a stamp to mail a payment—is no longer necessary for some defendants wishing to pay fines. In January, the General District Court signed up with the Virginia Information Providers Network (VIPNET) to allow some defendants to pre-pay their summonses on line using a credit card.

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Circuit Court

During FY04, the Circuit Court Clerk continued enhancing the computerized land records system. To date, staff has made publicly available more than a million scanned land records. More than 6 million images are now available in digital format, ensuring ease of use and future maintenance.

Funding for this project comes from the Technology Trust Fund fee collected by the clerk that allows technology and equipment purchases without using county taxpayer money. Digitizing of the land records will eventually allow compliance with Virginia Code Section 17.1-279 that states, “It is the intent of the General Assembly that all circuit court clerks provide secure remote access to land records on or before July 1, 2006.”

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Commonwealth's Attorney

Through its cooperative efforts with police, the Commonwealth's Attorney has maintained a high rate of successful convictions. During FY04, the office gained convictions in more than 90 percent of the homicide cases it tried. Among those guilty verdicts, three high-profile cases worked in close cooperation with police netted a combined total of a life term plus 86 years in jail for the three individuals convicted.

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Sheriff's Office

The Recovery In a Secure Environment (RISE) substance abuse program, initiated in August 2000, was expanded in FY04 to include 25 to 30 beds in the jail's work release program. The expansion increases the available program slots to about 200 and allows prisoners transitioning from general population to work release to remain involved in this successful substance abuse program. The Sheriff's pioneering program expanded beyond the county this year, when five visiting inmates from Richmond returned to Richmond jail along with six volunteer inmates from Henrico jail to develop and lead a RISE program in the city.

FY04 marked the beginning of numerous cooperative agreements between the Henrico Sheriff's Office and other jurisdictions. Last spring, Henrico and Chesterfield counties held their first joint training academy for new sheriff's deputies. The cost-saving measure aims to improve long-term cooperation with Chesterfield.

The Sheriff also entered into a cooperative statewide agreement to streamline prisoner transport between jurisdictions. Under the agreement, a carpooling arrangement allows jurisdictions to transport one another's prisoners when they are also transporting a prisoner to a common destination.

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Community Corrections Program

A record number of probation cases in FY04—1,561 to be exact—kept Community Corrections busy. This steady workload likely is due to broader use of probation by judges in their sentencing for certain crimes.

Community Corrections set another record this year thanks to a six-year-old initiative that each year has increased returns. The department collected \$227,817 in restitution for victims of crimes.

The department also implemented a new pretrial risk assessment tool in January. The tool, used statewide, is based on several years of state research studying how best to determine bond levels and lower defendants' risk of flight. The tool, which uses a point-scale questionnaire administered prior to an accused person's initial hearing, protects public safety and prevents detaining defendants unnecessarily.

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Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court

Better outcomes for children and families remain the perpetual goal of Henrico Juvenile Court. The court established the Children First committee in January. Conceived by two Henrico Juvenile Court judges, the committee brings to the table children's legal advocates and representatives from all of the county agencies tasked with protecting the interests of children who come before the court. The committee meets every other month to coordinate services for abuse and neglect cases, ensuring smoother process through the court. By opening this new avenue of discussion, the committee also ensures that services are available to children earlier in the process, providing for better outcomes. Better foster placement coordination allows kids to stay in their home schools, minimizing disruption to children's lives and maintaining this important continuum of care.

Frequent evaluation of the juvenile court's processes and progress is key to improvement. The fourth Henrico Judges/Clerk retreat, held in June, provided judges with time to review their successes and disappointments during the past year. A previous retreat led to the creation of a training program for substitute judges. The program was implemented last year. During this year's retreat, judges examined their caseloads and calendar management methods, making necessary adjustments for the following year.

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Juvenile Probation

Arrest and arraignment procedures for juveniles continued to aid the intake process for youths and their families, and to relieve the court system. In FY04, intake officers processed 6,859 complaints, down nearly 600 from last fiscal year.

Programs that seek to further relieve the courts also continued to perform well. Since 1996, the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) has provided funding to a continuum of community-based services for juvenile offenders, including anger management and parenting groups, drug and alcohol abuse and prevention programs, and outreach and intensive home-based day treatment. Despite significant reductions in state funding, 1,200 referrals were made in FY04 to the county's crime control act coordinator requesting services provided through VJCCCA.

The Stepping Stones program measured the success of Juvenile Probation's efforts. In conjunction with Henrico County Community Partners Inc., Social Services and the County Attorney's Office, the program recognizes young people who excel in their foster care or probation/parole supervision plans. Nine children received gift certificates and/or savings bonds during the program's first year.

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Juvenile Detention

Serving as pilot agency for a statewide short-term literacy program, Juvenile Detention targeted academically challenged residents. Concentrating on developing reading skills in a one-on-one environment, the program kicked off in April.

The plan recognizes statistics showing academically troubled children are at increased risk of involvement in criminal activity—and that positive educational experiences can give some troubled children a second chance.

Another learning initiative focused on curbing drug use and abuse. The short-term substance abuse program exhibits the effects of longtime substance abuse as both a deterrent and an avenue for children to seek help if they need it. Nationally, 75 percent of children who enter juvenile detention have mental health issues, including substance abuse problems. The program uses former addicts to tell their stories. Group sessions allow residents to ask questions and receive feedback from mental health counselors.

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James River Juvenile Detention Center

James River Juvenile Detention Center (JRJD) provides a broad range of services to increase residents' self-esteem and social skills in anticipation of the completion of their sentences.

During FY04, JRJD staff improved the services and activities available to juvenile residents, providing more exposure to education through anger management, drug prevention and GED or skills-appropriate education classes.

Children arriving at JRJD often lack simple social skills; knowing when to say thank you, how to interact in simple conversations. Learning these skills is emphasized both through classroom and one-on-one skill-building activities.

An average of 50 juvenile offenders, ages 14 to 17, reside at the home. The Post-Disposition (Post-D) program is a joint effort of judges, JRJD staff and juvenile probation. It currently provides beds to an average of 20 children, each serving a maximum of six-months. Post-D is a community-based program providing residents with frequent opportunities for interaction with the community, seeking to increase their abilities to interact and form healthy relationships. The program encourages residents to find part-time employment, provides basic help in filling out forms and applications, arranges transportation and monitors residents' work schedules to ensure that they remain on task. Many Post-D children maintain their jobs after leaving the program.

Due to the brief nature of their stay, juvenile residents rarely have time to earn their high school GEDs while at JRJD. Despite these odds, two students earned their GEDs during FY04.

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Finance

Henrico's "triple" triple-A bond rating continues to gain Henrico broad recognition as a well-managed, fiscally reliable jurisdiction. The numerous honors awarded to the Department of Finance in FY04 are proof of this distinction.

Among these high honors, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded certificates of achievement to Finance in both the Financial Reporting and Budgetary Excellence categories for the 23rd

and 15th years in a row, respectively.

NACo also recognized Finance with two awards last year. The first was for Henrico's technology replacement program, which allows the county to fund replacement computer equipment into the foreseeable future without any additional expense to the county. A second award was for Finance's sales and use tax program. This program represents an intense effort to ensure the county receives credit for all of the sales and use tax generated within our community.

Finance's Real Estate Advantage Program (REAP) increased the amount of relief it provides to eligible elderly and disabled homeowners. REAP helps residents with fixed incomes afford to stay in their homes by alleviating some of their real estate tax burden.

A new on-line payment program for property taxes aims at increasing convenience to taxpayers. Available through the county's Web site, this payment option became available in May.

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Finance Summary

Financial Resources & Requirements for Fiscal Year 2003-04 (A)

| General Resources: (A) | 2003-04 (B) | 2002-03 | Difference |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Current Property Taxes | \$266,167,616 | \$240,664,997 | \$25,502,619 |
| Local Sales Tax | 47,627,489 | 47,095,811 | 531,678 |
| Business and Professional Licenses | 24,042,471 | 23,013,363 | 1,029,108 |
| Other Local Revenue | 65,548,140 | 68,056,237 | (2,508,097) |
| Total Local Revenue | \$403,385,716 | \$378,830,408 | \$24,555,308 |
| State and Federal Sources | 253,606,444 | 229,130,495 | 24,475,949 |
| Total Revenue | \$656,992,160 | \$607,960,903 | \$49,031,257 |
| Net Transfers (C) | (60,365,924) | (33,972,064) | (26,393,860) |
| Total Resources | \$596,626,236 | \$573,988,839 | \$22,637,397 |
| General Requirements: (A) | 2003-04 (B) | 2002-03 | Difference |
| General Government | \$150,667,255 | \$144,235,290 | \$ 6,431,965 |
| School Operating | 295,444,215 | 285,603,230 | 9,840,985 |
| Public Safety | 113,567,806 | 107,919,783 | 5,648,023 |
| Debt Service (D) | 36,946,960 | 36,230,536 | 716,424 |
| Total Requirements | \$596,626,236 | \$573,988,839 | \$22,637,397 |

Notes:

(A) Includes both General and Debt Service Funds.

(B) Figures are preclosing for FY 2003-04.

(C) Includes \$5,951,526 of capital lease obligations in FY2002-03 and \$15,575,286 to Capital Projects Fund in FY 2003-04.

(D) Amounts include both General Government and School Debt Service Requirements.

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Information Technology

In January, Information Technology (IT) completed a years-long process of migrating the county from 25-year-old mainframes to new state-of-the-art servers.

Like trading in a '68 Volkswagen Beetle for a 2004 Ford Mustang in terms of speed and performance, the changeover upgraded from old servers that relied on processors with speeds slower than commonly found in a modern Palm Pilot. In terms of size, the migration means removing mainframes that were twice the size of a refrigerator and replacing them with machines that aren't much larger than laptop computers.

During the upgrade, IT increased the county's Internet speed capabilities. This new freedom—15-times faster than before—has enhanced new hardware recently adopted by the Division of Police and other county departments that use computers in the field. The increased speed improves response time for all county government users. It allows building inspectors with handheld devices to file reports directly from job sites. It also allows citizens to log onto the county Web site to download forms, get real-time status on traffic and schedule building inspections.

Speed isn't everything. Safety was also a priority during FY04, and IT implemented new technologies that provide centralized protection from viruses and e-mail Spam. Virus protection is now area-wide, with all Internet and e-mail traffic channeled through a single conduit where it is scanned and filtered before arriving on county desktop computers.

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Public Libraries



Library officials broke ground in October 2003 for the new Tuckahoe Library. The \$15 million facility will replace an aging building that during its time has been among the most visited libraries in the state.

When completed in 2006, the new library will be the largest county library. Its 50,000 square feet of space is a third larger than the current Tuckahoe facility and will boast enhanced parking. A planned café will provide patrons with a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy a quiet read or gather with friends.

The facility's drive-through window—sorry, no to-go cappuccino orders please—will allow patrons to call ahead for book selections, then drive through for pickup. This convenience will further aid parking issues that hamstrung the old Tuckahoe

facility.

All 10 of the county's library locations took another giant leap into the digital age during FY04, with the addition of wireless connectivity services available to the thousands of Henrico high and middle school students and teachers with Apple iBooks. With many county students now relying on iBooks as notebooks, calculators and virtual classrooms, this NACo award-winning enhancement opens new opportunities for students to access vast stores of knowledge and information. In addition to the typical resources on hand at the public library, students now have after-school-hours access to the school server, as well as the almost limitless resources available on the Internet. Though currently only available to county school students and teachers, planning is underway to expand the library's wireless technology, making it available for public use.

In FY04 the library took another step into the digital age, shifting its preference when adding titles to its video collection from VHS format to DVD. In the first year of this shift to digital format, the library's collection of DVD's swelled to more than 2,500 titles, including numerous titles produced in-house by Public Relations & Media Services. More DVD titles are added daily, though items in the VHS collection will be maintained. The shift to DVD acknowledges the newer format's superior quality and greater stability for long-term storage of music, movies and teaching tools.

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Schools

Henrico school administrators strove to keep pace with the county's phenomenal population growth during FY04—a growth attributable in large part to the county's reputation as a national leader in technological and instructional innovation.

Hungary Creek Middle and Greenwood Elementary schools, both slated to open in fall 2004, along with renovations and additions under way at Laburnum, Ridge, Trevvett, Baker, Fair Oaks and Ratcliffe elementary schools, are part of the county's strategy to meet the demands of Henrico's rapid growth.

As the school system builds new schools and increases services to meet the growing needs of its students, it continues to take giant leaps in the high-tech world of the on-line classroom. This year, nearly 86 percent of all surveyed Henrico residents—teachers, parents and students—supported the one-to-one iBook laptop program initiated in the county's high schools in 2002. FGI Research conducted the spring survey of more than 28,000 people, measuring satisfaction with the county's Teaching and Learning Initiative. Current iBook program participants include all county high and middle school students, and all county teachers and staff. FGI representatives indicated that the results showed a staggering level of

community support for the program.

Henrico school boosters weren't limited to county residents and educators during FY04. Among the awards presented to the county this year specifically citing the iBook and the Teaching and Learning Initiative were the American School Board Journal's 2004 Magna Award, and the 2003 Governor's Gold Technology Award, which it also received in 2001. Cisco Systems, one of the nation's largest computer networking firms, presented its Partners in Education award to Henrico Schools.

Receiving personal credit for his part in making the iBook initiative happen—and work—is departing Henrico Schools Superintendent Mark A. Edwards, who won the 2004 Harold W. McGraw, Jr., Prize in Education. The prize is the education world's equivalent to the journalism world's Pulitzer Prize.



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Recreation and Parks

Move over Simon & Schuster. This past fall marked the release of the Division of Recreation and Parks published book, *County Manager Form of Government in Henrico, Virginia*. This informative volume was penned by Dr. Nelson Wikstrom, a distinguished professor of political science and public administration at Virginia Commonwealth University, and chronicles the county's adoption of a unique form of county administration that has helped set Henrico apart from its Virginia neighbors.



Recreation and Parks preserves Henrico history not only through publication of books. The restored Antioch School reopened in the fall. Now a community center, the school closed in the mid-1960s and was donated to the county by the Fairfield Ruritan Club in 2000. Antioch joins a pantheon of high-quality facilities maintained by Recreation and Parks

Among these facilities, two garnered attention beyond Henrico's county line during FY04 when they played host to major regional sporting events. The girls Babe Ruth Southeast Regional Tournament was held at Varina district's Dorey Park in July. The Babe Ruth boys 14-and-under tournament was held the same month at RF&P Park in the Brookland district. Both events exhibited the fine facilities available in Henrico and brought tourism dollars to the area. The Dorey Park event attracted 50 teams from five different age groups. The boys event attracted teams, spectators and fans from seven states. These events drew more than 2,000 visitors and spectators to Henrico.

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Public Relations & Media Services

Public Relations & Media Services (PR&MS) spent the early part of FY04 on the continued expansion of HCTV-37, adding full-length, original programming to the television station's broadcast line-up. By late summer 2003, Henrico residents were watching award-winning documentaries and programs produced entirely in-house by PR&MS staff. Production was in full swing by late summer.

Then came the storm . . .

At 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 17, PR&MS staff reported to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as part of the core team preparing for the impending hurricane. For 10 days, staff worked around the clock disseminating timely, accurate information to residents. HCTV-37 stayed on air with constant updates, and staff worked closely with the local media alerting them to road closings, downed trees, water and ice distribution sites and other emergency information required by our community.

While some PR&MS staff handled media relations in the EOC, HCTV producers conducted on-site

interviews and shot phenomenal footage that later documented the hurricane, residents' reactions and a real, behind-the-scenes look at Henrico County's emergency operations. "Responding to Isabel" aired just one month after the storm devastated central Virginia. PR&MS staff plans to rerun the program late this summer during the anniversary week of Isabel.

Despite the storm's interruption, PR&MS staff met production deadlines for the fall issue of the quarterly newspaper, Henrico Today, as well as the many other print and on-line publications they write and produce in-house. These publications—along with the television programs, photography, design and public awareness campaigns conducted by the department—earned the staff an unprecedented 30 national, state and regional awards last fiscal year for excellence and professionalism in the communications field.

By fiscal year's end, the PR&MS staff was gearing up to conduct a countywide satisfaction and communications survey of residents. During September and October 2004, the Southeastern Institute of Research will conduct random telephone surveys of Henrico residents, seeking feedback on county services and how they prefer to receive information. Once the survey is complete, PR&MS staff will use the results and residents' suggestions to tailor Henrico's future communications plan.

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General Services

We're all a little safer since the July implementation of the county's new e-911 system. Installation of this state-of-the-art system—the "e" is for enhanced—was overseen by General Services. It provides dispatchers with immediate access to a broad range of information—address, directions, phone number, location of nearest first responders and space for notations—on every call they receive. Previously, call takers relied on a simple LCD display on their phones that listed only phone number and address, and required manual entry of information into dispatch computers. Future upgrades to the system will include mapping information, pinpointing the call location and first responders.

Also in FY04, a groundbreaking kicked off construction of the new Tuckahoe Library. The event was a long time coming and was preceded by General Services' negotiations with the U.S. Postal Service related to preexisting agreements over storm drainage. The new library design works around this agreement, relocating a retention pond designed to handle the new library facility, a planned future expansion of that facility and the needs of the U.S. Post Office.

General Services also oversaw completion of an addition and renovation to the Juvenile Courts and Probation building. Finished in October, the expansion added 7,720 square feet to the building's existing 35,850 sq. ft. The building remained in continuous use by the public during the renovations.

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Capital Area Training Consortium (CATC)

With corporate downsizing a continuing issue regionally and nationally, the Capital Area Training Consortium (CATC) had a busy year. CATC responded to the needs of more than 2,100 employees affected by local downsizing efforts and business closings at companies like Time Life Inc. and Circuit City. Work force redevelopment help included everything from teaching the basics of resumé preparation and how to use the Internet in job searches, to tuition assistance and financial aid.

Special needs programs ranked among CATC's priorities this year, leading to the installation in April and May of disability computer workstations in 12 Virginia Workforce Centers across the state. These stations expand access to information and services to the under-utilized disabled community.

May also marked CATC's participation in the first Richmond-area Diversity Job Fair. More than 1,100 job seekers and 30 companies participated. Though open to all, the fair emphasized Spanish speaking and disabled workers.

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Real Property

You can't build it until you buy a place to put it.

Following this simple guideline, Real Property helped Henrico face its growth needs with confidence during FY04. Among contracts secured by Real Property this year was a lease for a new Eastern Police Precinct. This new facility will allow the division to move as early as November from its current cramped quarters in the county's historic Dabbs House facility. The new police facility is in the Woodland Business Center in Sandston.

Real Property also secured rights of way for the widening of Hungary Spring Road between Broad Street and Staples Mill Road. This project will increase the road to four lanes for its entire length and add

necessary turn lanes, resulting in an easier commute and potentially improved drive time.

Some Henrico middle and elementary students also benefited from the work of Real Property in FY04. Staff procured a 24-acre site for a new western elementary school at Pouncy Tract and Bacova roads that will relieve other schools taxed by rapid development in the Short Pump area.

Real Property procured a 53-acre site on Whiteside Road south of Route 60 earlier this year, which will be the location of a new eastern middle school. The school will relieve overcrowding at Fairfield and John Rolfe middle schools by September 2006.

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Internal Audit

Protecting personal information is a high priority for Henrico County. In FY04, Internal Audit scrutinized existing county standards relating to protection of residents' Social Security information. Seeking to tighten security and privacy, auditors recommended controlled use of Social Security and credit card account numbers.

Several county agencies responded to this recommendation by finding alternatives to these commonly used numbers as identifiers in county billing and database records.

Internal auditors also examined the county's capital asset accounting, recommending several improvements to account for and control records related to maintaining more than \$2.5 billion in county assets. Among suggested improvements were recommendations to change one agency's property and fleet management methods.

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Human Resources

The Human Resources Department (HR) once again championed Henrico County's national reputation as an employer of choice. Proof of the county's distinction is evidenced by the county's single-digit—

less than eight percent in FY04— employee turnover rate, now maintained for a 17th consecutive year.

Meanwhile, more than 29,000 people applied online for county jobs this year at www.henricojobs.com. HR selected from the top 1.7 percent of these applicants. Many from this select group will choose to remain with Henrico throughout their careers; as nearly 20 percent of current Henrico employees boast more than 20 years of service to the county. Henrico's long-standing reputation as a stable employer remains vital to its attraction and retention efforts.

Innovative programs continue to secure Human Resources' reputation as an industry leader both locally and nationally. A newly implemented technology training initiative identifies technical skills needed by employees and allows HR to offer appropriate and timely training.

Henrico's leadership in the HR industry is further cemented by a recently forged partnership with Spotsylvania County. The partnership allows Spotsylvania's human resources department to benefit from instruction provided by Henrico HR.

NACo presented Human Resources with awards for each of these innovative programs in 2004, bringing the department's total to an unprecedented 36 NACo awards during the past 18 years.

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Mental Health/Mental Retardation

New Mental Health/Mental Retardation Services (MH/MR) Director Michael D. O'Connor stepped up to succeed departing director James W. Stewart, III, during FY04. Virginia Gov. Mark Warner tapped Stewart for a state mental health post.

MH/MR's Parent/Infant program serves the second largest number of children in Virginia compared to similar programs in other localities. Approximately 500 Henrico children, aged birth to 3 years with developmental disabilities, receive occupational, speech and physical therapy.

Because some children with developmental disabilities require almost constant reinforcement of what they learn, the program provides one-on-one education to both children and parents. This educational component focuses on teaching parents how to teach their children with special needs.

In October, MH/MR initiated its Opiate Recovery Program. Currently serving nearly 40 clients, the program acknowledges the strong physiologically addictive qualities of opiates, like heroin. Its services are designed to address that specific population. Included among those services are outpatient group counseling sessions that meet twice weekly. During sessions, participants receive education about

addiction and solutions. Directed group sessions provide participants with opportunities to talk with peers about challenges they face. Also provided as part of the program are auricular acupuncture sessions. Accepted study results show that auricular acupuncture is an effective treatment tool for opiate addicts, reducing an addict's cravings—and sometimes even lessening withdrawal symptoms.

A major shift in funding, initiated this year through the State Reinvestment Project, redirected more than \$166,285 to MH/MR from the Central State Hospital budget. The funding shift, which is a permanent funding increase for MH/MR, has benefited clients through the provision of more intense case management. The funds also provided for expansion of temporary housing options for at-risk clients who face possible hospitalization. Having a reliable place to stay during critical transition times is important to patients' long-term outcomes. About 20 people each year will benefit from these increased housing services and as many as 50 will benefit from the more intense case management services.

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Social Services

Children benefit from the involvement of both parents in their lives. This simple message has become a mission for Henrico Social Services during the past two years. In FY04, the department's second Fatherhood Conference proved a resounding success, drawing a broad audience that was enthusiastic and engaged.

The conference looked beyond the typical focus on mothers as primary caregivers, leveling the playing field in an often female-dominated environment and reminding fathers of the responsibilities they have to their children. Key to the conference's message is making the community aware of dad's importance in rearing future generations—encouraging businesses and county agencies to integrate an approach that recognizes dad and his responsibilities to his family. This past summer, Henrico was heralded during the National Fatherhood Conference in Atlanta, Ga., for its leadership.

Social Services also stepped forward during the county's response to Hurricane Isabel, taking a lead role in providing emergency needs to families devastated by the storm. With homes damaged or destroyed, some residents sought emergency shelter. Social Services placed some in area hotels and provided many with food, money and clothing, giving them hope that tomorrow was a new day.

Social Services aided residents who suffered less immediate damage from the storm by joining a seven-day statewide thrust to distribute a one-time-only emergency food stamp issuance. Department staff provided more than 6,030 families with much-needed additional benefits.

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Demographics

Demographics

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| Population | 280,698* |
| Land area (square miles) | 244.06 |
| Total housing units..... | 118,941* |
| Assessed value of taxable land and improvements | \$22,161,373,300** |
| Public schools..... | 65 |
| Public school enrollment | 44,761 |
| Roads (linear miles) | 1,263.62 |
| Roads (lane miles) | 3,178.25 |
| Voting precincts..... | 89 |
| Total registered voters | 171,005 |

* Figures are preliminary and not certified

** As of 1/1/04

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Health Department

With Henrico County's Hispanic population growing, and with more and more recent arrivals seeking

work in area service industries, the Health Department met FY04 education needs by offering its “Serving Safe Foods” course in Spanish. The course is presented several times yearly.

Education was also the focus of the department’s prenatal care television program, added this year to the programming schedule on HCTV-37. The show emphasizes healthy lifestyles for pregnant women, and informs residents about a broad range of free maternity services available through the Health Department.

Prevention is always the best cure for what ails, and the department maintained its focus on healthy lifestyles and wellness initiatives during FY04. The Fitness Plus series offers community exercise and nutrition classes to Henrico women, encouraging participation with a hard-to-resist incentive: it’s free.

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Virginia Cooperative Extension

The Extension Office continues to provide innovative, useful and free programs to county residents. Among programs new this year was SMART Lawns. The SMART acronym serves as a reminder that beautiful lawns are best achieved by following simple guidelines: Soil test, Measure, Aerate, Right fertilizer at the right time and Trouble free maintenance—was first offered this spring.

SMART Lawn was developed in-house, and more than 100 residents eager to improve their lawns have enrolled since the spring. But the underlying purpose of the program goes beyond aesthetics. It promotes water quality and protection of the Chesapeake Bay from the improper use of lawn chemicals. Participants learn that fertilizers and pesticides are important, but powerful tools that must be used responsibly.

The “Know Your Credit Score” program was also new and successful during FY04. First offered in February in observance of National Consumer Protection Week, new classes are held on a semi-regular basis. The program draws strong attendance and includes instruction on the importance of understanding how credit scores affect one’s ability to obtain credit and at what interest rate.

The Henrico 4-H program has marked a steady increase in popularity for years, maintaining waiting lists of eager, young participants. The program, which teaches life skills, demonstrated what its participants learned through numerous countywide competitions during FY04. Designed to develop poise and self-confidence among other valuable skills, these contests drew participation from more than 200 youth, competing in areas that included everything from public speaking to fashion to agricultural marketing.

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