



TALBOT
COUNTY

2025 Annual Report

*A Year of Progress,
Partnership, and
Purpose.*

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Message from the President

Council President Chuck Callahan

Over the past year, Talbot County has continued to move forward in ways that matter to the people who live and work here. From completing major infrastructure projects like Goldsborough Neck Road, to advancing the Public Safety Complex and expanding access to broadband and public sewer, to renovating Talbot Free Library's St. Michaels Branch, this has been a year focused on smart investments that strengthen our entire community.

We also made important progress in public engagement, launching Engage Talbot and improving how residents stay informed about the budget, long-range planning, and County projects. These tools help us listen better, plan better, and make decisions that reflect the needs of our citizens.

I'm especially proud of the partnerships that made this year successful. Whether it was supporting our volunteer fire companies, working with the school system, advancing the new regional medical center, or collaborating with nonprofits and local businesses, Talbot County continues to show what we can accomplish when we work together.

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain committed to strong fiscal management, safe and reliable infrastructure, and quality services that support all generations – from young families to our growing senior population. It's an honor to serve this community, and I thank our residents, our employees, and my fellow Council members for another productive year.

“ It's an honor to serve this community, and I thank our residents, our employees, and my fellow Council members for another productive year.

— Chuck Callahan,
Council President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Callahan".

Chuck Callahan

Talbot County County Council

The Talbot County Council is comprised of five members who serve at-large and are elected to a four-year term. The Council President and Vice President are elected on a yearly basis each November by their Council peers. The County Council members for the 2022-2026 term are as follows.



Chuck Callahan



Pete Lesher

President

Chuck Callahan is serving his third term on the Talbot County Council. A lifelong Talbot County resident and local business owner, he brings decades of community service, including more than 25 years with the Easton Volunteer Fire Department. He serves as Council liaison to several key boards, including the Board of Education, Economic Development Commission, and Talbot Family Network.

Vice President

Pete Lesher is serving his second term on the Talbot County Council and currently serves as Vice President. A lifelong history enthusiast and maritime historian, he works at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and contributes to dozens of exhibitions and publications. An Eagle Scout and longtime civic volunteer, Pete has held leadership roles with heritage and historic preservation organizations across the region.



Keasha N. Haythe



Lynn L. Mielke



Dave Stepp

Member, At Large

Keasha Haythe is in her first term on the County Council. She also leads a local nonprofit, bringing deep experience in economic development, entrepreneurship, and community empowerment. For over two decades, she has helped secure more than \$100 million for business expansions, start-ups, and public-private economic projects.

Member, At Large

Lynn Mielke is serving her first term on the Talbot County Council. A former attorney and longtime community advocate, she has worked for decades in family law, mediation, and volunteer service supporting social services, mental health, and arts organizations. Her extensive civic involvement includes service on boards addressing family violence, hospice care, mental health, and community support services.

Member, At Large

Dave Stepp is serving his first term on the Talbot County Council. A longtime Maryland resident and small business owner, he holds an MBA and works in telecommunications. Dave is deeply committed to youth sports and mentoring, serving as a coach and Scoutmaster, and volunteering with local Little League, baseball, and boating clubs for more than a decade.

Council By Numbers

Joint Meetings
Towns & TCPS

8

20

13

TOTAL
41

Legislation

This year, the Council enacted **24 bills and resolutions** each supporting key priorities such as public safety, infrastructure investment, environmental protection, and operational efficiency.

Community Recognition

Throughout 2025, the Council honored community members, employees, and partners whose contributions strengthen Talbot County. Proclamations, certificates of recognition, and commendations reflected a continued commitment to celebrating service and community impact.

| Category | Count |
|--|-------|
| Proclamations and Recognitions | 25 |
| Milestones (Anniversaries & Retirements) | 30+ |
| Employee Awards and Presentations | 4 |



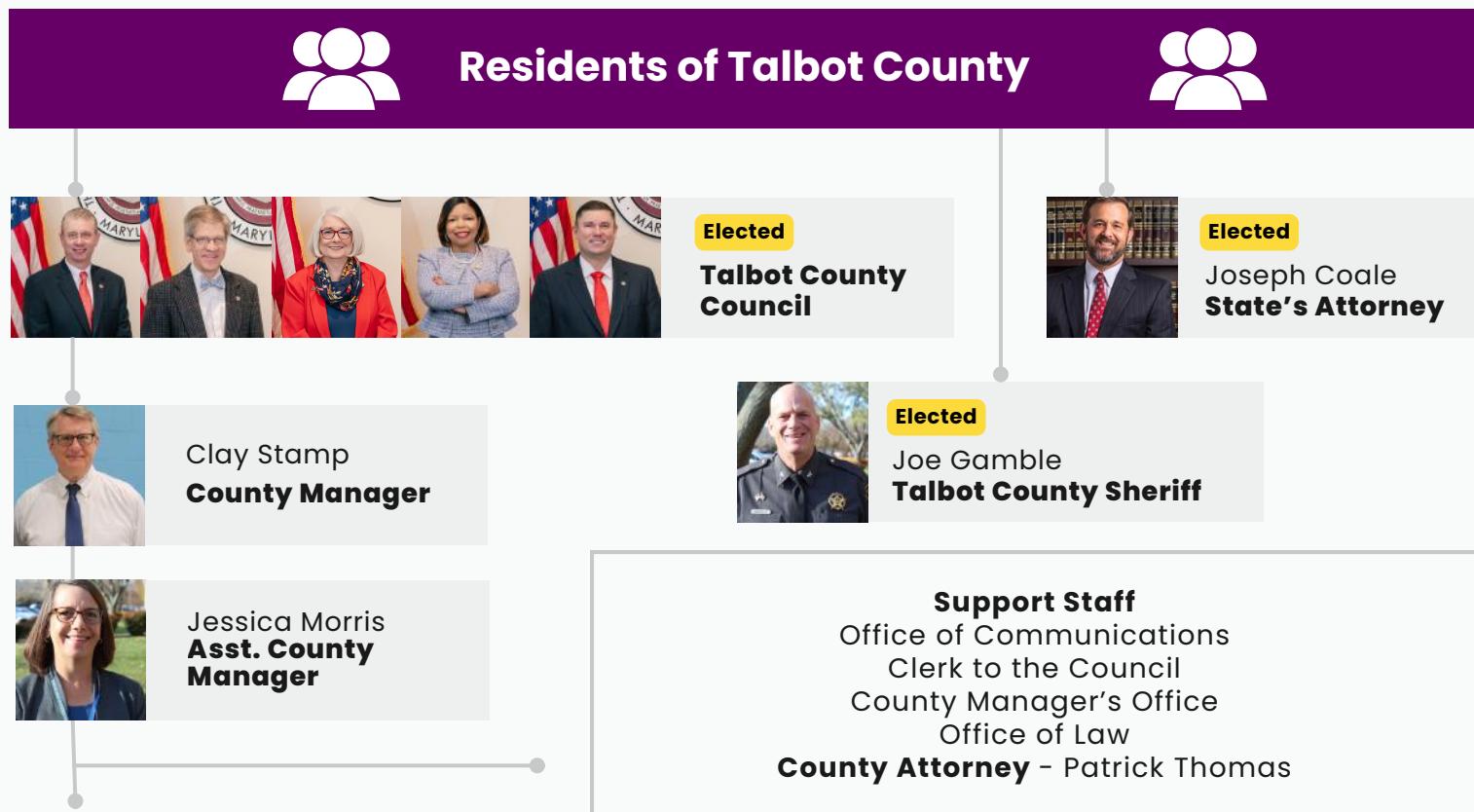
Get Involved By Applying to a Commission, Board, or Committee

We encourage residents to get involved and help shape the future of our community.

Boards and Commissions

Talbot County is supported by more than 35 boards and commissions, most of which are made up of dedicated community volunteers who lend their time, experience, and local perspective to help guide county policy and programs. These groups play a vital role in shaping initiatives related to planning, public health, environmental stewardship, housing, recreation, and more.

LEADERSHIP MAKEUP



Senior Leadership

| | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Micah Risher Easton Airport |  Tommy Haddaway Technology Services |  Brian LeCates Emergency Services |
|  Martha Sparks Finance |  Donna Pardieu Human Resources |  Rich Setter Hog Neck Golf Course |
|  Joseph Hughes Corrections |  Brian Moore Roads and Facilities |  Cassandra Vanhooser Economic Development and Tourism |
|  Ray Clarke Public Works |  Emily Gilmer Parks and Recreation |  Nancy Andrew Talbot Family Network |
|  Brent Garner Permits and Inspections |  Brennan Tarleton Planning and Zoning |  Brent Geib Facilities Maintenance |

Boards, commissions, and partner agencies (such as the Health Department and Social Services) also play a vital role in shaping policy, advising elected leaders, and supporting the delivery of high-quality programs and services across Talbot County.

DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

Office of the County Manager

The **Office of the County Manager**

oversees the daily operations of Talbot County Government and ensures that the policies of the Talbot County Council are carried out effectively, transparently, and efficiently. The County Manager works closely with all departments to set long-term and short-term goals, manage major projects, guide budget development, and ensure high-quality public services. Additional offices supported by the County Manager's office include Administration, Communications, Human Resources, and Procurement.

County Departments

Talbot County Government is supported by a team of service departments that ensure strong operations, effective management, and consistent service delivery across all functions of government. These include **Human Resources**, **Technology Services**, **Facilities**, and **Finance**. Together, they provide essential support including employee recruitment and training, benefits administration, cybersecurity, data systems, financial management, purchasing, grants oversight, and facility maintenance. Their work ensures that every department has the resources and infrastructure needed to serve the public effectively and responsibly.

The County also oversees departments that strengthen economic development, recreation, and community services. **Parks & Recreation** provides recreational

programs, youth sports, aquatics, community events, and facility rentals offered alongside the maintenance of County parks, trails, and the ice rink. **Hog Neck Golf Course**, operating as its own department, provides affordable, high-quality public golf and supports both recreation and tourism.

Economic Development and Tourism advances business growth, entrepreneurship, and job creation while promoting Talbot County as a premier visitor and business destination that fuels cultural vibrancy and economic vitality. The **Easton Airport** serves as a key economic asset, generating business activity and supporting regional aviation. **Talbot Family Network**, the County's Local Management Board, administers State-funded programs and partnerships that support children, youth, and families.

Departments supporting infrastructure, planning, and growth management include **Public Works**, **Roads, Planning & Zoning**, and **Permits & Inspections**. These teams maintain County roads and other critical infrastructure; oversee stormwater systems and culverts; guide land use and long-range planning; review zoning and development proposals; and enforce building and safety codes. Their combined work supports sustainable development, protects rural character, and ensures well-managed growth across Talbot County.

Talbot County also provides essential public safety services. **Emergency Services** manages 9-1-1 communications, emergency medical services, emergency management, Mobile Integrated Health (MIH), hazardous materials coordination, and public safety education. **Corrections** operates the Talbot County Detention Center, ensuring the safe and humane care of individuals in custody while supporting rehabilitation, reentry preparation, and community safety.

"When departments collaborate, we create stronger outcomes for our residents. Our employees are the reason we can proudly serve this community with excellence."

— Clay Stamp, County Manager

459

Total Employees
serving Talbot County
Government across all
departments. **334** Full
Time • **125** Part Time

16

Departments
working together to
deliver essential
services to residents.

Message from the County Manager

Clay B. Stamp

This past year was a busy and productive one for Talbot County Government. Under the leadership of the County Council and in alignment with our strategic plan, we focused our efforts on investing in our personnel, enhancing internal processes, and advancing strategic projects, particularly in infrastructure and other priority areas, that continue to keep our staff actively engaged in serving the community.

I join the County Council in extending our sincere thanks to our department heads, employees across all departments, and the many partner organizations with whom we work closely to deliver services to the public. It continues to impress me how a small, fiscally disciplined rural county government, supported by an exceptional team, consistently embraces ingenuity and creativity in service delivery. This ability is a rare but essential component of responsible economic stewardship, especially during a period of fiscal uncertainty marked by federal policy shifts affecting grant funding and ongoing state solvency challenges that increasingly shift responsibilities to county governments.

Looking ahead, the coming year will allow us to bring several major capital projects initiated by the County Council over the past three years to completion. These investments are exciting and important on multiple fronts. Capital infrastructure projects not only address long-standing needs but also inject resources into our local economy, supporting jobs and strengthening our community. Projects include the completion of a new public safety facility, a new EMS station serving the northern end of the County, renovations to the St. Michaels Library and Chapel District Elementary School, the extension of sewer services to remediate failing septic systems as part of a significant environmental mitigation initiative, and continued investment in resurfacing County roads, to name a few.

Talbot County remains a special place to live, work, and serve, made so by the people who call it home and by the dedicated teams who work every day on their behalf.

Clay Stamp

Clay B. Stamp

“Behind every accomplishment in this report is the dedication of our county employees — professionals who show up every day committed to public service.

— Clay Stamp, County Manager

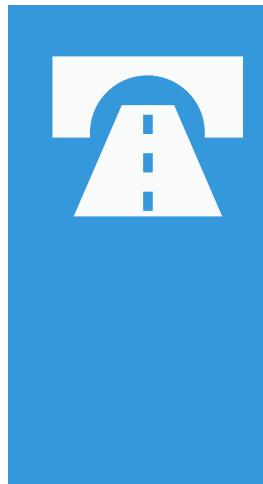


Our Community Pillars

Talbot County's community pillars focus on impactful areas for lasting change. By aligning services and investments around these priorities, the County enhances its adaptability, responsiveness to community needs, and future planning. This foundation fosters a resilient and sustainable community that supports current residents while preparing for future generations.



Talbot County



Economic Stability

Talbot County promotes a resilient local economy by supporting businesses and workers, investing in regional assets, and planning for long-term prosperity.

Environmental Stewardship

The County protects its natural resources and the Chesapeake Bay through conservation, sustainability, and responsible land use to preserve environmental quality for generations to come.

Infrastructure

Talbot County maintains and invests in critical infrastructure—from roads and public facilities to utilities and technology—that supports daily life and prepares the community for the future.

Public Safety, Health, and Welfare

The County is committed to protecting the safety, health, and well-being of residents through emergency services, public health initiatives, and programs that support individuals and families in times of need.

Education

Talbot County supports education as a lifelong pursuit—investing in schools, libraries, recreation, and enrichment opportunities that help residents of all ages learn, grow, and stay engaged.



Education

Education in Talbot County extends beyond the classroom, encompassing formal instruction, lifelong learning, and enrichment opportunities that support residents at every stage of life.

In 2025, the County invested in public education, library services, parks and recreation programs, senior centers, and workforce-focused learning with Chesapeake College and Talbot County Public Schools. From youth development to active aging, these initiatives reflect a commitment to education as a lifelong pursuit—one that strengthens individual opportunity, community engagement, and the County's future.

Education Snapshot

95%**High School Graduation Rate**

330 Total High School Graduates (Public School)

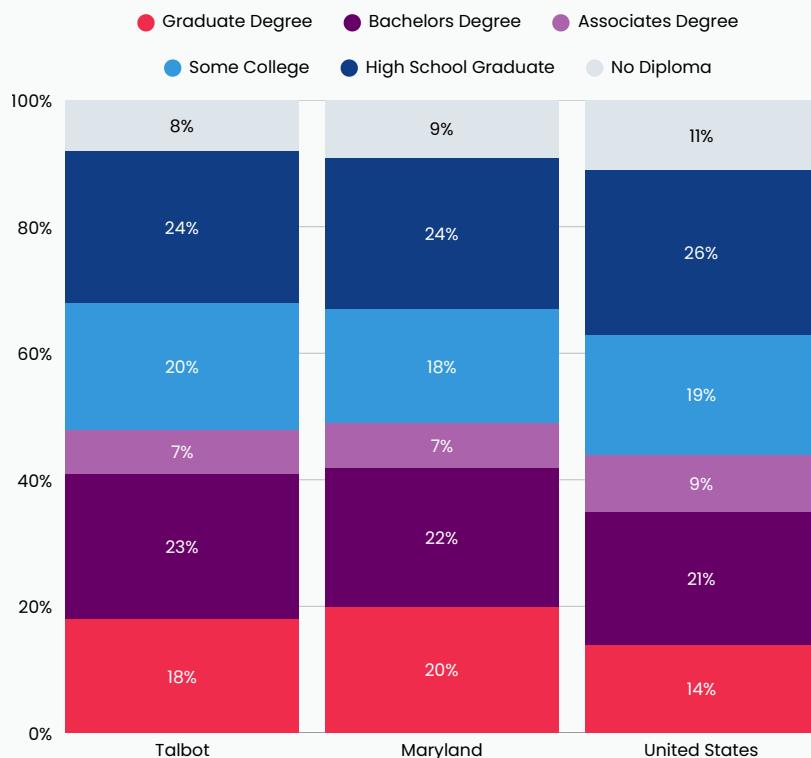
91.5%**School Attendance Rate**

330 Total High School Graduates (Public School)

4,502**Students Enrolled****Source:** [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), 2023

Educational Attainment

Talbot County is an educated community, with the share of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher rising steadily over the past decade (+36.77% 2012-2023 Change).



HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

6,710
High School Graduates

-16.66% change since 2012

2,112
Associate's Degree

+2.08% change since 2012

6,614
Bachelor's Degree

+36.77% change since 2012

5,168
Graduate Degree

+21.63% change since 2012

Source: [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), 2023

KEY INVESTMENTS

Talbot County's largest share of the annual budget is dedicated to education, reflecting a strong commitment to lifelong learning. In 2025, the County advanced two major projects—the Chapel District School Renovation Project and the St. Michaels Library Expansion—both scheduled for completion in 2026 and designed to support modern learning environments for students and the broader community.

Education is one of the most important investments we can make in our community. From early learning to lifelong enrichment, these projects help ensure Talbot County remains a place where opportunity and learning go hand in hand.

— Pete Lesher, County Council Vice President



Chapel District School Renovation Project

A major **\$27 million** County and State-funded renovation that expands Chapel District Elementary School and increases capacity for Critchlow Adkins Children's Center.

The project modernizes classrooms, improves safety and traffic flow, and supports long-term growth for families in the northeast area of the County.

Photos: Top: Elected officials, staff, volunteers and students ceremonially break ground on the Chapel District Elementary School property in August 2024. Bottom: Design rendering for library space at the elementary school.

St. Michaels Library Renovation & Expansion

The **\$6.3 million expansion** of the St. Michaels Branch of the Talbot County Free Library will create a modern, accessible community space featuring a new meeting room, early literacy area, quiet technology spaces, and improved ADA-compliant features. As a cornerstone of community life, the library provides far more than books; offering access to technology, learning opportunities, gathering spaces, and essential services that support residents of all ages.

Photo: St. Michaels Branch of the Talbot County Free Library during renovation construction in November 2025.

Parks and Recreation

2025 At a Glance

Talbot County Parks & Recreation expanded programming, increased participation, and improved recreational access throughout 2025. From youth sports to aquatics and the ice rink, the department continues to deliver high-quality programming, providing community health benefits.



On the Ice

Talbot County's ice rink now operates year-round, offering expanded skating, hockey, and drop-in programs. With the closure of the Harrington rink, Talbot has seen increased regional demand and higher participation across seasonal programs.

4,948
Program Participants

509 Summer Campers • 262 Basketball Drop-Ins • 3,251 Pickleball Drop-Ins • 19 Court Reservations • 24 Volleyball Drop-Ins • 112 Community Yard Sale Participants • 206 Dance Class • 90 Vendors for Decoy Tailgate Show • 33 Homeschool Gym • 162 Bus Trip Participants • 280 Sport Clinics Registrants

Outdoor Recreation

14 Public Parks

24 Ramps & Landings

Maintained by Staff Year-Round

2,407 Boat Ramp Permits Issued

Seasonal Pools

13,450

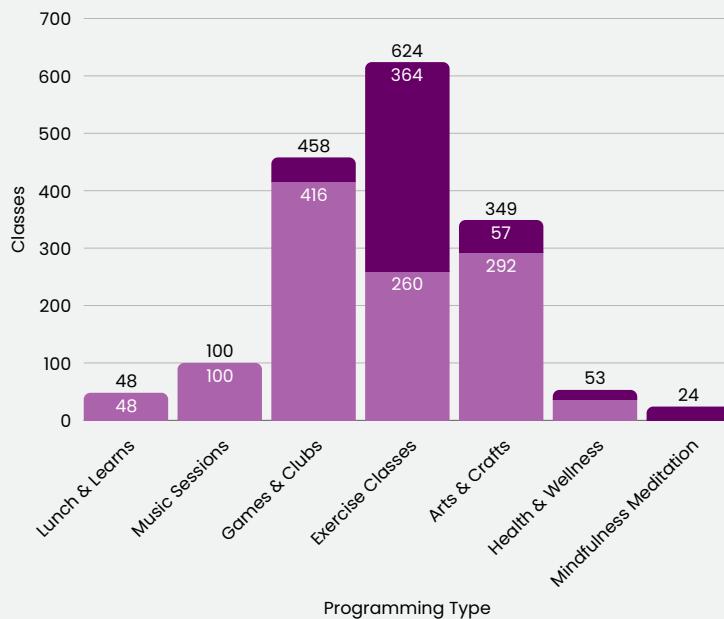
Total Pool Admissions

76 Adult Swim Lesson Participants • 34 Jr. Lifeguard Certifications • 1,092 Swim Lesson Participants • 605 Total Pool Memberships • 412 Scholarship-Supported Memberships

With the gym expansion in 2024, the Community Center added new programming including indoor pickleball, homeschool gym, volleyball, basketball, and more.

| Program | Participants |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Adult Hockey | 176 |
| Freestyle Ice | 1,549 |
| Stick & Puck | 1,427 |
| Me & My Little One | 257 |
| Public Ice Skating | 10,188 |
| Total Ice Participation | 13,597 |

Programs for Seniors



34,304

Meals on Wheels Delivered in FY25

Source: Upper Shore Aging

6,850

Meals & Food Vouchers

2,898 Congregate Meals at Brookletts
 • 2,695 Grab-n-Go Meals at Brookletts
 • 44 Farmer's Markets Coupons • 620 Emergency Meal Boxes • 593 Congregate Meals at Bay Hundred



Photo: Staff cuts ribbon for the Talbot County Senior Center at Brookletts updated computer lab in 2023.

Senior Centers

Talbot County supports lifelong learning and social connection for older adults through financial support for **Brookletts Place Senior Center** and the **Bay Hundred Senior Center**. These centers provide educational programs, recreational activities, wellness opportunities, and social engagement that help seniors remain active, informed, and connected to their community.

In 2025, the County Council took over the electric budget for the property on Brookletts, so that Upper Shore Aging, our area agency on aging, could better serve our residents with their direct budget going towards programming.



Photos: Left Chef Brian Matthews Right Renovated Putting Green in 2025.

Hog Neck Golf Course

Talbot County continues to invest in Hog Neck Golf Course as a place for lifelong recreation, skill development, and community connection. Recent improvements to the clubhouse and café enhance the overall experience for residents, creating a welcoming space for golfers of all ages to gather, learn, and participate in recreational programming.

Looking ahead, planned upgrades to the driving range will expand opportunities for lessons, clinics, and community-based instruction, supporting both new and experienced players. Together, these investments reinforce Hog Neck's role as an accessible, year-round recreational asset that encourages active lifestyles and learning at every stage of life.

\$450,000

Total Invested

In capital investments including renovations to the clubhouse and café

40+

Tournaments, leagues, and special events hosted yearly

Youth, adult, charity, regional

1,200+

Junior golf lessons, clinics, and camps

Youth development impact



Public Safety, Health, and Welfare

Protecting the safety, health, and well-being of residents is one of Talbot County's most essential responsibilities. Through a coordinated system that includes emergency response, public health services, community preparedness, and care for vulnerable populations, the County works to prevent harm, respond effectively to emergencies, and support recovery when challenges arise.

From 911 response and emergency medical services to public health programs, community training, and Mobile Integrated Health (MIH), Talbot County emphasizes readiness, prevention, and collaboration to ensure residents receive timely assistance, access to care, and support that strengthens community resilience and quality of life.

Public Safety & Health Snapshot

69,277

Total 911 Calls

13,810

Total Medical Consults

2,637

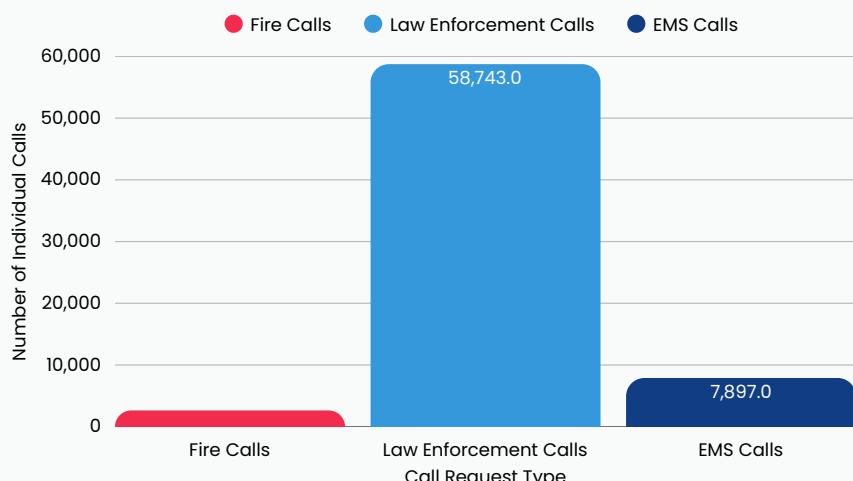
Fire/Rescue Responses

Source: Department of Emergency Services

7m49s

Average Response Time

From dispatch to on-scene; striving to dispatch and on scene within 8 minutes across the county.



Calls Dispatched by 911

TYPES OF REQUESTS

Talbot County Dispatch handles three primary types of calls: Fire, Law Enforcement, and EMS/Health. The dispatch center determines the appropriate responders for each call request and coordinates the necessary support accordingly.

KEY INVESTMENTS

Talbot County is wholeheartedly dedicated to ensuring the safety of our community and the well-being of our residents. To uphold this commitment, the County has recently invested in several essential facilities and systems, including the Health Department Building, the Public Safety Complex, the North EMS Station, and the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

“Every investment we make – from training to technology – helps ensure our community is safer, stronger, and ready for whatever comes next.”

— Brian LeCates, Director of Emergency Services



Public Safety Complex

Construction on the Public Safety Complex continued with the completion of the Sally Port addition and progress toward consolidating Emergency Services and Sheriff's Office operations in a modern facility.

Photo: Expansion of the Public Safety Complex building continues with the addition of the Sally Port on the right, construction photo from February 2025.

CAD System Upgrade

Talbot County invested in a new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in 2025, with upgrades now underway to improve accuracy and efficiency in emergency response.

Photo: Dispatch team member uses CAD system in Port Street Center. Talbot County's dispatch team will move to the new public safety complex on Mary's Court in 2026, with a new CAD system in place. Port Street location will remain as a backup dispatch center.

North EMS Station

Construction is underway on the **\$1.6 million** North EMS Station in Cordova. The new 24/7 paramedic and EMT base will improve response times and strengthen emergency coverage for northern Talbot County.

Photo: On September 29, 2025, the County held a groundbreaking ceremony for the North EMS Station. Construction was already well underway.

Talbot County Health Department

The Talbot County Council serves as the County's Board of Health, providing oversight, policy direction, and accountability for public health services. In this role, the Council works closely with the Talbot County Health Department to ensure programs and initiatives protect community health, respond to emerging challenges, and expand access to care for residents across the County.

Through this governance structure, the Health Department delivers evidence-based public health services while aligning its work with broader County priorities focused on prevention, equity, and long-term community well-being.

Photos: 1) Talbot County's Health Department moved into its new space in 2024, located at 510 Cadmus Ln, Easton, MD 21601. 2) Health Department holds its first all staff meeting in new space. 3) Talbot County Health Department announces new health officer, Fahmi Fahmi, MD in March 2025.

Public Health Highlights & Strategic Priorities

Key accomplishments included:

- **Expanded Rabies Prevention:**

Community rabies clinics achieved a 278% increase in pet vaccinations between 2023 and 2025, protecting more than 260 animals.

- **Comprehensive Vaccination Services:**

Nearly 900 vaccinations were administered between August 2024 and June 2025, including flu, COVID-19, HPV, and routine childhood immunizations.

- **Vision Care Access for Students:** A new Global Vision Clinic provided free eye exams and glasses to public school students, establishing a scalable model to support student health and academic success.

Twice a year, the Talbot County Health Officer shares an overview of the department's achievements, priorities, and health challenges. Access the latest presentation via the QR code.



Mobile Integrated Health

Expanding Care, Strengthening Access, Serving More Residents

In 2025, Talbot County significantly expanded its Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program, strengthening a model of community-based care that connects residents to the right services at the right time.

MIH—operated through a partnership between the Department of Emergency Services and the Talbot County Health Department integrating paramedicine, nursing, and case management to support residents with chronic conditions, medical complexities, mobility challenges, and social service needs.

The MIH team provides in-home assessments, follow-up care, wellness checks, medication review, education, and direct care coordination across medical and social support systems. As the program continues to expand, MIH is reducing emergency department visits, supporting earlier intervention, and improving residents' quality of life across Talbot County.

In 2025, MIH experienced one of its largest periods of growth, adding new staff capacity, broadening service hours, and strengthening coordination with local healthcare partners. The expansion ensures more residents receive proactive, personalized care outside of the hospital setting.

MIH FOCUSES ON

- Improving access to in-home and community-based care
- Reducing preventable emergency department visits and 9-1-1 calls
- Supporting chronic disease management (diabetes, heart failure, COPD, hypertension)
- Decreasing 30-day hospital readmissions
- Providing patient education and medication support
- Connecting individuals with community, behavioral health, and social service resources

Photos: Left MIH Staff checks heartrate of community member. Right Council presented MIH Partners with proclamation for "MIH Week" in October 2025.



“Navigating the healthcare system is incredibly difficult, especially when people are also struggling with access to food, transportation, or housing. Our MIH team is dedicated to supporting patients through that process, connecting them to community resources, and following up through home visits to ensure they have what they need for better health outcomes.

— Rachel Cox,
Community Program Coordinator

3 Months Of Continued Home Follow-Up

(often longer when needed) to ensure successful connection to resources and stable care

42%

Reduction in emergency calls

among enrolled MIH participants and significant reduction in emergency department and hospital visit up to 6 months after MIH enrollment

Community Readiness

Saving Lives Through Training, Awareness & A Well-Informed Community

In 2025, Talbot County continued to strengthen public safety by expanding CPR and AED training, installing additional life-saving equipment throughout the county, engaging Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers, and enhancing year-round emergency preparedness outreach.

From weather alerts and storm readiness messaging to community education on flooding, high winds, heat, and winter storms, the Emergency Services team worked to ensure residents stay informed and prepared before, during, and after emergencies.

These combined efforts reflect the County's commitment to building a resilient community where every person has the knowledge, skills, and tools to act in an emergency.

COMMUNITY TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- Training offered in County facilities, schools, and partner organizations
- Specialty trainings for: Sports teams, Faith communities, Senior Centers, Youth programs
- CERT volunteers integrated into training delivery and community outreach
- Partnerships with TCPS, YMCA, local nonprofits, and emergency preparedness group

Resilient Community

2,150+

Residents Trained in CPR & AED Use

30 CARES (Cardiac Arrest Rescue – Emergency Station) Towers** that include an AED, Stop the Bleed Kit, and Narcan to reverse opioid overdoses • 294 Publicly Accessible Defibrillators (PAD) at 160 Community Locations

Education

32

Community Outreach Events

Tabling, Community Presentations, Preparedness Trainings

Awareness & Alerts

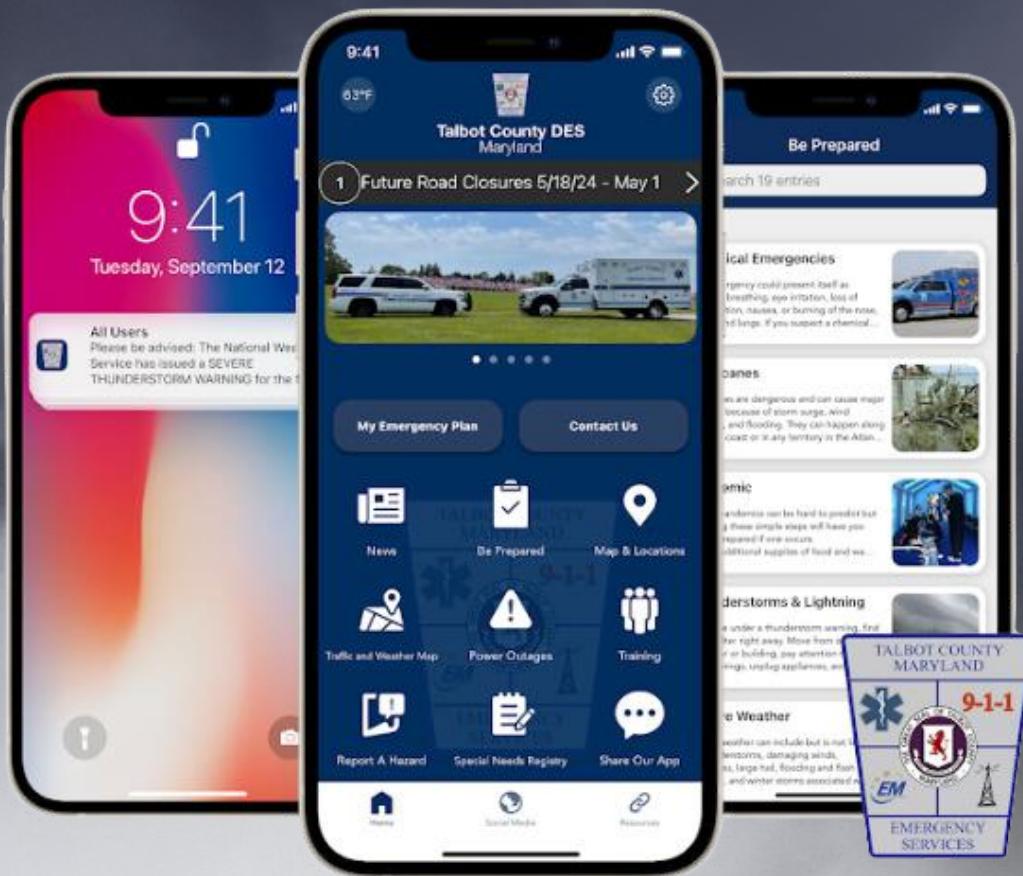
600+ Emergency Alert Messages
4 Talbot Ready Newsletters

6 Radio Interviews

*Data does not include 2025 Q4

**Talbot CARES is in partnership with Team Trace, DES, and Gunther's Electric





SAFETY IN YOUR HANDS

Stay **#TalbotReady** for any emergency with Talbot County's Emergency Preparedness App.

BEFORE



PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

Learn how to prepare for specific emergencies, create an emergency plan, and submit your special assistance form if needed.

DURING



RECEIVE ALERTS

Receive timely updates about upcoming and active weather or emergency related events.

AFTER



REPORT HAZARDS

Following an emergency event, help the community by reporting hazards, and get information on emergency relief specific to your area.

SCAN TO DOWNLOAD

Available in Apple Store and Google Play





Infrastructure

Talbot County's responsibility extends beyond maintaining existing infrastructure to planning for the future.

Through long-range planning, including updates to the Comprehensive Plan, the Report of the Review (ROTR), and even documents such as the Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, the County identifies community needs and invests in critical systems that support connectivity, reliability, and resilience over time.

Maintenance Snapshot

90

County Owned Buildings and Facilities

700+

Culverts

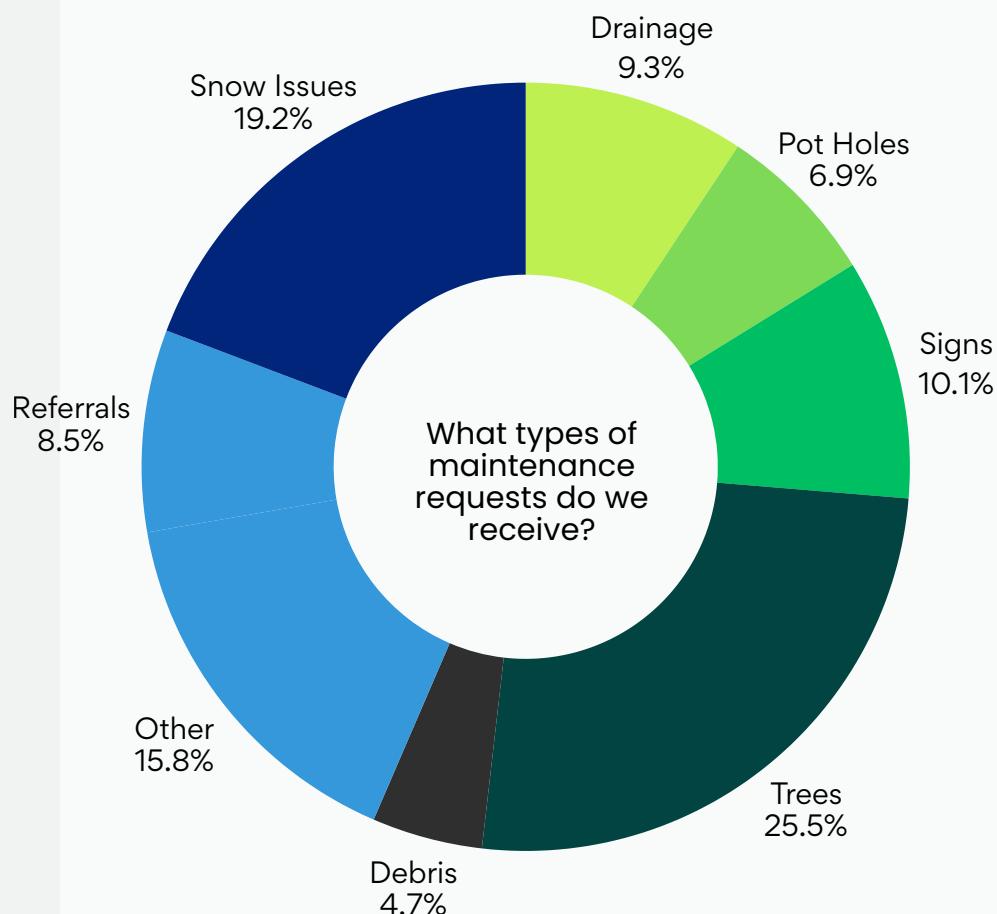
9

Bridges

370

Miles of Road

that the Talbot County Roads Department maintains, including road patching, drainage maintenance, resurfacing, sign maintenance, culvert installation, debris removal, mowing, and snow removal.



3,024

Work Orders Completed

in 2025, including Road requests

TYPES OF REQUESTS

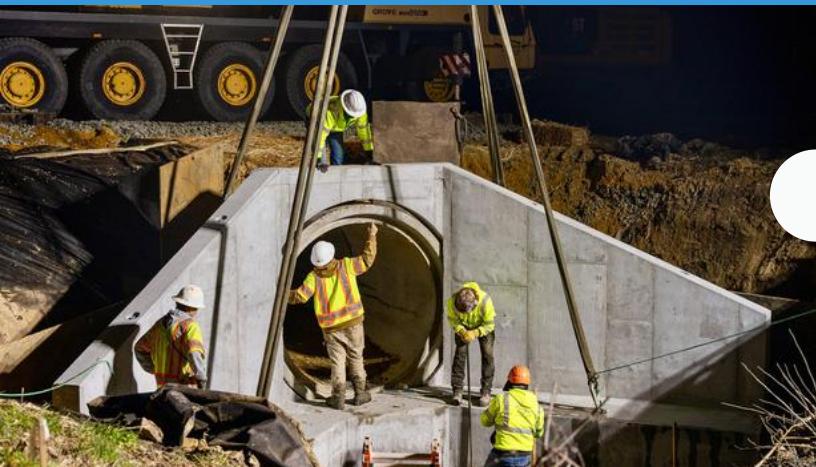
Above is an average quarter of citizen requests that the County receives and works on (does not include road work orders)

KEY INVESTMENTS

In 2025, Talbot County advanced key infrastructure projects that strengthen safety, connectivity, and long-term readiness across the community. From roadway improvements and airport access to countywide broadband expansion, these investments reflect a proactive approach to maintaining critical systems while planning for future needs.

“Infrastructure investments today ensure Talbot County is prepared for the needs of tomorrow.”

– Clay Stamp, County Manager



Goldsborough Neck & Airport Road Improvement Project

Talbot County completed the multi-phase Goldsborough Neck Road project, delivering safer travel lanes, upgraded drainage, a new culvert, and roadway widening to improve traffic flow and support economic development in the Town of Easton's Mistletoe Hall Industrial Park area.

The most recent expansion is one of 14 projects funded through the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund in the amount of **\$750,000**, representing a total project investment of **\$4.581 million**. These improvements are also critical to preparing the area for future development, including access and infrastructure support for the new regional medical center.

Photos: Top: Construction team at David A. Bramble works through the night to ensure timely installation of concrete headwall for Goldsborough Neck Road in December 2025. Bottom: Talbot County Roads team widen the roadway at Easton Airport Road.

Countywide Broadband Expansion

Talbot County secured full funding through state and federal grants to extend high-speed broadband to every unserved address. With construction in its final phases, the county is on track to achieve universal connectivity.

Photo: Example of fiber optic cable that was installed throughout the Bay Hundred area.

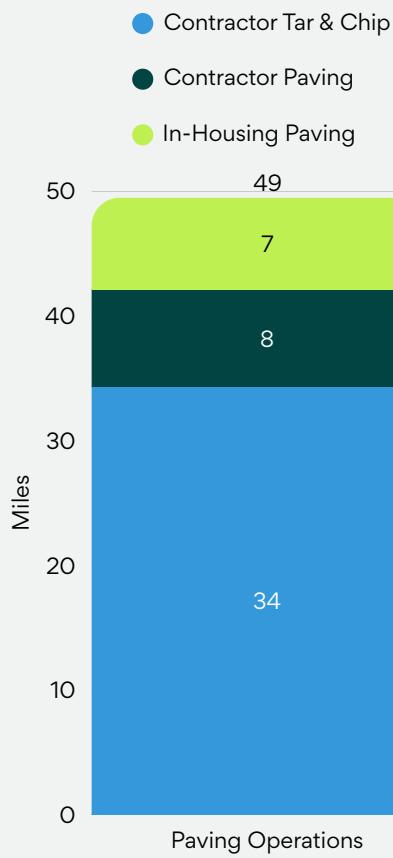


Photo: Talbot County Road's Paving Crew in Summer 2024

Roads At a Glance

Talbot County's Roads Department provides essential, year-round maintenance to keep roadways safe, reliable, and accessible. Crews respond daily to service requests ranging from debris removal and pothole repairs to signage, drainage, and rights-of-way upkeep.

Paving Operations

The County also advanced vital paving and resurfacing projects. Contractor tar-and-chip crews completed **34 lane-miles**, contractor paving added **8 lane-miles**, and in-house paving teams delivered another **7.38 lane-miles**, reinforcing the County's commitment to sustaining a resilient transportation network.



Photos: Left Planning and Zoning Department discusses Comprehensive Plan Update at St. Michaels Community Center. Right Brenan Tarleton, Planning and Zoning Director, engages community members during public listening session at the Talbot County Free Library.

Planning for the Future: The 2026 Update to the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan guides decisions related to transportation, utilities, land use, and public facilities, helping ensure infrastructure investments align with community priorities and long-term growth. It provides a long-range framework for balancing growth, preservation, and the services residents rely on every day.



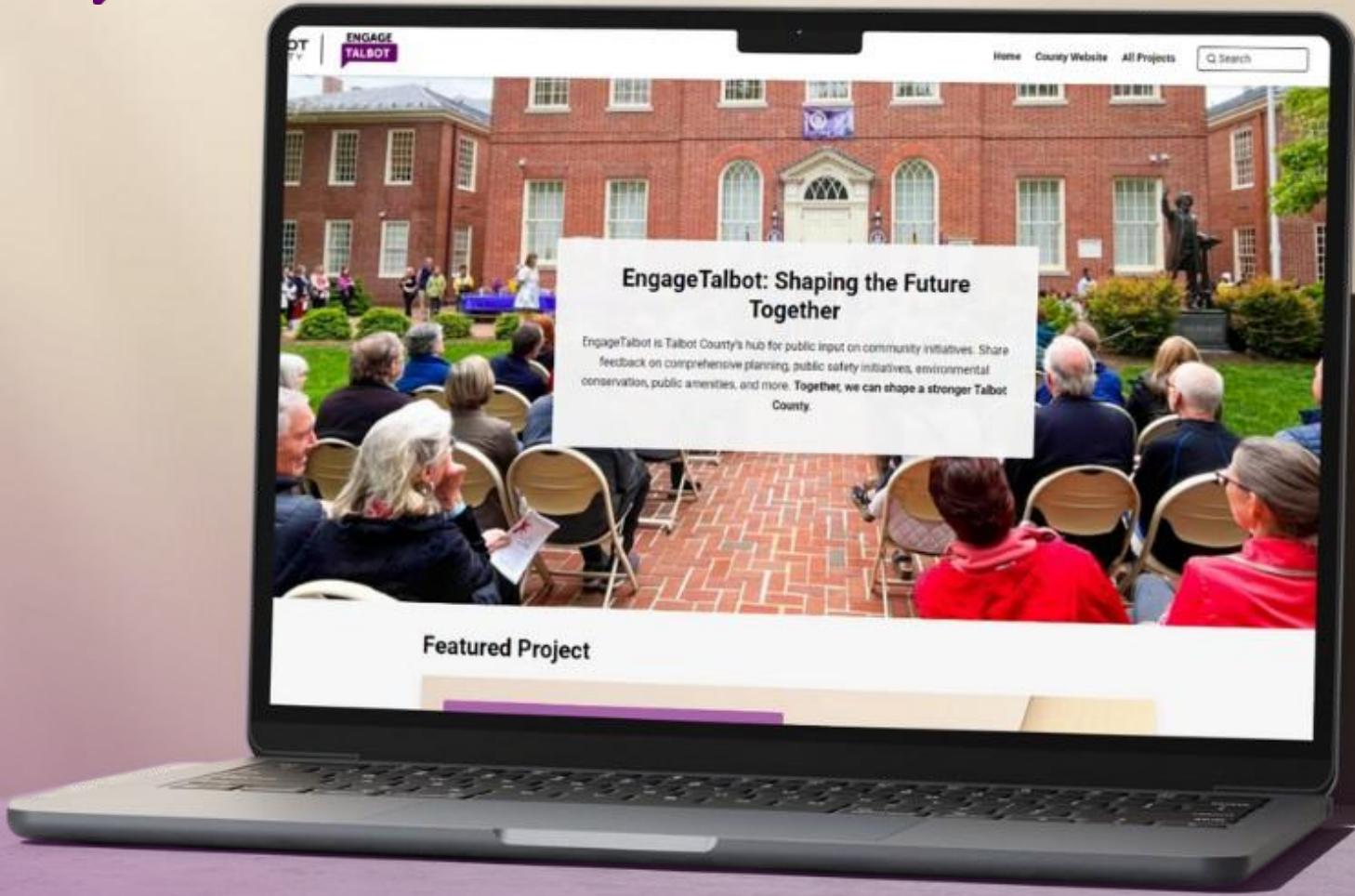
Get Involved with the Plan

Learn more about the Comprehensive Plan update, review draft chapters, and share your input.

12+
Public Meeting Sessions (So Far)
Listening Sessions, Chapter Draft Meetings

12
Required Elements/Chapters
Quality of Life and Sustainability, Public Participation, Growth Areas, Community Design, Infrastructure, Transportation, Housing, Economic Development, Environmental Protection, Resource Conservation, and Stewardship

ENGAGE TALBOT



SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

[**Engage.talbotcountymd.gov**](http://Engage.talbotcountymd.gov) is the place to speak up about the projects and decisions that affect daily life—housing, roads, conservation, amenities, and beyond.

Join the conversation, share your ideas, and help us build a Talbot County that reflects the people who live here.



Environmental Stewardship

Talbot County strengthened its environmental infrastructure in 2025 through major sewer expansion projects, wastewater system upgrades, and long-term investments that protect water quality and support resilient communities. These efforts advance public health, reduce nutrient pollution, and ensure reliable service for residents across the county.

Sewer Systems At a Glance

Talbot County's Department of Public Works **oversees the operation, maintenance, planning, administration, and engineering** of the County's public sewer facilities—ensuring safe, reliable wastewater service for thousands of residents.

Public Works owns and operates **three** wastewater treatment plants:

1 Tilghman Island Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Rated capacity: **150,000 gallons** per day
- Serves Tilghman Island and surrounding communities

2 St. Michaels Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Rated capacity: **660,000 gallons** per day
- One of the County's largest service areas, supporting: St. Michaels, Rio Vista, Bentley Hay, Royal Oak, Newcomb, Bellevue, Unionville, Tunis Mills, Copperville, and Martingham

3 Preserve at Wye Mills Treatment Facility

- Serves the Preserve at Wye Mills community
- Provides reliable wastewater service for this growing area

“By expanding public sewer and modernizing wastewater systems, we're not just improving infrastructure — we're protecting our communities, our environment, and the Chesapeake Bay for generations to come.

— Ray Clarke, County Engineer

Photo: Maryland Department of Environment Secretary Serena McIlwain visits the Region II Wastewater Treatment Plant in St. Michaels in November 2025.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



Resolution 250 Service Area

The Resolution 250 Project extends public sewer service to about 610 EDUs in the St. Michaels service area, including the villages of Bozman and Neavitt.

Sewer System Improvements Across Talbot County

Protecting water quality, strengthening community infrastructure, and safeguarding public health continue to be top priorities for Talbot County.

Through multi-year investments outlined in Resolution 235 and Resolution 250, the County is expanding access to modern wastewater systems in several environmentally sensitive and underserved areas.

These projects support Chesapeake Bay restoration goals, reduce nutrient pollution, and provide long-term resiliency for coastal and low-lying communities.

WHY IT MATTERS

These sewer system improvements deliver long-lasting benefits:

- Cleaner waterways and reduced nutrient runoff
- Stronger coastal resilience in flood-prone and environmentally sensitive areas
- Healthier communities free from failing septic impacts
- Capacity for future infrastructure planning
- Alignment with state and federal environmental standards

610

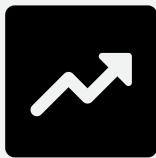
Dwellings
Approved for Connection

\$10M

Invested in Infrastructure
to date across all phases of sewer improvements and upgrades

18.8

Miles
of new sewer lines installed across the County



Economic Stability

In 2025, Talbot County focused on the fundamentals that matter most to a strong and resilient local economy: supporting businesses and workers, investing in critical infrastructure, and planning for long-term prosperity.

These efforts extended across County government, recognizing that economic stability is shaped by decisions in planning, public works, education, public safety, and community services—not by any single department alone. Through coordinated action and strong partnerships with municipalities, regional organizations, and the private sector, the County worked to ensure Talbot County remains a competitive place to do business, a desirable place to live, and a welcoming destination for visitors—today and for generations to come.

Economic Snapshot

56%

Labor Force Participation

With Employment in Health Care and Social Assistance making up 3,393 Total Jobs.

16,593

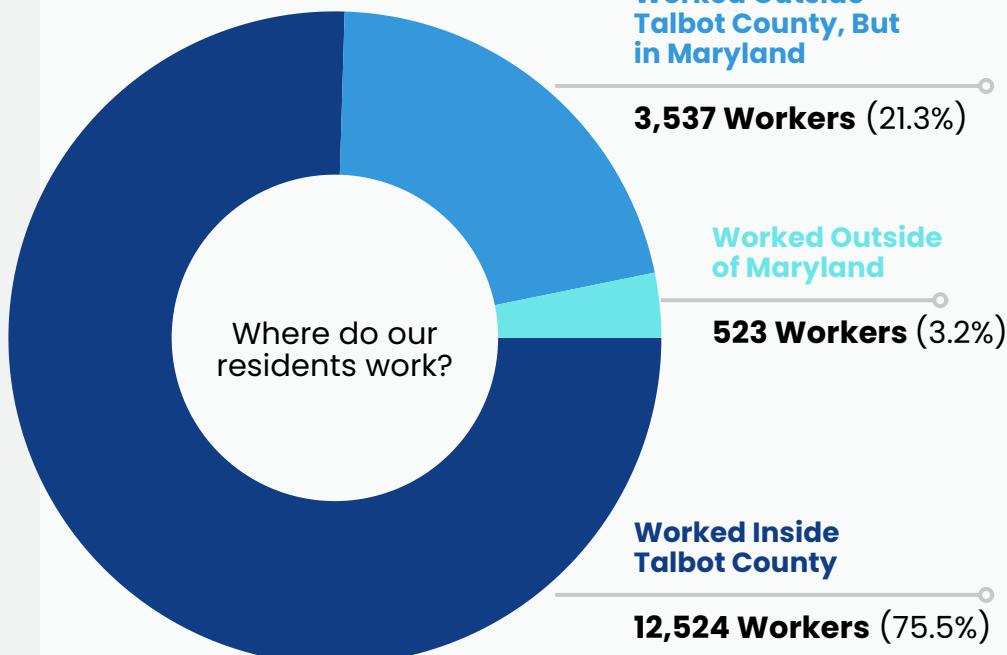
Total Workers

1,537

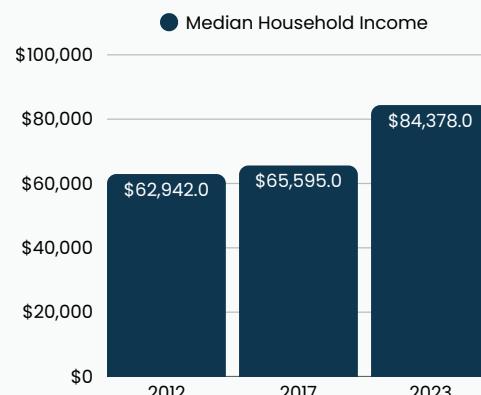
Number of Individual Establishments

Top Business Categories
203 Retail Trade
190 Other Services (Except Public Administration)
182 Construction
182 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
156 Health Care and Social Assistance

Source: [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), July 2024



Source: [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), 2023



Median Household Income

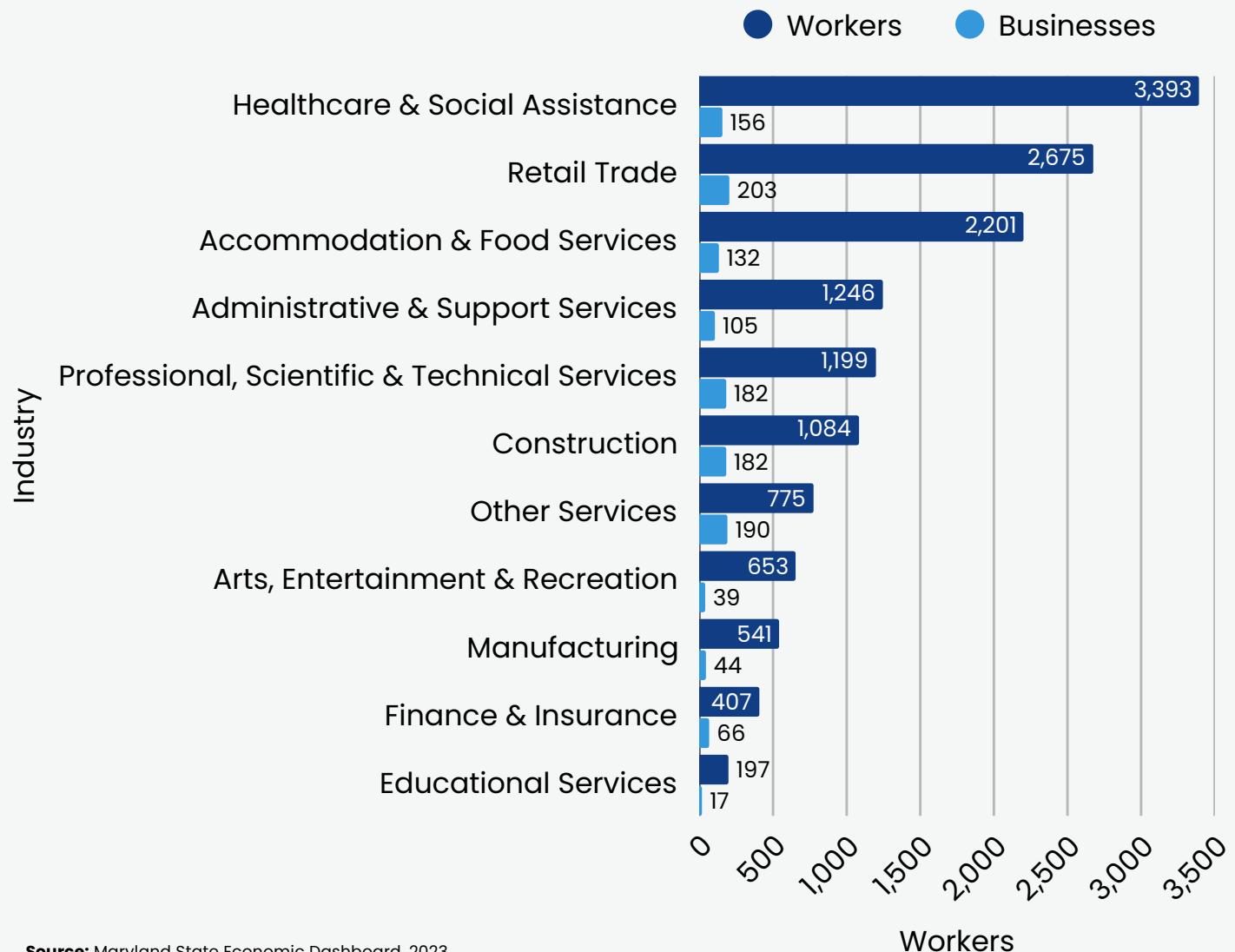
Talbot County's median household income has steadily increased over the past decade, rising from **\$62,942 in 2012** to **\$84,378 in 2023**.

Source: [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), 2023

Industry Specialties in Talbot County

Understanding Our Local Workforce

Talbot County's economy is supported by diverse industries, including healthcare, retail, accommodation, professional services, construction, and manufacturing. This mix creates thousands of jobs and local businesses, contributing to economic resilience and enhancing residents' quality of life.



Source: [Maryland State Economic Dashboard](#), 2023

Healthcare: A Growing Regional Anchor

Healthcare and social assistance are Talbot County's largest employment sector, reflecting the County's role as a regional service hub for the Mid-Shore. Hospitals, outpatient facilities, long-term care providers, nonprofits, and support services provide jobs while meeting essential community needs.

As demand for healthcare continues to grow, Talbot County has prioritized strategic investments in workforce development and infrastructure that strengthen this sector and support long-term economic stability. The **University of Maryland Shore Regional Medical Center** builds on this foundation, positioning healthcare as both a core industry today and a driver of future regional growth.

The Department of Economic Development & Tourism

Driving Economic Vitality and Opportunity

The **Department of Economic Development and Tourism** serves as a connector—linking businesses, workers, visitors, and communities to the resources and opportunities that drive a healthy local economy. Through business support, tourism promotion, workforce initiatives, and regional collaboration, the department helps create pathways for growth while reinforcing Talbot County's unique character as a place to live, work, and visit.

Strengthening the Small Business Ecosystem

Talbot County strengthened its local business ecosystem in 2025 through intentional outreach, resource sharing, and community partnerships. More than 300 businesses engaged through the County's Business Appreciation Summit and year-round visits, helping employers access financing tools, workforce supports, and networking opportunities.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism continued its commitment to regional collaboration by supporting data tools that strengthen economic planning and decision-making. In 2025, the department helped develop and launch the **Maryland Agricultural Economic Dashboard**, created by the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative as part of the ongoing development of the **Delmarva Index**.

This work reflects a collaborative partnership among Mid-Shore Regional Council, the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Maryland Department of Commerce, and Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot counties, demonstrating a shared, data-driven approach to regional economic strategy.



Empowering Decisions with Insightful Intelligence

Visit delmarvaindex.org to see how key regional indicators—population, economy, housing, workforce, and health—to support informed decision-making across the Delmarva Peninsula

ECONOMIC STABILITY

Talbot Works Business Academy

3 Cohorts since program started in 2023

38 Entrepreneurs trained

\$70,000 grant funding invested directly in businesses

Talbot County Business Appreciation Summit

6 Businesses Highlighted

2025 Awardees

Blueprint Hospitality • BAAM Academic Center • Fello Port Street Commons • The Oaks Waterfront Hotel • UM Shore Regional Medical Center • Walter E. Chase Sr.

Tourism Impact

Talbot County welcomed **657,600 visitors** who spent **\$320.2 million** in 2024 and generated \$62.2 million in tax revenue.

County tourism businesses directly support **1,960 employees**.

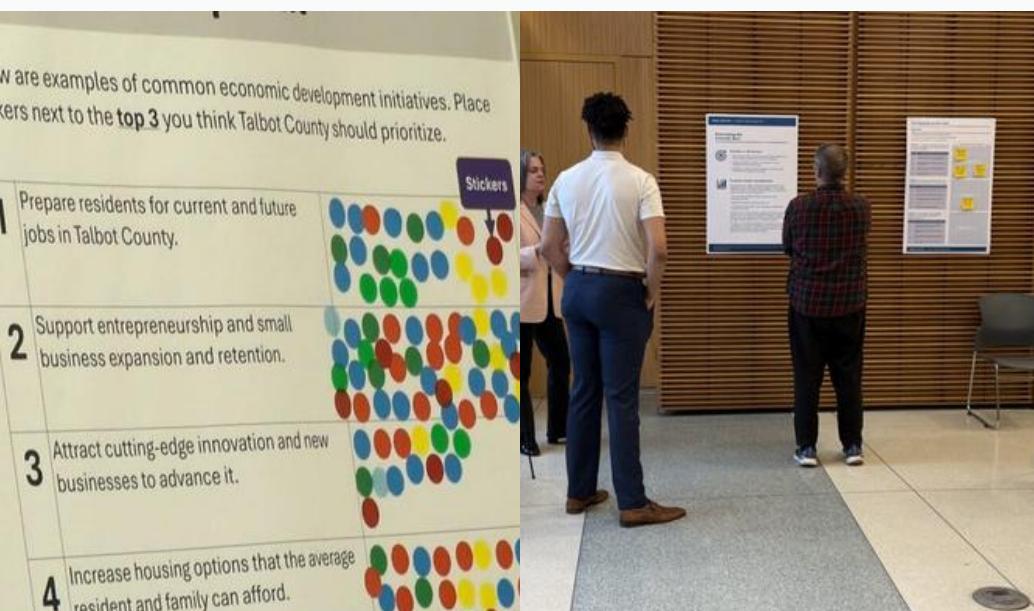
Source: Top Department Report Bottom Tourism Economics, 2024 Annual Report

ECONOMIC STABILITY

A Roadmap for the Future

In January 2025, the **Department of Economic Development and Tourism** began the development of a robust strategic plan to guide its work in the years ahead. Built through data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and close coordination with County leadership and regional partners, the plan establishes clear priorities and a disciplined framework for action. More than a vision statement, it is a working roadmap, aligning economic development and tourism, focusing resources where they matter most, and positioning Talbot County to respond thoughtfully to opportunity and change while remaining grounded in community values.

Photos: Left Public input gathered during Strategic Planning Open House meeting. Right Community members gather to review data in May 2025.



December 9, 2025

Award-Winning Leadership in Tourism

In 2025, Talbot County's leadership in tourism received state recognition. Cassandra Vanhooser, the Director of Economic Development and Tourism, was named Maryland Tourism Person of the Year. The county also earned Best Website honors for the Chesapeake Country All-American Road website as part of the Eastern Shore consortium. These accolades highlight Talbot County's commitment to strategic partnerships and quality storytelling that promote it as a destination.

175

Number of Stakeholders

Engaged across all events and meetings including 16 in-depth interviews with subject matter experts.

6

Community Open Houses

In-person open houses hosted across Talbot County (Cordova, Queen Anne, Easton, Oxford, St. Michaels, Tilghman Island, and Trappe)

6

Focus Groups

Education, Finance/Real Estate, Innovation, Manufacturing, Nonprofits, and Tourism

KEY INVESTMENTS

Building the Mid-Shore's Healthcare Hub

The **University of Maryland Shore Regional Medical Center** project represents a once-in-a-generation investment for Talbot County and the broader Mid-Shore region, made possible through sustained interdepartmental and interagency collaboration. The Talbot County Department of Public Works, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, the County Manager's Office, and the Talbot County Council have worked in close partnership with the Town of Easton, Easton Utilities, and dedicated staff from UM Shore Regional Health to align infrastructure planning, economic strategy, and policy leadership around this transformative campus.

Designed around a hub-and-spoke model, with the regional medical center serving as the hub, the facility will support a coordinated healthcare network **serving five counties and approximately 170,000 residents across the Mid-Shore**. This collective effort includes the pursuit of a pending U.S. Economic Development Administration grant to support critical water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure, ensuring the campus is positioned not only as a modern healthcare facility, but as a catalyst for workforce development, innovation, and long-term regional resilience.



Economic Impact

The Regional Medical Center is expected to deliver significant short- and long-term economic benefits for Talbot County and the Mid-Shore, strengthening the region's employment base, supporting local businesses, and enhancing overall economic stability.

WHY IT MATTERS

A strong healthcare system is a cornerstone of a stable local economy. Beyond providing critical medical services, the Regional Medical Center supports workforce growth, attracts complementary businesses, and enhances the Mid-Shore's competitiveness as a place to live and work. By investing in healthcare infrastructure today, Talbot County is strengthening long-term economic resilience, improving quality of life for residents, and positioning the region for sustainable growth for decades to come.



XX

Construction Phase Employment

(often longer when needed) to ensure successful connection to resources and stable care

XX

Permanent Healthcare Jobs

Full-time positions upon opening, spanning clinical, administrative, and support roles

\$xxM

Annual economic output

in regional economic activity



Workforce Attraction & Retention

Increased ability to recruit healthcare professionals and retain residents who might otherwise seek services and employment outside the region



Easton Airport: A Regional Economic Engine

Easton Airport continues to be one of the Eastern Shore's most important economic assets, supporting business travel, flight training, public safety operations, and regional commerce. Ongoing improvements ensure the airport remains safe, efficient, and competitive.

Regional Impact

- Supports **600+ jobs** across the Mid-Shore
- More than **80** aviation and aviation-adjacent businesses
- Generates over **\$91 million** in business revenue for the local economy.

Aviation in Talbot County: by the Numbers

Learn more about the economic impact and businesses at Easton Airport.



KEY INVESTMENT

Airport Modernization Project

Construction is underway on the Airport Modernization Project at Easton Airport, representing a multi-year investment in safety and operational improvements. The project will enhance airfield infrastructure and facilities, supporting business travel, emergency services, flight training, and the airport's role as a regional transportation hub.

KEY INVESTMENT

Leading Through Digital Modernization

In 2025, Talbot County advanced its leadership in modern tourism marketing and business outreach through the full redesign of its two primary digital platforms, TourTalbot.org and TalbotWorks.org. Built to meet current standards for accessibility, mobile performance, and user experience, the redesigned sites make it easier for visitors, residents, and businesses to engage with County resources. Together, these investments strengthened Talbot County's digital presence and underscored a clear commitment to setting a high standard for effective, user-centered public communication.



Fiduciary Responsibility

Did you know?

Talbot County Government is responsible for collecting payments and fees, and administering funds that support a wide range of County departments and partner agencies that deliver essential public services, including:



Emergency Services

911 calls, EMS, emergency response



Public Works

Roads, stormwater, sanitation, engineering



Economic Development & Tourism

Business attraction, retention



Infrastructure Services

Sewer, broadband, and capital infrastructure



Community Services

Programs supporting seniors, families, youth



Planning & Growth

Permits, zoning, development review



Transportation

County Road maintenance, transit partnerships



Parks & Recreation

Recreational programs, parks, ice rink, golf course



Animal Care

Humane services and community education



Public Schools

Public schools and student services



Public Libraries

Easton and St. Michaels branches



Talbot County Sheriff's Office

Law enforcement operations



State's Attorney's Office

Prosecution and victim services



Circuit Court & District Court

Judicial operations and court services



Chesapeake College

Regional higher education and workforce training



Health Department

Public health services and community programs



Local Management Board

Youth and family services



Landfill & Environmental Services

Solid waste operations, recycling, and environmental compliance

Strong fiscal management ensures Talbot County can deliver essential services today while planning responsibly for the future. Through transparent budgeting, conservative financial practices, and public engagement, the County safeguards taxpayer resources and long-term stability.

How does the Budget Process Work?

Talbot County Government's budget represents the allocation of resources needed to deliver essential services. Each year, the County Manager and finance leadership team guide the budget process by:

- **Estimating revenues** from State and local taxes, grants, and user fees
- **Reviewing budget requests** from the Board of Education, Sheriff's Office, Talbot County Free Library, State's Attorney, Courts, Chesapeake College, partner agencies, and County departments
- **Proposing a balanced budget** for the County Council's consideration

Developing the Budget

In developing the budget, our approach is to:

- Build a fiscally responsible and sustainable budget
- Discuss department and agency priorities and needs
- Balance funding through internal reallocation of resources while limiting tax increases
- Plan for a budget that meets future needs



May 15, 2025

County Retains AAA Bond Rating

In May 2025, rating agency Fitch Ratings assigned Talbot County Government's \$25.8 million general-obligation bonds a AAA rating, and affirmed the County's Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at AAA with a stable outlook. The rating reflects Talbot County's strong financial management, stable revenue base, and conservative debt and budget practices. This AAA rating underscores the County's fiscal strength and supports investor confidence in its long-term financial health and ability to fund essential public services and capital projects.

Capital Improvement

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds one-time investments in community assets – including land preservation, facility construction, and infrastructure upgrades. The Council reviews the CIP annually and designates funding supported by General Fund revenues or bonds.

Enterprise Funds

Enterprise Funds projects—such as stormwater, sewer, landfill, and environmental services—are funded through user fees, ensuring that operational costs are covered by those who directly use the services.

Public Engagement

The Council receives public input, makes revisions based on community feedback, and approves the final budget in May each year.

Residents can view the Fiscal 2026 Budget Timeline and stay informed through Engage Talbot.



Be involved in the budget process

Visit engage.talbotcountymd.gov to view the budget timeline, explore FAQs, and sign up for notifications.

FY2026 Budget Highlights

Talbot County's Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Budget totals **\$161.1 million** and reflects the Council's commitment to fiscal responsibility while continuing to invest in public safety, education, and critical infrastructure.

Educational Supplement

The FY26 budget includes a **1.06 cent education supplement per \$100** of assessed valuation to help fund teacher pensions and nine priority educational positions, including two social workers, six instructional assistants, and one special education teacher. These investments support student well-being, classroom instruction, and specialized learning needs across the school system.

Income Tax Rate

The FY26 budget maintains Talbot County's historically conservative financial approach with no increases to the County's schedule of fees and an unchanged income tax rate of 2.4%, the second lowest in Maryland.

Capital Improvement Projects

FY26 capital funding supports key long-term investments, including continued progress on the Public Safety Complex and North EMS Station, road and culvert upgrades, facility improvements, and infrastructure related to the new regional medical center. These projects strengthen service delivery and support future community needs.

The budget ensures that essential services remain fully funded while giving departments the resources needed to meet operational demands and maintain high-quality services for residents. Public safety, emergency services, transportation, and infrastructure continue to be key priorities, supporting long-term resilience and community needs.

The final FY26 budget, along with detailed funding summaries and departmental allocations, is available online at [FY2026 Budget | engage.talbotcountymd.gov](https://engage.talbotcountymd.gov).

Public Safety

\$39,735,488

Other

\$15,374,155



Where does the Dollar Go?

A breakdown of how Talbot County invests each dollar of the FY26 budget to support education, public safety, infrastructure, and essential services.

Education

\$65,801,521

County Gov't Operations

\$18,836,307

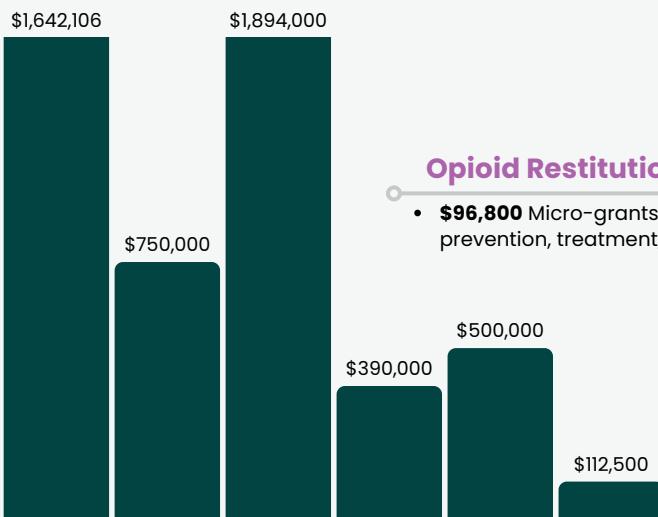
Infrastructure

\$21,369,529

Leveraging Grants to Support Community Priorities

In addition to the County's annual budget, Talbot County works with regional, state, and federal partners to secure grant funding that advances community priorities and strengthens local services. These resources help support projects that might otherwise exceed local funding capacity, allowing the County to invest strategically in infrastructure, economic development, public safety, environmental protection, and quality-of-life initiatives.

County-Administered Grant Programming



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Of the total \$7.2 million in funding, recent allocations were approved for the following:

- **\$1,642,106** Community Nonprofit Support
- **\$750,000** County Infrastructure & Technology
- **\$1,894,000** Broadband Projects
- **\$500,000** Fire Companies Support
- **\$390,000** Public Works Sewer Extension
- **\$112,500** Food Banks

Total: \$5,288,606

Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund

Through the **Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund**, Talbot County invested **\$3.233 million** received through the Mid-Shore Regional Council to support 14 projects across the county. These projects, concluding at the end of 2025, strengthened priority sites and leveraged significant outside funding.

A signature investment was the *F3 Tech Biotech Manufacturing Facility*. Talbot County's \$500,000 contribution helped secure an additional **\$1.25 million** in federal and state funding, supporting a facility that opened in late 2025 and is already attracting biotechnology entrepreneurs.

Cannabis Reinvestment Fund

- **\$731,000 (Not Allocated Yet)** Aimed to support youth programs, housing stability, homelessness prevention, and other restorative, community-focused initiatives in 2026

COVID CARES

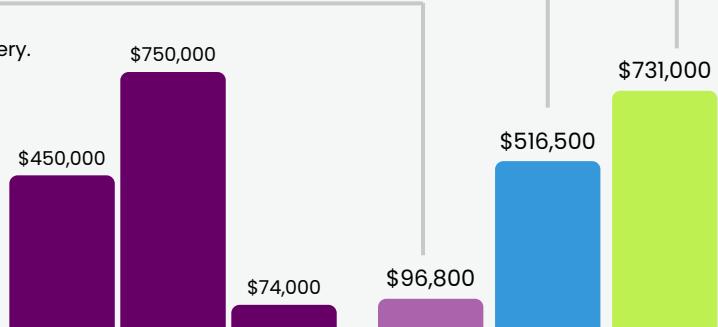
Food Security: Supports food distribution, equipment, and facility improvements through June 2026.

- **\$143,000** Neighborhood Service Center
- **\$273,500** St. Michaels Community Center
- **\$100,000** Upper Shore Aging

Total: \$516,500

Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF)

- **\$96,800** Micro-grants for prevention, treatment, recovery.



Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

CDBG is a federally funded program administered through DHCD, that direct funds towards neighborhood revitalization, housing opportunities, economic development, and improved public facilities and services.

- FY24 **\$450,000** St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry
- FY25 **\$750,000** For All Seasons Mental Health Center
- FY26 **\$74,000** Talbot Interfaith Homeless Shelter ADA Improvements

Total: \$1,424,000

A Look Ahead to 2026

Talbot County remains committed to continuous improvement, innovation, and meaningful community engagement.

In 2026, several major multi-year projects will reach completion, bringing noticeable benefits to residents and businesses alike. These efforts will strengthen government operations, improve customer service, and support a vibrant, resilient future. Collectively, they demonstrate our dedication to transparency, operational excellence, and delivering high-quality services for all who live, work, and play in Talbot County.



Spring Opening of North EMS Station

The North EMS Station in northern Talbot County is expected to open in 2026, expanding emergency medical coverage and reducing response times for thousands of residents. This new station represents a significant investment in public safety infrastructure and community preparedness.



Early 2026 St. Michaels Library Expansion

The expansion of the Talbot County Free Library in St. Michaels will deliver new community spaces, improved accessibility, and dedicated programming areas. The upgraded branch will better serve families, students, and lifelong learners, strengthening access to educational and cultural resources for the Bay Hundred region.

Accommodations Tax Billing & Data Collection

In 2026, the County will launch a new online accommodations tax billing and data collection system to modernize reporting, improve compliance, and streamline processes for local lodging operators.

Complete Comprehensive Plan

Talbot County will finalize its updated Comprehensive Plan, a long-range blueprint that guides land use, growth management, housing, transportation, natural resources, and community priorities.

New Home for Emergency Services

Construction continues on the new Public Safety Complex, which will bring Emergency Services and the Sheriff's Office together under one roof. The current Port Street facility will remain a fully functional backup 9-1-1 dispatch center, providing essential redundancy and operational continuity.



One Year, Many Stories

From Top Left

- 1) Director of Corrections Joseph Hughes honors staff during Corrections Week.
- 2) Darrin and George from Facilities gear up for incoming snow, loading trucks with ice rock.
- 3) DES staff participates in a peer-led training.
- 4) Employees participated in Parks and Recreation's Shore Social Volleyball League.
- 5) Council President Chuck Callahan gives remarks at Talbot Day.
- 6) Parks and Recreation staff LaDarian Blake and Ellie Kilmon host special programming during Parks and Recreation Month.
- 7) Corrections staff celebrates Cpl. Andrea Taylor-Moaney, the 2025 Officer of the Year.

Building a Stronger Talbot, Together.

**Talbot County
Government • 2025
Annual Report**



*Prepared by the Office of
Communications, December 2025*