

County Administrator's Memo

To: Chairman Floyd Thomas and Members of the Board of Supervisors
From: Percy C. Ashcraft
Date: 10/24/06
Re: Benchmarking Analysis

The government of Caroline County has always been committed to providing services and programs that contribute to a high quality of life for its citizens. Like many organizations representing both the private and public sector, Caroline County's government has found it necessary to take an inside look at itself and begin the process of planning to serve its citizens better than ever.

This document is an ongoing product of a "Benchmark Analysis" conducted by the staff of Caroline County. This is the sixth year of a process that produces recommendations that were first presented to the Board of Supervisors in July, 2000. Since that time, the government has been working to improve its level of performance and efficiency.

The categories included in this analysis include: **Service Delivery, Employee Development, Community Involvement, Policy Direction and Budgeting and Financial Controls.** The analysis of these categories provides the most well rounded aspect of County government and touches all parts of its services and programs.

Scores to rank progress are recorded in every category. There are **188** possible points as the ultimate benchmark for the County to achieve. When the analysis was conducted in July, 2000, **110.0** points were recorded, or **58.5** percent of the ultimate benchmark. The second report submitted in January, 2002 increased the total points to a baseline of **128.6**, or **68.4** percent of the ultimate benchmark. The third report issued in June, 2003 increased the total points to **139.3** or **74.1** percent of the ultimate benchmark. The current report dropped back to **136.3** or **73.5** percent of the ultimate benchmark.

The individual categories and their percentage to the ultimate benchmark include:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2006</u>
<i>Community Involvement</i>	57.1	74.3	75.3	75.0
<i>Employee Development</i>	56.9	73.0	79.0	72.7
<i>Policy Direction</i>	66.2	75.8	85.4	78.3
<i>Service Delivery</i>	63.7	69.8	74.5	76.8
<i>Budget & Financial Controls</i>	51.8	51.8	59.5	62.5

This document will continue to be used by County employees to improve their daily operations and also increase our dialogue with the Board of Supervisors. With that in mind, the focus is to improve the level of service offered to our citizens and increase productivity and tighten financial controls. County government wants to have the highest feeling of trust bestowed by its citizens and understands that as servants for the public we have exceptional responsibilities. It will be through improvements made by the recommendations contained within this document and future Board actions that will serve as future benchmarks of Caroline County government.

I would like to thank the members of the Administrative Executive Committee for their input in preparing this analysis. Most of the burden of establishing better government falls on their shoulders as they interact daily with their employees and the citizens of Caroline County. Members joining me on the Administrative Executive Committee include: Mr. Alan Partin, Assistant County Administrator; Mr. Garland Atkins, Director of Finance; Mr. John Sieg, Retired Director of Finance; Mr. Allen Ramsay, Director of Public Works; Mr. Mike Finchum, Director of Planning and Community Development; Mr. Donnell Howard, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Ed Fuzy, Director of Fire and Rescue; and Mr. Gary Wilson, Director of Economic Development.

The Staff welcomes any input you might have into this process and we certainly encourage suggestions and feedback. The outcome of this process is aimed at providing better services to your constituents and

making the future brighter for those who choose to live and work in
Caroline County.

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Caroline County

Virginia

Benchmark Analysis

October, 2006

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Community Involvement

Total Possible Score: 32 18.3 (2000) 23.8 (2001)
 24.1 (2003) 24.0 (2006)

1. *Citizens have convenient access to elected officials and top managers to provide input on policy decisions:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 3.0 (2000) 3.3 (2001) 3.1 (2003)
 3.6 (2006)

Current Practices: Phone numbers and e-mail addresses of elected officials and department heads are published and readily available for citizen response through directories and internet....Citizens have the opportunity to attend BOS meetings, both at the Community Service Center and in the districts....Elected officials receive information from staff when it is necessary to involve them....A Speaker's Bureau is in place....County website is utilized to seek citizen comments and conduct surveys....Appointments with citizens are made in a timely manner when requested....Roles of employees have been specified through definitive job descriptions and assignments....Public information meetings are held on a regular basis....Elected officials and staff have a greater presence at public events....Elected officials have been present to greet citizens at public events....Annual meeting was held with Town of Bowling Green and budget meetings with School Board members....Elected officials and staff are more involved in civic organizations....Voice mail was installed as part of the County's telephone system.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () On-line chats will be held by elected officials with citizens.
- () Encourage regular meetings involving Board of Supervisors, Towns of Bowling Green and Port Royal and School Board.
- () Elected officials and staff should establish data bases to send out regular information updates.
- () Satellite offices will be placed throughout the County to improve accessibility.

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2. *Public forums are routinely held throughout the community to solicit general public comment about Caroline County services*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.8 (2000)** **3.4 (2001)** **3.3 (2003)**
2.9 (2006)

Current Practices: Board of Supervisor meetings are held throughout the districts.....More Supervisors are holding individual meetings with groups throughout their districts.....Public hearings have been held in communities and districts on different issues.....Community meetings with business leaders are held on timely topics.....Citizen boards and commissions are holding meetings in various districts.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Elected officials and staff should have more of a presence at Property Owners' Association meetings.
- () Forums should be developed on County website.

3. *Public opinion surveys are conducted on a regular basis to obtain citizen ratings of services:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.6 (2000)** **3.4 (2001)** **3.4 (2003)**
2.1 (2006)

Current Practices: Transportation Survey was conducted in Spring, 2000.....Surveys have been conducted in County newsletter.....Surveys have been conducted at community meetings held by Supervisors.....Surveys have been available at libraries, Social Services Department and Health Department.....Caroline's Promise occasionally runs surveys on children's issues.....Sub-area planning groups survey the community before finalizing their reports.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Hire professional survey firms to gather important information and reduce margin of error.

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4. *Caroline County sponsors outreach programs to encourage citizens to be active in public issues:*

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 1.8 (2000) 2.6 (2001) 2.6 (2003)
3.0 (2006)**

Current Practices: Sponsored “how-to” forums on timely topics.....Encouraged more citizen programs like Adopt-a-Highway, Neighborhood Watch, etc.....Received greater input from civic organizations, churches, property owners’ associations, etc. on all public matters pertaining to County government.....Placed suggestion boxes at libraries, businesses and other strategic locations where the public can easily provide input or make suggestions.....Implemented public transportation plan to give citizens better access to government offices.....Encouraged County government to partner with the School Board to encourage more learning programs about local government for grades K-12 that would include more field trips.....Improved signs directing citizens to various County departments and facilities.....Expanded opportunities for Senior Citizens to include establishment of central location in Bowling Green.....Established Junior Police Academy during the summer to teach youth the importance of law enforcement.....Worked with public and private sectors to improve the availability and affordability of day care.....Developed “How To” pamphlets for each department.....Published an annual Schedule of Events and Activities in January of every year.....Implemented policies to encourage local purchasing from Caroline vendors.....Implemented policy to encourage local hiring of Caroline residents.....Conducted annual seminars for contractors and realtors in anticipation of housing growth in the County.....Expanded partnership with Fort AP Hill to better utilize military resources.....Expanded involvement in regional programs.....Created “Jobs Hotline”.....Developed Fall Prevention Program for the elderly.....Established Juvenile Fire Prevention Program.....Established Babysitter Education Program with emphasis on injury prevention and first aid.....Established Disaster Response Program for Animal Control.....Established Developer/Real Estate/Engineer Banquet Awards Show.....Established a Building/Development Committee to foster communications between Builders and the County.....Published County calendar.....Facilitated sub-area planning groups in the community.....Prepared packets for new residents.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop a system where public services are offered at “satellite” locations, such as payment of fees, purchase of stickers, etc.
- () Place greater emphasis on people moving into the community.

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5. *Neighborhoods in Caroline County have been empowered to make some decisions impacting service delivery in their areas:*

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.2 (2000) 2.5 (2001) 2.7 (2003)
3.3 (2006)**

Current Practices: Ladysmith Planning Committee.....Dawn Progressive Association.....Lake Caroline Property Owners Association.....Local Emergency Planning Committee.....Lake Land 'Or Property Owners Association.....Port Royal Historic Association.....Dawn Water & Sewer Committee.....H.E.L.P. Bowling Green.....Madison Ruritan Club (County Fair).....Town of Bowling Green (Harvest Festival).....Churches have been utilized to disseminate information.....Greater communication has taken place between groups and County officials.....Bowling Green-Milford Sub-Area Planning Committee.....Port Royal Sub-Area Planning Committee.....Established district plans and identified groups that can participate.....Developed a plan for civil defense.....Organized planning groups that complement sub-area planning committees.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Publish a County services directory to be included on the website that would also include major publications such as the Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan and annual Budget.
- () Work closely with George Washington Planning Region Staff to assist with analysis of the demographics of the County.

6. *Caroline County provides assistance to neighborhoods who want to organize and be eligible for special grant programs.*

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.5 (2000) 3.1 (2001) 3.0 (2003)
3.6 (2006)**

Current Practices: Mini-park program provided funds for groups interested in recreation, such as Dawn Progressive Association.....Funds were appropriated for the installation of lights at Caroline Little League Park.....Landfill fees were waived for H.E.L.P. Bowling Green in demolition of old buildings.....Funds expended through Tourism Fund.....Involved civic organizations to a greater extent.....Funds were appropriated for the installation of lights at Caroline High School Baseball Field.....Developed programs that small groups can organize and assist with.....Brought in outside agencies that can explain resources.....Accessed congressional staff to address

needs.....Explored faith based grant programs.....Worked closer with RADCO to research grant opportunities.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Encourage groups to get involved with the Community Pride Program.

7. Caroline County makes an effort to promote the cultural diversity of its residents through special events such as festivals, parades and neighborhood pride parties:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.6 (2000)** **2.4 (2001)** **2.6 (2003)**
3.9 (2006)

Current Practices: Fairs & Festivals sponsored by the former Tourism Committee.....Worked with the Sheriff’s Office to implement National Night Out.....Increased funding for County Fair.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Conduct a needs assessment to see what activities are not being held, or what groups are not being properly recognized.

8. A community needs assessment has been conducted to gauge the effectiveness and responsiveness of current government services:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.8 (2000)** **3.1 (2001)** **3.4 (2003)**
2.4 (2006)

Current Practices: Implemented system of follow-up for citizens to rate department responsiveness after they were provided a service.....Citizens are frequently surveyed through the County newsletter.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Continue to survey citizens frequently through the County newsletter.

Employee Development

Total Possible Score: 52 29.6 (2000) 38.0 (2001)
 41.1 (2003) 37.8 (2006)

1. *Employees have the opportunity to participate in setting objectives and performance requirements for their work groups:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.4 2000 3.1 2001 3.3 2003
 3.6 2006

Current Practices: Staff meetings.....Department heads and front-line supervisors are leading more one-on-one and small group meetings.....Information on short and long-range goals are being shared with employees so they know the direction the County is going.....Department heads continue to make visits to other Counties to compare operations.....Employees are participating in role shifting to create better understanding of job situations.....Employees are meeting and participating in discussions prior to submittal of six month goals.....Employees are participating in follow-up of six month goals after Board of Supervisors' approval.....Employees are encouraged to give more dialogue and feedback in performance evaluations.....Employees are asked how they would choose to participate in department discussions.....Employees have more ways to generate workplace suggestions.....Employees are being more involved in problem solving.

Action Plan for Improvement

() Conduct greater training opportunities for second line supervisors.

2. *Effective communications systems are in place to encourage employees to receive and provide feedback to management:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.8 (2000) 2.9 (2001) 3.2 (2003)
 3.5 (2006)

Current Practices: Staff meetings.....Performance evaluations.....Suggestion boxes.....Internal memorandums from County Administrator and Department heads.....County Administrator, Department heads and front line supervisors are holding more one-on-one and small group meetings.....E-mail is being more utilized.....County

Administrator and Department heads maintain an open-door policy.....Employees are being visited at their worksite.....Phone system that contains voice mail.....Employee handbook was developed and given to every employee.....Employee satisfaction survey was conducted and results implemented.....Notes and cards of encouragement are routinely sent to all employees.....Employee webpage.....

Action Plan for Improvement

- () **Expand employee suggestion incentive program.**

3. Training programs in Caroline County have been set up to allow employees to:

a. Refine their skills to keep current on new technologies and procedures to do their jobs better:

Total Possible Score: 4.0	<u>2.4</u> 2000	<u>3.3</u> 2001	<u>3.6</u> 2003
	<u>3.0</u> 2006		

Current Practices: Six hours mandatory training implemented in January, 2000, 12 hours in January, 2001, 24 hours in January, 2002.....County provides continuing education which is reimbursable and pays for all training directly related to job description.....Individual skills were defined for each employee and annual training goals were developed for each department.....Each department defined their skill levels that need to be improved to meet the goals and objectives of the County.....Training budgets are in place for every department.....Employees have greater awareness regarding training and educational opportunities.....More employees have been encouraged to take computer classes and training.....IT Committee and Technology Manager help to address employee needs.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Hold small group classes led by the IT consultant.
- () Identify strengths and weaknesses of all employees through technology and set goals for improvement.
- () Develop more structured training schedule.

() Utilize the website to assist employees regarding education and training.

b. Develop new skills to prepare for advancement or other careers within the organization:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.1 (2000)** **2.8 (2001)** **3.1 (2003)**
2.5 (2006)

Current Practices: Six hours mandatory training implemented in January, 2000, 12 hours in January, 2001, 24 hours in January, 2002.....County provides continuing education which is reimbursable and pays for all training directly related to job description.....Mentor program for new hires was established.....Supervisors developed more coaching techniques to share with subordinates.....Cross-training opportunities have been increased.....Job responsibilities are shared among departments.....Hiring practices have been adjusted to emphasize promoting from within whenever possible.....Developed career ladder programs in most departments, including evaluation of job descriptions and pay scales.....Job openings are posted internally to give employees opportunity to change departments.....Greater participation in the Wellness Program.....Employees attend staff meetings and BOS meetings from time to time to build understanding of government process.

Action Plan for Improvement

() Develop new positions that require special skill sets to meet needs of citizens.

c. Learn how to interrelate more effectively with other employees and co-workers from different cultural backgrounds:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.5 (2001)** **2.2 (2001)** **2.4 (2003)**
2.2 (2006)

Current Practices: Employees interact mostly through social gatherings and meetings.....Job Satisfaction survey gave employees an opportunity to express likes, dislikes, customs, etc. of their job.....Team building was promoted through training exercises and seminars.....Provided specific training for males who work for females.

Action Plan for Improvement

() Hold direct training seminars on the subject.

- () Provide specific training for males who work for females.
- () Provide Myers-Briggs training for employees.

4. *Alternative employment options (e.g. job sharing, flexible hours) are available in Caroline County:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.5 2000** **3.2 2001** **3.7 2003**
3.5 2006

Current Practices: Implement schedule changes on a case-by-case basis, except for regular practices in the Public Works Department.....Some departments are working four, 10-hour days.....Adjusted schedules from traditional 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. to other alternatives that could include Saturdays.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Review positions to see how two part-time positions can make up one full-time position.

5. *Minority employees in my organization are encouraged to pursue advancement opportunities:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.4 (2000)** **3.3 (2001)** **2.9 (2003)**
2.6 (2006)

Current Practices: Promotion was given to female employees in 2000 to department supervisor and department coordinator.....African-Americans and women have been encouraged to apply for job openings through notification of all sources.....Greater training opportunities were provided to minority employees.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Enroll African-Americans and women in formal education programs tied to financial incentives.

6. *Physically challenged employees are provided responsible jobs within my organization:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.0 (2000)** **3.2 (2001)** **3.1 (2003)**
3.1 (2006)

Current Practices: Americans with Disability Act is being implemented, especially with new construction.....Provided adequate office space and equipment to meet the needs of challenged employees.....Have given special consideration to Caroline County residents who are physically challenged and apply for County jobs.

Action Plan for Improvement

() Develop list of employees who have disabilities and/or special needs.

7. *My local government has a comprehensive safety program for its employees*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.8 (2000)** **2.3 (2001)** **2.9 (2003)**
2.6 (2006)

Current Practices: Involvement of Accident Review Committee.....Needs assessment conducted by liability insurance and workers' compensation carrier.....Followed through with recommendations from needs assessment.

8. *Employee suggestions are supported, and good ideas are implemented:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.5 (2000)** **3.0 (2001)** **3.6 (2003)**
3.0 (2006)

Current Practices: Suggestion boxes are in various locations and visibility increased.....Employee of the Month, Quarter and Year programs were implemented in January, 2000.....Special awards program developed for employees who make suggestions that save the County money.....Department heads and front line supervisors have increased their level of participation.....Department recognition ceremonies are being held.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Promote competition among departments and reward accordingly.
- () Have smaller committees continue to do the work of the former Employee Relations Committee.

9. *Employees in my organization are encouraged to take risks and to be creative and innovative:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.8** (2000) **3.2** (2001) **3.6** (2003)
3.4 (2006)

Current Practices: Employees are now being recognized for their effort, not for just completing a goal or a task.....Employees are more involved with small team and individual projects.....Each employee has at least one special project to work on during each six month period.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop more incentive programs for overachievement.
- () Continue to improve the working relationship between supervisor and subordinate.

10. *My local government sets up labor-management committees to address employee issues of general concern (e.g. health insurance, training programs):*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.0** (2000) **3.5** (2001) **3.5** (2003)
2.9 (2006)

Current Practices: Accident Review Committee.....Departmental safety committees.....Established department subcommittees to make recommendations on various issues.....

11. In the event of employee layoffs due to budget cuts, my organization has a plan to assist displaced workers:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.4 (2000)** **2.0 (2001)** **2.2 (2003)**
1.9 (2006)

Current Practices: No plan is currently in place.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop a plan which could include:
 - a. Process of continuing current benefits such as health insurance.
 - b. Process of receiving new benefits such as unemployment compensation.
 - c. Process of directing workers to training and educational opportunities.
 - d. Policy on recalling workers if positions are filled at a later time.

- () Review the need to fill all vacancies and possibly adjust the job descriptions.

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Policy Direction

Total Possible Score: 24 15.9 (2000) 18.2 (2001)
 20.5 (2003) 18.8 (2006)

1. Caroline County has a mission statement that is recognized and understood throughout the organization.

Total Possible Score: 4.0 1.8 (2000) 2.1 (2001) 3.1 (2003)
 3.3 (2006)

Current Practices: A version of a mission statement is currently contained in the Employee Personnel Policy Manual & Employee Handbook...Have instituted components of mission statement into various training sessions.....Mission statements have been framed and given to every County employee.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Include mission statement on pay stubs.
- () Mission statement will be given to all new employees, along with a pin and note from the County Administrator.
- () Include mission statement in all brochures and letterhead.
- () Develop Fact Sheet that includes mission statement.
- () Include mission statement in every edition of County Newsletter.
- () Have mission statement shown at beginning of every BOS meeting on cable access channel.
- () Increase emphasis of mission statement at department staff meetings.
- () Relate mission statement to Employee of the Quarter honorees.
- () Relate mission statement to hiring process.

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2. Goals and objectives have been established for all departments.

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 3.2 (2000) 3.9 (2001) 4.0 (2003)
3.6 (2006)**

Current Practices: Goals and objectives are established in five major ways: (1) Six Month Planning Goals; (2) Comprehensive Plan; (3) Strategic Plan; (4) Staff Meetings; and (5) Board of Supervisor directives.....Department input was provided for the update of the Comprehensive and Strategic plans...Better communication is existing for all employees to understand the goals and objectives of the department and the County...Greater emphasis is being placed on departmental meetings to discuss goals and objectives and other concerns employees might have.....Department goals were reached by establishing goals within each division.....Performance Base Budgeting was implemented.....Better documentation of outcomes and tracking of progress was achieved.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Establishment of inter-departmental goals and scenario planning.
- () Receive greater input from all employees.

3. Job responsibilities are clearly defined for executives and middle managers in the organization.

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 3.1 (2000) 3.6 (2001) 3.4 (2003)
3.3 (2006)**

Current Practices: County has continually updated its job descriptions with the assistance of an outside consultant.....Emphasis has been placed on supervisor training.....Department heads are sharing their knowledge more with employees and taking advantage of “teachable” moments and situations.....Confidence is growing within employee ranks through shared decision-making techniques.....Employees are shown it is acceptable to take risks and to fail without retribution.....Loyalty for the Caroline County government organization is stressed throughout each department.....Employee responsibility is assigned for each project.....Training has increased in project management and time management.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop innovative ways to get input from employees on departmental issues.

- () Greater defining of responsibilities between department heads and front line supervisors: (a) Decision-making (solution-oriented); (b) Customer responses; (c) Explanation of ongoing projects; (d) Serving as coaches and mentors; (e) Ability to lead.
- () Constant assessment of time management, not task management.
- () Develop plan for inter-departmental responsibilities.
- () Reassess responsibilities on job descriptions for executives and middle managers.

4. *Reward systems for managers are based on performance results.*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.8** (2000) **3.4** (2001) **3.3** (2003)
2.8 (2006)

Current Practices: County offers financial rewards for managers in two ways: (1) Merit system up to 4 percent at time of performance evaluation; (2) Periodic raises approved by the Board of Supervisors.....New evaluation system was implemented for supervisory and non-supervisory employees....Greater participation in employee recognition program such as Employee of the Quarter, etc.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Better identifying of goals and ways to recognize employees who assist in the completion of those goals.
- () Identify better ways to examine performance results.
- () Develop ways to publicize individuals who receive recognition.

5. *Board policy decisions are explained and disseminated to all affected personnel throughout the organization.*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.5** (2000) **2.7** (2001) **3.3** (2003)
2.9 (2006)

Current Practices: Board decisions and directives are communicated throughout the organization in seven different ways: (1) Staff meetings; (2) Department staff meetings;

Service Delivery

Total Possible Score: 40 25.5 (2000) 27.9 (2001)
 29.8 (2003) 30.7 (2006)

1. *Caroline County has an established customer service program for all departments and activities:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.5 2000 3.3 2001 3.5 2003
 3.6 2006

Current Practices: Each department has guidelines in which to serve the public.....Regular hours of operation have been established.....Comprehensive customer service program implemented in April, 2001, focusing on information and communication; responsiveness; problem resolution; on-time reliable, consistent service delivery; accuracy; and courteous and friendly service.....Greater focus on customer service oriented employee training.....Greater emphasis given to adequate parking, particularly those with disabilities.....Issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act are being addressed with new and renovated facilities.....New system of performance for customer visits has been implemented.....New customer theme implemented.....Out-of-office visits have been increased with more one-on-one opportunities with citizens....."How-to" brochures and maps have been published to assist citizens.....Employees have been encouraged to return messages the same day as receiving a call or entertaining a visitor.....Staff has been encouraged to serve citizens by appointment after regular hours and on Saturdays.....Customer service has been emphasized throughout all government offices on letterhead and businesses cards.....Training was conducted for clerical personnel to emphasize delivery of information and greater personable response.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Make all forms, invoices, stationery, business cards, etc. easily readable and explainable to citizens.
- () Each department is identifying all primary and secondary customers and develop strategies to serve them.
- () Messages should be part of voice mail system to increase information to customers.

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2. Total Quality Management, or a similar program, has been implemented in Caroline County:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.9 (2000)** **2.4 (2001)** **2.3 (2003)**
3.2 (2006)

Current Practices: Administration uses ‘Management by Objectives’ program for measuring progress.....Principles of the public-sector view of Total Quality Management have also been introduced to each County department.....Citizen feedback has been encouraged.....Continuous improvement has been stressed through performance evaluations and reward incentives.....Employee Recognition Program has been implemented in each department.....Better follow-up of employees takes place after they have been given an assignment or provided input.....Employees are being empowered at every level.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Increase training on the subject of Total Quality Management

3. Caroline County has prepared a long-range strategic plan to identify community needs and develop strategies to meet the service demands of the future:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.3 2000** **3.5 2001** **3.2 2003**
3.4 2006

Current Practices: Comprehensive Plan.....Strategic Plan.....Six Month Goals.....Benchmarking.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Implement the principals of the Balanced Scorecard 101 strategic management system.
- () Each department will develop 3-5 year plans that will assist with development of overall County Strategic Plan.
- () Department impacts will be analyzed on all planning issues.

4. *Our existing technological capabilities have been fully evaluated and a program developed to bring new technology into Caroline County:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.9 (2000)** **2.1 (2001)** **3.4 2003**
3.3 (2006)

Current Practices: County has e-mail and internet capabilities for all departments.....Technology Team has been established and preliminary needs for each department have been assessed.....Improved phone systems with voice mail capability have been installed for several departments.....Technology consultant has been retained.....Long-term needs of each department have been determined.....Implementation has begun of IT plan.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Re-evaluate current IT plan.
- () Provide training for all employees on all phases of IT.

5. *Caroline County adheres to all environmental requirements:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.6 2000** **2.8 2001** **2.6 2003**
2.9 2006

Current Practices: Recycling Program.....Addressing non-attainment issues.....Quick responses to Notices of Violation by regulatory agencies.....Closure of landfill.....Non-attainment plan has been implemented.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Implement Community Pride Program.
- () Develop Environmental Management System.

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6. *The costs of our government services are compared to competitive alternative private sector services:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.4 (2000)** **2.6 (2001)** **2.9 (2003)**
3.0 (2006)

Current Practices: Finance department has begun the process of making comparisons.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Identify list of services which have private offerings and vica versa.
- () Conduct cost analysis of each service to see if it would be more cost effective to use private vendors.

7. *Caroline County's services are supportive of business and economic development activities that are beneficial to the entire community:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.1 (2000)** **3.1 (2001)** **3.5 (2003)**
3.2 (2006)

Current Practices: Purchasing procedures.....Zoning regulations.....Strategic planning.....Inspection procedures.....Marketing strategy.....Strong cooperation among departments.....Being more consistent with interpretations.....Working to establish a "business friendly" environment.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Each department will review operations and work with Director of Economic Development to present a report.
- () Continue to receive input from Business Roundtable.

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8. *Caroline County's ordinances and regulations are reviewed regularly to eliminate outdated or overly burdensome requirements:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.3 (2000)** **2.4 (2001)** **2.7 (2003)**
2.6 (2006)

Current Practices: Reviewed by County Attorney when particular ordinance or regulation is before the Board of Supervisors.....Outdated subject matter is eliminated when changes to ordinances are being considered.....Ordinances are compared frequently with other counties.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Have County Attorney review ordinances for outdated subject matter.

9. *Caroline County's organizational structure has been analyzed to ensure that unnecessary layers of bureaucracy have been eliminated:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.6 (2000)** **3.0 (2001)** **2.8 (2003)**
2.5 (2006)

Current Practices: Annual budget process.....When vacancy occurs.....Reorganization of departments.....Current staffing study assists in making budget recommendations.....Staffing comparisons have been made with other counties.....Department heads are constantly analyzing the effectiveness of their personnel.....Part-time help is being utilized to the greatest extent possible.....Contracted help is being utilized in some cases over hiring of full-time personnel.....In limited cases, full-time personnel are used instead of hiring contracted help.....Department heads are constantly analyzing the effectiveness of their personnel.....Financial controls are reviewed for Board approval.....Organizational structure is reviewed frequently.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop new staffing study.
- () Evaluate production of work on monthly basis.
- () Establish government satellite offices

10. *Caroline County's service standards for its departments compare favorably to those of national professional associations such as National Fire Protection Association, Government Finance Officers Association, American Library Association, etc.*

**Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.9 (2000) 2.7 (2001) 2.9 (2003)
3.0 (2006)**

Current Practices: All department heads belong to professional organizations.....More employees belong to professional organizations.....Standards to belong to certain organizations are being reviewed.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Invite state and national presidents to visit Caroline and discuss issues.
- () Host regional training on topics of interest.

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Budget and Financial Controls

Total Possible Score: 40 20.7 (2000) 20.7 (2001)
23.8 2003 25 (2006)

1. *Caroline County's financial reports meet the requirements set by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA):*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.1 (2000) 2.5 (2001) 2.9 (2003)
3.3 (2006)

Current Practices: Format complies with mandatory state code. Some GFOA policies are included.....Analysis of requirements not meeting the standards has been performed.....County's financial system reflects general accounting principles in moving toward an accrual system.....GASBY 34 was implemented in 2003.....Fixed assets summary has been compiled.

Action Plan for Improvement

() Explore popular reporting alternatives.

2. *Our budget process allows for timely and meaningful public discussion of proposals and alternatives*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 2.8 (2000) 2.9 (2001) 3.1 (2003)
3.4 (2006)

Current Practices: Budget was discussed in several worksessions in addition to regular meetings.....Public hearing requirements were met.....Budget documents were available at several locations.....Agendas have been cleared whenever possible to allow budget discussions to be more of the focal point.....Website utilized to seek public comment.....Documents were better organized for Board of Supervisors.....CIP coordinated with overall budget expenditures....."How to Use" budget guide was developed.....Multi-year financial plan was adopted.....Financial goals were linked to service improvements.....Summary sheet was prepared for public distribution.

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Action Plan for Improvement

- () Place more information on County website.
- () Build a better understanding of the Budget with community groups.

3. My local government's budget document clearly delineates expenditure allocations and sources of revenues for all funds in all programs:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.1** (2000) **3.1** (2001) **2.9** (2003)
3.4 (2006)

Current Practices: Budget format is broken down into various departments and accounts.....Certain accounts were consolidated to make budget easier to read.....Department goals are stated by narrative within budget format.....Budget is summarized at the fund level.....Explanation of budget process was simplified.....Chart of accounts was developed.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Set up system of submitting budgets electronically.
- () Write a more elaborate Budget message.

4. Caroline County has a multi-year capital improvement program:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.5** 2000 **3.0** 2001 **3.3** 2003
3.5 2006

Current Practices: CIP is recommended over 10 years..... CIP process was revamped to improve communication between staff, Planning Commission & Board of Supervisors.....CIP was divided into two parts – Infrastructure & Equipment.....Tied the budget process more closely with CIP.....Made more realistic projections by following suggestions from consultant.

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Action Plan for Improvement

- () Develop new Equipment Replacement Program.
- () Maintain a realistic 10-year plan.
- () Strengthen planning for general government operations.

5. Comprehensive efficiency and effectiveness measurements have been established for all programs:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **2.0 (2000)** **1.7 (2001)** **2.6 (2003)**
2.4 (2006)

Current Practices: Quarterly review of budget with department heads.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Conduct a cost analysis for every new program prior to implementation.
- () Measure effectiveness and efficiency of all programs annually.
- () Conduct frequent program audits.

6. Financial and program audits of departments are performed on both a random and scheduled basis:

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.6 (2000)** **1.9 (2001)** **2.5 (2003)**
2.3 (2006)

Current Practices: Quarterly review of budget with department heads.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Hold staff workshop on program auditing.

- () Hold staff training session on program analysis.

7. *An outside audit of Caroline County's overall finances is performed annually:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **3.8** (2000) **3.7** (2001) **3.7** (2003)
3.9 (2006)

Current Practices: Audit is conducted annually for all funds.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Conduct more internal review of financial controls and policies.

8. *A long-range financial plan has been prepared to ensure the stability of my local government's bond ratings:*

Total Possible Score: 4.0 **1.8** (2000) **1.9** (2001) **2.8** (2008)
2.8 (2006)

Current Practices: Financial planning has taken place at the staff level, but not before Board of Supervisors.....Outside consultant has been hired to offer advice on capital projects.

Action Plan for Improvement

- () Have Board of Supervisors adopt long-range financial plan which will include results of staffing study and use as a planning tool.