



Calvert County NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Jan. 16, 2018
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Calvert County Enters Negotiations on Cable Franchise Agreement

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Jan. 16, 2018 – A major project for Calvert County Government staff in 2018 will be the negotiation of a new cable franchise agreement covering the provision of cable television services to county residents. Comcast currently has a non-exclusive franchise in Calvert County that it seeks to renew.

A cable franchise agreement allows any cable television provider to build and operate cable systems in county rights-of-way. The agreement covers areas to be provided service, public access channels, local programming support, studios and equipment, and more. By federal law, cable franchise agreements only address services related to cable television, not internet service. While any cable provider can petition the county to provide service, Comcast is currently the only provider that has chosen to enter the Calvert County market.

In 2016, the county conducted a cable-related community needs ascertainment and performance review in order to develop a renewed franchise agreement that best represents the needs of the county's citizens. To help with the process, the county contracted with CBG Communications, Inc., a telecommunications and cable television consulting firm.

Following a public input process conducted throughout 2017, negotiations are now underway with Comcast to define the county's expectations for service. The county and CBG conducted a random survey of 4,000 county residents to learn the needs and concerns regarding Comcast and cable television service. Staff from the county Department of Technology Services hosted a public meeting July 13, 2017 to present the findings of the Cable Television-Related Needs and Interests Ascertainment and accept public comment.

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An online resource section is available at www.co.cal.md.us/ComcastInfo with details on the franchise renegotiation process, a copy of the current 15-year agreement, a map of current broadband access and more.

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