

# News Release



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From the Office of the:

## CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

For Immediate Release

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**Charles County Receives Stimulus Funds through Energy Grant:**

*Over Half a Million Dollars Will Be Used for Energy Efficiency Programs in Partnership with American Communities Property Trust and Meridian*

The Charles County Commissioners are pleased to announce that the County has been approved to receive \$560,300 in Recovery Act funding for energy-related projects through a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG). This formula grant – meaning that the County was eligible to apply for a specific amount – was announced last spring. After a lengthy application and review process, the County received word in December that the full amount would be awarded.

“We are delighted to have this opportunity to improve energy efficiency in County operations and begin laying the groundwork for a cleaner, greener Charles County,” said Commissioner President, Wayne Cooper. “We are grateful to our partners, ACPT and Meridian Ventures, for their role in this process.”

American Community Properties Trust (ACPT), the developer of St. Charles, recently announced a new strategy to transform the 9100-acre PUD into a model “green community.” The company is working with County government to create a public/private partnership that will enable the County to use ACPT’s retrofit and future development in St. Charles to serve as a “living laboratory” for policies and practices that could be applied throughout the County and in other communities. ACPT is also providing \$235,000 of continuing in-kind services through its staff and “green” initiative consulting team to further supplement the grant. ACPT engaged Meridian Ventures, Inc., a Waldorf-based project management, energy and development consulting firm, to develop and oversee the grant application for the County. As part of its involvement, Meridian also contributed in-kind services to post-application follow-up work with the federal Department of Energy.

The EECBG grant funds will be used to implement eight activities. They include:

- Development of a County energy efficiency and conservation strategy which will be integrated into the 2012 Comprehensive Plan update;
- Educational and promotional programs to raise awareness of energy saving County government operations and opportunities for Charles County citizens to participate;
- Energy efficient upgrades to County buildings to produce significant energy and cost savings;
- An initiative to investigate geothermal technologies for use in new construction and major renovations;
- A comprehensive review of the County zoning ordinance and policies related to transportation and energy efficiency;
- A building code and inspections review of amendments that would promote and support sustainable construction practices;
- Feasibility and planning for renewable energy upgrades at existing County facilities;

“A key part of ACPT’s ‘green’ initiative for St. Charles is to form broad and lasting partnerships that will help establish environmentally sustainable development policies and communities in Charles County,” said Steve Griessel, ACPT CEO.

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January 15, 2010