

County of Ventura

At Work in Your Community

Annual Report



2013 – 2014



County of Ventura Board of Supervisors & CEO



District 1

Supervisor Steve Bennett
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2703
Fax (805) 654-2226

Serving: San Buenaventura, Montalvo, Saticoy, Ojai Valley, City of Ojai, Upper Ojai Valley, Riverpark, Northwest Oxnard, and North Coast.

E-mail: Steve.Bennett@ventura.org



District 2

Supervisor Linda Parks
625 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 214-2510
Toll Free (800) 660-5474

Serving: Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Westlake Village, Oak Park, Bell Canyon, Hidden Valley, Lake Sherwood, Somis, Las Posas Valley, CSUCI, Portions of the Oxnard Plain, Santa Rosa Valley, Naval Base Ventura County Point Mugu, California Air National Guard, and South Coast.

E-mail: Linda.Parks@ventura.org



District 3

Supervisor Kathy Long
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2276
Fax (805) 654-2226

Serving: Camarillo, Port Hueneme, Southeast Oxnard, East Oxnard Plain, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, East Lockwood Valley, and the Eastern Portion of Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme.

E-mail: Kathy.Long@ventura.org



District 4

Supervisor Peter Foy
980 Enchanted Way, #203
Simi Valley, CA 93065
(805) 955-2300
Fax (805) 658-4524

Serving: Simi Valley, Moorpark, Santa Susana Knolls, Box Canyon, Chatsworth Peak, Home Acres, Sinaloa Lake, and Tierra Rejada Valley.

E-mail: Supervisor.Foy@ventura.org



District 5

Supervisor John Zaragoza
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2613

Serving: Oxnard, Oxnard Shores, Mandalay Bay, Silver Strand, Hollywood Beach, Hollywood by the Sea, Channel Islands Harbor, El Rio, Nyeland Acres, Del Norte area, Oxnard College, Oxnard Plain, Strickland, and a Portion of Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme.

E-mail: John.Zaragoza@ventura.org



Ventura County Executive Office

Michael Powers, CEO
Hall of Administration
800 S. Victoria Avenue L#1940
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2861

Responsible for overseeing more than 8,000 employees in 27 agencies and departments and overseeing or supporting all major County functions including budget, finance, legislation, human resources, labor relations, economic development, and information technology.

E-mail: CountyExecutiveOfficer@ventura.org

Ventura County has never been stronger and your County employees have never been more focused on improving the quality of life here for every resident.

With the help and expertise of a team of committed employees, the County has navigated through a time of historically difficult economic conditions to emerge stronger and better prepared for the future. During this period we have maintained, and even expanded, the services we offer. And financially, we have built our reserves and invested in new initiatives and infrastructure. To name just a few of these, the core strengths of our Information Technology systems are being expanded, new fire stations are being built, and a new hospital wing is under construction at the Ventura County Medical Center.

Even with all of this, many of our residents continue to be surprised at both the number of innovative practices employed at the County and the vast array of vital services we provide to our community. We intend to get the word out about these programs, because every day, your talented and professional County employees strive to provide these services at the highest levels of efficiency, quality, and customer service.

In this report you will see a sampling of just some of these services and innovative practices. We have grouped them by the five focus-areas which make up our County Strategic Plan:

- Good Government and Financial Stability
- County Workforce
- Environment, Land Use, & Infrastructure
- Community Well-Being
- Public Safety

The Strategic Plan works as a blueprint for the success we are striving to achieve. Agencies and departments use the Plan as the foundation to build their individual strategic, business and operating plans. It guides all of us in County government as we continually work to improve our processes to make Ventura County a place where all of its residents can thrive personally and professionally.

We hope this report will help to foster greater intergovernmental and public/private collaborations, and individual access to the outstanding services available from both the County and our community-based partners. As we continue to move forward, we will be asking for your comments and feedback to guide us in our pursuit of excellence.



www.ventura.org

Steve Bennett
Chair, Ventura County
Board of Supervisors

Michael Powers
Ventura County
County Executive Officer

Good Government and Financial Stability

We will pursue policies, practices, and procedures which provide the foundation for effective and efficient operations of Ventura County government.



County Clerk & Recorder – Reporting “Real Time” Election Results

The County Clerk and Recorder’s Office has launched an improved, integrated website that includes easier access and several new and useful features for customers. In addition to being easier to navigate and packed full with “how to” information, customers can now apply for marriage licenses and Fictitious Business Name Statement filings online, and conduct a grantor/grantee search of property records from their own personal computer. The website also offers a first-ever “Election Night Reporting” feature that provides voters and candidates “real time” election night results as well as customizable elections information, precinct reporting maps, and graphing capabilities. The County Clerk & Recorder’s Office website can be found here - <http://venturaclerkrecorder.org>.

County Executive Office – County Receives Standard and Poor’s Highest Credit Rating

Standard and Poor’s Ratings Services (S&P) recently assigned the County a long term issuer credit of AAA - S&P’s highest rating. This puts Ventura County among the highest for all California counties. S&P described some of its rating factors in supporting the AAA rating as a “very strong and diverse economy, strong budgetary performance, and very strong management that has consistently maintained what we consider strong policies and procedures.”

At the same time, S&P also raised its long-term rating on the County of Ventura’s outstanding Lease Revenue Bonds and Certificates of Participation from AA to AA+. Moody’s Investors Service also assigned a rating of Aa3, and Fitch Ratings assigned an AA, to the County’s Lease Revenue Bonds, meaning the County has AA-level ratings

from all three of the major rating agencies. Lease Revenue Bond and Certificate of Participation ratings are typically one or two grades lower than an agency’s issuer credit rating.

In developing their ratings, the rating agencies analyzed a number of financial and economic factors including the County’s financial performance and policies, long-term financial planning tools, debt profile, management practices, legal safeguards, revenues, and local economic conditions and demographics.

The high ratings will significantly benefit the County in the form of lower interest rates when borrowing or issuing debt. Obtaining a AAA rating from S&P is a significant accomplishment, and is a validation of the strong work of the County managers and workforce, and the fiscal discipline demonstrated in the decision-making of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.



General Services Agency – Leveraging Technology to Speed Resident Services

In 2013, the General Services Agency (GSA) was proud to partner with the Human Services Agency (HSA) and Information Technology Services (ITS) to centralize the scanning of 4.2 million images annually at the GSA Digital Mailroom, a process that was previously decentralized at various offices throughout the County. The three agencies collaborated to leverage technology solutions that revolutionized the way business reply mail is handled and processed.

In the past, incoming mail was sorted by GSA, and distributed by courier to various HSA facilities throughout the County, where it was then opened and manually scanned by staff. Today, that mail is efficiently opened by an automated machine, rapidly scanned, and entered into HSA’s workflow immediately upon receipt. The physical mail no longer leaves GSA’s facility. By implementing this automated process, documents now arrive in the case workers’ queue within hours, instead of days, allowing them to deliver critical services to the public that much sooner. In addition, HSA was able to redirect many hours of administrative labor, valued at \$2 million, to direct client contact.

County Workforce

Continually improving the skills of the people who provide quality government services.



Library Services Agency – Director’s Initiative Grants

The Library Services Agency sought to capitalize and enhance the skill sets of our staff by offering them small “Director’s Initiative Grants.” These grants are intended to create a new program, service, or to learn a new skill that would aid our communities. Amazing programs emerged such as the Techfest at Oak Park, a Book to Action program at Oak View, a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month at Foster Library, as well as many others. Library staff established Makerspace where entrepreneurs can engage with inventors, families can learn to make rather than buy, and where everyone can be introduced to new technologies. The Makerspace has found a permanent home at Foster Library.

Department of Child Support Services – Improving the Quality of Life for County Children

Established as a county department in July, 2002, the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) is charged with collecting child support payments for children and their families in Ventura County. DCSS’s performance has been improving steadily

year after year, which directly equates to improved quality of life for the more than 22,000 children for whom we provide services. In 2002, DCSS was ranked number 32 among all California counties for performance and collected \$43 million in child support annually. By the end of 2011, DCSS was ranked number seven in the state, making it the top performing large county and the only large county in the top 10. In

2013, DCSS’s ranking rose to number five among all counties for performance. DCSS remains the top performing large county child support department and the only large county in the top 10. Again, what makes these rankings meaningful is their validation of DCSS’s constant efforts at improving our operations, which in turn results in improved quality of life for some of our most vulnerable residents, the children and families we serve.



Information Technology Services – Cloud-Based Collaboration

Information Technology Services continues to invest in productivity tools to help County staff provide better service more effectively. This year, a major project has been underway to upgrade and replace the County’s email and calendaring solution, collaboration, and office productivity tools. Microsoft Office 365 provides email, calendaring, file sharing and other collaboration, as well as the Microsoft Office suite of products to County staff. This capability is provided through a cloud-based subscription service where staff can access these services from a variety of devices, providing greater flexibility to mobile staff (e.g. field workers, case workers, health professionals, etc.). This in turn provides improved, timelier service to the public.

Human Resources – ePerformance Management

One goal of the County has been to empower employees at every level to provide County services with maximum effectiveness and efficiency. To help achieve this goal, the County launched a new, standardized Countywide electronic performance management system that will give new tools to managers, supervisors, and employees to collaborate on collecting goals and performance results. The standardized process defines, communicates, and assesses core competencies, appropriate business behaviors, and measurable goals and timeframes. The pilot kicked off this year with three departments. Based upon the success of the pilot, four more agencies have launched the new performance management system.

Environment, Land Use, and Infrastructure

Encourage private and public uses of land that are consistent with the General Plan; utilize facilities and services efficiently; protect our agricultural and natural resources; preserve private property rights; and protect the common good.



Public Works Agency – Going Solar

To address the challenge of stabilizing energy costs, and to benefit the environment, the Ventura County Public Works Agency constructed and completed the largest publicly-owned solar electric system in Ventura County. Located in Moorpark, the 1.0 megawatt solar electric system covers approximately six acres of land. Utilizing 3,984 solar panels with single-axis trackers, the solar panels rotate and follow the sun throughout the day, boosting production to an estimated 2,236,356 kilowatt hours of electricity annually. This provides about 80 percent of the energy required to operate the Moorpark Wastewater Reclamation Facility each year and helps to achieve savings of approximately \$200,000 annually in electricity costs. This helps to keep these monthly sewer rates the lowest of all of the sewer agencies in Ventura County. This \$4.3 million project was funded using Waterworks District No. 1 reserves and the California Solar Initiative Program. The District will receive a \$1.6 million rebate from Southern California Edison over the five-year period, and the project will pay for itself in the form of electric cost savings in about 13 years.

Harbor Department – Encouraging Connection to Coastal Resources

The Harbor Department operates Channel Islands Harbor, the “Gateway to the Channel Islands,” as a recreational and business facility. As an enterprise fund, Harbor Department revenues are used to pay for facility operations, maintenance, and marketing. In 2013, the Harbor Department constructed a replacement boat launch facility to maintain affordable access for boaters. The \$4.3 million in grant funds awarded by State Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways, were provided through fuel taxes paid by boaters. The project provided a new six-lane launch ramp, parking facility, picnic area, upgraded drought-tolerant landscaping, and new public restrooms. Facility design objectives included improved accessibility, increased boat and vehicle traffic safety, and enhanced storm water systems to improve water quality.



Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner – Farm Stand Safety

Farm stands can be found throughout the county and provide a wide variety of commodities, including locally grown produce. Farm stands can operate seasonally or year-round. Most farm stands are located directly adjacent to production fields, others operate as retail establishments. Farm stands offer a marketing venue for local growers and individuals involved in the agricultural industry. The Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office performs routine standardization inspections at the various stands. Inspections include identification of proper container labeling, use of containers as well as proof of ownership of produce. There are currently over 50 farm stands in Ventura County.



General Services Agency – A Leader in Sustainability and Energy Reduction

In October 2013, the County General Services Agency (GSA) completed a 1-megawatt solar photovoltaic array at the Todd Road Jail, adding to several systems already in operation. Construction of the project was managed by the County Public Works Agency. On the first day of operation the sun provided 100 percent of the electrical needs of the jail for about 4.5 hours. The system was designed to generate forty percent of the jail’s annual electrical needs. Solar represents an important strategy in meeting the goal set by the Board of Supervisors to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions by 15 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2020.

In an effort to provide additional electric vehicle charging stations at the County of Ventura, GSA received a grant that will partially fund the installation of eighteen new electric vehicle charging stations in various County parking lots. In its continuing effort to increase the efficiency of fleet operations, the County took possession in 2013 of its first two electric vehicles – the Ford Focus EV.

Community Well-Being

Provide quality healthcare and social services supporting healthy communities.

Health Care Agency – Building Better Health

The Health Care Agency is working to create healthy communities by improving its technology, facilities and programs.

To achieve great results an organization must have great people. To ensure it has the highest quality employees, the HCA creates opportunities for excellence throughout its departments. One example of this is the Family Medicine Residency program at the Ventura County Medical Center. The program was recently named the top program for family medicine training in the United States by a Doximity/U.S. News & World Report study.

Launched in 1968, the program has graduated more than 600 family physicians, many of whom still practice in Ventura County. It is the largest and oldest family medicine residency program in the state.

Great caregivers also need great facilities.

To that end, construction of a new wing is underway at the VCMC. The addition will include an expanded emergency department, trauma suites, and the newest technology in medical equipment. It will also contain a Ronald McDonald House that allows the parents of critically ill children to stay near them. The construction is scheduled for completion in 2017.

To improve health through the use of technology, the HCA partnered with the Cerner Corp., a leader in electronic health care systems, to upgrade the agency's clinical care and patient billing systems. The 18-month project included 56 technical systems. As a result of the total system upgrade, the HCA was awarded more than \$20 million in incentives from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The system is now being used by 3,500 clinicians and support staff to achieve a more efficient, consistent, and higher standard of patient care.

Animal Services –

Mobile App

Animal Services partnered with Information Technology Services to develop a mobile application for smartphones



(iPhone and Android) that is available to the public for download. This mobile app will allow the public to browse and search for pets available for adoption, view and report Lost & Found Pets, create Pet Notifications to be instantly alerted when a pet arrives in one of our shelters, as well as donate money to the Ventura County Animal Shelter. All of this will assist the shelter in its continued operation as a no-kill shelter.



Area Agency on Aging – Collaboration Equals Results

The senior citizens of our community are a vulnerable, at-risk population, in need of programs and services to guide them through the complicated systems of today's world. The Ventura County Area Agency on

Aging administers many programs that help thousands of seniors and their caregivers navigate the challenges that confront many citizens age 60 and over. One of the major problems facing seniors who can no longer drive is getting to medical appointments. Through a partnership with the Ventura

County Transportation Commission over 30,000 rides are provided yearly. Participants of the Medi-Ride program that are low income receive bus or dial-a-ride passes. Eighty-eight percent of participants in the program have one or more disability, making the Medi-Ride program an invaluable resource for a very vulnerable population.



Human Services Agency – Covered Ventura County

In October 2013, the Human Services Agency (HSA) began implementing the Affordable Care Act, assisting uninsured Ventura County residents in securing affordable health insurance. With approximately 130,000 local residents uninsured but newly eligible for the expanded Medi-Cal program or subsidized private plans available through Covered California, HSA prepared to meet public demand in new ways.

In addition to accepting applications for Medi-Cal online, by phone, by mail, and in person, HSA established a local Covered California TeleCenter to field some 10,000 calls for assistance with private and public health insurance coverage. Over 150,000

residents are now enrolled in MediCal, a 30 percent increase since January 2013. While final enrollment numbers are not yet available, current estimates are that approximately 20,000 county residents purchased private insurance plans through Covered California.

To improve outreach, HSA developed communication tools and materials that helped inform the public, county staff, and community partners about the historic health care reform law changes. A new website – Covered Ventura County – was created to provide comprehensive information regarding opportunities for coverage under the Affordable Care Act. The website has proven to be an important information source for the community, averaging 800 visits per month since January 2014.

Public Safety

Remain one of the safest counties in the nation through coordinated, efficient, and effective public safety services.



Fire Protection District – Confined Space Rescue Training

Members of the Ventura County Fire Department's Urban Search & Rescue team conducted specialized confined space training in a storm drain channel located in the city of Camarillo. The training allowed firefighters to practice with equipment designed for rescues in tunnels and confined spaces more than 300 feet long.

These so-called super confined spaces are problematic because their size exceeds the capacity of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) normally worn by firefighters. The standard SCBA gives a firefighter about 20 minutes of air. In a super confined space, that length of time is not adequate for a firefighter to gain access, effect a rescue, and evacuate a patient.

The new equipment includes closed circuit breathing apparatus (CCBA) that increases the

capability of firefighters to work for extended periods in confined spaces. This increased productivity also enhances the survivability of patients by giving firefighters more time to operate at a confined space rescue. The CCBAs allow the firefighters to work almost eight times longer than they can using the standard SCBA typically used at structure fires and other emergencies.

Ventura County has three railroad tunnels in Santa Susana at the east end of Simi Valley – the longest is more than a mile long – hundreds of miles of storm drain systems and flood control channels, and other confined space tunnel infrastructure at dams across the County. The 2008 Metrolink train accident in Chatsworth was only moments away from occurring in the longest Santa Susana tunnel.

At the drill, the firefighters made simulated rescues from a vehicle accident and other confined space rescues.

Ventura County Sheriff – Interagency Pharmaceutical Task Force

The task force began in May 2013 and is led by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office. The Simi Valley Police Department, California Highway Patrol, and the District Attorney's Office joined forces to stem the flow of prescription medication to the illegal market, identify and stop new trends of drug abuse affecting area youth, and target local criminally operating doctors who allow themselves to be sources of supply to drug abusers and dealers.



District Attorney's Office – Serious Habitual Offender Program

In response to statistics that show a small number of repeat offenders commit a disproportionate number of crimes, the District Attorney's Office partnered with local law enforcement and the courts to create the Serious Habitual Offender (SHO) program. Under the program, the criminal justice partners focus enhanced frontline police, custodial, and prosecution resources upon SHO designees in an effort to interrupt and stop the cycle of criminality.

Ventura County Probation Agency – Evening Reporting Center

Based on the growing need for more community-based alternatives to detention for youthful offenders, the Ventura County Probation Agency in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme (BGCOP), established Ventura County's first Evening Reporting Center (ERC) program.

Located within the caring confines of BGCOP's "Teen Center" facility in Oxnard, the ERC operates Monday – Friday during the afternoon to evening hours. Youth participants range from 12½ to 18 years old and they are referred into the program for a period of 20 to 45 days by County deputy probation officers. While in the program, youth have access to enhanced services and opportunities designed to improve their overall compliance with the court-ordered conditions of probation, identify and meet the individual needs of each participant,

and address risk factors which contribute to delinquency. The goal is for youth participants to remain crime-free, develop a positive connection to natural support systems within the community, and continue their involvement with the ERC once their recommended time period has expired. Specialized services offered to the participants include individual tutoring, continuing education, job readiness, career guidance, cooking, leadership courses, health/life skills, family engagement, sports, art, and field trips.

Youthful offenders break the cycle of delinquency by participating in community-based interventions, such as the ERC, which are designed to provide a wide range of services and approaches that encourage pro-social behavior and activities. The ERC creates a safe environment that surrounds each youth with caring adults, positive engagement, and a clear path to success.

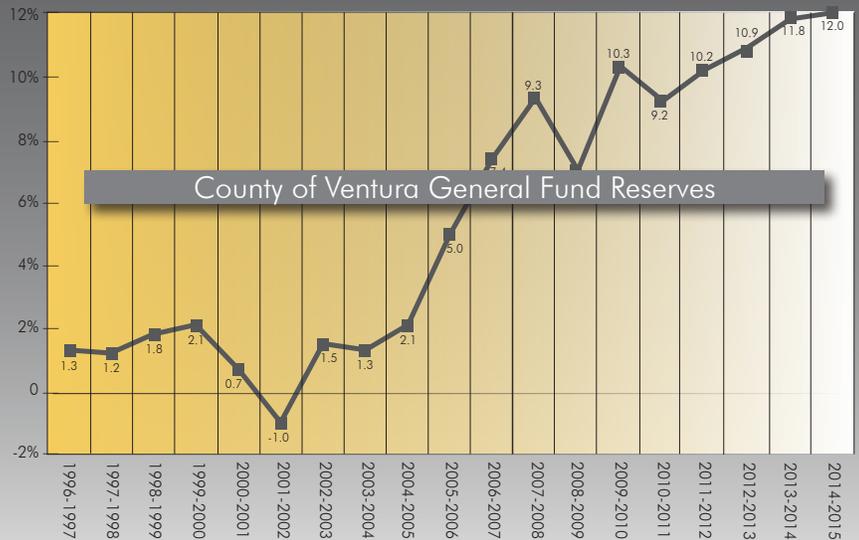
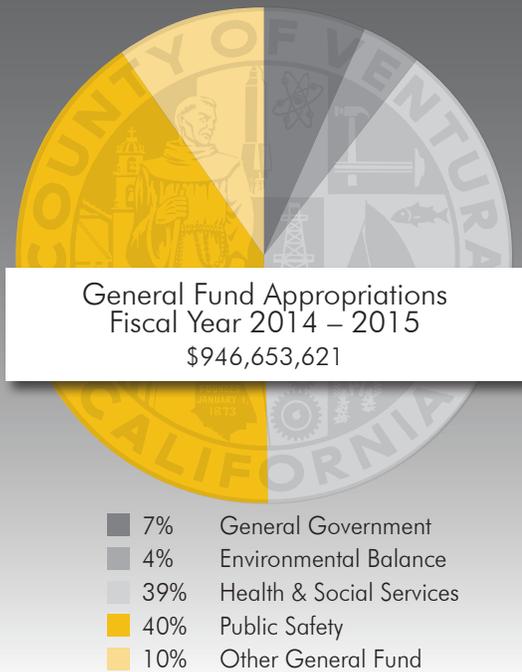
County of Ventura Budget in Brief

Overall Financial Health

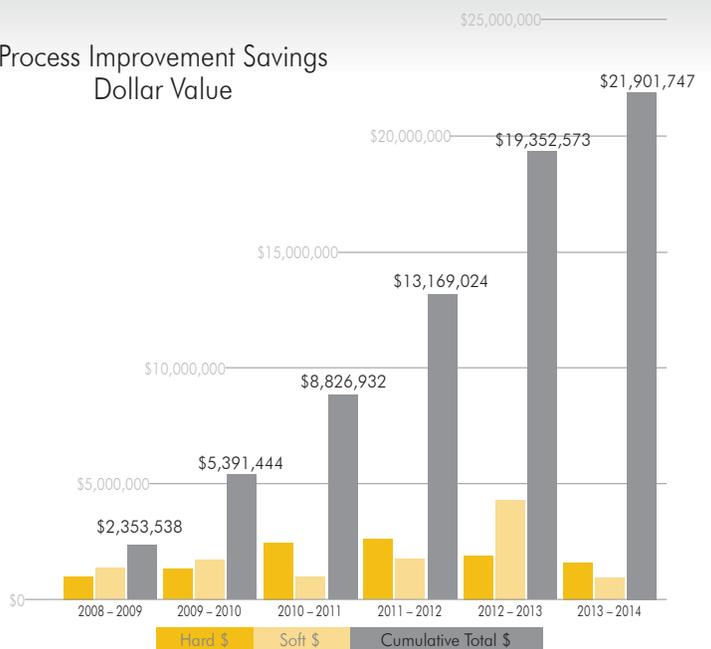
The County's adherence to a comprehensive long-term fiscal plan helps maintain the County's strong financial position. Consistent application of budget principles has allowed the county to maintain services during the past economic downturn while increasing our Unassigned Fund Balance to twelve percent of expenditures (\$114 million).

Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget Overview

On June 16, 2014, the Board of Supervisors adopted a structurally balanced budget for the Fiscal Year 2014-15. Because of diligent management and collaborative efforts by all employees, the County is in a financial position to be able to expand services in Public Safety, Health Care, Mental Health for Foster Children, and, for the first time in several years, provide modest market based salary adjustments for employees.



Process Improvement Savings Dollar Value



The County has made a long-term commitment to continuous process improvement utilizing the Lean Six Sigma methodology. Since the program's inception in 2008, customer experience has improved in many areas and more than \$24 million in ongoing savings have been realized in both hard (actual dollar) savings, and soft (redirected resources) savings. Examples of the program's success include increased efficiencies in storm channel cleaning, reduced healthcare clinic wait times, sharing of heavy equipment between departments, automation of mail routing, and many other improvements.

