

From the Office of Sharon Bulova
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035
703-324-2321

chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman



Bulova Byline

The Monthly Newsletter from Chairman Bulova

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going on in Fairfax
County?



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Did you know?

The NEW VA. TRANSPORTATION BILL is the first major piece of transportation legislation passed in the last 27 years.

March 2013

Greetings,

I count among my friends governors and congressmen and men who live in the woods.

It was the latter who I met with in the wee hours of the morning last Wednesday when I joined a group of volunteers from area non-profits, faith organizations and County employees at the Mott Center on Braddock Road. The effort to personally reach out to the chronically homeless was part of the 100k Homes Registry Week initiative. By learning more about the relatively small population of individuals who are living hidden away in the woods or in vehicles, Fairfax County will be better able to achieve our goal of ending homelessness as we know it.

My team piled into a FACETS van at 4:30 a.m. Minutes later we were slogging through the dark woods near Shirley Gate Road in Fairfax looking for what turned out to be a recently abandoned camp site. We guessed the occupant had fled the area when driving rain the night before had blown down his tent and soaked his belongings, which included an American flag and a canvas suitcase packed neatly with clean wet clothes. The top of a cookie tin was embossed with Marine Corps insignia. A Vet? We left a note letting him (or her) know we had been there and where he (or she) could go for help.

Our next stop was close to Fair Oaks Mall. Our van pulled onto the shoulder of Route 50 and we all piled out. Flashlights in hand, we stepped onto a path and disappeared into the woods behind thick underbrush. Amanda Andere had announced in the van that we were going to "Steve's house," and sure enough, there in a clearing was a neat little frame house tucked away out of sight,

[Click here](#) to learn how the bill affects Fairfax County!

complete with an attractive front door secured with a padlock and round pavers leading up to it.

Steve was not home. Amanda had met him earlier during Registry Week and learned that he worked at Giant Food. We learned through this outreach effort that many of the chronically homeless are employed. An interesting statistic - someone making the minimum wage could work 24 hours a day for one week and still not be able to afford a one bedroom apartment in Fairfax County. Amanda left a message for Steve about a dentist appointment she was able to arrange for him.

We crept deeper into the woods and found three more campsites. At the last campsite, volunteers were elated that "Dave" had finally agreed to come out and talk with them. Dave was a nice looking man, with sharp pleasant features and gray hair. In front of his tent was a table and plastic chairs next to a grill.

Lisa Thompson, a member of our group, asked questions from her form. How long had he been homeless? Six years. Did he have health problems? Yes, he had kidney problems and arthritis. Did he drink every day or use drugs? No. Dave shared that when he worked last it was in construction and if he could work again he would like to work in auto mechanics.

Before we left, I told Dave that we cared about him, and that Registry Week was an attempt to learn more about the homeless population in Fairfax County. I asked what he thought we needed to do to end homelessness. At first he answered "I have no idea!" Then, after giving it more thought, he said, "Jobs. And not just 'a job' but a job that pays enough to live on. And job retraining

when someone can't do the job they've been doing anymore. "

I wasn't surprised by his answer.

By now, the sun had come up. Our little team trekked out of the woods and onto the highway. Rush hour had begun with cars whizzing by on their way to work in D.C. or Tysons or wherever. I

couldn't get over the contrast. Just steps away from comfortable



Photo: A group of volunteers visits one of several campsites in wooded areas around Fairfax County.

homes and an upscale shopping center, was this little homeless village of tents and shacks.

It was a powerful, unforgettable experience. It's one thing to advocate for "the issue" of ending homelessness, it's another to know Steve and "John Wayne" and Dave and to worry about them when the temperature dips into the single digits, or the wind howls, or a heavy rain comes pelting down.

This effort is a partnership among the County, our non-profit community, faith organizations and our Fairfax County corporate neighbors. To learn more about Fairfax County's commitment to end homelessness, and what you personally can do to help, for more information visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/>.

A lot happened in February:

- The General Assembly passed a major **transportation bill**, the first increase in state funding for transportation in a generation.
- The County Executive released his **Advertised Budget for Fiscal Year 2014**, with a look ahead at Fiscal Year 2015.
- The EPA chose not to appeal the court decision that upheld Fairfax County's strategy for addressing our clean water challenges.
- Fairfax County adopted an agreement with VDOT to remove illegal signs from VDOT's right-of-way.

See inside this edition of the Byline for details about these and other items that will be on our agenda during the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Bulova". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sharon Bulova

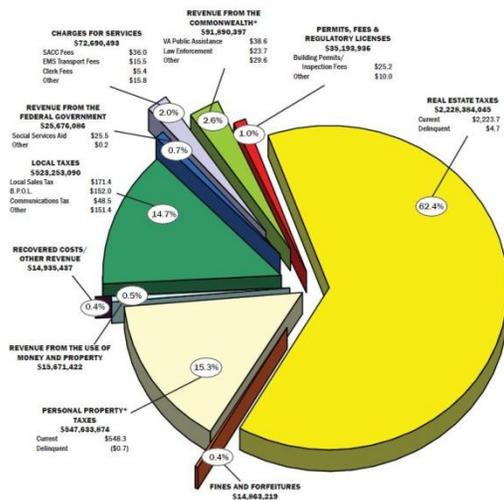
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

FY 2014 Budget Overview

Fairfax County, like all jurisdictions in Virginia, operates on an annual balanced budget as required by the State Constitution. As the Board begins our deliberations on striking a balance between services and costs for Fiscal Year 2014, I wanted to share recent budget history, describe some of the factors affecting county revenue, highlight important parts of the County Executive's Advertised Budget and let you know how you can get involved in the FY2014 Budget Process.

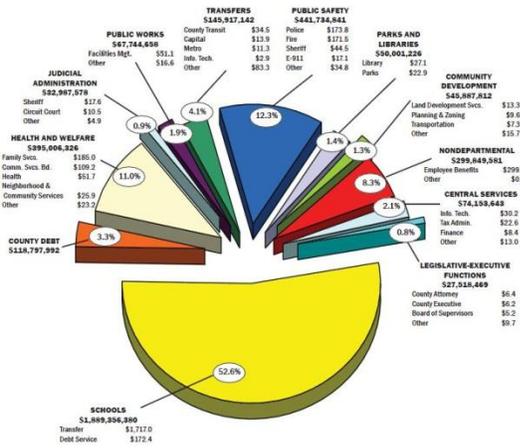
FY 2014 ADVERTISED GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS **

Where it comes from . . .
(subcategories in millions)



FY 2014 ADVERTISED GENERAL FUND DISBURSEMENTS

Where it goes . . .
(subcategories in millions)



(Click Images to Enlarge)

Recent History:

- Since the Great Recession started in 2008, Fairfax County has implemented a number of efficiencies and reductions to our budget.
- Between FY2009 and FY2013, the Total General Fund Budget has only increased an average of 1.4% annually.
- Since FY2009, county agency budgets have been cut by more than \$150 million and more than 500 positions have been eliminated.
- Revenue growth during the recession has been slow.

Drivers for FY2014:

- The real estate tax provides more than 60% of the County's General Fund Revenue
- Appreciation of property for Residential Real Estate increased 3.5%.
 - o homes are once again selling
 - o foreclosures have returned to pre-recession rates
- Non-residential Real Estate Equalization was essentially flat, increasing only 0.14%

- Significant drop in growth from 3.73% in FY2012 and 8.21% in FY2013
 - Office and commercial leasing is at a five-year low.
- Uncertainty created by the threat of sequestration has slowed recovery from the recession and limited growth in the commercial sector.

The County Executive's Advertised Budget:

- Maintains the quality of life that we value in Fairfax County.
- The total recommended FY2014 Budget for all funds is **\$7.17 billion**, including all county funds and pass-through revenue from the state and federal government.
- The Advertised Budget is based on a 2 cent increase to the Real Estate Tax Rate.
- General Fund Disbursements would total **\$3.589 billion**.
 - \$1.31 billion in General Fund Direct Expenditures to fund County Government
 - \$1.89 billion for the School Transfer
- Eliminates 91 full time positions while adding 11 new positions in public safety.

Impact on the Average Fairfax County Household:

- Our Board advertised a tax rate of \$1.095, an increase of 2 cents over the current \$1.075 rate. When we mark-up (amend) the Advertised Budget we can adopt a rate that is lower than 1.095 but not higher.
- If the Board adopts the proposed tax rate of \$1.095, the average real estate tax bill would increase \$262.45 annually or about 0.9% from last year's average tax bill.
- Each 1 cent change in the real estate tax rate translates into a \$47 change on the average tax bill.
- The value of 1 cent in the real estate tax rate translates into approximately \$20.65 million.

How to Get Involved:

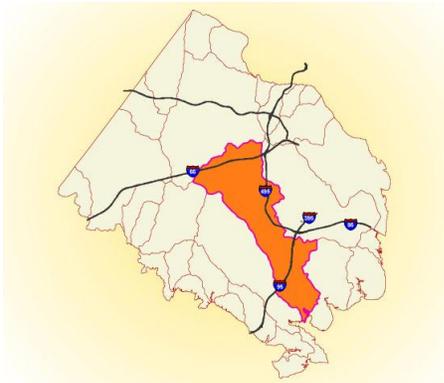
- Contact the Department of Management and Budget to share your comments and suggestions [online](#) or at 703-324-2391.
- Contact your [District Supervisor](#) or [my office](#).
- Attend a [Town Meeting on the Budget](#).
- Speak at a Public Hearing - contact the Clerk to the Board [online](#) or a 703-324-3151 to sign up.

At the end of the year's budget process, our Board will adopt a budget that continues to invest in the community's priorities and supports our goal of keeping Fairfax the outstanding place it is to live, work, play, raise our families and grow older comfortably.

Upcoming Budget Forums/Town Meetings	Date
Springfield District Budget Meeting Springfield Governmental Center - 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield	March 6 - 7:00 p.m. TO BE RESCHEDULED
McLean Budget Meeting McLean Community Center - 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean	March 12 at 7:00 p.m.
Braddock District Budget Meeting Kings Park Library, Braddock Hall - 9000 Burke Lake Rd, Burke	March 13 at 7:30 p.m.
Sully District Budget Meeting Rocky Run Middle School - 4400 Stringfellow Rd., Chantilly	March 13 at 7:00 p.m.
Lee District Association Franconia Governmental Center - 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria	March 13 at 7:00 p.m.
Braddock District Budget Meeting Little Run Elementary School - 4511 Olley Lane, Fairfax	March 18 at 7:30 p.m.
Mason District Budget Town Meeting Mason District Governmental Center - 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale	March 20 at 7:00 p.m.
Hunter Mill District Budget Meeting Reston Community Center - Hunter Woods -- Rooms 3 and 4 - 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston	March 27 at 7:00 p.m.
Braddock District Budget Meeting Robinson Secondary School (Lecture Hall) - 5035 Sideburn Rd., Fairfax	April 2 at 7:30 p.m.
Great Falls Budget Meeting Great Falls Library - 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls	April 2 at 7:00 p.m.
Herndon Budget Meeting Herndon Town Council Chambers - 765 Lynn Street, Herndon	April 3 at 7:00 p.m.
Hunter Mill District Budget Meeting Vienna Community Center - 120 Cherry St SE, Vienna	April 6 at 10:00 a.m.
Public Hearing on FY 2014 Budget - Board Auditorium - Govt. Center	April 9, 2013
Public Hearing on FY 2014 Budget - Board Auditorium - Govt. Center	April 10, 2013
Public Hearing on FY 2014 Budget - Board Auditorium - Govt. Center	April 11, 2013
FY 2014 Board Budget Mark-up and Approval of FY 2013 Third Quarter	April 23, 2013
Formal Adoption of the FY 2014 Budget	April 30, 2013
Beginning of FY 2014	July 1, 2013

EPA Will Not Appeal Accotink TMDL Decision

Over the weekend, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it would not appeal a court decision in Fairfax County's favor concerning the environmental regulation of Accotink Creek. This concludes more than two years of disagreement between the EPA, the County and the Commonwealth of Virginia over the best strategies for restoring Accotink Creek to a healthy condition.



The headwaters of Accotink Creek are located in the center of Fairfax County and the stream drains southeast to Accotink Bay, then Gunston Cove and finally to the Tidal Potomac Region.

The County filed a lawsuit in July of 2012 after months of negotiations and talks failed to yield an acceptable compromise. Faced with a regulatory deadline, the lawsuit was the County's only recourse. The County argued that the proposed TMDL (Total Minimum Daily Load) overstepped the EPA's regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act and also unnecessarily limited the types of projects that Fairfax County is doing to restore the Accotink. The lawsuit did not contest the impairment of the Accotink or the need to improve, restore and protect Accotink Creek and other waterways in Fairfax County.

This decision and the EPA's explanation for not appealing are strong validations of Fairfax County's sound and successful strategy for addressing our clean water goals.

Now that the legal battle is behind us, we can focus on addressing improvements to our watersheds and water quality. The County has already invested significant resources in developing 30 Watershed Management Plans covering all of the drainage areas in Fairfax County. Each plan includes an assessment of the existing conditions within the particular watershed and 10-year and 25-year project plans for improving and protecting the water quality in each watershed. Investing in the health of Accotink Creek and other tributaries in Fairfax County not only improves local streams and rivers, it provides downstream benefits to the Potomac River and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay.



Lake Accotink, with a surface area of approximately 70 acres, is located in the central portion of the watershed.

The EPA has asked that the Commonwealth and Fairfax County begin work on a new TMDL and said Fairfax County's 2011 Accotink Creek Watershed Management Plan provides a good starting point for that effort. Fairfax County remains committed to improving the health of the Accotink Creek as well as other tributaries of the Potomac and Chesapeake in the County.

Residences at the Government Center

Workforce housing provides our young people, entry level professionals, and lower income employees an affordable option for living near their jobs. **Workforce housing is not the same thing as Subsidized Housing.** Living close to where you work is not only

convenient, but **environmentally sound and less expensive** than living far from work and having a long commute, which contributes to our area's transportation challenges. Fairfax County business leaders have called a lack of affordable workforce housing a major impediment to economic development. In Fairfax County, we identified significant interest in creating affordable housing near the Government Center when we conducted surveys of our County employees several years ago.

In March of 2011, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved [the Residences at the Government Center](#), a new 270-unit affordable apartment community to be built adjacent to Fairfax Corner. **Groundbreaking for this project is expected this summer.** This



Artist rendition of Residences at the Government Center. Construction is expected to begin in Summer 2013.

attractive, high-quality development will offer apartments to applicants who work in Fairfax County at a rate affordable to working individuals and families. **The Residences will be built, managed and maintained by the private sector and rents are not subsidized by the county.**

Fairfax County has a shortage of workforce housing, which means teachers, firefighters, police officers, and entry level employees are often forced to commute to their jobs from outside the County. The Fairfax County Economic Advisory Commission (EAC) highlighted this shortage in their report to the Board of Supervisors, and recommended the County "reduce obstacles and/or create incentives" for the creation of more workforce housing.

The Residences will provide **housing at reasonable rents to individuals and families working in the Fairfax Corner/Fair Oaks area.** It will be an easy walk for employees at the Fairfax County Government Center. Through its location in a job-rich area, the Residences will help improve the jobs-housing balance that was identified as a challenge in the EAC's report. Because it will be privately-owned, the development will also generate tax revenue for the County.

The Residences at the Government Center will be an attractive community that is consistent with the standards of the surrounding neighborhood. The complex will also incorporate green building, universal and sustainable design features. Fairfax County is very pleased that The Residences at the Government Center has received joint recognition by the Washington Sustainable Growth Alliance and the ULI Terwilliger Center for Workforce Housing for its innovative approach to providing workforce housing. **By leasing land on the Government Center campus to the private sector, this development, and this partnership, will serve**

as a model for affordable and smart growth in the County at no cost to the taxpayer.

New Va. Transportation Bill

On February 23, the Virginia General Assembly passed an historic piece of legislation that will help Fairfax County and Northern Virginia to invest in our critical transportation needs. While the bill results in new revenue coming to Fairfax County, it does have some restrictions on how that money is used, in particular projects must be selected that relieve congestion and/or add capacity to roads or transit. Our transportation staff is working now to determine exactly how this new money can be spent.

For more information on what it means specifically for Fairfax County please visit: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/pdf/va_transportation.pdf.

Illegal Sign Removal

Unlawful signs in the public rights-of-way have been a long-standing problem, but the number of signs has spiraled out of control in recent years and many residents in Fairfax County have voiced concern about unlawful signs.

The Board of Supervisors recently authorized the county to enter into a legal agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) that allows the County to remove illegal signs from the public right-of-way.

The Office of the Sheriff will provide its Community Labor Force (CLF) (non-violent offenders accompanied by Sheriff's Deputies) to remove signs in identified areas of the County. CLF crews would remove all signs located in the designated public rights-of-way between Tuesdays and Fridays. Special event signs are only permitted from Saturday through Monday. If they are present during the weekdays they will be subject to removal. These signs will then be stored at a County facility for five days, which would allow the owner of the sign to reclaim it. After this five day period, unclaimed signs would be destroyed. Staff of the Office of the Sheriff and the Department of Code Compliance will monitor and record all costs associated with the implementation of this pilot program during its initial one year test period.

Sign Removal Facts

- Sign removal program will begin later this year after operations details are determined.
- Signs will be removed between Tuesdays and Fridays.
- Special event signs (i.e. open houses, school plays, community meetings, etc.) are only permitted from Saturday through Monday.
- Signs will be removed from selected highways, not neighborhood streets.
- Under state law, some kinds of signs are permitted in public rights of way. These

include no trespassing signs; Red Cross stations; signs at the intersections of two or more roads giving the distance or direction to a church, residence, or place of business; signs denoting only the name of a civic service club or church; and signs advertising or providing directions to a "special event."

For more information visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2013/board-approves-legal-agreement-remove-signs.htm>.

Insect Management Programs

Protect yourself from Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus & other vector-borne diseases

- Take precautions to avoid mosquito & tick bites to reduce your risk of getting sick
- Use repellents containing DEET



- Remove sources of standing water from around your house
- Avoid tick-infested areas, such as overgrown grass and brush

The Disease Carrying Insects Program focuses on mosquitos, which may carry the West Nile Virus, and ticks, which can be carriers of Lyme disease and other diseases. Throughout the spring, summer and fall, Health Department staff will be conducting surveillance, trapping, prevention through education and, if necessary, the targeted application of EPA-approved insecticides to limit exposure to mosquitos, ticks and the diseases they carry. For more information on these programs and precautions you can take to minimize the risk of contracting an insect-borne disease like treating standing water to eliminate mosquito larvae or landscaping practices to keep your home as tick-free as possible, please visit the [Disease Carrying Insect Program](#) site.

At the same time, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services will be working to suppress and manage insects that harm or kill trees. Many of the species targeted by the Forest Pest Management Suppression Program are invasive, non-native insects like the Gypsy Moth Caterpillar or the Emerald Ash Borer and they represent a threat that local trees are not adapted to resist. DPWES staff will monitor forest pests and tree diseases throughout the county and will employ targeted suppression with EPA-approved insecticides. More information on forest pests and the management program can be found here: [Forest Pest Management Suppression Program](#).

With warmer weather (hopefully) just ahead of us, I am looking forward to enjoying the outdoors and wanted to take this opportunity to share some information about the County's insect management programs so that insects don't bug you this spring.