

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

When I began my service as a Councilman on the La Plata Town Council, over 16 years ago, I did so with enthusiasm and an understanding that I had a lot to learn about local government and my chosen community, La Plata. It is hard to believe how much has happened in those sixteen years but I believe La Plata is a better place today because people find ways to come together to solve major issues. As an elected individual charged with first representing my ward and later the entire Town, the inherent responsibility and trust that goes with each election never strays far from one's mind when they take a seat on the dais at Town Hall. Representation means understanding the issues and problems and working for solutions that are consistent with moving the Town forward toward a predetermined destination.

I believe that this Council takes their responsibility very seriously and make the tough decisions in the best interest of the residents and the Town of La Plata.

La Plata is a great community within which a lot of wonderful people reside. It is more than a spot on the map or an abundance of brick and mortar. It is the end of line after a long day at work and the place where our families call home. For this reason many people take enormous pride in their Town and want to ensure that it retains the character that made them stay in the area or select this Town when they moved here.

One of the major issues we face each and every day and will continue well into the future is the subject of growth. Like a child when they pass from one stage of growth to another, getting all parts of the body to

Continued on page 3

Town Posts Snow Emergency Routes:

Old man winter is just around the corner, this means the possibility of snow. The Public Works Department has posted snow emergency routes throughout the Town. Parking will be prohibited on these streets while a snow emergency plan is in effect for Charles County. Vehicles parked along these roads will be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense during a snow emergency. To aid snow removal crews and improve safety, please do not park along streets when winter weather is in the forecast. Instead park in your garage, driveway, or designated parking space. The following is a list of the Town's snow emergency routes:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Agricopia Drive | Hickory Circle | Redwood Circle |
| Bath Drive | Hickory Lane | Savanna Drive |
| Clarks Run Road | Kent Avenue | Shining Willow Way
<i>(between Rt. 301 and
Washington Avenue)</i> |
| Cornwall Drive | La Grange Avenue | Somerset Street |
| East Patuxent Drive | Llano Drive | St. Mary's Avenue |
| Fescue Circle | Magnolia Drive | Suffolk Drive |
| Garrett Avenue | Norfolk Drive | Wales Drive |
| Hawthorne Drive
<i>(between Rt. 301 and
Washington Avenue)</i> | Oak Avenue | Wicomico Street |
| Heritage Green Parkway | Oriole Lane | Willow Lane |
| | Quailwood Parkway | |
| | Queen Anne Street | |

Early Warning Devices/Sirens Testing

The Town of La Plata will test our early warning devices/sirens on **Saturday, December 10, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.** Testing is done twice per year in early May and early December. The testing lasts about a half hour. The tests consist of both siren alerts and audible notifications. The tests are conducted in conjunction with the Charles County 911 Communications Center, which controls and operates the system for the Town.

The devices are installed at the following locations:

- On Charles Street in front of the Charles County Courthouse
- On Curley Hall Road at the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant (near Quailwood Subdivision)
- In Clarks Run Subdivision
- In King's Grant Subdivision
- On Shining Willow Way next to the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department

Emergency Management Officials remind you that in the event of a real emergency to stay tuned to local radio stations for more information, to have emergency supplies on hand - including a radio which can be operated during a power outage, and to know where the safe haven is in your home. It is everyone's responsibility to plan for an emergency.



COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Joe Norris, Ward 4

As I write this message we have not received the petition for the referendum concerning the annexation for the Super Walmart, though I would be very surprised if we did not. There are still a few days before it is due. I am assuming there will be a valid petition and I urge you to come out and vote whether you are for the annexation or opposed to it. After all the testimony, letters and information we received throughout the process I believe we made the right decision, however if the annexation is turned down by the electorate then I will of course accept that. That is the beauty of the democratic process. A number of people opposed to the annexation have said we as a Council should not be making that decision. I strongly disagree, that is what we were elected to do. If we were to throw every difficult decision to the voters it would be too easy an out for those of us elected to make the

tough decisions. Fortunately if enough people are not happy with a decision that we have made then we always have the referendum process. Again I encourage you whether opposed or in favor of the referendum let your voice be heard.

I hope you had the opportunity to join us for our Salute to Veterans Parade and Ceremony. Our guest speaker was Navy Rear Admiral Randolph Mahr. Admiral Mahr is Commander Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division and Assistant Commander for Research and Engineering Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Maryland. Our thanks to Admiral Mahr for joining us, and to all of our veterans and active duty personnel for their service.

As always I have been enjoying the beautiful fall colors and am looking forward to the holiday lights to come. Speaking of the holidays be sure to check out some of our Christmas events by going to our

website www.townoflaplata.org and click on events to learn more. We will be having the "Olde Time Holiday Gathering at Town Hall and the lighting of the Town Christmas Tree. We will also welcome santa and enjoy many other activities.

The Design Review Board of which I am Council Representative has completed the revision of the Design Guidelines for the Commercial Highway District and Central Business District. After review and a minor modification the Town Council has adopted the changes. This was an arduous but necessary task. We now have guidelines which are now in line with our town code and hopefully a user friendly tool for those in the business community when coming before the Design Review Board.

If you have any questions or issues, I may be reached by phone at 301 934-9230 or by email at jnorris@townoflaplata.org. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

SEWER BACK UP DAMAGE

Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee certainly stressed the Town's infrastructure. The heavy rains, and power outages overwhelmed some homeowners causing sewer system failures or your sump pump's inability to handle the water runoff. The next thing you know, water or sewage is backing up into drains, overflowing toilets and tubs, or flooding basements.

Damage to your property because of a sewer back up is a potential problem for every Town resident. You may not be aware that from any point in the system, the introduction of items such as disposable diapers, tree roots, grease and excessive rain or snowmelt, can cause sewer backups in spite of regular Town maintenance. The Town of La Plata cannot guarantee that your sewer system will never back up and in most cases is not responsible to pay for damages resulting from a sewer back up.

Do not assume your homeowner's insurance is adequate. According to the Insurance Information Institute, most sewer system backups are not covered under a typical homeowner's insurance policy, nor are they covered by flood insurance.

For most consumers, coverage for sewer-related problems must be purchased either as a separate product or as an addition to

a homeowner's policy. Fortunately, sewer backup coverage is available from most insurance companies for a nominal cost. Check with your insurance provider to ensure you are covered.

If your sewer line does sustain a blockage, call the La Plata Department of Public Works at (301) 934-8421 before calling a plumber.

Code Corner

Chapter 117 Health and Sanitation

117-6 Storage Receptacles

Every dwelling and every dwelling unit shall be provided with a container to contain all garbage, rubbish, and ashes as may be necessary. Containers are the property of the Town of La Plata, and shall be returned when sanitation service ceases for that occupant. All such containers shall be at all times maintained in good order and repair, with the lid closed. Additional refuse containers may be used, and shall be made of metal or other suitable material, watertight, strong, durable, rodent and insect proof, and secured with tight covers. They shall each have a capacity not to exceed thirty-two (32) gallons, except that this maximum capacity shall not apply to larger containers which are handled mechanically with Town equipment.

117-7 Location of Containers

Unless otherwise provided by the Chief Executive Officer, where alleys are used by the refuse collectors, containers shall be placed on or within six (6) feet of the alley line in such a position as not to intrude upon the traveled portion of the alley. Where streets are used by the refuse collectors, containers shall be placed adjacent to and back to the curb or adjacent to and back to the ditch or street lines if there is no curb, at such times as shall be scheduled for the collection of refuse. As soon as practicable after such containers have been emptied, they shall be removed by the owner to within or to the rear of the premises and away from the street line until the next scheduled time for collection. Only containers provided by the town of La Plata for mechanical collection may be stored discretely in the front or on the side of the premises.

MAKING LA PLATA MORE EFFICIENT

With resources strained by challenges in the economy, it is vital that the Town explore ways to make its operations more efficient to save money, time, and add value to the services provided. Town staff is charged with finding new ways to improve services, and the Town regularly invests in technology or implements process changes to drive efficiencies.

Geographic Information Systems

One of the very basic tools used in local government is a map. The work of the Town requires a lot of maps. Maps show the size and location of streets, sidewalks, and public facilities. In Planning maps show different zoning classifications, land use, subdivision plats, and transportation networks. In Utilities, maps show the locations of wells, pump stations, hydrants, valves, and the myriad of pipes that interconnect them. The Police Department uses maps to get property information, identify locations of offenses, and present traffic data. In general maps show aerial photography, construction, property ownership, along with a host of other details.

In the past, the Town has traditionally created a variety of paper maps to depict one or more of these items. The maps were used to assist in the delivery of service and to help plan for changes in service delivery. Since 2008, the Town has been under development of a Geographic Information System (GIS) that creates a digital map of La Plata that incorporates many of these different layers of information. The development of the GIS for La Plata has been

a time consuming process that is still underway. The effort put forth in the development of the system has been extremely beneficial to getting accurate map information into one place that all members of the Town staff can access.

The basics of the Town's GIS is not unlike other communities. It starts with a current aerial photo of the Town, which the GIS technicians add a layer of the Town boundary, a layer of the roads, a layer that identifies every building in Town, and layers of other maps like parcel boundaries, subdivision plats, ward boundaries, and zoning designations. Staff can then turn on the layers that they want in the map to create their own custom map. Perhaps a map showing an aerial photo with streets and parcel boundaries is required, those three items can be turned on, and none of the other information is shown.

The Town has been adding a lot of information about the Town's infrastructure as well. As built plans of utility infrastructure have been scanned in, and all of the sewer pipes, manholes, water lines, and related infrastructure are added, each in its own layer that can be turned on and off. Town staff went through Town locating every valve in the water system and used a GPS device to get its exact coordinates. That information was imported into the GIS, so when there is a need for Public Works to fix a water main break, they can use the map to know exactly which valves need to be shut off in order to fix the break. Additionally, in the winter when snow covers the ground, or at night when it is hard to see, staff can use the mapped GPS

coordinated to find a valve quickly, and improve the speed that a break is fixed.

While all of these elements of the GIS are still being updated, most aspects are functional. The largest effort of work that is underway is the mapping of all of the storm water pipes and related infrastructure in Town. There will be a continued effort to add new information to the system and improve its accuracy. Today, the Town staff is able to utilize this resource, and through mobile devices and an ESRI app bring the information of dozens of map layers into the field. In 2012 the Town will begin to host the GIS itself, yet improvements and adding content will be a continual process.

MAYOR'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

work together can be a challenge. A Town is no different. Some parts grow faster than others putting tremendous pressure on the parts yet to catch up. Some feel that all parts must move in unison and this would be the ideal but it rarely occurs. A community can strive to grow or it can stay static and over time decline. One of the major concerns of limited growth or no growth is that the cost of government does not decline and these costs are borne by the same or similar number of households. Growth provides the basis for spreading these costs to more residents and businesses, obtaining essential infrastructure from new businesses, which will lessen the taxes, fees and charges to current homeowners. Most people want to keep costs low but they differ on how to accomplish this difficult task.

How La Plata grows and to the extent that it does grow will be the subject of many debates. The Mitchell Property annexation that includes a Super Walmart is an important issue but it will not be the last. My position on this issue has been well publicized. But growth does not always have to have a bad connotation even with our renewed interest in the environment. If growth is planned and placed in the correct area it can benefit the entire community. There are many good examples of this in La Plata today. It is all right to disagree on how to reach a predetermined destination as long as we do not lose sight of what it was we wanted to accomplish in the first place.

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a bountiful and happy New Year. Please join us for our annual holiday events at Town Hall.

As your Mayor, I will always be interested in your comments, both favorable and unfavorable. You can reach me at Town Hall (301-934-8421) or at home (301-934-4850).

Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

Christmas	Monday, December 26, 2011
New Years Day	Monday, January 2, 2012
Martin Luther Kings Birthday	Monday, January 16, 2012

If you have a **water or sewer emergency** after hours, call (301)934-8421 and follow the instructions given to report your emergency. The automated response system will alert the appropriate department to respond to you.

TOWN OF LA PLATA OFFICIALS

Mayor: Roy G. Hale

Council:

Wayne Winkler	Ward 1
C. Keith Back	Ward 2
Paddy Mudd	Ward 3
Joseph W. Norris	Ward 4

Town Manager:

Daniel J. Mears

Treasurer: Robert W. Oliphant

Assistant Town Manager:

Michelle D. Miner

Town Clerk: Danielle Mandley

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder

Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings

Director of Planning and Community

Development: David M. Jenkins

Director of Operations: Robert F. Stahl, Jr.

Director of Public Works:

Jeffrey S. Garner

Senior Planner: Theresa C. Dent

Manager of Inspections: James Q. Yates

305 Queen Anne Street,

La Plata, Maryland 20646

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Telephone: 301-934-8421 / 301-870-3377

La Plata Police Department: 301-934-1500

Email: mminer@townoflaplata.org

Website: www.townoflaplata.org

La Plata Beautification Commission

Beautification Grant Awards

The Beautification Commission implemented the *Beautification Commission Grant Program* to encourage residents, Home Owners Associations, school projects, scout groups, civic organizations, businesses and other community members to help "beautify" our town.

On October 25, 2011, at the Town Council meeting the Beautification Committee presented monetary awards to four organizations that submitted grant applications for consideration. The

first project awarded was in the amount of \$500 for the Quailwood Parkway Enhancement Project. The next award went to Grace Lutheran School in the amount of \$400 for their garden upgrade project. The Hickory Ridge Home Owners Association received a grant in the amount of \$500 for the Quince Island Enhancement Project. Finally, Matula Elementary School was awarded a grant for \$400 for sign spruce up.

If you have a project idea that will improve the appearance, cleanliness or reduce current maintenance needs please

visit the Town's website www.townoflaplata.org under the Commissions tab for more information and an application. The next round of grants will be in the Spring of 2012 and the deadline for submission will be May 7, 2012.



LA PLATA TOWN SERVICES

Special Trash Pickup

Bulk items are picked up the first Monday of each month, or the following Monday if the first one is a holiday. Large amounts of loose material (such as brush) should be bundled or bagged in such a manner that the weight is less than 50 lbs. The Town reserves the right not to pick up items too heavy to safely handle. General construction cleanup and hazardous materials are not eligible. Items must be at curbside by 7:30 a.m. on pickup day. Call Town Hall before pickup day to be placed on the list. Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection



CHARLES COUNTY
**HOUSEHOLD
HAZARDOUS WASTE
COLLECTION**

The last household hazardous waste collection days for 2011 is the first Saturday of the month December 3, 2011 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Department of Public Works building, located at 10430 Audie Lane, off of Radio Station Road in La Plata.

Household hazardous waste collection is a

contracted service and items cannot be accepted when the contractor is not on site.

Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription drugs, and other poisons that are around your house. Please keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring them to the collection site in cardboard boxes to ease unloading.

For more information, call the Charles County Department of Public Facilities, Environmental Resources Division at (301) 932-3599.

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:

Monday, December 26, 2011

Monday, January 2, 2012

Monday, January 16, 2012

Trash will be picked up on:

Tuesday, December 27, 2011

Tuesday, January 3, 2012

Tuesday, January 17, 2012

Christmas Tree Pick up will be Tuesday, December 27, 2011 to Friday, January 6, 2012.

AUTOMATED WATER METER SYSTEM

After several months of preliminary work, the Town is now ready to begin installation of the new Automated Water Meter system. This system will read each water meter every day and the Town will be able to access the information without sending anyone to the customer location. Each customer will also be able to access their own account information and current meter reading individually through the internet.

The equipment needed to receive the information from each of the meters will be installed throughout the Town during the first or second week of December. The contractor expects to begin installing large meters in December and residential meters in January of 2012.

Your help is appreciated to access your meter. A technician will need access to each of the existing meters to install the new equipment

and do the initial setup. Please call (301) 542-5361 to make an appointment with the contractor to do the installation at your convenience. The contractor will also be following up with every utility customer. All of the installations should be completed by May 1, 2012. While the installation is in progress, please continue to call the Town at (301) 934-8421 to report any problems with the quality or quantity of water you are receiving.

DECEMBER 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

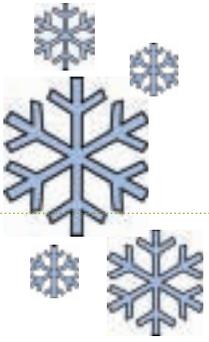
TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



4

5

6

7

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9

10

Older Tyme Holiday gathering; 3:00 pm

Yard Waste Pick Up
Special Pick Up (please call by 12/2 to be put on list)

Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day; Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Crime Watch Council Meeting; 7:30 p.m.

Yard Waste Pick Up

Early Warning Device Test; 10:00 am
Breakfast with Santa (reservations required)

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

Yard Waste Pick Up

Christmas Decoration contest (have lights on by 5:00 pm)

Mayor and Council Work Session; 7:00 p.m.

Parks and Recreation Meeting; 5:00 p.m.

Yard Waste Pick Up

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

Yard Waste Pick Up

Beautification Commission Meeting; 4:00 p.m.

Mayor and Council Business Regular Meeting; 7:00 p.m.

Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Winter Begins

Yard Waste Pick Up

25

26

27

28

29

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31

Town Hall Closed

No Yard Waste Pick Up

Monday trash Pick Up

No trash Pick Up (12/27)

Christmas Tree Pick Up

Recycling delayed to later in day or 12/29

Continue Recycling Pick Up

Yard Waste Pick Up



JANUARY 2012

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



1

Town Hall closed
No Yard Waste Pick Up
No Special Pick Up
No regular trash Pick Up (1/3)

2

Monday trash Pick Up
Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.

3

Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Recycling delayed to later in day and 1/5

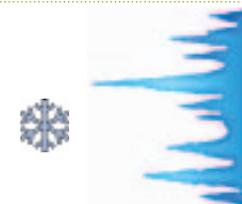
4

Recycling continued from 1/4

5

Yard Waste Pick Up
Last day of Christmas Tree Pick Up

6



7

8

Special Pick Up, please call by 4:00 on 1/6 to be put on list

9

Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

10

Parks and Recreation Commission meeting; 5:00 p.m.

11

Yard Waste Pick Up

12

13

14

15



Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday
Town Hall closed
No trash Pick Up (1/17)
No Yard Waste Pick Up

16

Monday Trash Pick Up
Mayor and Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

17

Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Recycling delayed to later in day and 1/19

18

Recycling continued from 1/18

19

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21

22

23

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Beautification Commission Meeting; 4:00 p.m.

Mayor and Council Regular meeting; 7:00 p.m.

Yard Waste Pick Up

29

30

31



Trash Containers

Thank you to residential trash customers for the smooth transition to the new standardized trash containers. About 3,000 containers were delivered in a week, and residents began to utilize the new containers right away. Less than 5% of customers opted for a smaller size container and many asked for a second container. If you remain interested in switching to a different size container, please act now. The Town offers residential customers the opportunity to switch to a different size at no charge through December 31, 2011. The containers come in three sizes: 95 gallon which holds approximately 7 full kitchen bags, 65 gallon which holds approximately 5 full kitchen bags, or 35 gallon which holds approximately 4 kitchen bags. To request a different container please contact Public Works at (301) 934-8421.

After, December 31, 2011 you may still switch containers, however there will be a

fee of \$35 to switch. If you would like an additional container, the cost is just \$50 for any size. Simply contact Public Works at (301) 934-8421 for an extra. There is no extra charge for residential customers with multiple containers. Please keep in mind the containers are the property of the Town and stay with the property should you move.

Some residents have asked if they can mark their containers to help distinguish between their neighbor's container. You may put a label with your house number or other identification on the inside lid of the container. Please do not mark or alter the outside of the container. The Town can identify the can with the serial number imprinted on the container.

The containers are very sturdy and with normal use have a long and useful life span. Should the need arise to replace the container there will be a \$50 replacement fee charged. As with all of your waste includ-

ing recycling, please store the container in your garage, a shed, or behind your home. Per the Town Code "Only containers provided by the Town of La Plata (your new container) for mechanical collection may be stored discretely in the front or on the side of the premises". All other containers will need to be placed in the rear of the residence. Your neighbors appreciate the most discrete storage of your trash containers.

Your own additional container may be used, however all waste must be put in a container with a secure lid to reduce the chance of windblown debris, or animals getting into your trash. These containers are limited to 32 gallons in size. Waste not put into an appropriate container will be subject to a fine. Please consider an additional Town container if you have larger needs. There is additional information at <http://www.townoflaplata.org> under the Sanitation tab on the left side of the screen.



Town of La Plata Utility Payment Automatic ACH Withdrawal Authorization Instructions & Terms

INSTRUCTIONS:

Fill out the accompanying form. Please print or type all of the information.

The person(s) completing the form must return the completed form to the Finance Office in the Town Hall in person and must provide some form of picture identification to the Town staff at the time they submit it, documenting that they are the person(s) who signed the form.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

The automatic withdrawal will become effective for the first billing cycle that ends after the authorization has been submitted.

Customers electing to pay their bills via this process will still be mailed bills each quarter and will have ample time from the date the bills are mailed until the due date to contact the Town re: any issues they may have with their bill and get them resolved before their account is drafted.

It is the customers responsibility to ensure there are adequate funds in their account to cover their payment at the time that the withdrawal is scheduled to occur and will be subject to fees and interest if there is not.

It is the customers responsibility to make sure their payment is withdrawn from their account prior to the due date and may be subject to late fees and interest if it is not.

If a customer desires to change or terminate this service once it has been initiated, they must communicate their desires to the Town in writing, a minimum of two weeks before the end of the calendar quarter.



Town of La Plata
Utility Payment
Automatic ACH Withdrawal Authorization
Form

Utility Account Information [as it appears on your utility bill(s)]

If you want to pay the bills for multiple utility accounts from a single bank account, please provide the following information for each of the utility accounts - attach additional pages as needed.

Name(s) on account _____
 Account Number _____
 Service Address _____

Bank Account Information

Name(s) on Account _____

Account Type Checking Savings

If you have chosen to use a checking account, please attach a voided copy of a check to this form

Bank Name _____

Bank Routing Number _____
9 digit number

Bank Account Number _____

I (we) hereby certify that I (we) have the rights and authority to authorize the ACH withdrawal of funds from the above referenced account and hereby authorize the Town of La Plata to automatically withdraw the amount I (we) owe for Town utilities, from this account, each quarter, two to five days before the due date specified on the quarterly bill.

Signature(s) _____

Date _____

All information provided will be used solely for the purpose of drafting Town utility payments from customer accounts. None of the information provided shall be made available to or shared with other entities, except as required to facilitate the drafting of the payments.

 For Office Use Only

Identity Verification

ID Type _____

ID Number _____

Initials _____ Date _____

System Input

Initials _____ Date _____

TOWN OF LA PLATA SNOW POLICY

County Plowed Roads	Town Plowed Roads	State Plowed Roads
Glen Albin Road St. Mary's Avenue from Frederick Drive to Rt. 301 Washington Avenue from Route 301 to Route 6 Radio Station Road	St. Mary's Avenue from Rt. 6 to Frederick Drive Quailwood Parkway from Hawthorne to Route 6 Hillary Court, Aura Court, May Day Street, Morgan's Ridge Court, Morgan's Ridge Road	Route 301 Route 6 - Charles Street Route 225 - Hawthorne Drive west beginning at Route 301 Route 488

Snow Preparation Procedures

- Snow removal crews will be put into action at the call of the Director or Asst. Director of Public Works
- Snow removal will begin when 2" of snow has accumulated on roadways.
- Snow removal efforts will be ongoing during the event and will continue until all streets in the Town are cleared.
- It may be necessary to pile snow in front of mailboxes, especially in smaller courts and cul-de-sacs.



Plow Routes

- The Town will normally plow to provide better access to the higher traveled streets first (Primary Roads, Collector Streets and Major residential roads). In addition, the Town has agreed to provide snow removal and salting for treatment of ice accumulation from all roadways, parking areas, vehicle entrances, sidewalks, and bus stop location at the MTA lot located on Washington Avenue.
- Secondly secondary streets and municipal buildings are plowed.
- Lastly cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets are plowed.

Icy Conditions

- Salt distribution will be determined based on the following criteria and priority:
 - Main Collector Streets
 - Streets with Hills
 - Difficult intersections – stop lights

and stop signs
Major residential roads

- Cul-de-sacs and courts may not receive salt treatment

Sidewalks

- Town crews are responsible for clearing sidewalks at public facilities, Town Hall and Parks.
- Town of La Plata property owners are responsible for keeping all sidewalks along their property clear and free of snow and ice.

Parking

- Residents are asked not to park vehicles on any street.
- If you must park on the street park as close to the curb as possible and on one side of the street.

Examples of Street designations:

Primary Roads	Collector Streets	Major Residential	Secondary
Agricopia Drive East Patuxent Drive Oriole Lane Shining Willow Way	St. Mary's Avenue Washington Avenue Heritage Green Pkwy.	Llano Drive Martin Drive Laurelwood Court	Baltimore St. Cecil St. Calvert St. Howard St.

Snow Emergency Routes

Parking of vehicles on marked snow emergency routes is prohibited when the snow emergency plan is in effect for Charles County. Parking shall continue to be prohibited until the snow emergency plan has been cleared. Any vehicles that are illegally parked, that are obstructing traffic, or interfering with the clearing of snow and/or ice are subject to a parking violation or the vehicle being towed at the owner's expense.

Mailbox Replacement Policy

Please contact the Public Works Department at (301) 934-8421, if your mailbox is damaged during snow removal. The Public Works Department will investigate the claim to determine if the damage was caused by the Town or contracted equipment making physical contact with the mailbox. If it is determined by the Public Works Department that the mailbox damage was at fault of the Town or contracted equipment the following options are available.

1. Replacement by the Town of existing mailbox with a standard wooden post and mailbox.
2. Property owners may be reimbursed at a flat rate of \$45.00. It will be the responsibility of the property owner to replace the mailbox.

Mailboxes damaged by snow flowing from plows will not be replaced or reimbursed.



TOWN OF LA PLATA SPECIAL EVENTS

Community Yard Sale

October 8, 2011

73 vendors and countless shoppers filled the grounds at Town Hall for the Fall Community Yard Sale.



La Plata High School Key Club volunteer Eleni Back shows off the Town's new commemorative tee-shirts that were for sale at the Yard Sale.



La Plata Fall Festival

October 23, 2011

It was a day of family fun at the Fall Festival with food, crafts, activities, music, and more.



The Wise Guys kept it rockin' ...



Kids played on inflatables such as the moon bounce ...



... took train rides around Town Hall ...



... and expressed themselves on the big art cube.



Craft vendors displayed their wares ...



... and everyone enjoyed tasty festival fare.



Harvest Halloween Party

October 29, 2011

They came in costume, even the cow!



There were scary snacks ...



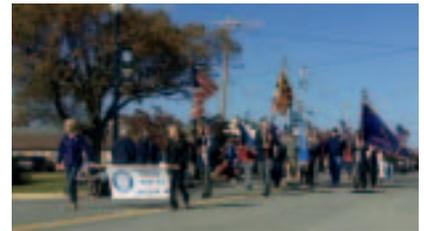
... and Halloween crafts.



Salute to Veterans Parade

November 6, 2011

A big thank you to everyone who marched in the parade and came out to watch the parade. Most of all, a big thank you to our veterans and service members!



Breakfast with Santa



Santa Claus makes his annual trip from the North Pole to have breakfast with the youngsters of La Plata on Saturday December 10th. Seating is limited, so call Town Hall to reserve your space 301-934-8421.

Saturday, December 10, 2011

At La Plata Town Hall

Four seatings: 8:00am to 8:45am
9:00am to 9:45am
10:00am to 10:45am
11:00am to 11:45am

WEBSITE POLL



Visit the Town of La Plata's website at <http://www.townoflaplata.org> to participate in an online poll. Click on the 'Snap Poll' link on the left side of the web page to go to the poll and see the results to date. The current question is:

How have the challenges in the economy impacted La Plata, its residents, and businesses? Choose the response that best describes how La Plata has fared compared to 2007.

Far better off than 2007

Better off than 2007

Slightly better off than 2007

Same as 2007

Slightly worse off than 2007

Worse off than 2007

Far worse off than 2007

October Website Poll Results

Below are the website 'Snap Poll' results from the last issue. The question and results are:

Recent heavy rain events highlight challenges in La Plata's storm water system. Do you feel storm water infrastructure near your home or business need maintenance or improvements?

Strongly Agree – 44%

Somewhat Agree – 21%

Neither Agree nor Disagree – 0%

Somewhat Disagree – 7%

Strongly Disagree – 16%

Don't Know – 12%

September was a very wet month in La Plata. In a typical year the Town gets about 42 to 44 inches of rain. During Tropical Storm Lee a third of the annual total fell within two days on ground that was

already saturated by Hurricane Irene. The impact of the water was dramatic, with two major storm water pipes under 301 failing, resulting in a partial collapse of the highway shoulder. Washington Avenue almost washed out just north of Talbot Street, were it not for the efforts of La Plata's Public Works staff during the height of the storm overnight. A storm water pipe along St. Mary's Avenue failed, washing out the ground next to the road and requiring the storm water box along the road to be replaced, along with the failed pipe. A storm water pipe in King's Grant dropped a few feet when the heavy rain washed away some of the dirt around the pipe. That dropped pipe exposed a sewer force main which bent and broke open when there was no more dirt surrounding the pipe.

The Town is applying for a partial reimbursement of the cost to repair these and other issues caused by the storms, since a Federal disaster was declared. The numerous problems caused on private property are not eligible for partial reimbursement for homeowners or businesses. Many property owners are learning that the failed pipe on their property, the severe erosion caused by the storm, and other issues are their responsibility as the owner of the property.

The Town is not responsible for maintaining the entire storm water system in La Plata. Storm water infrastructure is the responsibility of the person or entity that owns the facility. Storm water pipes, detention basins, and even earth channels are owned and maintained by businesses, Home Owners Associations, the Town, private residences, Charles County, and the State. To complicate matters, a single pipe could be owned by multiple entities, depending on whose property it is on. There are many instances in Town where a pipe runs across a private property, under a Town maintained road, and onto an-

other private property.

The State adopted the Storm Water Management Act of 2007 which required local governments to update their own storm water ordinances in conformance with State guidelines by May of 2010. The new requirement mandates that La Plata and every other local government in the State begin inspecting, and requiring proper maintenance of storm water infrastructure. Regulations regarding the maintenance of these systems are in place, and municipalities in Maryland are beginning to be fined for violations by the EPA. La Plata is in its third year of having a small storm water utility fee on the quarterly utility bill. The small amount of funds collected is being used to inventory, map, and assess the storm water infrastructure in the Town. It is a large job to begin managing this complex system.

La Plata leads many municipalities in the State with its efforts to address storm water infrastructure, however the resources available are inadequate. The Town will be addressing how it will comply with State and Federal requirements this spring. The September storms highlighted the problems of deteriorating storm water infrastructure. Without an appropriate maintenance plan, failures of the system will continue, threatening property and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay.

Commercial Building Permits issued 9/1/11-10/31/11

NONE

Commercial Use & Occupancy Permits issued 9/1/11-10/31/11

One Main Financial – 20 Shining Willow Way

NEW EMPLOYEE

Aaron Mosrie

Aaron Mosrie joined the Town of La Plata in October as the Assistant Manager of Inspections. Aaron brings almost 20 years of experience in the Animal Control Field, with accreditation from the National Animal Control Association. Aaron does extensive volunteer work with many local animal welfare agencies, and worked as an Animal Control Officer serving the residents of Prince George's County. He transitioned to Code Enforcement for the City of Bowie to assist with the growing need for property preservation. Aaron has received certifications from the International Code Council, and the American Association of Code Enforcement as a Property Maintenance, and Housing Inspector. He resides in Charles County and in his free time enjoys riding motorcycles and visiting historical sites.

TOWN OF LA PLATA

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Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata.

Looking for a great gift idea this month?

Tornado Recovery Commemorative Tee Shirts \$15.00

The Tornado of 2002 came through the Town of La Plata almost 10 years ago. At the time, it seemed hard to imagine that our community would recover. We have done so much more than recover in the years since. Today we are a **closer and stronger community** — even better than we were before.



Entering 2012, the Town of La Plata will celebrate our remarkable comeback from that devastating event. You will be hearing more about what's in store. But to begin, we are offering these commemorative tee-shirts to kick off our remembrance. Get your commemorative tee at La Plata Town Hall or local stores. Supplies are limited.

