**The Business Barometer**  March 2004

### Sales Tax Collections by Class of Business (value in $):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Business</th>
<th>February '04</th>
<th>January '04</th>
<th>February '03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>550,422</td>
<td>-22.86</td>
<td>-3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>103,591</td>
<td>-59.05</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise</td>
<td>458,510</td>
<td>-60.12</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto and Oil</td>
<td>154,892</td>
<td>-26.09</td>
<td>5.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Appliances</td>
<td>137,886</td>
<td>-50.42</td>
<td>7.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Industrial</td>
<td>217,203</td>
<td>-28.65</td>
<td>12.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities and Transportation</td>
<td>268,718</td>
<td>11.35</td>
<td>12.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardware, Machinery, and Equip.</td>
<td>45,909</td>
<td>-25.75</td>
<td>16.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>128,615</td>
<td>-51.57</td>
<td>-18.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unemployment Rates: January 2002-2004

- **Maryland**: 9.2%
- **United States**: 6.8%
- **Allegany Co.**: 7.6%

### Consumer Price Index

- **ALL URBAN CONSUMERS**
  - February '04: 186.2%
  - Monthly % Change: 0.54%
  - Annual % Change: 1.69%

- **URBAN WAGE AND CLERICAL**
  - February '04: 181.9%
  - Monthly % Change: 0.55%
  - Annual % Change: 1.51%

### Building Permits

- **COUNTY BUILDING PERMITS**
  - February '04: 760,400
  - January '04: 7,858,500
  - February '03: 852,900

- **CITY BUILDING PERMITS**
  - February '04: 3,566,730
  - January '04: 237,755
  - February '03: 2,073,110

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*The Business Barometer* is generated by the Center for Regional Progress at Frostburg State University. Information is obtained from: Comptroller and Treasury, MD Dept. of Economic and Employment Analysis and Information, City of Cumberland Planning and Zoning, and [http://stats.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost](http://stats.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost)