

Fairfax County Benchmarking Charts

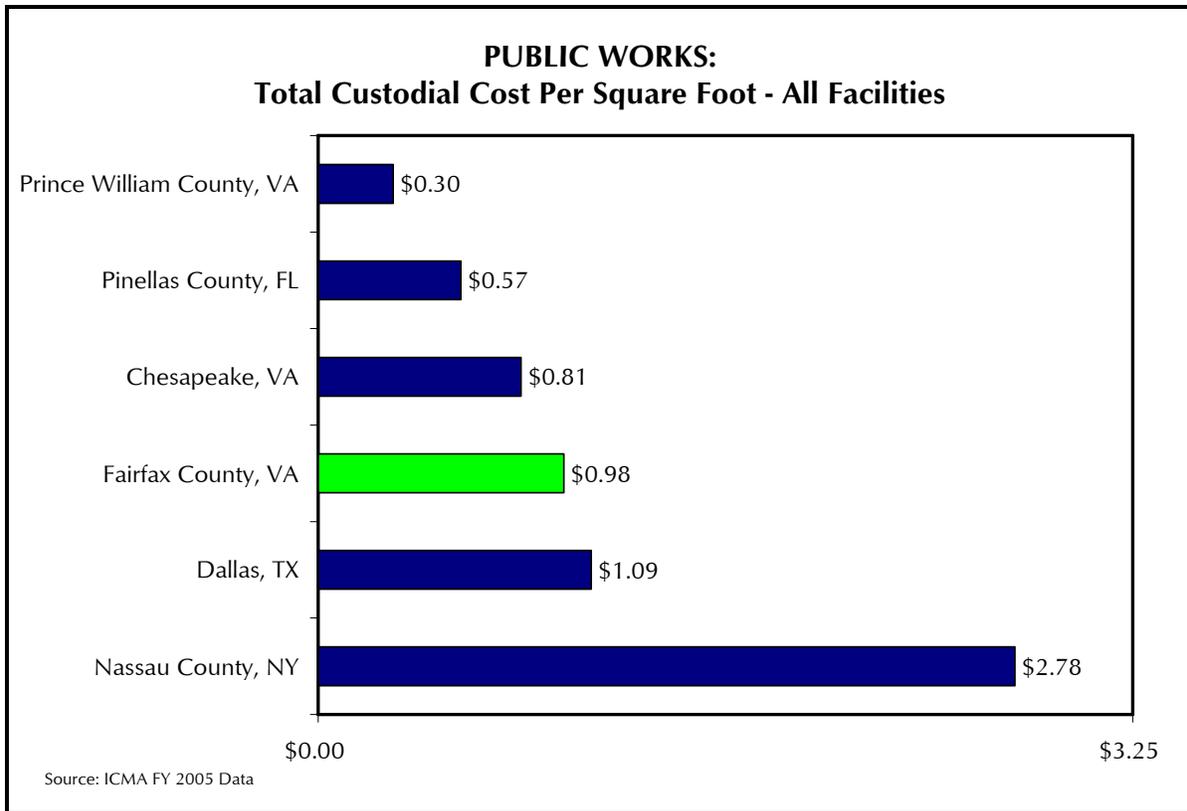
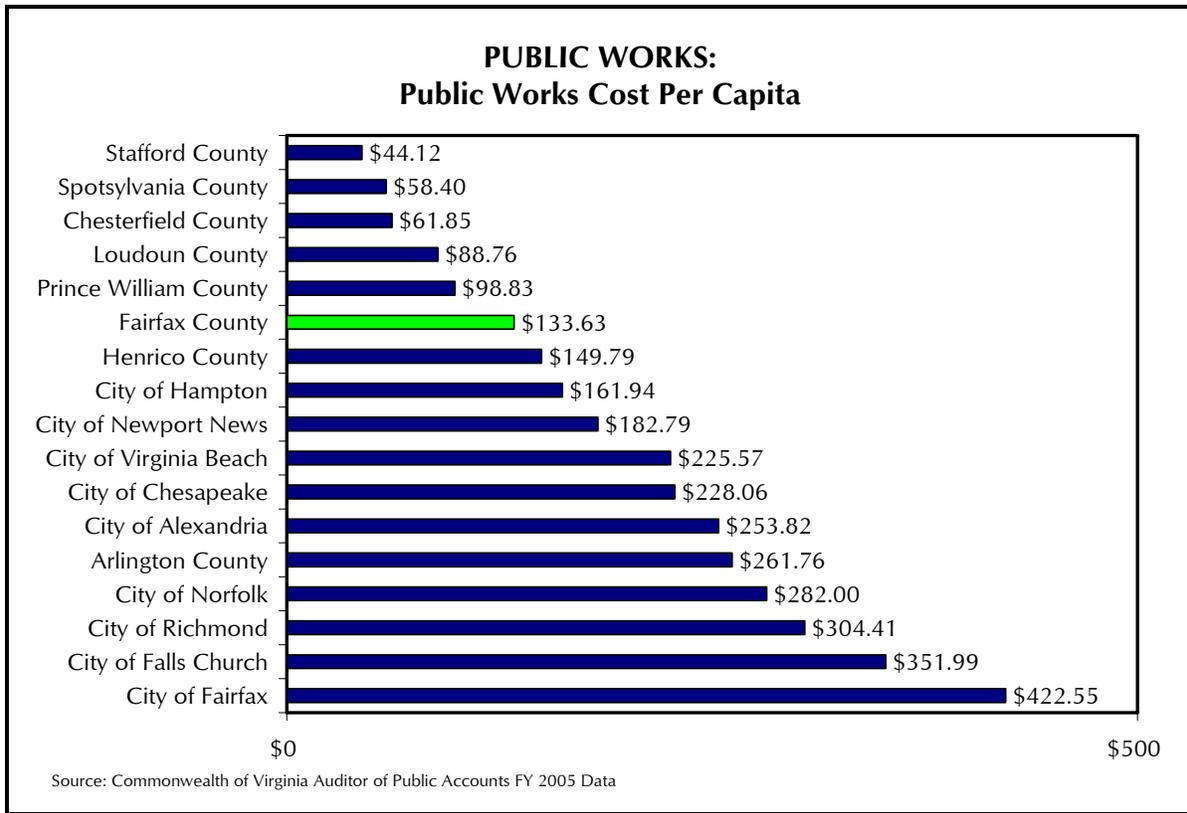
Public Works Program Area Benchmarking Charts

Since the FY 2005 Budget, benchmarking data have been included in the annual budget as a means of demonstrating accountability to the public for results achieved. These data are included in each of the Program Area Summaries in Volume 1 (General Fund) and now in Volume 2 (Other Funds) as available. Fairfax County has participated in the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) benchmarking effort since 2000. Approximately 150 cities and counties now provide comparable data annually in a number of service areas. Not all jurisdictions provide data for every service area, however. For this program area, facilities management is one of the benchmarked service areas for which Fairfax County provides data. Participating local governments (cities, counties and towns) provide data on standard templates provided by ICMA in order to ensure consistency. ICMA then performs extensive data cleaning to ensure the greatest accuracy and comparability of data. As a result of the time for data collection and ICMA's rigorous data cleaning processes, information is always available with a one-year delay. FY 2005 data represent the latest available information. The following graphs generally show how Fairfax County compares to other large jurisdictions (population over 500,000). In cases where other Virginia cities or counties provided data, they are included as well.

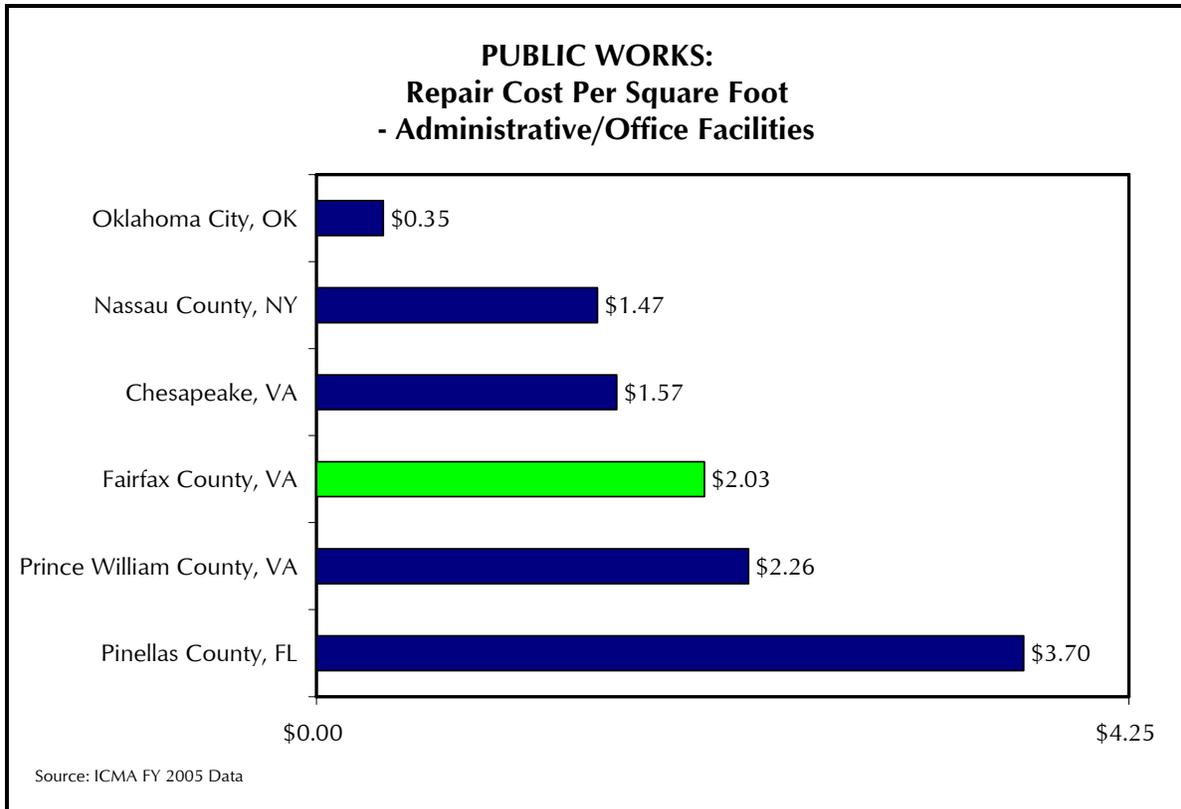
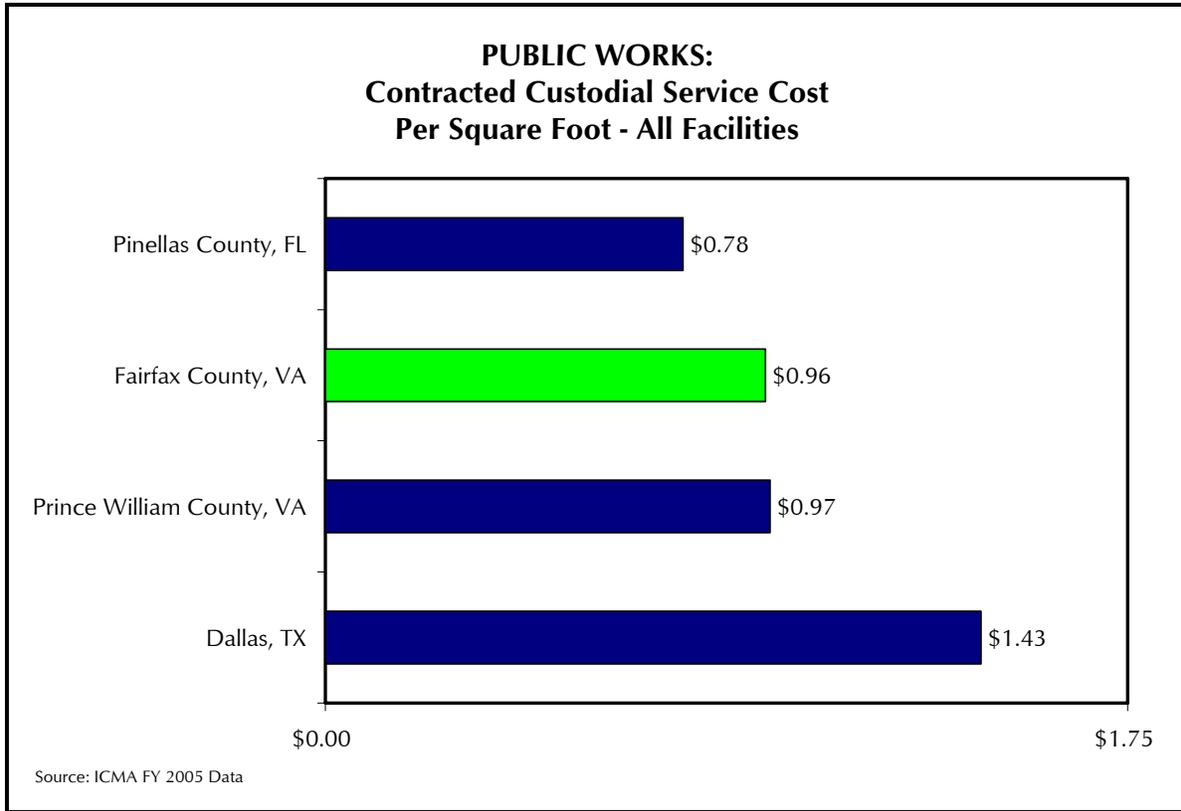
An important point to note in an effort such as this is that since participation is voluntary, the jurisdictions that provide data have shown they are committed to becoming/remaining high performance organizations. Therefore, comparisons made through this program should be considered in the context that the participants have self-selected and are inclined to be among the higher performers than a random sample among local governments nationwide. Performance is also affected by a number of variables including funding levels, weather, the economy, types of services provided, local preferences and the labor market. 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.

In addition, as part of an effort to identify additional benchmarks beyond the ICMA effort, data collected by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) for the Commonwealth of Virginia are also included here. Again, due to the time necessary for data collection and cleaning, FY 2005 represents the most recent year for which data are available. An advantage to including these benchmarks is the comparability. In Virginia, local governments follow stringent guidelines regarding the classification of program area expenses. 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. As can be seen below, Fairfax County is very competitive in terms of cost per capita for the Public Works Program Area. Likewise, other cost per square foot comparisons show that Fairfax County is also competitive with other large jurisdictions that responded to the various template questions.

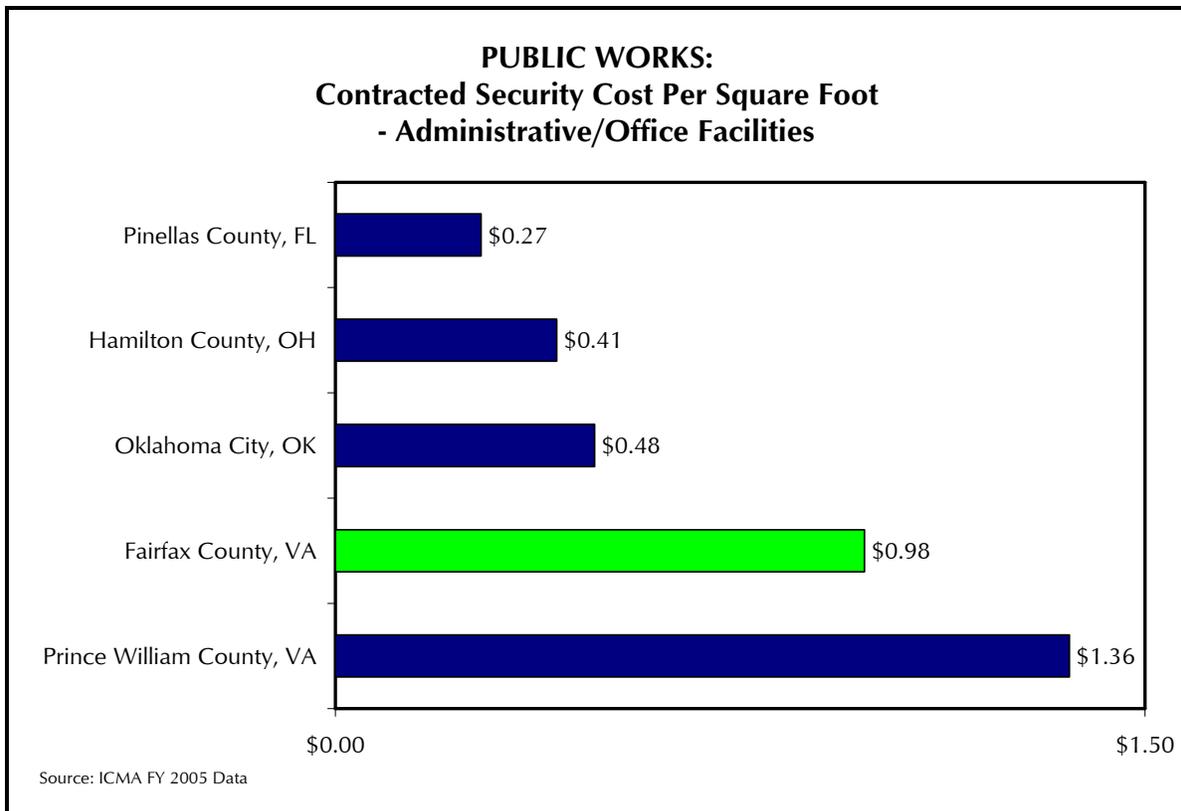
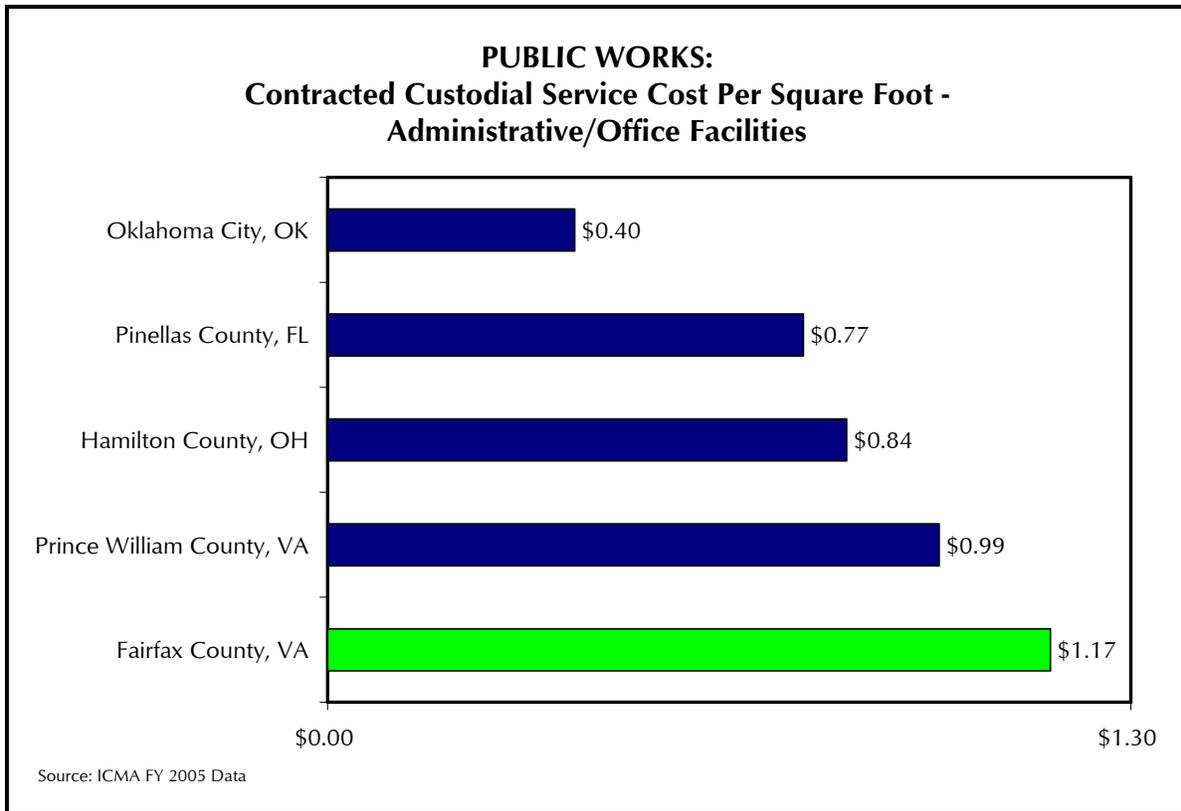
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