

TOWN NOTES

News from La Plata Town Hall



MAYOR'S CORNER

Over the past few weeks, the Town has commenced a number of projects that will benefit the community for many years. As you may have noticed the Willow Lane Pump Station is complete and this station will provide a resource that will meet the current and future needs of the eastern side of Town. Also, work has commenced on an important upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant that will permit our plant to meet or exceed the more stringent federal and state requirements for wastewater treatment plants mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This upgrade is intended to meet TMDL (total maximum daily loading) requirements for nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment that gets into the Chesapeake Bay. It will reduce the amount of nitrogen being discharged from 4 parts per million to 3 parts per million gallons of effluent.

Most of the cost for these major capital improvements is derived from grants provided by federal stimulus funds or bay restoration funds. Federal stimulus dollars paid for the Willow Lane Pump Station and the State of Maryland will provide \$8.7 million of the \$9.7 million cost of the wastewater treatment plant upgrade from Bay Restoration funds. Therefore, the residents of La Plata will not have to bear the brunt of the financial burden that would otherwise have been required. Substantial improvements to our infrastructure were derived by the addition of the Rosewick Crossing commercial development. Through agreement the developer provided to the Town millions of dollars in utility improvements without passing these

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Willow Lane Pump Station

The Willow Lane Pump Station has been quietly operating for four months resulting in a very positive impact to the Town's sewer system. Since it became operational on April 1, 2011, the Town has not experienced any sanitary sewer overflows. A major rain event on July 13 that dumped three inches of rain in fifteen minutes in the La Plata area would normally have resulted in a sanitary sewer flow overflow at Centennial Street and on Willow Lane. Instead there has been efficient operation, with a noticeable reduction in the amount of inflow and infiltration into the treatment system. This work was required by the State of Maryland under a consent decree to eliminate the sanitary sewer overflow issues. Continued performance at the current level will help assure no future overflows at the typical overflow locations during major rain events.

August is Speed Awareness Month

The Council of the Town of La Plata and the La Plata Police Department has declared August as *Speed Awareness Month*. August signals the end of summer and the start of another school year. The goal of Speed Awareness Month is to slow down traffic, thus saving lives. La Plata Police Department Chief Gittings states, "If we can make drivers more aware of the speed limits and encourage them to drive within the posted limits, the citizens and visitors of the Town will have a safer, happier August. We strongly encourage drivers to always drive within the speed limit throughout the year. Please help us reach our goal; obey the speed limit."

Sidewalk

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) will begin an upgrade of all the existing sidewalks and pedestrian ramps along both sides of MD 6 (Charles Street) from US 301 east to MD 488 (La Plata Road). The project purpose is to bring the sidewalks and ramps to meet current ADA standards. Estimated completion is by the end of the calendar year. All work will be conducted at night and all affected businesses and residences will be notified by SHA.

This project is using previously committed Federal infrastructure funds and is consistent with and supports the Town's Vision Plan for a more pedestrian friendly downtown.

Questions can be directed to Debra Russell, P.E., Assistant District Engineer
Capital Projects District 5 Annapolis, 138 Defense Highway, Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone (410) 841-1079. drussell@sha.state.md.us

COUNCIL COLUMN

Councilman Joe Norris, Ward 4

Several of our citizens have approached me about the deplorable condition of the CSX Railroad Crossing on Charles Street. Let me assure you that we are aware of the situation and doing all we can to get it resolved. The Mayor has personally been tracking down various officials with CSX to try and get the situation fixed. At one point he thought he was making progress but then no action. He has since been in touch with the Secretary of Transportation for Maryland and several Federal Officials. Hopefully we will see some progress soon. Rest assured that we will not stop working on this until it is fixed. The railroads are very independent and governed by Federal Laws.

The Mayor and Council recently joined many of our fellow municipal officials at the 2011 Maryland Municipal League convention. As always it is a great learning opportunity to learn from our peers how they are dealing with many of the same problems we are encountering. The various workshops are always a great occasion to learn about various subjects of interest to each council person. We try and split up the various sessions among us so that we can gather and share as much knowledge as possible. Two of the sessions I attended were on the "Impact of Foreclosures on Municipalities" and "Reducing Roadway Maintenance Costs". They are both very timely subjects and we got some valuable tips from each of the sessions.

Remember to check out our calendar of events at www.townofaplata.org. Please remember to enjoy our Friday Night Concert Series at 7 P.M. weather permitting. To have the most up to date and specialized information please send your email address to Carolyn Johnson at cjohnson@townofaplata.org.

As always if you have any questions, concerns, comments or issues, I may be reached at (301) 934-9230 or by email at jnorris@townofaplata.org. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

WEBSITE POLL



Visit the Town of La Plata's website at <http://www.townofaplata.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:

What is your main source of information about La Plata's Special Events?

Town Notes Newsletter

TownofLaPlata.org

Special Events Brochure

Town of La Plata Facebook page

Town email list

Word of Mouth

Newspaper

Other publications

June Website Poll Results

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

If there is a need to enhance my community and I can help, I would volunteer some of my time.

Strongly Agree – 58%
Somewhat Agree – 27%
Neither Agree nor Disagree – 7%
Somewhat Disagree – 2%
Strongly Disagree – 7%

There are many things that make a strong community, including good schools, quality housing, reliable public services, and access to shopping, dining and culture. One vital aspect of community that is difficult to quantify is the altruism of people and the impact of people helping others.

Locally, there are many opportunities to provide service and be of benefit to your community.

The Town of La Plata regularly has opportunities to volunteer to be on a Board or Commission. Over 50 people serve on the Town's various boards and provide service, advice, and support to the Town Council. If you are interested, you may contact Town Clerk Danielle Mandley at dmandley@townofaplata.org, or call (301) 934-8421.

Others have utilized Green grants or Beautification grants from the Town to make our community a better place and help to educate others. Homeowner Associations put together National Night Out events every August, sponsor cleanup days that the Town can support, and improve the lifestyle in their neighborhoods. People volunteer to help at Town Special Events through working at the food trailer or assisting with activities for children.

Local non-profits and religious organizations regularly have opportunities for community service. The College of Southern Maryland has a resource to help connect volunteers and volunteer opportunities called Volunteer Southern Maryland. VSMD serves as a one-stop shop for people who are looking for volunteer opportunities in Southern Maryland. They host an online database of current volunteer opportunities and other ways to get involved in the community at www.csmd.edu/vsmd.

There is a strong community spirit in the Town of La Plata, the willingness to assist a neighbor, give time to a cause, or act to improve life for yourself as well as those around you makes our town strong. If you are among the majority in our community willing to volunteer, and have more time to give, please reach out. There are always needs in our community you can fill.

Code Corner

Home Office

Have you ever thought about starting your own business and running it out of your home? Well before you make too much of an investment there are a few things you should be aware of. In the Town of La Plata you are required to apply for a home office permit. The abbreviated version of a Home Office definition is the use of a designated portion of a dwelling unit, not to exceed ten percent of the floor area of the dwelling unit, for telephone and other technological communication with customers, clients, suppliers and others, for occasional consultation with customers, clients, suppliers and others, and/or for the performance of administrative work such as bookkeeping, processing of correspondence, preparation of reports or other written materials, etc., in support of a business, profession, trade, occupation or employment. For detailed instructions and requirements please visit the Town's website www.townofaplata.org and click on the applications tab, choose application for home office permit or you may contact the Town Clerk, Danielle Mandley at (301) 934-8421, dmandley@townofaplata.org

Conservation Corner

The end of summer brings cooler temperature and a time we all enjoy working outside. This fall as you plan your landscaping projects for the upcoming season consider tasks you can do to help green La Plata. Please reduce the amount of potable water used for landscaping, and use greener landscaping techniques to reduce water consumption, have healthier landscapes, and be good stewards of the environment. Here are some steps you can take this fall, to get your landscaping better prepared for next year.



Compost – Trimming, weeding, and raking generates a lot of organic material. By composting, natural processes will biodegrade that material, and turn it into valuable mulch you can reuse on your property.

Reduce the Turf – Turf grasses consume more water than trees, shrubs, and other plants. By expanding your garden areas, installing a new rain garden, and planting native plants, you can reduce the amount of water your landscape needs.

Only add plants and trees that have low water-use and **native varieties** to reduce water needs in the new garden areas you have added.

Dethatch to remove accumulated matted organic material from your grass.

Aerate your grass to reduce the compaction of your soil and help precipitation get deeper into the ground for deeper root systems with less runoff.

Reseed and **overseed** with drought resistant and native grass seed varieties.

Add insect eating **Bird Houses**, and **Bat Houses** to your property as natural bug control.

Use a **mulching mower** on your grass, and mulch in fallen leaves to return organic material to your lawn to reduce fertilizing needs.

Mulch Plants – It adds organic material to soil, helps retain moisture, and keeps roots cool during warm months.

Fall is a great time to get a healthy lawn is one that will not require large amounts of fertilizers or irrigation. Keeping organic material on your property, using appropriate plants and seed varieties, and proper lawn care result in a beautiful property, that is good for the environment as well.

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

relocated from the recycling center at the landfill on Billingsley Road. Household

Household hazardous waste collection days for 2011 are on the first Saturday of each month through December 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. This site

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, September 5

Trash will be picked up on:
Tuesday, September 6

Recycling Collection Schedule Adjustment

September 7 pushed to later in day and continued on September 8.

August 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1
Yard Waste pick up
Special Pick Up, please call by 7/29 to be put on list

2
National Night Out
Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.

3
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Crime Watch Council Meeting; 7:30 p.m.



4
Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: The Blarney Stones



5
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



7
Yard Waste pick Up

8
Town Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

9
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Parks and Recreation Meeting; 5:00 p.m.



10
Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: Sons of Pirates



11
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



14
Yard Waste Pick Up
Beautification Commission Meeting; cancelled

15
Town Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

16
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Design Review Board Meeting; 9:00 a.m.



17
Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: US Navy Band "Country Current"



18
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



21
Yard Waste Pick Up

22
Town Council regular meeting; 7:00 p.m.

23
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



24
Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: Southern Maryland Concert Band



25
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



28
Yard Waste Pick Up
1st Day of School



29
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



30
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



31
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



SEPTEMBER 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

4

Town Hall closed
No Yard Waste Pick Up
No Special Pick Up
9/5 trash pick up 9/6

5

Trash pick up from 9/5
Planning Commission meeting; 7:00 p.m.

6

Recycling pushed to later in day and 9/8
Farmers Market: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Design Review Board meeting; 9:00 a.m.
Crime Watch Council Meetings 7:30 p.m.

7


Recycling pick up continued from 9/7

8

Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: Eric Scott Band

9

Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Chili Cook-Off; noon to 3:00 p.m. 

10

11

Yard Waste pick Up
Special Pick Up, please call before 4:00 p.m. on 9/9 to be put on list

12

Town Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

13

Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting; 5:00 p.m.

14

Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: US Navy Band "Cruisers"

15

Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: US Navy Band "Cruisers"

16

Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

17

18


Yard Waste Pick Up
Beautification Commission Meetings; 4:00 p.m.

19

Town Council work session; 7:00 p.m.

20

Design Review Board meetings; 9:00 a.m.
Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

21

Yard Waste Pick Up
Concert: Lionel Ward and the New World Band
Autumn begins 

22

Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
La Plata High Homecoming parade through Town

24

25

Yard Waste Pick Up

26

Town Council regular meeting; 7:00 p.m.

27

Farmers Market; 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 

28

Yard Waste Pick Up
Final Concert: 25th Hour Band 

29

30

SPECIAL EVENTS

Summer Concert Series



Every Friday evening at 7PM, enjoy a free concert on the lawn at La Plata Town Hall. Bring your blanket or lawn chair. Picnics are welcomed (no alcohol, please), or buy something to eat on site. Of course, the Town of La Plata has a tasty selection of restaurants to visit before or after the show. Children can play in the Kids' Zone play area in view of parents while they enjoy the music.

Upcoming concerts:

- August 5, 2011: **The Blarney Stones**
- August 12, 2011: **Sons of Pirates**
- August 19, 2011: **US Navy Band Country Current**
- August 26, 2011: **Southern Maryland Concert Band**
- September 2, 2011: **Cover Story**
- September 9, 2011: **Eric Scott Band**
- September 16, 2011: **US Navy Band Cruisers**
- September 23, 2011: **Lionel Ward and the New World Band**
- September 30, 2011: **25th Hour Band**

You can find out more about each band and see videos at our website, www.TownofLaPlata.org. Click on "Events" on the left, then click on "Summer Concert Series."

Chili Cook Off



Cris Curtis, winner of the Chili Cook Off 2010 People's Choice Award

Is your chili hot and spicy? Maybe you have a secret ingredient or non-traditional recipe. Or maybe it's just really, really good. The annual **La Plata Chili Cook Off** comes to Town Hall on Saturday September 10th. If you make great chili, join us for the fun. Details and entry forms are available online at www.TownofLaPlata.org.

Click on "Events," and click on "Chili Cook Off." If you like to eat good chili, come out and sample the entries. We'll have fun and games for the kids, music, and lots of good things to eat.

July 4th Watermelon Bash

Thanks to all who came out and joined the celebration!



MID SUMMER CONCERT ATTENDEE SURVEY

We are just over halfway through this season's Friday Night Concerts at Town Hall. We would appreciate getting your feedback on the bands and the event itself. Log on to <http://www.townoflaplata.org> and take the Sum-

mer Concert Attendee Survey on the Event page. Rate the facilities, services, and most importantly the music. If you know a great band that you would like to hear perform at the Town Hall, indicate so on the survey. Your opinion

matters to us and the Town wants you, your families, and the entire community to have enjoyable experiences this year and for many years to come.

TILGHMAN LAKE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

The Town has been steadily making improvements to Tilghman Lake Park, south of Laurel Springs. The facility which had been closed to general use for many years is open for pedestrian access from Laurel Springs. The Town was awarded \$100,000 in State grant last year to construct a restroom facility, which is now complete and is available for public use. This facility is a wonderful upgrade to this beautiful park and adds convenience for park guests.

During the summer of 2010, the Town applied for a Community Parks and Playgrounds grant through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Our project, pavers for a parking facility at Tilghman Lake has another \$100,000, included in the FY 2012 Maryland Executive Budget. Once the funds have been approved by the State Board of Public Works, the Town will finalize design and begin construction of the new parking, improving access to the park.

Also in this fiscal year, the Town Council approved funding to complete a Parks Master Plan specific to Tilghman Lake Park. The plan development will seek comment from the public on what should be done for the ultimate benefit of the public within this beautiful setting. Details on how you can participate in this process will be available in the coming months.

FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 BUDGET

The Town of La Plata adopted a smaller budget for the current fiscal year with no reduction in services for Town residents. In the last year of the current property tax assessment cycle, property tax revenue is projected to increase just under \$100,000. Contrarily, other revenue sources associated with economic activity are expected to decline, resulting in over \$200,000 less in general fund revenue, than was budgeted in the previous fiscal year.

Annually the La Plata Town Council meets to discuss its service priorities for the coming fiscal year. Your elected officials take into account the Town's Citizen Survey results and comments on Town Services and Community Perceptions. The adopted FY2011-2012 Financial Plan and Budget addresses the service priorities of the Town, to maintain and enhance the Town's services. The Town's budget covers its General fund operations and self supporting enterprise funds, which include Sanitation, Water, Sewer, and Storm Water.

The Town Council adopted the Financial Plan and Budget with General Fund Expenditures of \$6,208,890 including Capital Expenditures of \$185,000. This represents more than \$200,000 in reduced general fund

spending, mostly through reduced capital expenditures. Sanitation Expenditures are budgeted at \$1,187,125, Water Expenditures of \$2,055,510 including Capital Expenditures of \$1,050,000, Sewer Expenditures of \$8,042,590 including Capital Expenditures of \$4,733,590, and Storm Water Expenditures of \$82,780.

The budget contains significant Capital expenditures to maintain the Town's vital infrastructure as well as meet State and Federal requirements. The largest single project is the upgrade of the Town's Waste Water Treatment Plant to the Enhanced Nutrient Removal standard. The contract for the upgrade has been awarded, and the project is currently in the mobilization phase. The ENR upgrade must be completed to accommodate a higher standard of clean water requirements, and will be constructed over the next two years at a cost of over \$9 million. About 94% of the project is financed with a State Grant funded by Bay Restoration Fees every La Plata resident pays. That State revenue is generated from the recurring quarterly charge on your utility bill. The Town financed its portion of the project through available State water quality loans.

Repair and maintenance of streets in La

Plata will continue to be minimal. The State collects a tax on fuel purchases which is then redistributed to local governments for street repairs. The Town has historically received over \$400,000 from the State, however continued cuts have significantly eroded that funding to an insufficient amount for the Town to maintain its streets. The Town will continue to work to reverse and mitigate the State's impact before the deterioration of Town streets becomes unacceptable. The State's continued actions indicate local street maintenance is not a priority and inadequate funding for street repairs will continue for the foreseeable future.

Excluding street repairs, the Town is able to maintain the quality of all of the Town's services. The strained economy impacts our residents, businesses, and Town Government. The past few years of investments in technology and other operational efficiencies have allowed the Town to continue to deliver on its service priorities. The budget does not require an increase to the Town's property tax rate. The tax rate remains at \$0.32 per \$100 of Assessed Valuation.

For a complete FY '11/'12 Budget and please visit our website at <http://www.townoflaplata.org> and follow the links on the left to the FY 12 Budget.

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.

Council Upgrades

La Plata's Town Council has a standing directive to find ways to improve service and find efficiencies. These improvements have not been limited to staff tasks, facility improvements, and service delivery. They are also taking place in the business conducted by the Town Council. In the Town Council Chambers, there has been an improved use of technology in the display of

information, maps, and presentations. The addition of a wireless mouse and keyboard has improved the ease of electronic presentation of information to the Council, commissions, and the public. A new projector this spring allowed for the quality of those presentations to improve, and allows, more information to be shared without using additional paper or staff time in creation of physical displays.

In July the Town Council has begun using iPads to conduct their business. The Town Clerk now prepares paperless agendas and support material for Council meetings which also reduces the amount of staff time needed to prepare for meetings. The iPads all use the Town's existing WiFi system for connection to the Internet, so no additional ongoing funds are needed for connection to the Internet. Email, calendars, and important Town docu-

ments can all be accessed quickly to aid in response to resident inquiries, and improve contact with Town staff.

The Town has been developing a Geographic Information System of maps to identify properties, buildings, utilities, zoning, streets, and other information. The Town's GIS layers are integrated into an ESRI app that now allows the Town Council to pull up maps of any property in Town and have a full complement of data available in a mobile device.

Reducing paper needs, improving communication, and enhancing access to information are a few of the new ways the Town Council is becoming more efficient. The iPads have become a valuable business tool that has more advantages to be discovered.

TRASH SYSTEM

The Town has purchased a new trash collection system and is working towards implementation. Town trash trucks are currently in the process of being modified with an automatic dump system and GPS based in-cab monitors. The computing side of the upgrade is the most challenging piece, and requires coordination between the

Town's utility database, and the new information the system will collect. The new dark green trash receptacles with a La Plata logo imprint have been ordered and delivery is expected in the coming weeks. The new receptacles will be assembled with lids, and then distribution to customers will be coordinated. These improvements will

allow the Town trash service to increase efficiency, customer service, and safety of Town employees.

Further information about the transition to the new trash containers can be found now on the Town's website under the Sanitation link, and will also be mailed to every customer in advance of container distribution.

LA PLATA POLICE DEPARTMENT EXPLORER POST 1888



Members of the Town of La Plata Explorer Post 1888. Back row left to right: Chief Casey Gittings, James Michael Hall, Jr. promoted to Captain. Front row left to right: Officer Jason Posey, Michael Patrick Wills Posey promoted to Lieutenant, TyJon Cortez Johnson, promoted to Explorer First Class, Jordan Lamar Madison, promoted to Explorer First Class, Craig Timothy Stewart, Jr. promoted to Explorer First Class. Not pictured Amanda Nicole Campbell promoted to Corporal.

The La Plata Police Department recently offered young people who are between the ages of 14 and 20 and are interested in law enforcement, the opportunity to learn about police work and acquire skills used by police officers.

The inaugural class met the following qualifications to participate in the program.

- Be between 14 and 20 years of age and have completed the eighth grade or be at least 15 years of age regardless of school grade.
- Be enrolled in school, have graduated from high school or have attained a GED. If enrolled in school, the Explorer must maintain a grade average of "C" or higher.

- Maintain good moral character and be a responsible citizen in the community with a good reputation.
- Maintain a good appearance and demeanor in compliance with the standards and policy of the Post and the La Plata Police Department.
- Have full approval of parents or guardian and assurance of their support and cooperation.
- Successfully pass a thorough background investigation, including a criminal history check.

If you would like further information or would like to participate in the next class please contact the Advisor Pfc. Jason Posey at (301) 934-1500 ext. 617 or jposey@townofaplata.org.

NEW WATER METERS

Mueller Systems, with whom the Town has contracted to install all new water meters throughout the Town is working on the technical aspects of the project. The new water meters will include a remote read systems that will eliminate the need for employees to go out in the field to read meters. Instead the system will remotely read meters and automatically associate that information with the Town's utility database. Currently work is underway to update the Town's utility database to integrate this new information. Also underway is an evaluation of using the Town's

existing WiFi network to transmit collected data. It is expected that the WiFi network can be expanded to five new locations to accommodate this service, instead of utilizing a series of single purpose cellular connections.

When the backbone of data transmission and collection technology is in place, the contractor can then begin the installation of new meters. This project will require most residents allow access to the water meter in their homes for the conversion to the new meter. Installations will take several

months and will begin this fall. The new system once fully implemented, will allow residents to review their water consumption online and help the Town to monitor for leaks throughout the system.

Further information about the installation process of the new water meters can be found now on the Town's website under the Water link, and will also be mailed to every customer in advance of meter replacement. Cooperation of our residents as this project is implemented is sincerely appreciated.

The Town of La Plata annually prepares a Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the water quality and services we deliver to you every day. The 2010 report was mailed to all households in the beginning of July and is available on the Town's website www.townofaplata.org. We encourage you to read the report and learn more about the quality of your drinking water.

TOWN OF LA PLATA

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La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

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



La Plata Community,

On April 28th, 2002 the La Plata area was severely impacted by a tornado. It will soon be ten years since that significant event destroyed our infrastructure, hampered our businesses, damaged our buildings, and rattled the peace and security of our homes. In the intervening ten years the strength of this community has been shown through repairing the damage, removing the debris, and building back a community that is closer, better, and stronger than before the tornado.

The Town of La Plata is coordinating events to commemorate the ten year anniversary in April of 2012, and would like to work with organizations, businesses, and individuals to demonstrate the spirit and resiliency of our community. These events include a dinner to recognize and thank those that helped in

our recovery, were impacted by the storm, and worked to rebuild. The Town will also be coordinating a Memory Lane project that will highlight the impact of the tornado across La Plata, and how people overcame the challenges they were faced with. On April 28th, 2012 the Town will hold Celebrate La Plata, a full day of community, togetherness, fun, and remembrance, which will be concluded with a solemn ceremony marking ten years to the minute from when the tornado struck followed by an outdoor concert at Town Hall.

Many members of our community will be recognizing the ten years since the tornado in their own ways. The Town would like to coordinate with groups, businesses, and individuals with your commemoration activities. Please start by visiting the Town of La Plata's tornado page of its website at www.TownofLaPlata.org. There you will find information about the Town's activities, and we will fill it with stories, pictures, and more in the coming months. You can also find contact information for the tornado event coordination.

Property owners along the tornado's path will be encouraged to participate in Memory Lane. It is a display project that will show pictures of a property, the tornado impact, and share some narrative about how they have rebuilt. The goal is to establish a walking tour that will be available for the

entire month of April, and culminate with a Memory Lane display at the Celebrate La Plata event.

Everyone is encouraged to share their tornado story on the La Plata Tornado Facebook page. Please write a note or post a video answering the three questions below. We can also set a time to record and post a video for you.

Where were you when the tornado hit?

How did the tornado impact your life?

How are you stronger today as a result?

If you are planning an event, please let us know, so we can promote it along with other activities. The tornado impacted us all, and through a shared remembrance we can continue to grow stronger. Please contact Marcia Keeth at (301) 934 – 8421 or via email at mkeeth@townoflaplata.org. Visit the La Plata Tornado web page at <http://www.townoflaplata.org>, visit the La Plata Tornado Facebook page and the La Plata Tornado YouTube channel. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making our community stronger.

Sincerely,

La Plata Tornado 10 Year Anniversary
Committee