



FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

2015 Public Safety Bond Referendum Information

Bond Issue on the Ballot on Nov. 3

In the Nov. 3, general election, Fairfax County voters will be asked to vote YES or NO on a public safety bond question. The question asks voters to allow the county to borrow up to \$151 million to fund the cost of constructing, reconstructing, enlarging, renovating, equipping and acquiring land for public safety facilities. If the majority of voters approve the question, the county currently plans to issue bonds to fund these improvements to five police facilities and five fire stations as described below.

Police Facilities, \$100 Million

South County Police Station/Animal Services \$30 Million

A new police station with animal services in southern Fairfax County will serve a growing population. Police service in South County currently is provided by the Franconia and West Springfield District Stations, with Franconia being one of the county's busiest stations. **The additional police station will allow the department to organize smaller patrol areas and decrease response times throughout the county.** The station also will be home to a new animal shelter and animal control officers. **Currently one county animal shelter supports an estimated 5,500 companion animals and 2,000 wildlife animals per year.** Animals from South County must be transported long distances to the current shelter. An animal shelter in South County will offer services such as pet adoptions, rabies clinics, spay and neuter services, wildlife education and a volunteer program in a location more convenient to South County residents.

Police Heliport — \$13 Million

Built in 1984, the West Ox Police Heliport no longer meets the needs of the specialized staff and equipment assigned to the 24/7 facility. The flight officers, pilots, paramedics and maintenance crews perform more than 150 helicopter missions per month and more than 80 medical evacuations a year. Similar to a firehouse, staff remains on-site throughout their shift, but locker space, helicopter equipment space, storage areas and training space is insufficient to meet current operational needs. **The helicopter hangers are not large enough to house the county's two twin-engine helicopters, and the sloped landing pad causes safety issues especially during winter months.**

Operations Support Bureau \$24 Million

Located within a former elementary school built in 1967 and renovated in 1985, the Operations Support Bureau houses approximately 95 officers who make up the traffic and special operations divisions (SWAT, K9, bomb squad, etc.). They provide specialized support, such as traffic control and enforcement, safety education and specialized weapons and tactical responses for critical events. **Office space, training rooms, and secure storage for specialty vehicles and equipment at the facility is inadequate.** A renovated and expanded facility will provide the necessary space to support 24/7 operations throughout the county.

Emergency Vehicle Operations and K9 Training Center \$10 Million

The Emergency Vehicle Operations Center (EVOC) and the K9 training facility are located on the same site and share training space in two double-wide trailers. Approximately 1,300 county police officers, as well as new recruits from the police and sheriff's departments, and from the towns of Herndon and Vienna, are trained at the facility to drive vehicles in critical situations. **Built in 1995 as a temporary structure, the EVOC suffers from inadequate building support systems, pipes that consistently freeze in the winter months, pest infestation and insufficient space for training and vehicle maintenance.** Indoor K9 training takes place in a small shed with no audio/visual capabilities and no office space. A new building will house both the EVOC and K9 Training Section, allowing the department to provide night-driving courses and multi-jurisdictional training events.

Franconia District Police Station \$23 Million

Built in 1992, the Franconia District Police Station has surpassed its ability to support the 130 officers and 30 non-sworn personnel assigned to the station. **The 25,305-square-foot station, which also houses the Lee District Supervisor's Office and the Franconia Museum, has exceeded its intended life cycle and requires extensive renovations to meet current operational needs.** This project will provide for a more efficient station including interview rooms, a property evidence room, locker rooms, wellness/exercise room, office space and adequate parking to support specialty units conducting operations within the district.

Fire Facilities, \$51 Million

Five fire stations, between 36 and 48 years old, must be renovated, expanded or rebuilt to address current Fire and Rescue Department operational requirements and to replace major building systems, such as HVAC and electrical systems that have far exceeded their intended life cycles. Continuous fire and rescue services will be provided to the community during any future construction projects.

The modernized fire stations will have flexibility and capacity to add Fire and Rescue personnel and apparatus to keep pace with the changing response environment and meet future demands for emergency services. **Specifically, the fire stations will be renovated or rebuilt with larger bays to provide space for modern emergency apparatus, additional bunkrooms and locker facilities to accommodate both male and female personnel and space for station management and operations support functions. Innovative technologies will be incorporated in the station design to improve emergency response times, provide a healthy and safe environment for responders and ensure efficient delivery of emergency services to the residents, workers and visitors in Fairfax County.**

Penn Daw, Fire Station 11 — \$10 Million

Built in 1967 as a volunteer fire station with a large bingo hall, the existing 19,488-square-foot station is one of the oldest and busiest in the county. The station's apparatus bays are undersized with very low ceilings and cannot house a tiller truck. Tiller trucks are strategically placed in densely populated areas of the county because they have operational advantages related to maneuverability and fire scene positioning as well as capacity to carry extrication equipment. **The station lacks adequate living quarters for female personnel and requires replacement of major building systems.** The Penn Daw Fire Station's response area covers the northern section of the Richmond Highway corridor, which is one of eight revitalization areas in the county targeted for commercial and residential development. A renovated or rebuilt fire station at the existing site will have capacity to add emergency responders and units to meet increased service demand resulting from projected population growth.

Woodlawn, Fire Station 24 \$10 Million

The existing 6,800-square-foot fire station opened in 1970, and has two-and-a-half undersized apparatus bays, inadequate female living quarters, no space for operations management functions and very limited parking. The Woodlawn Fire Station's response area covers the southern section of the Richmond Highway corridor, which is one of eight revitalization areas planned for commercial and residential development. A larger fire station is planned to be constructed on the existing site, combined with the adjacent county-owned property.

Reston, Fire Station 25 — \$13 Million

Built in 1972, the existing 7,740-square-foot fire station needs to be replaced with a much larger facility to address outdated infrastructure and critical operational space shortages. **The two-and-a-half-bay fire station lacks sufficient space for existing equipment and operational support functions as well as capacity to handle additional emergency responders and units anticipated to meet future service demands.** Reston is undergoing high-density commercial and residential development as a result of the expansion of the Metrorail to Dulles Airport. A larger replacement fire station with multi-functional response capabilities will be constructed at the existing site.

Edsall Road, Fire Station 26 \$10 Million

The existing 8,327-square-foot fire station opened in 1974, and **the station's two-and-a-half apparatus bays are undersized, female living facilities are inadequate, and additional space is needed to conduct field operations management and support functions.** The Edsall Road Fire Station's response area includes Annandale and Springfield, two revitalization areas in the county planned for future development, as well as I-395/495 highways. An expanded fire station at the existing site will have capacity to meet projected service demand.

Merrifield, Fire Station 30 — \$8 Million

Built in 1979, the existing 13,224-square-foot fire station requires renovation to upgrade building systems, address operational deficiencies and incorporate space previously occupied by the Providence District Supervisor's Office. **The existing fire station lacks sufficient living accommodations for female personnel, a workout facility to maintain physical fitness and space for operations support functions.** Merrifield is a revitalization area in the county undergoing high-density commercial and residential development. A renovated station will meet projected service demands in the urbanizing area.

What Are Bonds?

Bonds are a form of long-term borrowing used by most local governments to finance public facilities and infrastructure. Bond financing makes it possible to build facilities and infrastructure based on future population estimates and to spread the cost equitably over the useful life of the facilities. This kind of financing allows the cost of a facility to be spread over a number of years so that each generation of taxpayers contributes a proportionate share for the use of these long-term investments.

Q Why referenda?

A Virginia law requires that voters in Fairfax County approve general obligation bonds through a referendum. You have the opportunity to vote either YES or NO on the question. If the majority votes YES on a question, then the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will be authorized to sell bonds for the purpose described in the ballot question. If the majority votes NO on a question, the county cannot issue general obligation bonds to finance the purpose described in the question.

Q What is the cost of borrowing?

A Borrowing always entails interest costs. Since the interest earned by holders of municipal bonds is usually exempt from federal taxes, interest rates for these bonds generally are lower than the rate charged for private loans. Since our county has a reputation for sound financial management, Fairfax County has the highest credit rating possible for any government: triple-A from Moody's Investors Service Inc.; from Standard & Poor's Corp.; and from Fitch Ratings. As of July 2015, Fairfax County is one of only 10 states, 40 counties and 30 cities to hold a triple-A bond rating from all three rating agencies. For this reason, Fairfax County's bonds sell at relatively low interest rates compared to other tax-free bonds.

Q What are the benefits of Fairfax County's triple-A ratings?

A The county's triple-A bond ratings lower the county's borrowing costs. The county's policy of rapid debt retirement and strong debt management guidelines serves to keep debt per capita and net debt as a percentage of estimated market value of taxable property at low levels. Since 1978, the county has saved over \$702.51 million on bond and refunding sales as a result of the triple-A ratings when compared to industry benchmarks of other municipal bond issuers.

Q Will these bonds cause a tax rate increase?

A The bond program is designed not to contribute to an increase in your tax rate. Fairfax County has adopted a prudent financial management policy designed to protect its triple-A bond ratings. Under the program, the county's net long-term debt is not to exceed 3 percent of the total market value of taxable real and personal property in the county. It also provides that annual debt service (the cost of principal and interest

payments) be kept below 10 percent of annual combined general fund spending, and that bond sales shall not exceed an average principal amount of \$275 million per year or \$1.375 billion over five years.

For FY 2016, the county's projected actual net long-term debt is 1.25 percent of the market value of all taxable real and personal property. Debt service costs in FY 2016 are projected to be 8.8 percent of the combined general fund disbursements. The FY 2016-2020 Capital Improvement Program adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on April 21, 2015, anticipates issuance of an average of \$275 million of general obligation bonds per year. Of this amount, approximately \$155 million (56%) is for the Fairfax County Public Schools and \$125 million (44%) is for the county. This policy is expected to keep debt service at approximately 9 percent of general fund disbursements, which will maintain a balance between operating expenses and long-term capital needs.

Q Why not pay for capital improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis?

A If capital construction were financed on a pay-as-you-go basis out of current tax revenues, expenditures would be paid for in a much shorter time frame, which could necessitate tax rate increases or a significant reduction in other county services. Bonding spreads the cost of major projects of general benefit to the county over future years and ensures that both current and future residents and users share in the payment. Without bond funding, capital improvement budgeting is less predictable.

Q What percentage of my taxes goes toward paying for the bonds?

A During the past 20 years, the share of taxes used to pay debt service has fluctuated from 7.5 percent to a high of 9.3 percent. For FY 2016, it is projected to be 8.8 percent and is projected to remain at or slightly above 9 percent based on current market and revenue forecasts even assuming passage of the public safety bond referendum.

Q What is the county's total bonded indebtedness?

A As of July 2015, the total of general obligation bond and other tax-supported debt from FY 2016 through FY 2042 is \$2.964 billion in principal and \$1.097 billion in interest. During the next five years, \$1.539 billion, or approximately 38

percent of the total debt, is scheduled to be paid off.

Q Can the proceeds of the bonds on the Nov. 3 ballot be used for other purposes?

A Proceeds of the sale of bonds authorized for a specific purpose may not, by law, be used for any purpose other than the purpose specified in the referendum question. In other words, the proceeds of the sale of public safety bonds may not be used to finance other projects, such as transportation or storm drainage projects. Although this pamphlet describes the county's current plans for the use of the bond proceeds, the county would be permitted to issue bonds for any purpose described in the ballot question.

Q Why put forth additional referenda if there are still unsold bonds?

A Fairfax County bond packages are planned to fund specific projects. This means that all previous bond authorizations were planned for or are obligated to specific projects. These projects often take a number of years to complete. Bonds are sold only as the money is needed, resulting in substantial amounts of authorized, but unissued, bonds. Prudent financial management dictates that the proportionate amount of bonds be sold to coincide with the annual cash flow requirements for construction costs associated with the respective capital projects.

Some pro and con arguments about financing capital projects through bond funding:

PRO

Some people think that bond financing is a vital part of the county's comprehensive approach to the challenge of funding needed infrastructure and capital facilities. Here are some of the arguments used by proponents of bond funding:

- Bonding spreads the cost of major projects of general benefit to county residents over future years and ensures that both current and future residents and users share in the payment.
- Spreading the cost of major projects permits the county to accomplish more projects sooner than would pay-as-you-go using only current tax revenues.
- Constructing the proposed county facility improvement projects from current general tax dollars cannot be accomplished without substantial cuts to current programs or increased revenues from taxes and fees.
- Prudent use of long-term debt can be accomplished without having any adverse impact on the county's bond ratings or the tax rate.

CON

Some people think that the issuing of general obligation bonds is neither justified nor a viable solution to the county's capital infrastructure and facility needs. Here are some of the arguments used by opponents of bond funding:

- Issuing general obligation bonds results in a long-term future obligation for the county that may create an unmanageable burden on future taxpayers. Pay-as-you-go financing would not create long-term debt.
- Costs for infrastructure and facilities should be borne by those directly using or benefiting from them, not by all taxpayers.
- These facilities could be fully or partially paid for out of the current revenues by cutting or eliminating other programs.
- The funds otherwise spent on debt service could support a substantial pay-as-you-go program of capital construction adequate to meet the county's needs.

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For contact information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board.

Do You Have a Photo ID to Vote on Election Day, Nov. 3?

Virginia requires everyone to provide an acceptable photo ID in order to vote in person. If you do not have a valid Virginia driver's license, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) ID card, U.S. passport, military ID or other government-issued ID, you may need to get a free photo ID from the Fairfax County Office of Elections. Additional information on acceptable forms of identification may be found at the Office of Elections website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections

¿Tiene usted una identificación con foto para votar el día de las elecciones, 3 de noviembre?

Virginia ahora requiere que todos los votantes presenten una identificación con foto que sea aceptable para votar en persona. Si usted no tiene una licencia de conducir válida de Virginia, tarjeta de identificación emitida por el Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), pasaporte americano, identificación militar u otra identificación válida emitida por una agencia de gobierno, usted puede obtener una identificación con foto gratuita en la Oficina de Elecciones del Condado de Fairfax. Información adicional sobre las formas aceptables de identificación se puede encontrar en la página web de la Oficina de Elecciones: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections

Fairfax County Office of Elections
703-222-0776, TTY 711

To request this information in an alternate format, call the Office of Public Affairs at 703-324-7329, TTY 711.

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2015 Bond Referendum Information for Residents

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