

# Albemarle County Organizational Efficiencies

## INTRODUCTION FOR WEBSITE HOMEPAGE:

Albemarle County has always focused on efficient service to our citizens, and that focus has intensified since the challenging times of the great recession. We have considered the resource constraints of recent years as opportunities to transform local government to improve our processes and streamline our services to benefit the greater community. Our efficiencies are evident in the productive relationships and joint partnerships the County maintains with our school system and other partners like the University of Virginia and the City of Charlottesville. Efficiencies have also been realized through strategies including alternative revenue sources, effective uses of technology, cost reduction opportunities, repositioning of resources, savings, and progressive energy improvements.

Each day we take deliberate action to enhance the everyday organization and success of our local government, with a focus on improving the quality of life for all citizens, and ensuring access to government resources. Albemarle County and the Albemarle Public School system work together across many areas to improve efficiency - a rare partnership in most local governments that translates into direct cost savings to citizens. This cooperation allows for a shared human resources department, finance department, and legal services. We also join efforts to help ensure public safety, field maintenance, and community recreation at school facilities.

## PROCESS / OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- Regional Partnerships: Regional Jail, Juvenile Detention Center, ECC, SPCA, CACVB, JMRL
- Partnership and General Government partner for field maintenance and using space for programs
- Utilization of volunteers to develop trails to open parks without increasing staffing
- Reduction in non-public safety vehicle fleet
- Since 2010, the county has privatized its custodial services and has saved \$100,000 per year
- Fully implemented Purchasing Card program – saved \$29,063 in 2014 and \$72,375 estimated in 2015, as well as 400-800 person hours per year to complete transactions; also saves admin time/hassle; rewards points & cash back spending incentives
- Recently increased the number of Housing Choice Vouchers available to public without extra staff resources
- Successfully launched Innovation Fund in 2014
- A solar-thermal system which supplements the existing hot water system & recent solar panels in county schools
- With the 5-Year Energy Conservation Plan, the County reduced consumption within county buildings by 26% from baseline year 2005 to 2014. This is equivalent to over \$1 million in energy costs.
- Volunteer fire fighters work jointly with career personnel
- Auxiliary police force
- *Program Evaluations.* Program evaluations will be conducted to determine actual costs and program efficacy, used to inform decisions regarding resources. The [first evaluation](#) was presented to the School Board on December 11, 2014. A work group is being formed to refine fidelity measures (KPI)

# Albemarle County Organizational Efficiencies

for both operational and student achievement impact of programs. A schedule of program evaluations will be developed in the fall of 2015. (ACPS)

- Community Development implementation of paperless plan review.
- *Paperless Communications.* [Parent Portal](#) provides parents and students daily access to class and teacher assignments, bus routes, student meal accounts, attendance, course requests from parents and students, course schedules and syllabi, interim and quarterly progress reports and teacher recommendations. Almost 80% of our families at the secondary level are utilizing this new communication system, which improves connections to school activities while providing savings in printing and paper costs. (ACPS)
- *Regional Services.* Albemarle County participates with 10 neighboring school systems in the Piedmont Regional Education Program (PREP). The regional approach seeks to provide a high quality of services in a cost-effective manner. The fact that the state supports regional programming at a more favorable rate makes participation in this program more cost effective than if Albemarle County provided the services on its own. (ACPS)
- *Transportation Rerouting.* A comprehensive study of bus routes was completed in 2010/2011 which allowed the eliminated of 14 bus routes, reduced deadhead mileage, and provided significant fuel savings. New bus routes are only added as necessary due to enrollment growth. (ACPS)

## ENERGY/ENVIRONMENTAL

- Reduction in non-public safety vehicle fleet
- The County supports cleaner vehicles through our use of 9 gas-electric hybrid vehicles, as well as several flex-fuel vehicles that are ethanol-capable.
- County Office Building has a green roof
- A solar-thermal system which supplements the existing hot water system & recent solar panels in county schools
- Both County Office Buildings have earned an Energy Star Rating, meaning they perform in the top 25% of similar facilities nationwide with regards to energy efficiency
- With the 5-Year Energy Conservation Plan, the County reduced consumption within county buildings by 26% from baseline year 2005 to 2014. This is equivalent to over \$1 million in energy costs.
- Crozet Library awarded the LEED Silver Certification for its green design and construction efficiencies (2014)
- *Energy Star Ratings.* We strive to operate school facilities as efficiently as possible. Digital control of buildings and continual capital improvements has allowed us to achieve Energy Star certification at 22 of our facilities and keeps energy usage below national averages. In order to receive Energy Star certification, buildings must perform better than 75% of all similar buildings nationwide. The total site energy utilization for ACPS schools for fiscal year 2013/2014 was 47 kBtu per square foot. For comparison, the national median site energy utilization for similar facilities was approximately 70 kBtu/square foot. Interns assist with site verifications for Energy Star certifications for eligible schools each year. (ACPS)

# Albemarle County Organizational Efficiencies

- *School Composting and Recycling.* The Division recycled 525 tons of materials in calendar year 2014. Recycled materials include mixed waste recyclables, cardboard, composted food waste, bulbs, ballasts, batteries, construction & demolition debris, electronic waste, scrap metal, and used oil. Commercial composting operations are established at Monticello High, Jouett Middle, Meriwether Lewis Elementary, Crozet Elementary, Yancey Elementary and Building Services. ACPS recently received a grant to expand the commercial composting operation to the western feeder pattern schools and develop related curriculum. (ACPS)
- *Solar Agreement.* ACPS has completed a [solar power purchase agreement](#) (PPA) with Secure Futures to install 1 megawatt of power from solar photovoltaic panels. ACPS will purchase the electricity generated from the panels. Benefits of the solar PPA include predictable electricity prices, promoting renewable energy sources, and educational benefits of real-time generation data and solar workshops. (ACPS)

## INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

- Using technology – smart phones allowing employees in CDD and DSS to work more efficiently in the field
- County won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Information Technology as Efficiency Driver – Government to Government division at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Commonwealth of Virginia Innovation Technology Symposium (COVITS) (2014)
- Named #2 Most Technologically Advanced County Government in the country for our population by the Center for Digital Government and National Association of Counties 2014 Digital Counties Survey (2014)
- Granicus
- *DART Internship Program.* The Department of Accountability, Research, and Technology is providing hands on learning experiences for students through its summer intern program each year. Interns in the program image and asset tag new electronic devices at a cost to the division far less than using an outside provider, allowing the department to realize significant cost savings each year. (ACPS)
- *Paperless Communications.* [Parent Portal](#) provides parents and students daily access to class and teacher assignments, bus routes, student meal accounts, attendance, course requests from parents and students, course schedules and syllabi, interim and quarterly progress reports and teacher recommendations. Almost 80% of our families at the secondary level are utilizing this new communication system, which improves connections to school activities while providing savings in printing and paper costs. (ACPS)
- *Electronic Conversion of Student Records.* The school division will begin digitizing student records through the use of a document management system (DMS) this year. The DMS function is to electronically archive legacy and paper based student records for secure, searchable, scalable and Library of Virginia GS-21 compliant student records archiving. The DMS will also be scalable for future School Division records archiving needs. (ACPS)
- *GPS Tracking.* The use of GPS-tracking for all school buses has allowed the department to reach an average on-time arrival for all school buses of 99.4%. (ACPS)

# Albemarle County Organizational Efficiencies

- *Albemarle App.* The division now has a [free mobile app](#) for use on both the Apple and Android platforms, recognizing the increasingly prominent role that mobile devices occupy in communications. The content available through the app includes all social media and news feeds; up-to-date information on upcoming school events and activities; resources for students, parents and staff; and access to the parent and student portals. Users also can choose to follow individual schools or academies and receive instant notifications of news and developments that are specific to those sites. (ACPS)
- *Microsoft Office.* In an agreement reached with Microsoft, Albemarle County Public Schools students can download, at no cost, [Microsoft Office 365](#) on up to five computer devices in their home, making it easier and more convenient for students to access software tools frequently used inside and outside of the classroom. (ACPS)

## SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

- Completed implementation of Access Albemarle the Financial Management System with customer online access (2014)
- Recently increased the number of Housing Choice Vouchers available to public without extra staff resources
- Community Development implementation of paperless plan review.
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## FUNDING SERVICES/PROJECTS WITH SOURCES OTHER THAN TAX MONEY

### Grants

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- FY 15 Applications as of May 28, 2015 – 22 Applications totaling \$3,043,610
- FY 15 Revenue received as of May 28, 2015 – \$1,413,610
- Citizens raised \$\_\_\_\_\_ for Crozet Library

## Sources

[http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms\\_Center/Departments/Albemarle/Forms/2015\\_Annual\\_Report\\_Web.pdf](http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Albemarle/Forms/2015_Annual_Report_Web.pdf)

2013 County Exec Annual Report

[http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms\\_center/departments/County\\_Executive/forms/2013\\_Report\\_to\\_Community\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms_center/departments/County_Executive/forms/2013_Report_to_Community_FINAL.pdf)

Albemarle Visit Page

<http://www.albemarle.org/navpages.asp?info=business2#agritourism>

Albemarle Performance Page

[https://ia2010.albemarle.org/performance/kpi/Pages/Awards\\_Accolades.aspx](https://ia2010.albemarle.org/performance/kpi/Pages/Awards_Accolades.aspx)

<http://www2.k12albemarle.org/acps/schools/school-highlights/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.albemarle.org/department.asp?department=envmgt>