

Strategic Linkages

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Strategic Linkages

Context and Background

Fairfax County has been working on a number of initiatives in recent years to strengthen decision making and infuse a more strategic approach into the way business is performed. These initiatives include developing an employee Leadership Philosophy and Vision Statement, identifying the priorities of the Board of Supervisors, implementing a coordinated agency strategic planning process, incorporating Performance Measurement and benchmarking into the budget process, implementing a countywide Workforce Planning initiative, redesigning the Budget Process and converting to Pay for Performance. The process has been challenging and has required a shift in organizational culture; however, the benefit of these efforts is a high-performing government in Fairfax County, which is more accountable, forward-thinking and better able to further its status as one of the premier local governments in the nation.

Strategic Thinking

Among the first steps Fairfax County took to improve strategic thinking was to build and align leadership and performance at all levels of the organization through discussions and workshops among the County Executive, senior management and County staff. This initiative included the development of an employee Leadership Philosophy and Vision Statement to help employees focus on the same core set of concepts. This dialogue among the County Executive, senior management and staff has continued over several years and culminated in the development of seven "Vision Elements" for the County, which are consistent with the priorities of the Board of Supervisors. These Vision Elements are intended to describe what success will look like as a result of

the County's efforts to protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:

Employee Vision Statement

As Fairfax County Employees we are committed to excellence in our work. We celebrate public service, anticipate changing needs and respect diversity. In partnership with the community, we shape the future.

We inspire integrity, pride, trust and respect within our organization. We encourage employee involvement and creativity as a source of new ideas to continually improve service. As stewards of community resources, we embrace the opportunities and challenges of technological advances, evolving demographics, urbanization, revitalization, and the changing role of government. We commit ourselves to these guiding principles: Providing Superior Service, Valuing Our Workforce, Respecting Diversity, Communicating Openly and Consistently, and Building Community Partnerships.

Employee Leadership Philosophy

We, the employees of Fairfax County, are the stewards of the County's resources and heritage. We are motivated by the knowledge that the work we do is critical in enhancing the quality of life in our community. We value personal responsibility, integrity and initiative. We are committed to serving the community through consultative leadership, teamwork and mutual respect.



Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities: The needs of a diverse and growing community are met through innovative public and private services, community partnerships and volunteer opportunities. As a result, residents feel safe and secure, capable of accessing the range of services and opportunities they need, and are willing and able to give back to their community.



Building Livable Spaces: Together, we encourage distinctive "built environments" that create a sense of place, reflect the character, history, and natural environment of the community, and take a variety of forms - from identifiable neighborhoods, to main streets, to town centers. As a result, people throughout the community feel they have unique and desirable places to live, work, shop, play, and connect with others.



Connecting People and Places: Transportation, technology, and information effectively and efficiently connect people and ideas. As a result, people feel a part of their community and have the ability to access places and resources in a timely, safe, and convenient manner.

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Maintaining Healthy Economies: Investments in the workforce, jobs, and community infrastructure and institutions support a diverse and thriving economy. As a result, individuals are able to meet their needs and have the opportunity to grow and develop their talent and income according to their potential.



Practicing Environmental Stewardship: Local government, industry and residents seek ways to use all resources wisely and to protect and enhance the County's natural environment and open space. As a result, residents feel good about their quality of life and embrace environmental stewardship as a personal and shared responsibility.



Creating a Culture of Engagement: Individuals enhance community life by participating in and supporting civic groups, discussion groups, public-private partnerships, and other activities that seek to understand and address community needs and opportunities. As a result, residents feel that they can make a difference and work in partnership with others to understand and address pressing public issues.



Exercising Corporate Stewardship: Fairfax County government is accessible, responsible, and accountable. As a result, actions are responsive, providing superior customer service and reflecting sound management of County resources and assets.

Vision Element posters are prominently placed in County facilities to continue to foster the adoption of these concepts at all levels of the organization and to increase their visibility to citizens as well.

Strategic Planning

In the spring of 2002, Fairfax County implemented a countywide strategic planning effort. Strategic planning furthers the County's commitment to high performance and strategic thinking by helping agencies to focus resources on services that are the most needed in the County. While some agencies already had strategic plans, the new process directed all agencies to forge a link between their individual missions and goals and the broader County vision laid out in the seven Vision Elements.

Each agency performed an agency-wide environmental scan to determine what factors influence service delivery and customer demands, identified business areas within each department to more specifically define the services provided, aligned the specific tasks performed by business areas within the departmental and vision element framework, and refined goals to meet the countywide vision elements and agency mission. The strategic planning effort involved a cross section of employees at all levels and in all areas of the organization. The County Executive meets annually with specific agencies to discuss the process of strategic planning. He believes that the strategic planning process is as important as the product and that the steps agencies take in the process are effective in orchestrating the shift in organizational culture.

The strategic planning efforts in Fairfax County have been bolstered by four on-going efforts – performance measurement, pay-for-performance, workforce planning and technology enhancements – which help the County maintain a top quality workforce and fund County programs and technology improvements, often despite budget reductions:

Performance Measurement: Since 1997, Fairfax County has used performance measurement to gain insight into, and make judgments about, the effectiveness and efficiency of its programs, processes and employees. While performance measures do not in and of themselves produce higher levels of effectiveness, efficiency and quality, they do provide data that can help to reallocate resources or realign strategic objectives to improve services. Each Fairfax County agency decides which indicators will be used to measure progress toward strategic goals and objectives, gathers and analyzes performance measurement data, and uses the results to drive improvements in the agency.

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Fairfax County also uses benchmarking, the systematic comparison of performance with other jurisdictions, in order to discover best practices that will enhance performance. The County has participated in the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) benchmarking effort since 2000. Approximately 100 cities and counties provide comparable data annually in the following service areas: Police, Fire/EMS, Library, Parks and Recreation, Youth Services, Code Enforcement, Refuse Collection/Recycling, Housing, Fleet Management, Facilities, Information Technology, Human Resources, Risk Management and Purchasing, although not every participating jurisdiction completes every template. ICMA performs extensive data cleaning to ensure the greatest accuracy and comparability of data. In service areas that are not covered by ICMA's effort, agencies rely on various sources of comparative data prepared by the state, professional associations and/or nonprofit/research organizations. It is anticipated each year that benchmarking presentations will be enhanced based on the availability of information. Cost per capita data for each program area, (e.g., public safety, health and welfare, community development, etc.) has also been included at the beginning of each program area summary in Volume 1 of the FY 2007 Advertised Budget Plan. The Auditor of Public Accounts for the Commonwealth of Virginia collects this data and publishes it annually. The jurisdictions selected for comparison are the Northern Virginia localities, as well as those with a population of 100,000 or more elsewhere in the state. It should be noted that Fairfax County's cost per capita in each of the program areas is highly competitive with other Northern Virginia and large jurisdictions in the state.

Pay for Performance: In FY 2001, Fairfax County implemented a new performance management system for non-public safety employees. Based on ongoing dialogue between employees and supervisors regarding performance and expectations, the system focuses on using countywide behaviors and performance elements for each job class to link employees' performance with variable pay increases. FY 2002 was the last year for automatic step increases and cost-of-living adjustment for over 8,000 non-public safety employees so annual compensation adjustments are now based solely on performance. Consistent with the County's ongoing assessment of its compensation philosophy and policy, staff undertook a review of the pay for performance system during FY 2004, the fourth year of the program. As part of this analysis, other jurisdictions with pay for performance systems were surveyed for best practices. As a result, the County Executive recommended changes to the system for FY 2005, to better align the pay for performance system with the County's goals and competitive marketplace practices. Efforts will continue to update employee performance elements and assure their linkage to departmental strategic plans and performance measures. Countywide training for employees and managers will continue to be a priority, as will the expansion of options for multi-rater feedback as part of the performance management process.

As an integral part of the transition to pay for performance, and in order to ensure that pay scales remain competitive with the market, non-public safety pay scales are increased in accordance with the annual market index, which is calculated based on data from the Consumer Price Index; the Employment Cost Index, which includes private sector, state and local government salaries; and the Federal Wage adjustment. This is designed to keep County pay scales from falling below the marketplace, requiring a large-scale catch-up every few years. It is important to note that employees do not receive this adjustment as they did in the past through a cost-of-living increase. Pay increases can only be earned through performance. By adjusting the pay scales, however, employees' long-term earning potential remains competitive with the market.

Workforce Planning: The County's workforce planning effort began in FY 2002 to anticipate and integrate the human resources response to agency strategic objectives. Changes in agency priorities such as the opening of a new facility, increased demand for services by the public, the receipt of grant funding, or budget reductions can greatly affect personnel needs. Given these varying situations, workforce planning helps agency leadership to retain employees and improve employee skill sets needed to accomplish the strategic objectives of the agency. Effective workforce planning is a necessary component of an organization's strategic plan, to provide a flexible and proficient workforce able to adapt to the changing needs of the organization.

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Information Technology Initiatives: The County is committed to providing the necessary investment in information technology, realizing the critical role it plays in improving business processes and customer service. Fund 104, Information Technology Fund, was established to accelerate the redesign of business processes to achieve large-scale improvements in service quality and to provide adequate enterprise-wide technological infrastructure. Consequently, the County is consolidating its investments to accommodate and leverage technological advancements and growth well into the 21st century. Management continues to explore and monitor all areas of County government as potential candidates for further information technology enhancements and/or modifications.

Strategic Planning Links to the Budget

Since FY 2005 the annual budget has included links to the comprehensive strategic initiatives described above. To achieve these links, agency budget narratives include discussions of Countywide Vision Elements and agency strategic planning efforts, program area summaries include cross-cutting efforts and benchmarking data, and the Key County Indicator presentation demonstrates how the County is performing as a whole. As a result, the budget information is presented in a more user-friendly format and resource decisions are more clearly articulated to Fairfax County residents. In FY 2006 and FY 2007 this linkage has been strengthened with benchmark data in the program area summary sections of the budget and more focus on Vision Elements and Board priorities both when making funding decisions and when presenting them. This is most visible in the County Executive's memorandum to the Board included in the Overview Volume.

- **Agency Narratives:** Individual agency narratives identify strategic issues, which were developed during the agency strategic planning efforts, link new initiatives and recent accomplishments as well as core services to the Vision Elements and expand the use of performance measures to clearly define how well the agency is delivering a specific service. Agency narratives are included in budget Volumes 1 and 2.
- **Program Area Summaries:** Summaries by Program Area (such as Public Safety, Health and Welfare, Judicial Administration, etc.) provide a broader perspective of the strategic direction of several related agencies and how they are supporting the County Vision Elements. This helps to identify common goals and programs that may cross over departments. In addition, benchmarking information is included on Program Area services to demonstrate how the County performs in relation to other comparable jurisdictions. Program area summaries are included in budget Volumes 1 and 2.
- **Key County Indicators:** The Key County Indicator presentation provides several performance measurement indicators for each Vision Element. The presentation gives the reader a high-level perspective on how the County is doing as a whole to reach its service vision. The presentation of Key County Indicators will continue to be refined to ensure that the measures best represent the needs of the community. A detailed presentation and discussion of the FY 2007 Key County Indicators is included following this discussion.
- **Schools:** The Fairfax County Public Schools provide an enormous contribution to the community and in an effort to address the County's investment in education and the benefits it provides, a list of Fairfax County School Systemwide Targets is included following the Key County Indicator presentation.

Positive Outcomes of Strategic Planning Links to the Budget

Resource Decisions

- Enables funding of priorities that directly support agency strategic goals and the County's Vision elements
- Clearly articulates funding decisions to County citizens

Performance Measurement

- Creates measures of Countywide success in meeting the County's Vision Elements
- Improves tracking of agency progress toward desired outcomes
- Identifies common goals that cross over agencies
- Benchmarks the County's performance in key areas to other jurisdictions

Budget Format

- Presents budget information in a more user-friendly format, which improves readability

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Next Steps

The development of the County's leadership philosophy and emphasis on strategic planning is an ongoing process that will continue to be refined in the coming years. The County budget is extremely well received within the County and nationally. The County received an "Overall Performance Management Award" from the Performance Institute in San Diego, California for strategic planning and budgeting. Specifically the County was recognized for: enabling funding of priorities that directly support the vision goals of Fairfax County; articulating funding decisions to the residents and citizens of the County; and improving comprehension of budget information by organizing it in a user-friendly format. While recognition of this sort is positive the efforts undertaken by the County are designed to facilitate discussion and improvements will be discussed by the Board and the community, and it is anticipated that refinements to the strategic linkages efforts will be driven by that dialogue.

Key County Indicators

Introduction

The Key County Indicator presentation includes several measures of countywide performance for each of the seven Vision Elements. The Indicators were compiled by a diverse team of Fairfax County senior management and agency staff through a series of meetings and workshops. Indicators were chosen if they are reliable and accurate, represent a wide array of County services, and provide a strong measure of how the County is performing in support of each Vision Element. The County is committed to continue to refine and improve the Key County Indicator presentation each year, to ensure it best communicates the County's progress on each of the Vision Elements. Benchmarking data will be included in the future as information becomes available to provide a high-level picture of how Fairfax County is performing compared to other jurisdictions of its size and diversity. Benchmarking data is currently discussed in program area summaries in budget Volumes 1 and 2 to provide the reader with more context for agency performance.

Key County Indicators—How is Fairfax County performing on its seven Vision Elements?

- ✓ Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities
- ✓ Practicing Environmental Stewardship
- ✓ Building Livable Spaces
- ✓ Maintaining Health Economies
- ✓ Connecting People and Places
- ✓ Creating a Culture of Engagement
- ✓ Exercising Corporate Stewardship

The following presentation lists the Key County Indicators for each of the Vision Elements, provides data from FY 2004 to FY 2007, where available, and includes a discussion of how the Indicators relate to their respective Vision Elements. For some indicators, if FY 2004 or FY 2005 is the most recent year in which data are available, it was used to forecast estimates for FY 2006 and 2007. If FY 2005 actuals are unavailable, NA was used in the table until the data becomes available. All of the indicator data are for Fairfax County only, listed by Fiscal Year, unless otherwise noted in the text.

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Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities: The needs of a diverse and growing community are met through innovative public and private services, community partnerships and volunteer opportunities. As a result, residents feel safe and secure, capable of accessing the range of services and opportunities they need, and are willing and able to give back to their community.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Ratio of Part I Index Crimes (Violent Criminal Offenses) per 100,000 County Population (Calendar Year)	99.10	NA	99.10	99.10
Clearance rate of Part I Index Crimes (Violent Criminal Offenses) (Calendar Year)	49.69%	NA	49.69%	49.69%
Fire suppression response rate for engine company within 5 minutes	51.38%	57.10%	57.00%	57.00%
Percent of Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport units on scene within 9 minutes	85.27%	94.87%	95.00%	95.00%
Percent of low birth weight babies (under 5 lbs 8 oz)	7.10%	NA	6.40%	6.40%
Immunizations: completion rates for 2 year olds	78.0%	77.0%	80.0%	80.0%
High School graduation rates	83.9%	NA	83.9%	83.9%
Percent of children in foster care per 1,000 in total youth population	1.83%	1.69%	1.69%	1.69%
Percent of Seniors, Adults with Disabilities and/or family caregivers who report that the community-based services that are provided by Fairfax County help them remain in their home/community	95.0%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%
Percent of restaurants operating safely	95.0%	92.8%	93.0%	93.0%

Fairfax County is one of the nation's safest jurisdictions in which to live and work. The County expects to maintain its low crime rate. The Fairfax County **ratio of Part I Index Crimes** remains low at 99.10 violent crimes per 100,000 population, as compared to the National County Suburban average of 353.7 per 100,000. The County will also continue the current case **clearance rate for Part I crimes**, which is an index of four major crimes (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). *(Note: The Police Department collects and reports performance data based upon a calendar year rather than a fiscal year. Therefore, the Key County Indicators shown reflect calendar year information. Calendar Year 2005 Actuals will be updated in the FY 2007 Adopted Budget Plan.)*

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Advanced Life Support (ALS) and fire unit measures are standards set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). It is expected that the Department will maintain a consistent level of meeting the ALS and fire suppression response time standards in FY 2006 and FY 2007. Although increasing traffic congestion in the County has impacted the Department's ability to meet these standards 100 percent of the time, the opening of three new fire stations over the next several years, including Fairfax Center Fire Station in FY 2006, Crosspointe Fire Station in FY 2007, and Wolf Trap Fire Station in FY 2008 is projected to mitigate that effect. While the **5 minute fire suppression response standard** of the NFPA is met only 57.10 percent of the time, the average countywide **fire suppression response time** is just above 5 minutes, at 5 minutes 31 seconds. The County also met a second NFPA suppression response standard 91.18 percent of the time, which requires 14 Fire and Rescue personnel to be on site within 9 minutes. The complement of responding personnel may be greater than 14 and is appropriate to the incident and structure type, and may include response from engine, truck, heavy rescue, EMS units and other specialty units.

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The health and well-being of children in Fairfax County is evident in the low percentage of children born with **low birth weight** and the high **immunization completion rates** for two-year-olds. (Note: Data on the percent of low birth weight babies is provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation; actuals for the previous year are not typically available in time for publication). The County's incidence rate of 7.10 percent of low birth weight babies compares favorably against the state average of 8.4 percent. Fairfax County also funds numerous programs to help children stay in school, while providing recreational activities during after-school programs. These services contribute the County's **graduation rate** of 83.9 percent. (Note: The FY 2004 Actuals shown for the County's graduation rate have been calculated according to No Child Left Behind methodologies, reflecting a change from the calculation methodology previously used. The Fairfax County Public Schools are awaiting final verification from the state of the previous year's graduation rate data, which is anticipated to be finalized for the FY 2007 Adopted Budget Plan.) Currently, the **ratio of children in foster care per 1,000** in the total population of children 0-17 years old is 1.69 percent. While this is low compared to the statewide ratio of 4.0, Fairfax County is still working to decrease the number of children in foster care as well as reduce the time spent in foster care through intensive prevention and early intervention efforts and a stronger emphasis on permanent placements of children in foster care who are unable to return safely to their families.

The County continues to be successful in **caring for elderly residents and persons with disabilities by helping them stay in their homes** as indicated by the 96.0 percent satisfaction rating on four support programs: adult day health care, meals programs (congregate and home-delivered), home-based care, and center-based Saturday respite programs.

Fairfax County is committed to protecting the health of its citizens and currently **92.8 percent of restaurants are operating safely**. This measure reflects restaurants that do not present a health hazard to the public and are determined to be safe at the time of inspection, otherwise the operating permit would be suspended and the restaurant would be closed. It is anticipated that the percentage of closures will increase over the FY 2004 level due to a projected increase in the percentage of restaurants that are inspected at least once per year.



Building Livable Spaces: Together, we encourage distinctive "built environments" that create a sense of place, reflect the character, history, and natural environment of the community, and take a variety of forms - from identifiable neighborhoods, to main streets, to town centers. As a result, people throughout the community feel they have unique and desirable places to live, work, shop, play, and connect with others.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Acres of park land held in public trust	38,572	38,905	39,100	39,200
Miles of trails and sidewalks maintained by the County	565	570	580	590
Annual number of visitations to libraries, park facilities and recreation and community centers	11,170,262	11,293,902	11,516,465	11,516,465
Value of construction authorized on existing residential units	\$199,149,906	\$330,517,900	\$330,517,900	\$330,517,900
Percent of people in the labor force who both live and work in Fairfax County	52.1%	52.5%	52.5%	52.5%
Percent of dwelling units within business or transit centers as measured by zoning approvals	61.3%	38.7%	16.1%	16.1%
Number of affordable rental senior housing units	2,552	2,618	2,643	2,704

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Many of the indicators above capture some aspect of quality of life for Fairfax County residents and focus on the sustainability of neighborhoods and the community. The **acres of park land held in public trust** continue to increase each year and this preservation of open space enhances the County's appeal as an attractive place to live. In addition, the availability of trails and sidewalks supports pedestrian friendly access, and accessibility for non-motorized traffic. This indicator is measured by the **miles of trails and sidewalks** that are maintained by the County. In addition to the 600 miles of trails and sidewalks currently maintained by the County, approximately 1,400 miles are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and approximately 250 miles are contained within County parks. In addition, an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 miles of walkway are maintained by private homeowners associations. This increasing number of walkways contributes to the sense of community and connection to places.

Availability and **use of libraries, parks and recreation facilities** is often used as a "quality-of-life" indicator and is cited as a major factor in a family's decision for home location and a company's decision for site location. FY 2004 and FY 2005 data demonstrates a high level of participation at County facilities and it is likely that this number will increase over time, as new facilities are planned and constructed.

Resident investment in their own residences reflects the perception of their neighborhood as a "livable community." The **value of construction authorized on existing residential units** has increased dramatically in the past few fiscal years and is projected to remain steady, as residents renovate and expand their living spaces, investing in their homes and property. The **percent of dwelling units within business or transit centers as measured by zoning approvals** decreased in FY 2005 partially because the overall number of residential rezonings approved dropped. This number fluctuates based on the number of approvals in a given year and the size/number of units. Activity associated with the **percent of dwelling units within business or transit centers as measured by zoning approvals** was unusually high in FY 2004 due to several major applications in Tysons, Merrifield, and Fairfax Center. The estimate for FY 2006 and FY 2007 is based solely on FY 2006 approvals to-date; this percentage should increase dramatically, given pending rezonings in Vienna and Tysons which should yield a significant number of new residential units in the business and transit centers.

Mixed use development is an indication of the quality of built environments and is supported by the Comprehensive Plan which encourages built environments suitable for work, shopping and leisure activities. Business centers in the County require additional residential development to facilitate an appropriate mix of uses. Additional residential development in centers increases the potential for the members of the workforce to live in proximity to their place of work. The **percentage of employed people who both live and work in Fairfax County** is currently above 50 percent and may be linked to both quality of life and access to mixed use development in the County.

The stock of housing that is affordable to seniors increased slightly. Loss of **senior housing** due to private market forces and financing mechanisms is more or less offset by continued production of senior housing. Future indicators under development may include a more comprehensive measure for affordable housing in relation to the current housing stock.



Connecting People and Places: Transportation, technology, and information effectively and efficiently connect people and ideas. As a result, people feel a part of their community and have the ability to access places and resources in a timely, safe and convenient manner.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Number of times County information and interactive services are accessed electronically (millions)	39.0	39.8	45.2	51.5
Percent change in number of times County information and interactive services accessed electronically	21.9%	2.1%	13.6%	13.9%
Library materials circulation per capita	11.0	10.6	10.3	10.1
Percent of library circulation represented by materials in languages other than English	35%	35%	35%	35%
Percent change in transit passengers	0.0%	6.1%	2.5%	1.7%

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An important measure of a community's quality of life is whether or not its residents are connected to the community. Do residents have, or can they easily, conveniently and safely access, information, services and activities that are of interest to them? Fairfax County effectively and efficiently leverages technology and transportation to serve this end. Technology, for example, provides most residents of Fairfax County with 24-hour access to the County's Web site, which is continually being enhanced and expanded to include more and more useful information. Not only does the Web site provide information on County services, but it also enables residents to transact business with the County. Residents no longer have to appear in person, during normal business hours, at a County facility. They can now pay parking tickets, request special pickup for bulk and brush debris, sign up to testify at public hearings, and register for various programs, such as those offered by the Park Authority, online. Given hectic schedules, traffic congestion, an aging population and the sheer geographic size of the County, being able to access information 24 hours a day at home, the office or the local library is a highly valued convenience. Not only does it broaden how many people can access County government and services, but it also enhances that interaction. For example, technology is enabling the provision of information that was not readily available before. As a result, citizens can become better informed and better served by the County. Evidence of the County's success in providing useful and convenient access to information and services is found in the **percent change in electronic access to County information and interactive services**. This indicator is supposed to measure use of the County's Web site, utilization of County kiosks and use of interactive services such as online payment of personal property taxes. The erratic pattern exhibited in this indicator, however, reflects an outdated collection methodology rather than actual usage patterns. Technological advances and new industry practices have generated improved ways to track electronic access. As a result, this indicator will be revised as part of the FY 2008 budget process.

For residents of Fairfax County who do not have access to a computer at home or at work, do not possess the technical skills or are not able to utilize technology due to language barriers, the County utilizes other methods and media to connect County residents with information and services. Libraries, for example, are focal points within the community and offer a variety of brochures, flyers and announcements containing information on community activities and County services. Evidence of the heavy utilization of Fairfax County libraries is demonstrated by the **library materials circulation per capita** which was 10.6 in FY 2005. It should be noted that this is well above the mean for comparable jurisdictions of 6.4 based on benchmark data from the ICMA. This high circulation indicates a desire among Fairfax County residents for information and the holdings of the Library system. For additional information on benchmarks, please refer to the Parks, Recreation and Libraries Program Area Summary in Volume 1.

As previously mentioned, Fairfax County is becoming an increasingly diverse community in terms of culture and language. In 2003, 34.6 percent of Fairfax County residents spoke a language other than English at home. In an attempt to better serve the non-English speaking population, the Fairfax County Public Library has dedicated a portion of its holdings to language appropriate materials for this portion of the community. In FY 2005, 35 **percent of library circulation was represented by materials in languages other than English**. Efforts are underway to refine the collection of these data. Additionally, other indicators that would reflect what the County is doing to communicate with the non-English speaking segments of the population are being evaluated for future inclusion in the Key County Indicators.

Another important aspect of connecting people and places is actually moving them from one place to another. While transportation is largely a state function, the County does contribute funding to Metro and the Virginia Railway Express, support the County's CONNECTOR bus system and provide FASTRAN services to seniors, individuals who are mobility-impaired and clients of the County's human services agencies. Support of these mass transit options is intended to reduce road congestion and facilitate the transport of individuals from one place to another. In FY 2005, a 6.1 **percent change in transit passengers** was experienced. Increases in the number of transit passengers boarding Metrorail in Fairfax County and the number of passengers transported by the CONNECTOR bus system fueled this growth in FY 2005, and are due to population increases and desire to avoid traffic congestion. These increases are partially offset by a decrease in the number of individuals transported by the County's FASTRAN system. Further moderate growth is anticipated in FY 2006 and FY 2007.

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Maintaining Healthy Economies: Investments in the work force, jobs, and community infrastructure and institutions support a diverse and thriving economy. As a result, individuals are able to meet their needs and have the opportunity to grow and develop their talent and income according to their potential.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Total employment (not just payroll; includes part-time, contract, etc.)	557,570	580,129	602,629	623,629
Growth rate	3.4%	4.0%	3.9%	3.5%
Unemployment rate	3.0%	2.9%	2.5%	2.5%
Commercial/Industrial percent of total Real Estate Assessment Base	19.14%	18.20%	17.36%	17.22%
Gross County Product (in billions) - Unadjusted	\$74.351	\$79.170	\$83.769	\$88.650
Growth rate	7.6%	6.5%	5.8%	5.8%
Percent of persons living below the federal poverty line (Calendar Year)	4.4%	NA	4.4%	4.4%
Percent of homeowners that pay 30.0 percent or more of household income on housing (Calendar Year)	25.1%	NA	25.1%	25.1%
Percent of renters that pay 30.0 percent or more of household income on rent (Calendar Year)	45.4%	NA	45.4%	45.4%
Direct (excludes sublet space) office space vacancy rate (Calendar Year)	8.6%	NA	8.6%	8.6%

Maintaining a healthy economy is critical to the sustainability of any community. In addition, many jurisdictions have learned that current fiscal health does not guarantee future success. Like the other Vision Elements, this one was selected because it is a high priority for Fairfax County. Performance in this area affects how well the County can respond to the other six Vision Elements. The above eight indicators shown for the Healthy Economies Vision Element were selected because they are perceived as providing the greatest proxy power for gauging the health of Fairfax County's economy.

Total employment was selected as an indicator to illustrate the magnitude of Fairfax County's jobs base. For context, there are more jobs in Fairfax County than there are people in the entire state of Wyoming. Total employment includes all jobs, part-time and contract, and not just payroll jobs as is reported for the unemployment rate. Dr. Stephen Fuller of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University provides this data for *Fairfax County's Economic Index* monthly newsletter. While related to the number of jobs, the **unemployment rate** is also included because it shows the proportion of the County's population out of work. Fairfax County enjoys a relatively low unemployment rate in comparison to state and national trends. While the County's rate was 2.9 percent for FY 2005, the Commonwealth of Virginia experienced 3.8 percent unemployment for the same period. The strength of the County's economy is even more apparent when compared to the national unemployment rate of 5.2 percent for that same timeframe.

The **Commercial/Industrial percent of total Real Estate Assessment Base** is a benchmark identified by the Board of Supervisors, which places priority on a diversified revenue base. The target is 25 percent of the assessment base. In recent years, this percentage has declined to less than 20 percent due to the slow economy and is further exacerbated by the booming housing market attributable to record low mortgage rates that has resulted in double-digit residential real estate assessment increases for consecutive years. This imbalance increases the burden on the residential component to finance government services.

According to the County's contracted economist, Dr. Fuller, **gross county product** is the overall best measure of how well the County economy is performing because it captures the value of goods and services produced in Fairfax County and can be expressed in dollars as well the growth rate, which indicates an upward trend even in years when the national economy has been in a recession.

Strategic Linkages

While it was recognized that **percent of persons living below the federal poverty line** is an imperfect measure due to the unrealistic level set by the federal government, i.e., \$19,806 for a family of four, it is a statistic that is regularly collected and presented in such a way that it can be compared to other jurisdictions as well as tracked over time to determine improvement. In relative terms, Fairfax County's 4.4 percent poverty rate is better than most, yet it still translates to over 43,000 persons living below the federal poverty level.

The next two measures, **percent of homeowners that pay 30 percent or more of household income on housing** and **percent of renters that pay 30 percent or more of household income on rent**, are included because they relate the cost of housing to income and provide an indication of the relative affordability of living in Fairfax County. That capacity has an effect on other aspects of the County's economy. For example, if housing is so expensive that businesses cannot attract employees locally, they may choose to relocate from Fairfax County, thus resulting in a loss of jobs. In calendar year (CY) 2004, 25.1 percent of homeowners paid 30 percent or more of their household income on housing, while a substantially greater number of renters, 45.4 percent, paid 30 percent or more of their household income on rent.

Finally, the **direct (excludes sublet space) office space vacancy rate** is included because it reflects yet another aspect of the health of the business community. In recessionary conditions, businesses contract and use less space. The office market showed improvement in CY 2004 when the direct office vacancy rate fell to 8.6 percent. With sublet space, the vacancy rate improved to 11.6 percent in CY 2004. Through midyear CY 2005, the direct office vacancy rate continued to improve as it fell further to 7.6 percent while the rate including sublet space decreased to 10.1 percent. Fairfax County devotes considerable resources to attracting and maintaining businesses that will contribute to the revenue base through income and jobs, which helps to ensure a healthy local economy.



Practicing Environmental Stewardship: Local government, industry and residents seek ways to use all resources wisely and to protect and enhance the County's natural environment and open space. As a result, residents feel good about their quality of life and embrace environmental stewardship as a personal and shared responsibility.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Unhealthy Air Days recorded on Fairfax County monitors, based on the EPA Air Quality Index (Calendar Year)	2	9	12	10
Overall Level of Stream Quality as a weighted index of overall watershed/ stream conditions on a scale of 5 (Excellent) to 1 (Very Poor)	2.41	2.55	2.55	2.55
Percent of Tree Coverage in County	44%	43%	42%	41%
Number of homes that could be powered as a result of County Alternative Power Initiatives	69,000	63,000	67,000	67,000
Solid Waste Recycled as a percentage of the waste generated within the County (Calendar Year)	32.0%	32.0%	32.0%	32.0%

The Environmental Stewardship Vision Element demonstrates the County's commitment to the environment. Rapid growth and development since the 1980's have created new challenges for environmental preservation and stewardship. In recent years, Fairfax County has sought greater integration of environmental issues into all levels of agency decision-making and a proactive approach in preventing environmental problems and associated costs. Success in this area is demonstrated by the County's Solid Waste Management Program, Wastewater Management Program, and the Department of Vehicle Services, having earned the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's designation as Environmental Enterprises, or E2, in accordance with Virginia's Environmental Excellence Program (July 2003). This designation is given if a facility has a record of significant compliance with environmental laws and requirements and can demonstrate its commitment to improving environmental quality and evaluating the facility's environmental impacts.

Strategic Linkages

In addition, on June 21, 2004 the Board of Supervisors adopted the Environmental Excellence 20-year Vision Plan (Environmental Agenda). The Environmental Agenda is organized into six areas: growth and land use; air quality and transportation; water quality; solid waste; parks, trails and open space; and environmental stewardship. The underlining principles of the Agenda include: the conservation of limited natural resources being interwoven into all governmental decisions; and the County commitment to provide the necessary resources to protect the environment. By adopting the Environmental Agenda, the Board of Supervisors has endorsed the continued staff effort to support the Environmental Stewardship Vision Element.

In support of the regional goal of attaining the federal standard for ozone levels, Fairfax County is committed to minimizing **unhealthy air days** as measured and defined by all criteria pollutants. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for these criteria pollutants: ground-level ozone, particulate matter, lead, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. The **EPA Air Quality Index** for the criteria pollutants assigns colors to levels of health concern, code orange indicating unhealthy for sensitive groups; code red – unhealthy; purple - very unhealthy; and maroon - hazardous. The data above include all of these color levels. In 2005, EPA revoked the one-hour standard and completed the transition from the one-hour ozone standard to a more stringent eight-hour ozone standard. Fairfax County, along with the metropolitan Washington region, has been classified as being in moderate non-attainment of the eight-hour ground-level ozone standard. To meet the new standard, additional control strategies will have to be implemented. Also, the more stringent standard has resulted in higher **unhealthy air days** beginning in FY 2005. Several initiatives are already in place to help meet the new standard. These include partnerships with area jurisdictions, reducing County vehicle emissions through the purchase of hybrid vehicles, diesel retrofits and the use of ultra low sulfur fuel, transportation strategies including free FAIRFAX CONNECTOR bus rides on Code Red Days, gas can replacement, teleworking, community outreach, vigilant monitoring efforts, and maintaining standards and procedures that promote healthy air. The County's Environmental Coordinating Committee has been examining the adequacy of current air pollution measures and practices, education and notification processes, codes and regulations, and assessing the impact on air quality of the County's comprehensive plan. Further air pollution reduction initiatives have already been started as a result of these efforts. New measures with funding costs are being presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Fairfax County continues its membership with Clean Air Partners, a volunteer, non-profit organization chartered by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC). IN FY 2005, the County also became a media sponsor for the group's public awareness campaign.

Stream quality in the County affects County residents' recreational use of streams, as well as the regional goal of removing the Chesapeake Bay from the national list of impaired bodies of water. Fairfax County is moving aggressively to develop and implement watershed management plans for the County's designated 30 watersheds in order to meet the Chesapeake Bay 2000 goal of having watershed plans completed for two-thirds of the basin before 2010. The 30 watersheds are currently grouped into 15 watershed planning projects. The Little Hunting Creek Watershed Management Plan was completed in FY 2005. The Popes Head Creek Watershed Management Plan was completed in FY 2006, and by the end of FY 2006 nine more should be completed including Cameron Run, Cub Run/Bull Run, Difficult Run, Pimmit Run, Bull Neck Run, Scotts Run, Dead Run, and Turkey Run. As Watershed Management Plans are completed throughout the County, the list of stormwater management projects is updated. Implementation strategies and goals are developed on a watershed basis.

Since 2004, a stratified random sampling procedure has been used to assess and report the conditions in the County's streams. A stream quality indicator was developed from the benthic macro-invertebrate monitoring data to establish overall watershed/stream conditions countywide. The stream quality indicator is an index value ranging from 5 to 1, with the following qualitative interpretations associated with the index values: 5 (Excellent), 4 (Good), 3 (Fair), 2 (Poor) to 1 (Very Poor). The stream quality index was 2.41 in 2004 and 2.55 in 2005. A future average **stream quality index value** of 3 or greater (Fair to Good stream quality) is set forth as a 2010 goal associated with meeting Chesapeake Bay requirements. The EPA recognized Fairfax County as a Charter 2003 Clean Water Partner for its leadership role in the protection of the Chesapeake Bay (April 2003).

Strategic Linkages

Tree coverage contributes to healthy air, clean water, preservation of habitat for birds and other wildlife, and quality and enjoyment of the environment by County residents. County planning and land development processes emphasize tree preservation and integrate this concern into new land development projects when possible. **Tree coverage** in the County is expressed as the percent of the County's land mass covered by the canopies of trees. The latest data were collected over a one-year period between the fall of 2002 and 2003 through the interpretation of high-resolution satellite imagery. Annual estimates of **tree coverage** in the County for individual years are premised on statistical analyses and knowledge of recent development activities in the County. The most recent satellite analysis was funded by a Federal Urban and Community Forestry Grant. Satellite analysis is typically done once every five years with staff estimating annual changes based on interim surveys. Despite intense development in the County over the last 20 years, the County still anticipates a 41 percent **tree cover**, as compared with 68 percent 20 years ago. This figure compares favorably to the average **tree cover** levels reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service for other urbanized areas of Virginia (35.3 percent) and Maryland (40.1 percent). The County improved environmental protection through the implementation of new **tree cover** requirements in 2002 that contain incentives to preserve higher quality existing trees, preserve or plant trees to conserve energy, and plant species suited to the urban/suburban environment that will not be disruptive to native forest ecosystems.

Alternative power initiatives highlight County efforts to contribute to lowering pollution through the generation, procurement and/or use of cleaner, more efficient energy sources. These initiatives go to the heart of environmental stewardship. County **alternative power initiatives** are expressed as the equivalent number of homes that could be powered by energy realized from alternative sources, such as the energy from the County's Energy/Resource Recovery Facility and from methane recovery at the County landfill. Locally, average energy use per home equals 800 Kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month. Current electric sales from the County's resource recovery facility are approximately 51,500,000 kWh/month. Methane project sales are 2,500,000 kWh/month. FY 2005 reflects a decrease because the alternative power source went through an extensive overhaul due to the age of the facility and was not available to operate at peak efficiency for periods of time. With the overhaul completed, the increased numbers for the first six months of FY 2006 reflects that the facility is operating at its peak efficiency without down time for repairs. It is anticipated the projected values for FY 2007 reflect the continued increase.

The numbers reflected are lower in FY 2005 because the Alternative Power source went through an extensive overhaul due to the age of the facility and was not available to operate at peak efficiency for periods of time.

The next six months of FY 2006 should be constant with the first six months. However the projections for FY 2007 are not a definitive conclusion.

Solid waste management is a key environmental responsibility, and waste reduction through reuse and **recycling** is considered the most desirable method of waste management at all government levels. In May 2004, the Board of Supervisors approved the County's Solid Waste Management Plan, putting in place an integrated management system and long-range planning for waste and recycling for the next 20 years. A number of new recycling initiatives are being implemented under this plan for FY 2006 and will continue into FY 2007. These new initiatives include collecting additional recyclables curbside from residents, improving participation by County businesses in recycling and by implementing a rechargeable battery recycling program. The annual countywide **recycling rate** includes data on recyclable materials collected by the County, by permitted, privately-owned refuse and recycling companies, and a variety of businesses located within the County. The County's 2004 **recycling rate** of 32 percent of the municipal solid waste stream (which includes private haulers) exceeded the state-mandated goal of 25 percent. The amount of **solid waste recycled** measures material no longer of value to its owner, which would have been disposed of if not diverted to a recycling activity. Revenue is generated from the sale of recyclable materials, partially offsetting expenditure requirements. Expenditures are further reduced when materials are recycled, since disposal costs of that material are avoided. The countywide **recycling rate** is calculated on an annual basis through the authority of Fairfax County Code, Chapter 109, specifically section 109-2.2. Solid waste collectors and certain businesses operating in the County are required to prepare an annual report on the tonnage of materials collected for recycling. This report is due to the County on March 1 of each year. The annual **recycling rate** for 2005 is an estimate. The FY 2005 actual rate, required to be reported to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality by April 30th each year, will not be available until April 30, 2006.

Strategic Linkages



Creating a Culture of Engagement: Individuals enhance community life by participating in and supporting civic groups, discussion groups, public-private partnerships, and other activities that seek to understand and address community needs and opportunities. As a result, residents feel that they can make a difference and work in partnership with others to understand and address pressing public issues.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Volunteerism for Public Health and Community Improvement (Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Community Health Partners and Volunteer Fairfax)	4,150	7,487	8,125	9,250
Volunteer hours leveraged by the Consolidated Community Funding Pool (CCFP)	311,139	315,352	307,727	307,727
Percent of Registered Voters Who Voted in General and Special Elections	32.6%	73.8%	44.8%	55.0%
Percent of Park Authority, Fairfax County Public Schools, and Community and Recreation Services athletic fields adopted by community groups	35.4%	36.1%	32.8%	33.1%
Residents Completing Educational Programs About Local Government (Includes Citizens Police Academy, Neighborhood College Program, and Fairfax County Youth Leadership Program)	146	224	240	310

Fairfax County benefits greatly from citizens who are knowledgeable about, and actively involved in, community programs and initiatives. In February 2002, the Bioterrorism Medical Action Teams (B-MAT) Task Force was created and began recruiting teams of medical and non-medical volunteers who could be called upon to assist the Health Department in administering vaccine or dispensing medication to residents in Fairfax County, and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church in the event of a public health emergency. During FY 2004, all active B-MAT volunteers and any additional community volunteers added through on-going recruitment efforts were re-organized to fall under the auspices of the **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**, a national program sponsored by the Office of the Surgeon General. Fairfax County's MRC consists of physicians, Fairfax County School employees, nurses and non-medical volunteers from the community. The focus in FY 2007 for the MRC recruitment and training program will be directed to the further recruitment of MRC leadership and essential volunteer roles within the MRC structure with the goal of recruiting 6,000 MRC volunteers by the end of FY 2007. Since October 2003, a similar partnership comprising the **Community Health Partners** has been formed with ethnic community leaders and community volunteers to assist the Health Department in on-going community outreach initiatives. The actual number of Community Health Partners for FY 2005 is higher than previously estimated due to a positive response in recruitment efforts. A conservative approach to estimating the addition of additional Community Health Partners during FY 2006 and FY 2007 is used in order to account for the attrition of members. In addition, **Volunteer Fairfax** is a private, nonprofit corporation (created in 1975) that promotes volunteerism through a network of over 700 nonprofit agencies by mobilizing people and other resources to meet regional community needs. **Volunteer Fairfax** serves as a central, accessible resource dedicated to community involvement by actively engaging in community life and promoting awareness of the needs and issues throughout Fairfax County.

Volunteerism not only reflects a broad-based level of engagement with diverse organizations and residents throughout the County, but also greatly benefits citizens through the receipt of expertise and assistance at minimal cost to the County. As indicated by the number of volunteer hours garnered by the **Consolidated Community Funding Pool**, there is a strong nucleus and core of volunteers who feel empowered to freely participate in vital community programs and they "make a difference" in our community.

In recent elections, the **percent of voting Fairfax County residents** has generally surpassed or approximated state averages. For instance, the County's voting percent in the November 2005 Commonwealth of Virginia Election (FY 2006) was 44.8 percent as compared to the statewide average of 44.9 percent. Specifically, 277,471 registrants in Fairfax County cast ballots in the Commonwealth of Virginia Election in November 2005. It is anticipated that 55 percent of County registrants will vote in the upcoming 2006 elections

Strategic Linkages

(FY 2007) for U.S. Senate and U.S. Congress seats. These high voter participation levels reflect a community that is well informed, engaged, and involved with local government to address community needs and opportunities.

Another aspect of an engaged community is the extent to which residents take advantage of opportunities to improve their physical surroundings. The **percent of athletic field adoptions** by community groups is solid as evidenced by the consistent range of just over one-third of total fields over the recent period of time, reflecting the willingness of participants to maintain the fields they use. **Athletic field adoptions** also reduce the County's financial burden to maintain these types of public facilities. Organizations in Fairfax County annually provide approximately \$1 million in support for facility maintenance and development.

In addition to the many volunteer opportunities, Fairfax County has designed several programs to educate citizens about local government. The **Citizens Police Academy** is a 30-hour program designed to provide a unique "glimpse behind the badge" and learn about departmental resources, programs, and the men and women who comprise an organization nationally recognized as a leader in the law enforcement community. Attendees experience a simulated crime in progress. Course content parallels a subsequent police response, as students learn more about the volume of resources that assist in preventing and solving crime. Annually, approximately 60 residents complete this course. The **Neighborhood College Program** provides training opportunities for citizens specially engaged in or curious about participating in their local government or in developing healthy neighborhoods and strong communities. The program utilizes a combination of panel presentations, hands-on activities, group discussions, and fieldwork. This program has experienced significant growth, rising from 41 in FY 2003 to 200 in FY 2007. The **Fairfax County Youth Leadership Program** is designed to educate and motivate high school students to become engaged citizens and leaders in the community. This is a very selective program with one to two students from each of the County's 24 high schools represented. The students are chosen based on a range of criteria including student activities and awards, written essays and recommendations. The number of participants has almost doubled since its beginning. During a one-year period, the program includes a series of monthly sessions about County government, work assignments related to each session, a summer internship in a County agency and a presentation to 8th grade civics students. The goal of this initiative is to inspire young people to become citizens who will share their ideas and bring their energy to local government.



Exercising Corporate Stewardship: Fairfax County government is accessible, responsible, and accountable. As a result, actions are responsive, providing superior customer service and reflecting sound management of County resources and assets.

Key County Indicators	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Estimate	FY 2007 Estimate
Average tax collection rate for Real Estate Taxes, Personal Property Taxes and Business, Professional, and Occupational License Taxes	98.90%	99.21%	99.09%	99.12%
County direct expenditures per capita	\$918	\$974	\$1,069	\$1,096
Percent of household income spent on residential Real Estate Tax	4.23%	4.47%	4.80%	5.27%
County (merit regular) positions per 1,000 citizens	11.25	11.19	11.18	11.18
Number of consecutive years receipt of highest possible bond rating from major rating agencies (Aaa/AAA/AAA)	26	27	28	29
Cumulative savings from both County bond sales as compared to the Bond Buyer Index and County refundings (in millions)	\$315.27	\$323.11	\$343.94	\$343.94
Number of consecutive years receipt of unqualified audit	23	24	25	26

Strategic Linkages

The Corporate Stewardship Vision Element is intended to demonstrate the level of effort and success that the County has in responsibly and effectively managing the public resources allocated to it. The County is well regarded for its strong financial management as evidenced by its long history of high quality financial management and reporting (**number of consecutive years receipt of highest possible bond rating and unqualified audit**). The Board of Supervisors adopted *Ten Principles of Sound Financial Management* on October 22, 1975 to ensure prudent and responsible allocation of County resources. These principles, which are reviewed, revised and updated as needed to keep County policy and practice current, have resulted in the County receiving and maintaining a Aaa bond rating from Moody's Investors Service in 1975, AAA from Standard and Poor's Corporation in 1978 and AAA from Fitch Investors Services in 1997. Maintenance of the highest rating from the major rating agencies has resulted in significant flexibility for the County in managing financial resources generating **cumulative savings from County bond sales and refundings** of \$343.94 million since 1978. This savings was achieved as a result of the strength of County credit as compared to other highly rated jurisdictions on both new money bond sales and refundings of existing debt at lower interest rates. This means that the interest costs that need to be funded by County revenues are significantly lower than they would have been if the County was not so highly regarded in financial circles as having a thoughtful and well implemented set of fiscal policies.

This strong history of corporate stewardship was also key to the naming of Fairfax County as "one of the best managed jurisdictions in America" by *Governing Magazine* and the Government Performance Project (GPP). The GPP conducted a comprehensive study evaluating the management practices of 40 counties across the country and Fairfax County received an overall grade of "A-," one of only two jurisdictions to receive this highest grade.

The success in managing County resources has occurred despite the fact that the number of **merit regular positions per 1,000 citizens** is declining. This decline indicates a number of things - success in utilizing technology and success in identifying public-private partnerships and/or contractual provision of service.

The County consistently demonstrates success in maintaining high **average tax collection rates**, which results in equitable distribution of the burden of local government costs to fund the wide variety of County programs and services beneficial to all residents.

County direct expenditures per capita are increasing between FY 2004 and FY 2007. The primary drivers of County costs are salaries and benefits which continue to rise throughout the nation. Continuing in FY 2007, cost per capita data showing how much Fairfax spends in each of the program areas, e.g., public safety, health and welfare, community development, etc. is included at the beginning of each program area section in Volume 1 of the [FY 2007 Advertised Budget Plan](#). The jurisdictions selected for comparison are the Northern Virginia localities as well as those with a population of 100,000 or more elsewhere in the state (the Auditor of Public Accounts for the Commonwealth of Virginia collects this data and publishes it annually). Fairfax County's cost per capita in each of the program areas is highly competitive with others in the state.

The **percent of household income spent on residential real estate** has also increased during the period of FY 2004 to FY 2007 as the County has experienced double-digit increases in residential real estate assessments during the last six years. The continued reliance on the Real Estate Tax, in FY 2007 real property taxes total approximately 59.6 percent of total General Fund revenues, is due at least in part to the lack of tax diversification options for counties in Virginia.

In future years it is possible that additional Corporate Stewardship indicators, focused on customer satisfaction could demonstrate how the County is performing in the eyes of residents and would supplement the more financially based indicators presented herein. Similarly, data is currently missing regarding stewardship of other County assets like building and property, which could be developed for future presentations.

Strategic Linkages

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Systemwide Targets

The mission of the FCPS system is to educate all students to meet high academic standards and to prepare all students to be responsible citizens in the 21st century. The following ten systemwide targets support this mission and drive the FCPS' planning, budgets, and evaluations.

Target 1: All students will be reading at grade level by the end of second grade; goals will be established for students with limited English proficiency and for students who have disabilities that affect reading achievement.

FY 2007 projected enrollment is 164,725

89% of FCPS graduates continue to post secondary education

FCPS are in the top 3 percent of all high schools in the nation based on the 2005 Newsweek rankings.

Target 2: All schools will meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Accreditation, as measured by the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in mathematics, science, English, history and social science.

Target 3: The percentage of juniors and seniors enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses will be maintained or increased, with at least two-thirds of students scoring a three or higher on an AP exam or a four or higher on an IB exam. The enrollment for Black and Hispanic students will increase by 10 percent.

Target 4: By the end of 11th grade, all students scheduled to graduate with a standard or advanced studies diploma will have passed the Algebra 1 and the two English 11 SOL tests.

Target 5: The percentage of students scoring above the national average on the verbal and on the mathematics sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) will exceed the previous year's percentage, and the gap between minority and majority students' scores will narrow by 10 percent.

FCPS students scored an average of 1114 on the SAT exceeding both the State and national average for 2005

<i>FCPS</i>	<i>1114</i>
<i>VA</i>	<i>1030</i>
<i>Nation</i>	<i>1028</i>

Target 6: By better identifying all children who are entitled to receive gifted and talented services and by making those services readily available to all eligible students, the number of Black and Hispanic students in the gifted and talented program will increase annually and, over a five-year period, move toward the percentage of Black and Hispanic students in the general population.

Target 7: All schools will increase their capacity to serve a broader range of students with designated low incidence disabilities at their base schools. As a result, the percentage of students receiving special education services in their base school programs will increase.

Target 8: The minority student achievement gap for Black and Hispanic students taking the eighth grade SOL tests in reading and math will narrow by 10 percent.

Target 9: Through research-based alternatives to student suspension, staff training in methods of classroom management, and the provision of positive intervention measures that foster and promote civility within the classroom, student behavior will improve as measured by:

- A 10 percent reduction in the disparity of suspensions between minority and majority students.
- A 5 percent reduction in the rate of recidivism for suspensions due to acts of violence.

Target 10: FCPS will adopt a series of instructional accommodation plans that incorporate effective and innovative teaching methods while reducing by at least 5 percent annually the portion of students that otherwise would be receiving instruction in trailers.

FCPS ranks 6th when compared to other local districts in average cost per pupil.

\$11,915 in FY 2006