Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary

Overview

The Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area consists of 14 agencies that are responsible for a variety of functions to ensure that County services are provided efficiently and effectively to a population that has topped the one million mark. At last count, approximately 150 different languages are spoken by County residents, of whom more than 34.6 percent speak a language other than English at home. This program area strives to meet the needs of the County's rapidly growing and extremely diverse population in a cost-effective manner. Recognition by various organizations such as the National Association of Counties (NACo), the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and others validate the County's efforts in these areas. In 2004, numerous awards and other forms of recognition were accorded to County agencies and employees, confirming that Fairfax County continues to be one of the best managed municipal governments in the country. The County government Web site was named one of four "Cream of the Crop" county Web sites from across the nation for municipal-related content on the Internet. Fairfax County also received the City and County Performance Management Award for outstanding contributions in five functional areas including strategic planning, budgeting, human resources management, information technology and procurement. Other recent honors for Fairfax County in 2004 included the County's recognition as one of only 20 county governments nationwide as the "Best Workplaces for Commuters" and two first-place awards by the National Association of Government Communicators for the County's employee newsletter, the Courier, as well as the Fairfax County Government Communicators' weekly e-newsletter.

Managing in a resource-constrained environment requires a significant leadership commitment - from the elected Board of Supervisors to the County Executive and individual agencies. Fairfax County is committed to remaining a high performance organization. Despite significant budget reductions in recent years, or perhaps in part due to them, staff continually seeks ways to streamline processes and maximize technology in order to provide a high level of service with limited resources. Since FY 1991, the County's population has increased 28.2 percent; however, authorized staffing has increased only 3.6 percent despite the addition or expansion of over 150 facilities including police and fire stations, libraries, and School-Age Child Care (SACC) Centers, among others. This was made possible largely by the elimination of many administrative, professional, and management positions including 51 in this program area alone from FY 2002 to FY 2005. As an indication of improved productivity, Fairfax County has successfully reduced the number of positions per 1,000 citizens from 13.57 in FY 1992 to 11.10 for FY 2006, a decrease of 18.2 percent.

Strategic Direction

As part of the countywide focus on developing strategic plans during 2002-2003, the agencies in this program area developed mission, vision and values statements; performed environmental scans; and defined strategies for achieving their missions. These strategic plans are linked to the overall County Core Purpose and Vision Elements. Common themes among the agencies in the Legislative-Executive/Central Services program area include:

- Development and alignment of leadership and performance
- Accessibility to information and programs
- Strong customer service
- Effective use of resources
- Streamlined processes
- Innovative use of technology
- Partnerships and community involvement

COUNTY CORE PURPOSE

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:

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

Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary

This program area differs from most of the others because the majority of the Legislative-Executive/Central Services agencies are focused on internal service functions that enable other direct service providers to perform their jobs effectively. Overall leadership emanates from the Board of Supervisors and is articulated countywide by the County Executive who also assumes responsibility for coordination of initiatives that cut across agency lines. In addition, the County Executive oversees the County's leadership development efforts, particularly the High Performance Organization (HPO) model used in Fairfax County's LEAD Program (Leading, Educating and Developing). Agencies in this program area also provide human resources, financial, purchasing, legal, budget and information technology support; records management; and mail services.

Linkage to County Vision Elements

While this program area supports all seven of the County Vision Elements, the following are emphasized:

- Corporate Stewardship
- Creating a Culture of Engagement
- Connecting People and Places
- Practicing Environmental Stewardship

By the nature of this program area, **Corporate Stewardship** is the most commonly referenced vision element by these agencies. Efforts continue to focus on the most efficient use of resources including initiatives such as online registration of new vehicles and the Advance Decal Program in order to reduce administrative costs associated with the payment of County obligations, decrease walk-in traffic and provide responsive customer service; continuing to improve the County's use of national contracts under the U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance to enjoy the benefits of a large procurement pool; and employing ongoing information technology strategies to continue to enhance both internal and external computer security. During FY 2004, an online, electronic benefits registration system, Benelogic, was introduced, reducing the need to re-key information and greatly improving the efficiency of this effort. During FY 2005 and FY 2006, the County will continue its collaboration with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) to improve corporate purchasing and financial systems (I-Business) by developing web-enabled modules to facilitate ease of navigation and data entry by both County and FCPS staff.

Overall, agencies in this program area also ensure that taxes are assessed and collected fairly, and that revenue is spent in accordance with the elected Board's direction. In recent years, there has been a concerted effort to reduce red tape in areas such as procurement, human resources and budgeting in order to provide agencies the necessary flexibility to operate with fewer resources. The need to ensure accountability places an oversight responsibility on agencies such as the Departments of Finance, Purchasing and Supply Management, Human Resources, and Management and Budget.

The second most commonly cited Vision Element for this program area is **Creating a Culture of Engagement**. Fairfax County places priority on ensuring access and participation by residents and the business community in their local government. With a highly computer-literate community, over 78 percent of whom have home computers with Internet access, agencies in this program area continue to employ a variety of means to engage residents. Examples include enhancing the County's website to provide more information on County Boards, Authorities and Commissions in an effort to expand involvement by residents; building seasonal partnerships and collaborating with other organizations to provide essentials and gifts to needy families participating in Office of Partnership programs; expanding the capacity to pay for County services using a credit card on the Internet; and enhancing online vendor registration and contract registration. In addition, the Department of Management and Budget continues to conduct the Youth Leadership Program which is designed to teach high school students about local government as well as how they can become active participants. The Electoral Board and General Registrar use volunteers, extensively including high school students and those fluent in Spanish, to assist at polls on Election Day, as well as senior citizens to register voters at senior centers.

Efforts to promote the **Connecting People and Places** vision element also include the continuation of strategies to expand information online to diverse audiences for enhanced customer services such as real estate assessment information, numerous County publications including the annual budget and capital improvement program, and other information such as candidate financial reports and other election-related data, among many other types. An initiative for FY 2006 is adopting a Web content policy to ensure that residents have access to timely, accurate, consistent and appropriate information.

While at first glance, **Practicing Environmental Stewardship** may not seem to be a major function of this program area, several agencies play critical roles in advancing the County's protection of the environment. The County Executive's Office assumes overall leadership in this area and continues to coordinate the cross-agency Environmental Coordinating Committee, which focuses on air quality, watershed protection, recycling and timely response to emerging threats. A significant stormwater management program is proposed for FY 2006 that will address public safety, preserve home values and protect the environment. In conjunction with the Department of Human Resources, the County Executive continues to promote the County's Telework Program, the goal of which would be at least 20 percent of the eligible workforce teleworking by 2005. This would result in decreased traffic and emissions. Another countywide priority coordinated by this program area is the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management's initiative to continue developing an environmentally responsible ("green") purchasing strategy and educational model to assist customer agencies in identifying and using sustainable sources for products such as carpets and janitorial supplies. Finally, the Office of the County Attorney becomes involved in situations where other County agencies have identified environmental violations such as illegal zoning or industrial uses that require civil remedy.

Program Area Summary by Character

Category	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years					
Regular	949/ 949	948/ 947.5	954/ 953.5	950/ 949.5	954/ 953.5
Exempt	90/ 90	90/ 90	90/ 90	90/ 90	90/ 90
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	$61,805,819	$66,647,348	$66,415,843	$69,069,689	$69,212,929
Operating Expenses	31,755,710	31,487,577	36,386,129	34,629,620	34,653,764
Capital Equipment	88,045	1,046,556	760,193	766,619	766,619
Subtotal	**$93,649,574**	**$99,181,481**	**$103,562,165**	**$104,465,928**	**$104,633,312**
Less:					
Recovered Costs	($9,371,619)	($10,301,361)	($10,697,057)	($11,279,736)	($11,279,736)
Total Expenditures	**$84,277,955**	**$88,880,120**	**$92,865,108**	**$93,186,192**	**$93,353,576**
Income	**$3,319,733**	**$3,225,045**	**$4,456,978**	**$3,582,972**	**$3,582,972**
Net Cost to the County	**$80,958,222**	**$85,655,075**	**$88,408,130**	**$89,603,220**	**$89,770,604**

Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary

Program Area Summary by Agency

Category	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan
Board of Supervisors	$3,735,546	$4,291,548	$4,291,548	$4,457,350	$4,457,350
Office of the County Executive	6,438,435	6,797,901	7,248,976	7,454,623	7,607,007
Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection	1,696,467	2,049,437	1,253,259	1,353,776	1,353,776
Department of Finance	7,154,185	7,667,813	7,730,947	8,306,428	8,306,428
Department of Human Resources	5,857,129	6,011,310	6,544,856	6,290,617	6,290,617
Department of Purchasing and Supply Management	3,948,909	4,194,643	4,215,828	4,620,740	4,620,740
Office of Public Affairs	1,049,752	1,089,138	1,244,441	1,120,157	1,120,157
Electoral Board and General Registrar	3,805,308	3,020,872	3,880,628	2,964,770	2,964,770
Office of the County Attorney	5,501,146	5,526,887	5,672,519	5,722,450	5,722,450
Department of Management and Budget	2,666,100	2,941,827	3,080,429	3,093,938	3,093,938
Office of the Financial and Program Auditor	176,592	201,893	204,293	215,851	215,851
Civil Service Commission	190,656	207,202	211,724	213,509	213,509
Department of Tax Administration	19,262,364	21,243,796	21,953,890	22,276,127	22,291,127
Department of Information Technology	22,795,366	23,635,853	25,331,770	25,095,856	25,095,856
Total Expenditures	**$84,277,955**	**$88,880,120**	**$92,865,108**	**$93,186,192**	**$93,353,576**

Budget Trends

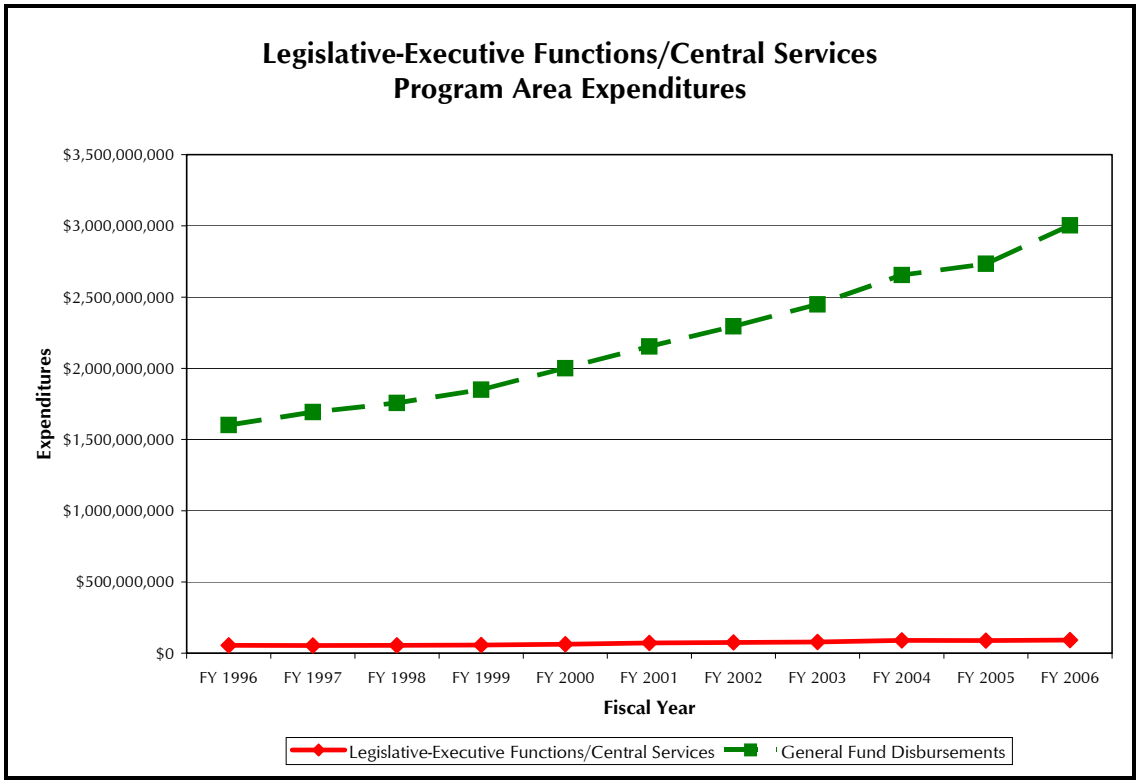
For FY 2006, the recommended funding level of $93,353,576 for the Legislative-Executive/Central Services program area comprises 8.6 percent of the total recommended General Fund Direct Expenditures of $1,083,966,875. It also includes 1,044 or 8.9 percent of total authorized positions for FY 2006. The Legislative-Executive/Central Services program area increases $488,468 or 0.5 percent over the *FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan*, primarily due to salary adjustments associated with the Pay for Performance Program. This increase represents 1.6 percent of the Direct Expenditures increase for FY 2006, which is $29,987,420 or 2.85 percent over the *FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan*.

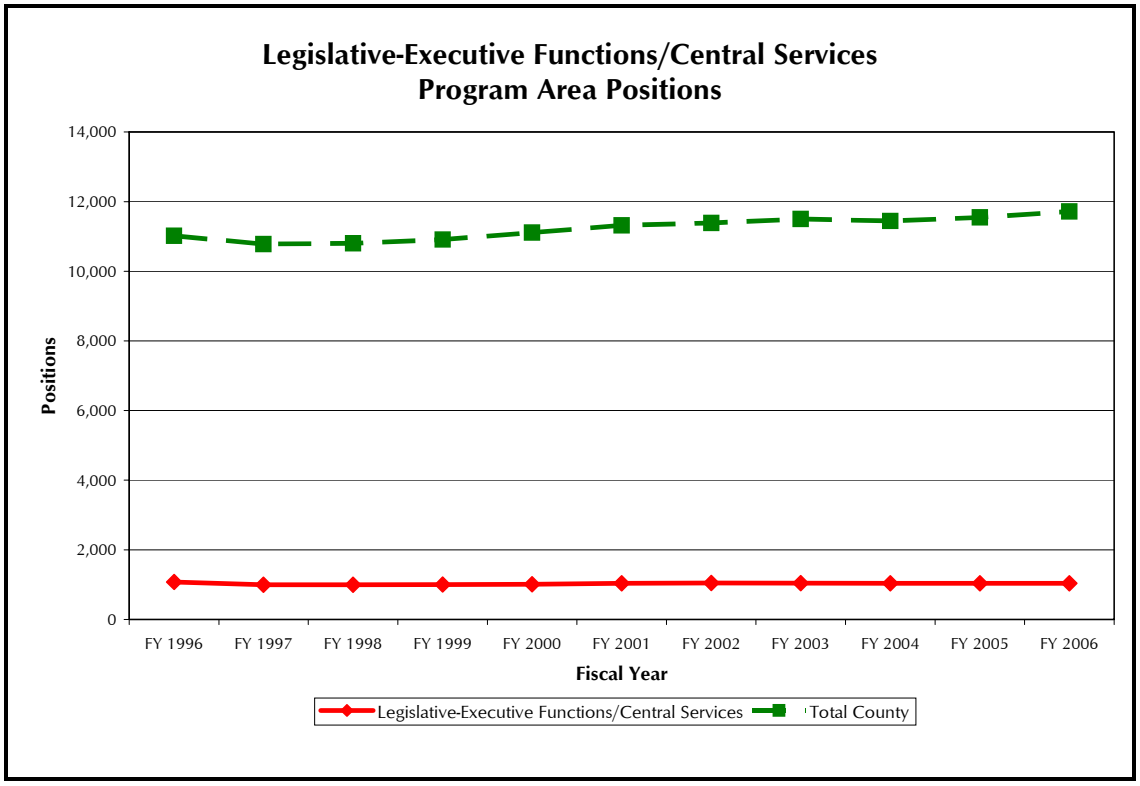
During the period of FY 2003-FY 2006, the real estate tax rate was reduced from $1.23 to $1.00 per $100 assessed value in order to provide tax relief to residents due to rising property assessments. After the 13-cent reduction in the Real Estate Tax rate for FY 2006, revenues are expected to grow at a rate of 6.76 percent or $189,132,654, from $2,797,123,909 to $2,986,256,563.

The charts on the following page illustrate funding and position trends for the agencies in this program area compared to countywide expenditure and position trends. Due to the large number of agencies in the Legislative-Executive/Central Services program area, an aggregate is shown because a line graph with each shown separately is too difficult to read. In other program areas with fewer agencies, it is possible to show each agency's trends with a separate line.

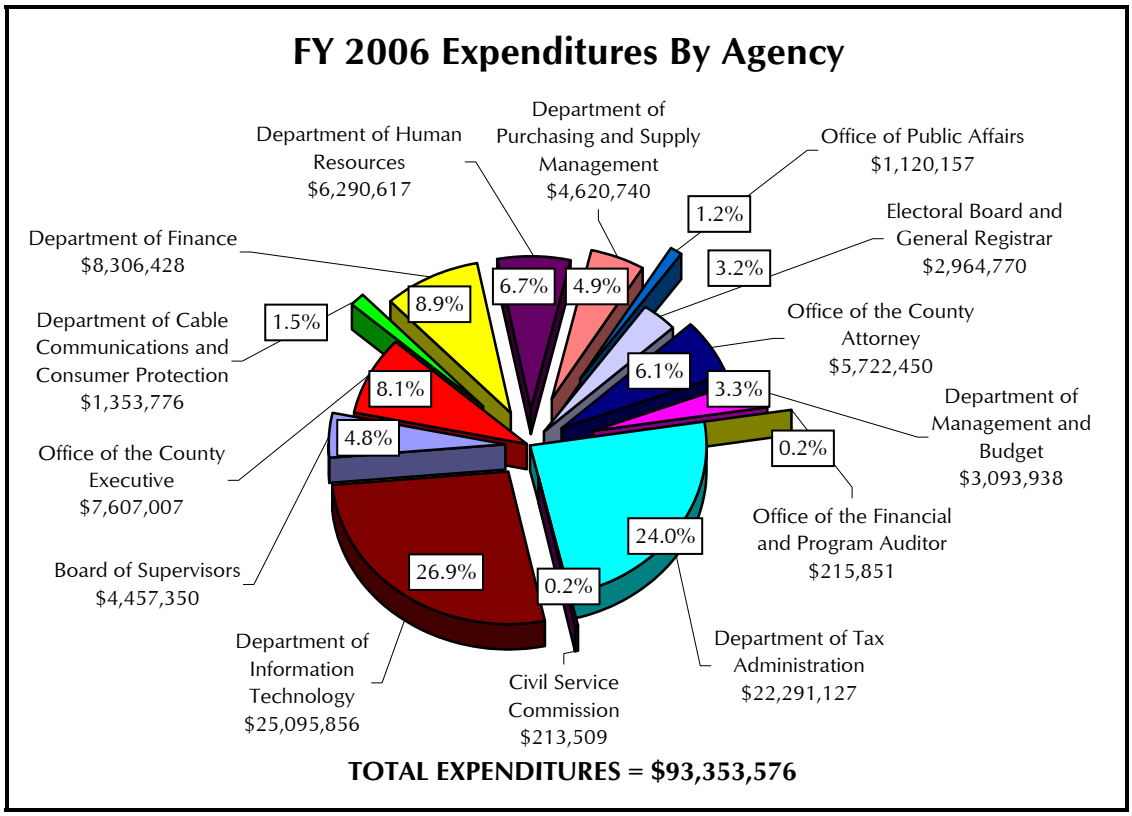
Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary

Trends in Expenditures and Positions

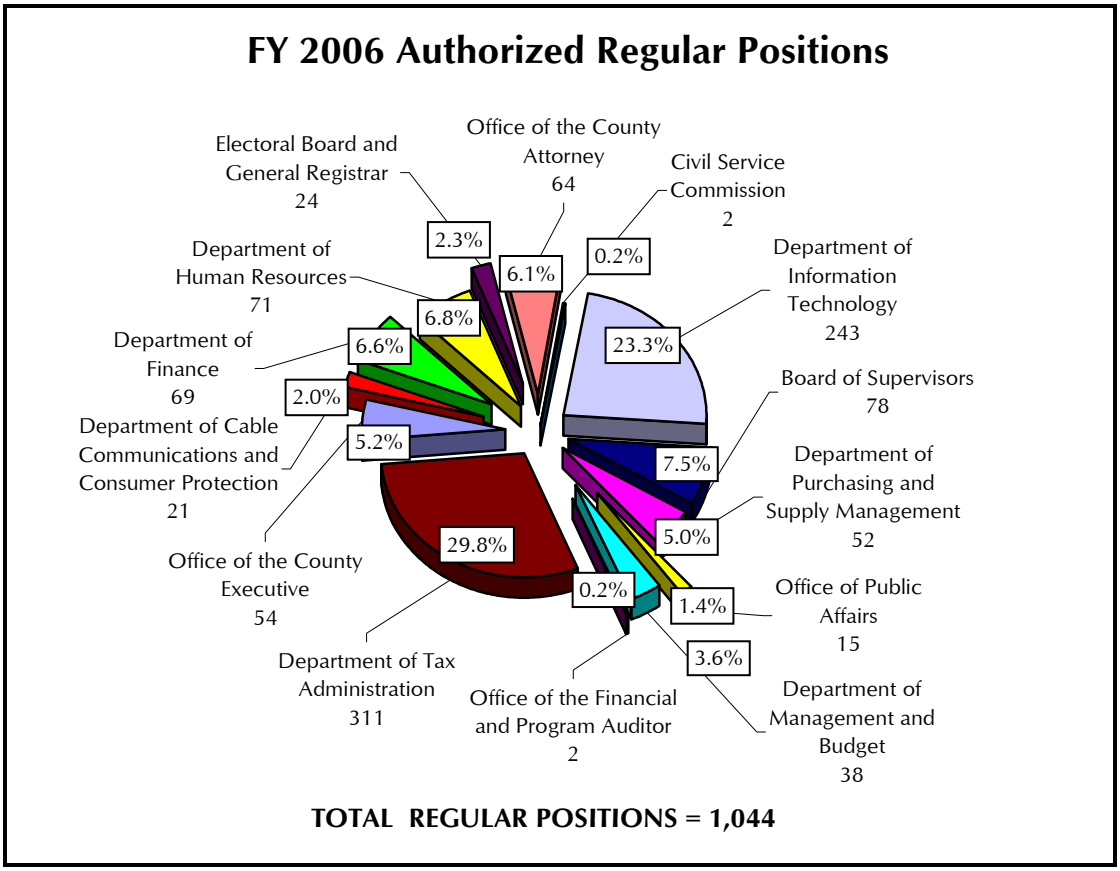




FY 2006 Expenditures and Positions by Agency



Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary



Benchmarking

As part of an effort to identify additional performance benchmarks, data collected by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) for the Commonwealth of Virginia that show cost per capita in each of the seven program areas (Legislative-Executive/Central Services; Judicial; Public Safety; Public Works; Health and Welfare; Parks, Recreation and Libraries; and Community Development) are included here for the first time. Due to the time necessary for data collection and cleaning, FY 2003 represents the most recent year for which data are available. In Virginia, local governments follow stringent guidelines regarding the classification of program area expenses; therefore, the data are very comparable. Cost data are provided annually to the APA for review and compilation in an annual report. Since these data are not prepared by any one jurisdiction, their objectivity is less questionable than they would be if collected by one of the participants. In addition, a standard methodology is consistently followed, allowing comparison over time. For each of the program areas, these comparisons of cost per capita are the first benchmarks shown in these sections.

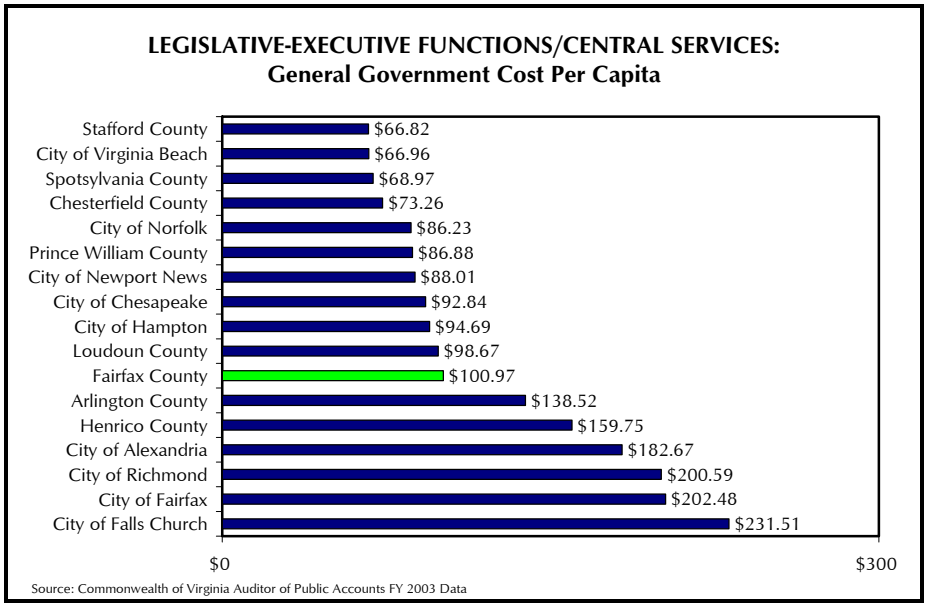
Since 2000, Fairfax County has participated in the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) benchmarking effort. Over 100 cities, counties and towns provide comparable data annually in 15 service areas. Not all jurisdictions provide data for every service area, however. The only one for which Fairfax County does not provide data is Roads and Highways because the Commonwealth maintains primary responsibility for that function for counties in Virginia. The agencies in this program area that provide data for benchmarking include the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management, and the Department of Information Technology. While not a comprehensive presentation of all agencies in this program area, the benchmarks shown provide a snapshot of how Fairfax County compares to others in these service areas. It should be noted that it is sometimes difficult to compare various administrative functions due to variation among local governments regarding structure and provision of service. It should also be noted that there are approximately 2,000 program-level performance indicators found throughout Volumes 1 and 2 for those seeking additional performance measurement data by agency.

Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary

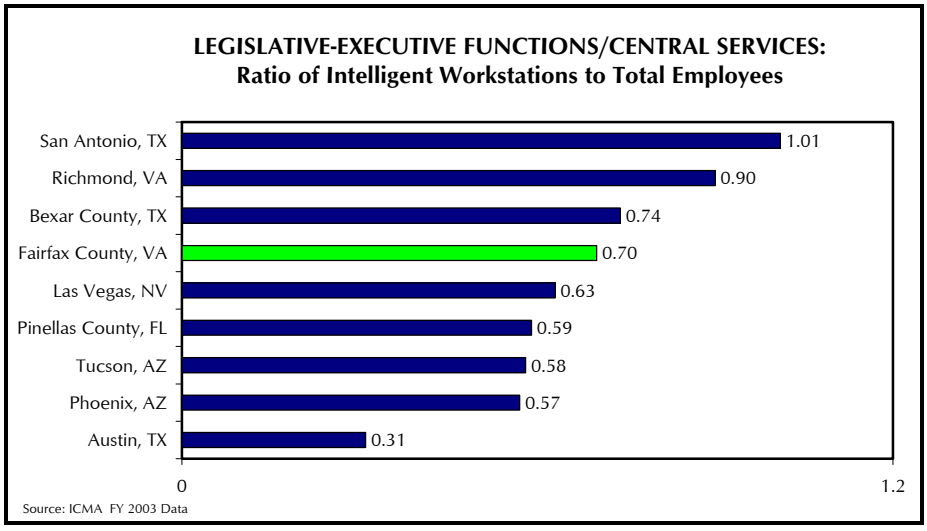
As part of the ICMA benchmarking effort, participating local governments (cities, counties and towns) provide data on standard templates provided by ICMA in order to ensure consistency. ICMA then performs extensive checking and data cleaning to ensure the greatest accuracy and comparability of data. As a result of the time to collect the data and undergo ICMA's rigorous data cleaning processes, information is always available with a one-year delay. FY 2003 data represent the latest available information. The jurisdictions presented in the graphs on the following pages generally show how Fairfax County compares to other large jurisdictions (population over 500,000). In cases where other Virginia localities provided data, they are shown as well.

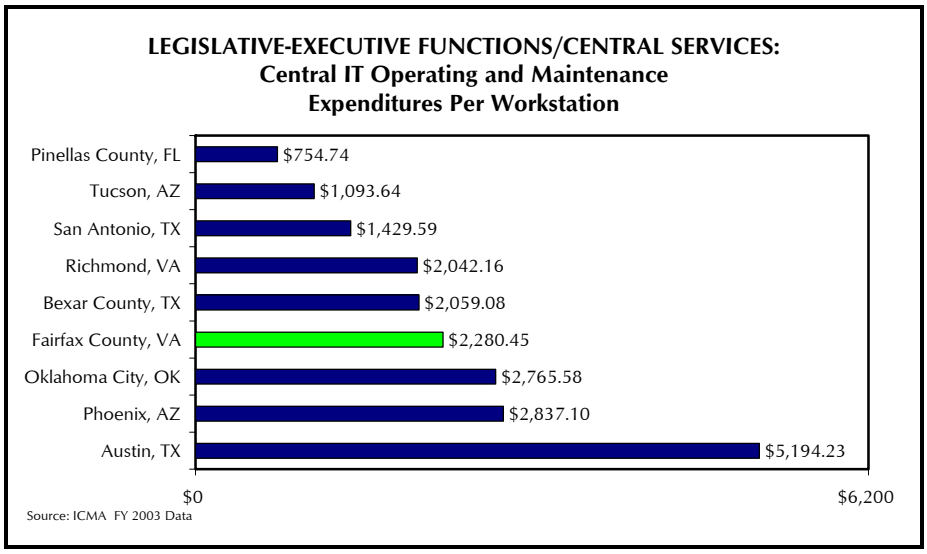
In terms of information technology efficiency and effectiveness, Fairfax County compares favorably to other large jurisdictions. Likewise in the human resources and purchasing service areas, the County's performance is very competitive with the other benchmarked jurisdictions. An important point to note in an effort such as this is that since participation is voluntary, the jurisdictions that provide data have demonstrated that they are committed to becoming/remaining high performance organizations. Therefore, comparisons made through this program should be considered in the context that the participants have self-selected and are inclined to be among the higher performers than a random sample among local governments nationwide. It is also important to note that not all jurisdictions respond to all questions. In some cases, the question or process is not applicable to a particular locality or data are not available. For those reasons, the universe of jurisdictions with which Fairfax County is compared is not always the same for each benchmark.

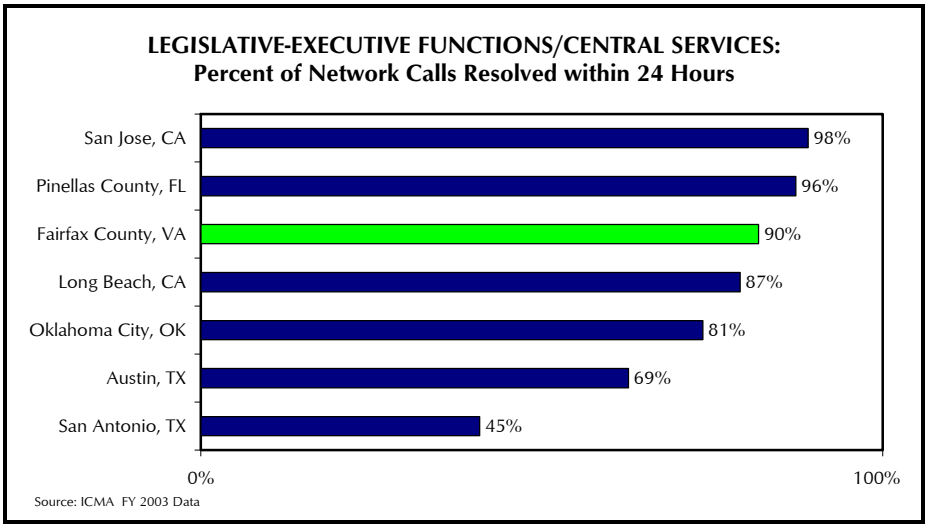
Agencies use this ICMA benchmarking data in order to determine how County performance compares to other peer jurisdictions. Where other high performers are identified, the challenge is to learn what processes, systems or methods they use that contribute to their high level of performance. This is an ongoing process that is continually evolving and improving.



Legislative-Executive Functions/Central Services Program Area Summary







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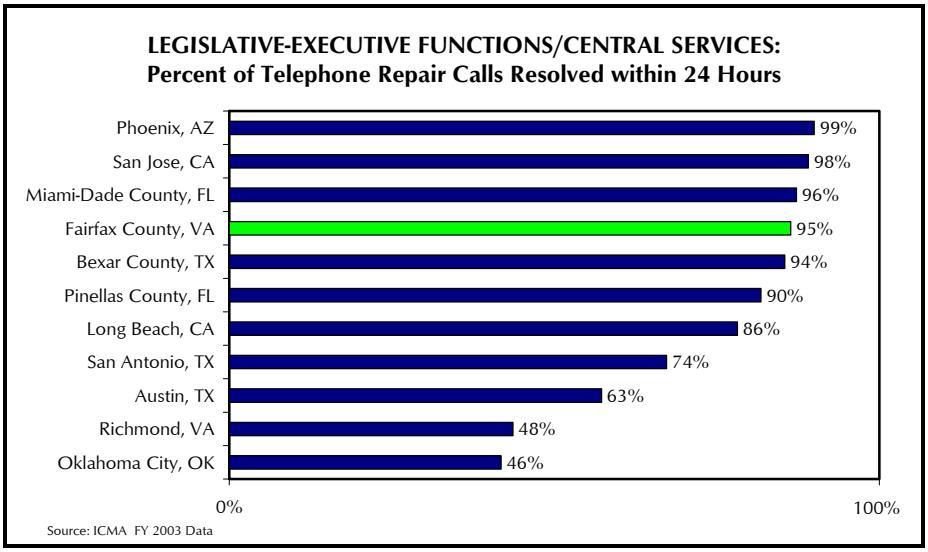

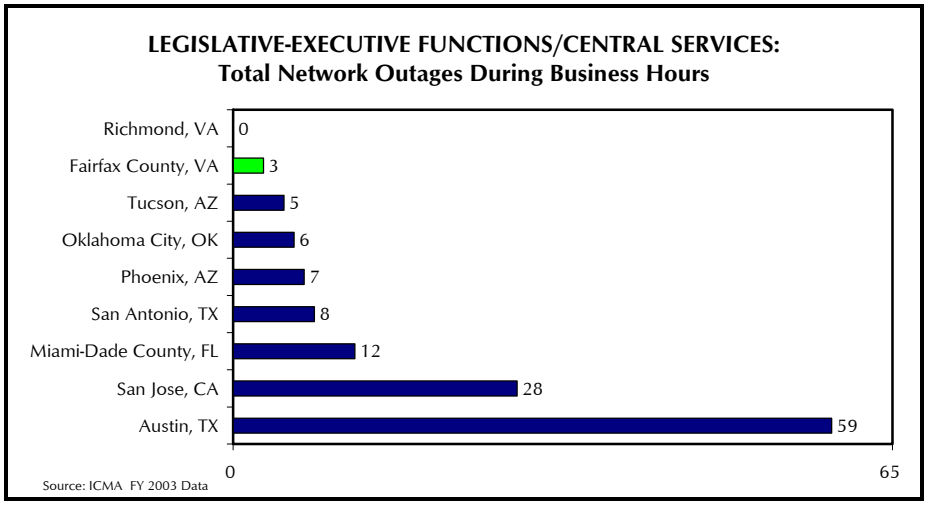

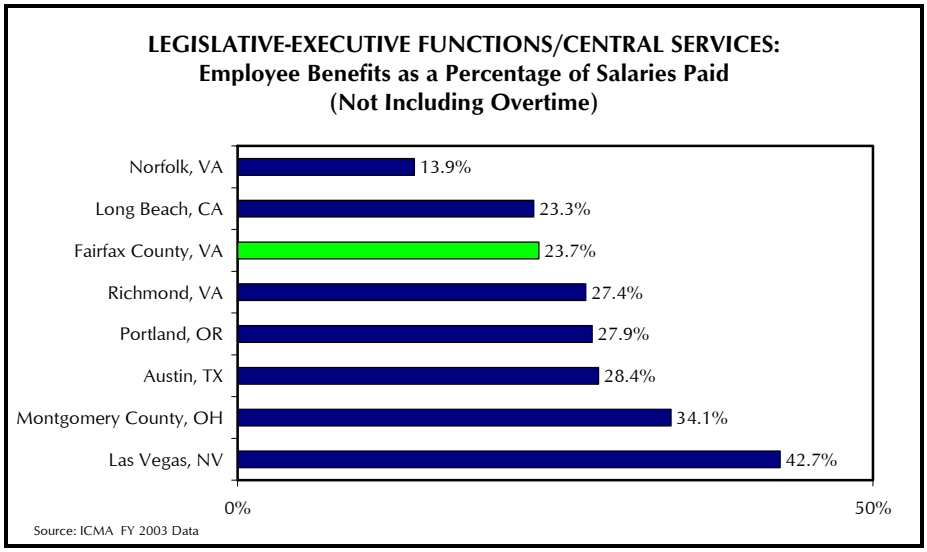
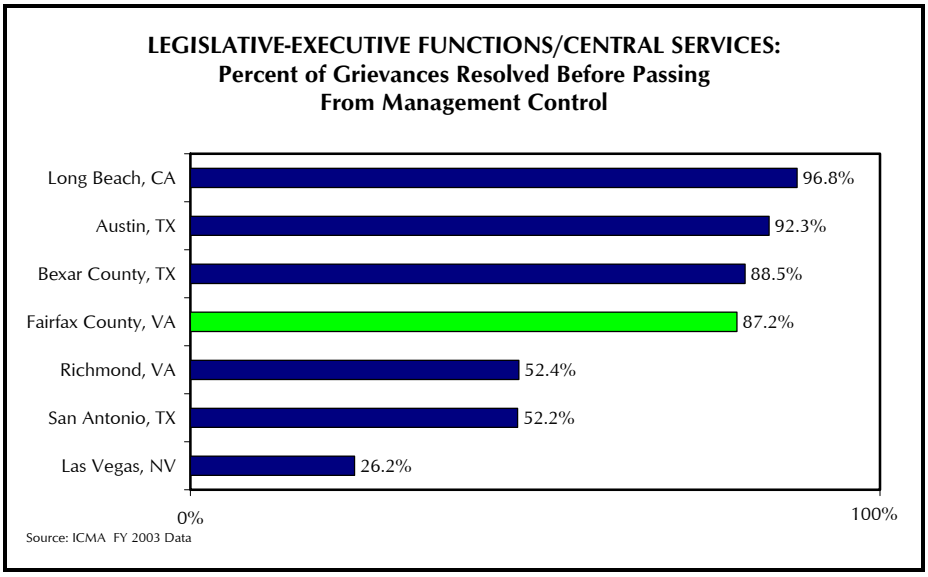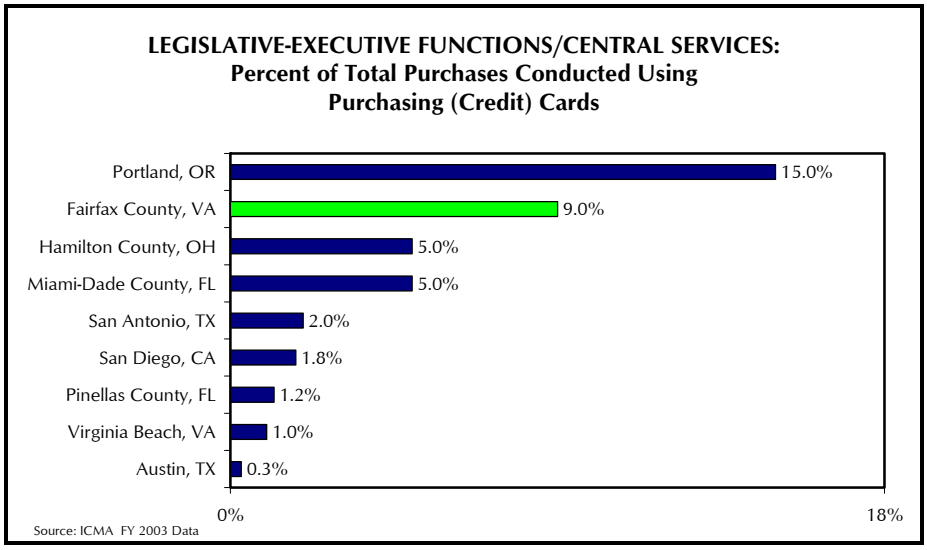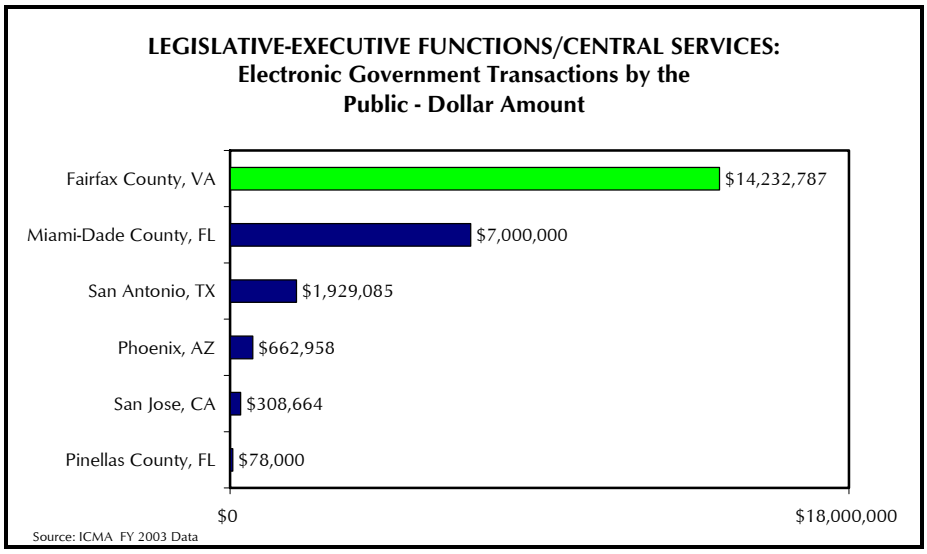
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