



GERALD E. CONNOLLY  
CHAIRMAN

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
**COUNTY OF FAIRFAX**  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22035

Suite 530  
12000 GOVERNMENT CENTER PARKWAY  
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22035-0071

TELEPHONE 703- 324-2321  
FAX 703- 324-3955

chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov

To the Citizens of Fairfax County:

I am pleased to present to you the Fiscal Year 2009 Adopted Budget Plan. This year represented one of the most challenging budgets in the last fifteen years. Decreases in the Federal Reserve's interest rate and loss of state revenue, coupled with increasing fuel costs negatively impacted the County's budget, causing an unexpected loss of more than \$50 million from what was originally planned for in the release of the FY 2009 Advertised Budget Plan. Therefore the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors were forced to address revenue losses along with increasing school and human services needs. County agencies, which experienced a 2 percent reduction in personnel costs in FY 2008, had an additional 2 percent personnel budget reduction in order to maintain a balanced budget.

Real estate property assessments decreased for a second straight year, with residential assessments declining an average of 3.38 percent. Although the real estate tax rate increased 3.0 cents from 89.0 cents per \$100 assessed value to 92.0 cents, the average homeowner will still pay less in actual real estate taxes this year than they did in 2007. That represents the second straight year of decreases for the average real estate tax bill. With the Board's prior reductions of the real estate tax rate from \$1.23 in FY 2002, the average homeowner has saved \$5,369 from what they would have paid.

The FY 2009 Budget includes an increase in General Fund revenue of just 1.03 percent over the FY 2008 Revised Budget Plan and 1.02 percent over the FY 2008 Adopted Budget Plan. Recognizing the weakening fiscal situation, the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan contains \$3.35 billion in General Fund Disbursements, a decrease of \$30.77 million, or 0.91 percent from the FY 2008 Revised Budget Plan. Excluding the County's transfer to the school system, Disbursements decreased \$11.6 million, or 0.73 percent from the FY 2008 Adopted Budget Plan.

Once again, our children's education holds the highest priority in the FY 2009 Budget, comprising 53.1 percent of our overall General Fund Disbursements or \$1.78 billion. This represents an increase of 2.70 percent, or \$46.8 million, over the FY 2008 Adopted and Revised Budget Plans. Furthermore, on the County side of the FY 2009 Budget, there is an additional \$64.2 million for School Aged Child Care programs, Head Start, school clinic nurses, crossing guards and after school programming. The Board also approved funding for the Protecting our Children from Sexual Offenders (P'CASO) program, staffing police officers to monitor the sexual offender database prosecute online predators, after the previous federal grant was not renewed.

The Board also approved new transportation funding through an 11 cent real estate tax on commercial properties, authorized by the Virginia General Assembly. This new revenue will provide the County with an additional \$51.7 million for transportation improvements. This represents new local transportation investments in addition to the Board of Supervisors' normal support for the Metro system, VRE, Fairfax Connector bus service, pedestrian and bicycle trails, and debt support for our second transportation bond referendum in five years.

The addition of a third team to the Board of Supervisors' Code Enforcement Strike Team represented one of the few program increases in the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan. This will dramatically expand the County's capacity for responding to neighborhood zoning and safety law concerns.

The Board of Supervisors again approved the dedication of one-penny on the real estate tax rate for the preservation of Affordable Housing. During the past four years, this dedication has allowed the Board to more than double its goal of preserving 1,000 affordable housing units that would otherwise have been lost. In addition to preserving affordable units, the FY 2009 Affordable Housing Penny dedication will enable the County to address the increasing number of foreclosures through a number of creative ways including counseling assistance to aid those whose houses are in danger of foreclosure, mortgage assistance for first-time homebuyers wishing to purchase a foreclosed house and outright purchase of selected foreclosed homes by the County for resale at affordable prices.

As part of the FY 2009 Adopted Budget, the Board of Supervisors also rededicated the one-penny on the real estate tax rate for Stormwater Management. This dedication better enables the County to implement our 20-year Environmental Agenda through protecting and improving our watersheds and addressing the environmental impact of previous decade's developments.

Despite the challenging fiscal situation, the Fiscal Year 2009 Adopted Budget Plan continues to support the core needs of the County and maintains the investments that we have made to ensure our quality of life while once again decreasing the average tax burden on our homeowners. While our future fiscal projections predict continued revenue challenges for the FY 2010 Budget, the Board of Supervisors has prepared by adopting policy guidelines permitting use of the County's Revenue Stabilization Fund if necessary to offset declining revenue and avoid both draconian cuts in service and dramatic increases in the tax rates. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors approved a comprehensive Lines of Business review starting in Summer 2008 which will analyze every County program and service for efficiencies and where necessary, elimination. The FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan, representing a balanced and fiscally responsible funding plan, is the culmination of the hard work of dedicated County staff and the Board of Supervisors working together on behalf of the Citizens of Fairfax County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald E. Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "G" and "E".

Gerald E. Connolly