



## STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

*An overview of the 2024 calendar year*

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with both a sense of deep pride and responsibility for the outcomes of 2024. Though I began my tenure with King George County in June, I am confident the future outlook of our beloved county is bright.

There have been countless challenges and achievements managed by our competent and dedicated staff in service to our residents of King George. Our resilient employees have overcome staffing shortages that resulted in restructuring the county, but our team has endured and welcomed new faces with open minds all while maintaining quality programs and services to our community and even succeeded with significant progress in many areas throughout the county.

In 2024, the county implemented a new zoning and subdivision ordinance, launched a brand, sold an industrial park lot, finalized over \$20 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) projects, selected a firm to complete architectural and engineering for a new fire station in Dahlgren, hosted its highest attendance to date at each of these events—Independence Celebration, Shred Event and Household Hazardous Waste Day—and received an increase in bond rating. This strong financial position allows taxpayer savings on capital projects that will be available for years to come. We continue to prioritize the needs of our residents while maintaining rigorous and reliable fiscal policies that improve the quality of life in King George. These are just a few of the many accomplishments we can all be proud were achieved in 2024. Even though our team has completed so much, there is always more to be done.

As we look toward 2025, our focus will remain on maintaining the programs and services our residents have grown accustomed to receiving, as well as expanding to new horizons. With a focus on public safety, we look forward to the grand opening of the new courthouse and breaking ground on the new fire station in Dahlgren. We will continue to invest in the future of our community with better resources for an improved quality of life for all our residents.

To achieve these goals, it will require continued collaboration and commitment. We must work together as a community, united in our common purpose, to maintain and enhance the qualities that uniquely make this county home to each of us. I am confident we can build an even stronger and brighter future for King George County.

Respectfully,

  
Matthew J. Smolnik  
County Administrator

*King George, Virginia*



## TOP ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2024

*For each department & constitutional office*

### Administration

- Increased bond rating from AA to AA+ with Fitch
- Improved the FOIA process for residents by outlining the Code of Virginia requirements with proper contact information for custodians of specific record topics available on the website [here](#)
- Implemented a FOIA log outlining requests to better track the status of records found and the volume of records requested—by May 2024 FOIA requests increased by 400% to 251 requests compared to 54 from the prior year
- Restructured the FOIA process to identify proper custodians of common topics of records to increase accountability and quality control in the county's fulfillment of the FOIA requests
- Executed reporting with detailed monthly and quarterly FOIA summaries to better gauge the increasing demand for FOIA requests

### Clerk of Circuit Court's Office

- Digitized 15 years of chancery, law, and civil files from approximately 2000 to 2015, reducing the necessity to move paper files to the new courthouse, as well as increasing efficiency for public access to records
- Received a grant from the Library of Virginia for conservation and preservation of Deed Book 2 (1735-1744), 3 (1743-1752), and 4 (1752-1765) along with improved digitization
- Received a grant from the Library of Virginia for four new plat book cabinets to enhance the public records room at the new courthouse
- Implemented a [free property notification service](#) through Logan (a land records software) that allows users to receive notices for selected names when they are recorded with the Circuit Court

### Clerk to the Board of Supervisors

- Implemented a digitized process for accessing and archiving clerk records
- In the process of acquiring the first Certified Municipal Clerk through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks
- Added quick links in the [agenda center](#) to increase access to the video recordings of meetings since 2021



- Updated the agenda process to increase transparency and access by incorporating links to items on the agenda, instead of the traditional attachment at the end of the agenda, which often caused the agenda file to become too large for the public to easily access, especially difficult for those with unreliable internet

## Commissioner of the Revenue's Office

- Succeeded in transitioning from non-prorating taxes to prorating taxes
- Implemented a new real estate assessment software called VISION
- Selected Wampler-Eanes Appraisal Group to conduct the 2026 general reassessment

## Community Development

- Implemented the new zoning and subdivision ordinance, including creating and using new applications and forms, as well as implemented new processes and procedures that benefit customer experience for the public
- Restored turnaround goal of ten days for building permits and meeting applicable code requirements for subdivisions, site plans, and zoning applications
- Issued 1,156 permits, including 167 new dwelling permits as of November 2024
- Generated nearly \$806,520 in revenue as of November 2024
- Completed 6,667 inspections as of November 2024

## Community Engagement

- Launched the county's first brand, complete with logos, sub-logos, typefaces, colors, imagery, patterns and more
- Completed the Native American Heritage Trail, funded by a state tourism grant, which included capturing video and imagery of county assets that will aid in the success of implementing the county's tourism strategic plan
- Published a more informationally comprehensive [budget summary](#) to increase financial transparency
- Implemented new community engagement activities, like Valentine Cards for Seniors, Spectacularly Spooky KG, offered free solar eclipse glasses, Thankful BINGO, KG Best of the Best, and more
- Increased social media presence
  - Visit King George Facebook
    - 32,721 impressions
    - 27,078 reach
    - 1,126 engagement

- 4.2% engagement rate
- 249 new followers
- Visit King George Instagram
  - 2,862 impressions
  - 1,173 reach
  - 220 engagement
  - 18.8% engagement rate
  - 96 new followers
- King George County Government Facebook
  - 132,629 impressions
  - 71,008 reach
  - 5,925 engagement
  - 8.3% engagement rate
  - 797 new followers
- King George County Government Instagram
  - 9,448 impressions
  - 1,552 reach
  - 446 engagement
  - 28.7% engagement rate
  - 101 new followers
- King George County Government Nextdoor
  - 147,417 impressions
  - 355 engagement
  - 0.24% engagement rate
  - 829 new members

## Economic Development

- Sold lot 4 of economic development authority's industrial park off Birchwood Creek Road with one lot remaining
- Continued support for planning district 16 to receive grant from the U.S. EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance program to create a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for the region, which will provide additional grant opportunities to the county
- Maintained consistent traffic to the economic development authority's website launched last year, with 1,330 visits in November 2024

- Recognized non-profit of the year, The Opp Shop, and business of the year, Four Elements Electric
- Received 85 business licenses in 2024, including Two Dogs Whine, Lala's Fusion, Taste of Himalaya, KG Gateway Storage, Equipment Corp of America, Bowhead Avionics, Optimal Prime Fitness, Catfish Kelly's, Greenleaf Farms and Auto Care.
- Awarded four local, small businesses grant funds from the economic development authority in 2024 to finalize or expand operations
- Established local government investment pool account and transferred the majority of economic development authority funds to this high-interest earnings account

## Engineering

- Finalized planning, bidding and awarding of nine major ARPA funded capital projects, totaling approximately \$20 million
- Assisted other departments in the technical aspects of completing capital projects including but not limited to:
  - Baseball and softball field lights for King George County Schools
  - Classroom trailers for Potomac Elementary
  - Barnesfield lights for Parks and Recreation
  - Sealston soccer field lights for Parks and Recreation
  - Resurfacing of Sealston Park Road and parking lot for Parks and Recreation
- Assisted Inboden and the King George Service Authority in navigating Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and Virginia Department of Health regulation compliance

## Finance & Procurement

- Sold surplus items at public auction with a revenue of \$50,050
- Implemented virtual pre-bid and bid opening meetings to increase attendance and participation in the solicitation process
- Secured bids for 11 ARPA- and DEQ-funded projects totaling in \$21 million to update water and wastewater infrastructure for the service authority
- Awarded bids for large projects, such as the development and construction of the Dahlgren Fire Station, the 2026 real estate reassessment, and field lighting at Sealston Sports Complex
- Established ACH payments for vendor bills, reducing processing time, ensuring quicker vendor payments, and eliminating risk of outstanding payments in the mail



## Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services

- Succeeded in managing over 4,100 emergency calls as of November 2024 with full staff coverage available year round
- Conducted 2,037 ambulance transports as of November 2024
- Re-licensed by the Office of EMS (OEMS) as an Advanced Life Support (ALS) EMS Agency
- Received and placed in-service a new Engine 1 and a new ambulance
- Provided mutual aid assistance to surrounding localities and to the NASP Dahlgren Naval Base 127 times as of November 2024
- Succeeded in graduating Recruit Academy 5 and 6, with 5 being the county's first full-time 28-week academy
- Started the county's first Opticom pre-emption on all traffic lights, providing safer response with an estimated completion in spring of 2025
- Construction began for the county's first fuel depot station with estimated completion in spring of 2025
- Upgraded the public safety 700 MHz communications radio with estimated completion in early 2025
- Assisted with selecting MW Studios, an architectural/engineering firm, for a replacement building for Company 2
- Began medication upgrades and pharmaceutical changes mandated to EMS agencies across the Commonwealth
- Conducted 3,790 man-hours of training as counted by the Insurance Services Office (ISO), including:
  - Company Level 1,967 hours
  - Officer Training 124 hours
  - Driver/Operator Training 449 hours
  - Hazardous Materials Training 54.5 hours
  - Facility Training 1,196 hours
  - EMS CEU Training 1,711 hours
- Increased social media presence
  - King George County (Va) Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Facebook
    - 30,566 impressions
    - 111,568 reach
    - 7,757 engagement
    - 7.0 % engagement rate

- 654 new followers

## General Properties

- Replaced fire alarm panel at Smoot Library
- Sealed and striped animal shelter parking lot
- Replaced fire alarm panel and instrument transfer switch on generator at Company 2 after a lightning strike
- Added electrical outlets and support brackets for added Christmas decorations along Route 3
- Purchased metal building to house general properties
- Replaced control panel for the generator at the Revercomb administration building

## Geographic Information Systems

- Plotted 77 maps for staff and citizens
- Processed 208 address changes to county GIS
- Administered 26 road changes to county GIS, including the addition of 4 roads
- Updated 97 parcels (38 plats) in the tax maps, using plats and coordinate geometry
- Added 5,220 water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure features to county GIS
- Continued to receive numerous traffic to the online GIS with 55,619 item views
- Created five new web mapping apps for internal and external use:
  - a King George Service Authority Area locator app,
  - a fire/rescue 2023 incidents reporting app,
  - a field acreage calculator app for planning in community development,
  - a running at large prohibited (dogs off leash) app for King George Animal Control/Sheriff's Office, and
  - a new polling place locator app for the registrar
- Inserted FOG (fats, oils, grease) data to the Water and Sewer app for the Service Authority

## Human Resources

- Launched a new applicant tracking system called Criterion in September
- Implemented a retiree healthcare policy and established premium deductions from VRS
- Assisted with the ongoing implementation of the new badge system

## Information Technology

- Onboarded nearly 70 desktop/laptop computers onboarded to staff needing a 5-year warranty replacement per policy



- Installed and programmed protection for the network infrastructure, increasing building security posture and vendors application software access
- Completed business impact analysis through interviews with each county department per the county's cybersecurity plan to measure the effects of network\communications down-time for each office and created a hierarchy of important functions, ranked by impact from any outages by county offices, for each user, state regulators\legal, citizens, and public news sources

### L.E. Smoot Memorial Library

- Increased library materials circulation, program attendance, meeting room and quiet study room use
- Completed project to shift entire adult fiction and non-fiction collections
- Added equipment to the makerspace
- Launched LED building sign to market programs

### Parks & Recreation

- Opened new playground and disc golf course at Barnesfield Park
- Repaved road and parking lot and added field lights at Sealston Sports Complex
- Added lights to baseball and softball fields at King George Middle School
- Increased attendance at the Independence Celebration by 40% with over 3,500 spectators
- Increased social media presence
  - King George Parks & Recreation Facebook
    - 285,489 impressions
    - 123,764 reach
    - 6,869 engagement
    - 5.6% engagement rate
    - 631 new followers
  - King George Parks & Recreation Instagram
    - 3,250 impressions
    - 721 reach
    - 135 engagement
    - 18.7% engagement rate
    - 16 new followers

### Registrar's Office

- Completed three elections effectively, including a presidential election



- Processed more early voters than ever before with 41% of registered voters in King George voting early

## Service Authority

- Replaced controls at the Hopyard Water Plant for \$174,000 less than quoted
- In the process of completing an upgrade to a class one reliability per Virginia Department of Environmental Quality requirements at the Burger King Pump Station for \$110,000 less than quoted
- Replaced the ultraviolet light at the Dahlgren Wastewater Treatment Plant for \$106,000 less than quoted
- Implemented a fats, oils and grease (FOG) program to better monitor clogs that can negatively affect the wastewater system creating costly repairs

## Sheriff's Office

- Switched to new radio system, which is estimated to be complete in December 2024
- Received patrol boat for security on both rivers, which was solely financed by a grant
- Certified two deputies as commercial vehicle inspectors
- Certified a forensic science investigator
- Graduated a deputy from UVA Command College

## Social Services

- Received second highest rate of kinship placements in the state
- Completed Medicaid unwinding, a 14-month process to address three years of Medicaid backlogs following the Federal COVID Public Health Emergency
- United US & Mary Washington Healthcare Pilot Program
- Collaborated with King George High School on work-based learning opportunities

## Solid Waste & Recycling

- Anticipated to recycle over 1.35 million pounds of metal, batteries, motor oil, cooking oil and co-mingled recycling in 2024
- Reclaimed 1.5 million pounds of wood waste for reuse
- Received highest attendance in five years at the fall shred event and household hazardous waste day
- Repaired infrastructure at the Sealston Convenience Center for a safer environment for all users
- Updated and certified the county's Solid Waste Management Plan through 2028



## Virginia Cooperative Extension Office

- Connected county youth to school-based positive youth development activities
- Increased enrollment for 4-H Camp 2024 to 102 participants
- Helped nine youths win first place for their Spin Club Parade Performance at the KG Fall Festival
- Organized Meet and Greets with Master Gardeners and reached 139 GreenTalk participants and 17 well water owners
- Informed and engaged 324 community members and producers through a bi-weekly newsletter
- Launched a new initiative for county kinship families by securing a \$20,000 grant that connected 101 participants to essential services
- Engaged 364 participants in family nutrition/finance classes and community awareness workshops
- Acclimated the office with training in fiscal management and program enrollment, demonstrating the unit's dedication to efficient community engagement