

# FY 2014

Adopted Budget Plan



## Strategic Linkages

---

---

# Strategic Linkages

## Context and Background

Fairfax County has been working on a number of initiatives over the last ten 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, converting to Pay for Performance, and initiating a Balanced Scorecard at the agency level. 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

### **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.

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:



**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.

## Strategic Linkages



**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.



**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**

Strategic planning furthers the County's commitment to high performance by helping agencies focus resources and services on the most strategic needs. The County process directs all agencies to strengthen the linkage between their individual missions and goals, as well as to the broader County vision laid out in the seven countywide vision elements.

**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.

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. According to ICMA, about 180 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

## Strategic Linkages

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 2014 Adopted 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 quite competitive with other Northern Virginia localities and large jurisdictions in the state.

The FY 2014 Adopted Budget Plan features an "agency dashboard" for every General Fund and General Fund Supported agency. These dashboards identify key drivers for these agency budgets. These dashboards are not replacing agency performance measures, but rather provide an additional snapshot of relevant statistics that pertain directly to why our agencies are funded as they are. The purpose of these drivers is to keep County decision-makers aware of this key data and how they are changing over time. Drivers will change over time and these drivers will be built into the annual budget process and into needs discussions with the community. This visual representation of what is driving the County's budget will improve the communications with the public and the Board as it relates to specific budget requests. The County Executive also developed a countywide dashboard to provide a snapshot of data, including commercial and residential real estate data, projected School enrolment data, and increases in employee compensation.

**Employee Compensation:** 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. In FY 2002 automatic step increases and cost-of-living adjustment were discontinued for over 8,000 non-public safety employees, so annual compensation adjustments were 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.

During FY 2007 a further review of County compensation practices, including the pay for performance system, was undertaken. The Board of Supervisors approved changes during their deliberations on the FY 2008 budget. These changes targeted the disconnect between an employee rated as "fully proficient" who received a 1.7 percent pay raise. The previous five rating levels were expanded to seven rating levels in response to focus group feedback that greater rating flexibility was needed in the rating process. The rating labels were also removed. With the exception of the disconnect between "fully proficient" and the 1.7 percent pay increase, the consultant found the County's rating distribution (a basic bell curve but leaning to the higher end of ratings) to be consistent with that of a high performing workforce.

## Strategic Linkages

In FY 2010, FY 2011 and FY 2012, the pay for performance (PFP) program was not funded given the fiscal environment. The Board of Supervisors approved a 2.00 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) during the *FY 2011 Carryover Review*, effective September 24, 2011. The FY 2013 Adopted Budget funded merit increments and longevity step increases for all uniformed public safety employees on their anniversary dates and 2.5 percent performance based scale increase in January 2013 for all non-uniformed merit employees. In addition, the Board of Supervisors also approved a Market Rate Adjustment (MRA) of 2.18 percent, effective July 1, 2012. In FY 2013, the County Executive introduced a new compensation program proposal entitled STRIVE. The new STRIVE compensation program is an integrated model designed to enhance succession planning and management, implement the new performance management system, and optimize the County's total compensation package. The Board supports the Employee Development and Succession Planning elements of the County Executive's STRIVE proposal and directs that staff proceed in implementing these two initiatives. The important elements of ensuring cross-training and building capacity are essential as the County moves forward. The Board will meet at a future Personnel Committee to discuss the sustainable compensation recommendations made by the County Executive in the STRIVE proposal. The FY 2014 Adopted Budget Plan does not include compensation increases for non-uniformed merit employees; however, it does include longevity increases for uniformed employees as well as funding of more than \$12 million in FY 2014 to pay for the full-year impact of increases received by employees in FY 2013. The FY 2014 budget also includes an increase of \$0.35 million for STRIVE program initiatives designed to enhance succession planning and management by developing current high performing employees. The Board of Supervisors has provided strong direction to senior County staff and the workforce to work together during the next months to develop recommendations for a new, sustainable compensation plan in time for consideration of the FY 2015 budget.

**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.

In FY 2008, Fairfax County added a Succession Planning component to workforce planning. The Succession Planning process provides managers and supervisors with a framework for effective human resources planning in the face of the dramatic changes anticipated in the workforce over the next five to ten years. It is a method for management to identify and develop key employee competencies, encourage professional development and contribute to employee retention. A very significant number of employees will be eligible for retirement over the next several years. By December 31, 2015, 25 percent of all merit employees will be eligible for retirement. In specific job categories, those numbers are even greater. For example, by December 31, 2015, 58 percent of County non-public safety senior managers will be eligible for retirement and 34 percent of mid-level management will be eligible. In the public safety agencies the numbers are even higher. In the Police Department by the end of calendar 2015, 82 percent of senior managers and 83 percent of mid-level managers will be eligible for retirement. To address this somewhat staggering trend, the County plans to re-tool and strengthen existing succession planning and knowledge transfer efforts—to build the capacity to support a “promote from within” when appropriate philosophy. The County will recruit externally when strategically advantageous and will strengthen recruitment effectiveness by encouraging employee referrals and deepening the County Executive's leadership team's engagement with executive level recruitments. Shifting the performance evaluation focus from “the amount of the pay increase” to better communication and employee development will also help the County address the exit of many tenured County employees.

## Strategic Linkages

**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 10040, 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. Constrained funding will impact the number of new IT projects that can be undertaken in the next year. However, the County continues to explore and monitor all areas of County government for information technology enhancements and/or modifications which will streamline operations and support future savings. In FY 2011, Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools partnered to replace aging legacy financial, procurement, budget and human resource systems with one integrated solution. The County selected and completed the purchase of SAP as the FOCUS software. The Fairfax County Unified System (FOCUS) supports all County government and school employees in their daily operations. County Schools and Government employees welcomed the new system for Finance and Logistics transactions in November 2011. In June 2012, Fairfax County Government employees transitioned to FOCUS HCM (Human Capital Management) for all Human Resources transactions including time entry.

As part of the FY 2014 budget, the County Executive is consolidating support for the FOCUS system that was previously spread out in the Departments of Finance, Purchasing and Supply Management, Human Resources and Management and Budget into a new unit (the FOCUS Business Support Group or FBSG) within the Department of Management and Budget. In addition, the FY 2014 reductions reflect a reduction of \$983,565 in salary and mainframe costs and the elimination of 4/4.0 FTE positions as a result of the implementation of the initial phases of the new system.

### **Strategic Planning Links to the Budget**

The annual budget includes links to the comprehensive strategic initiatives described above. To achieve these links, agency budget narratives include discussions of County Vision Elements and agency strategic planning efforts; program area summaries include cross-cutting efforts and benchmarking data; and the Key County Indicator presentation in this section demonstrates how the County is performing as a whole. As a result, the budget information is presented in a user-friendly format and resource decisions are more clearly articulated to Fairfax County residents.

- ▶ **Agency Narratives:** Individual agency narratives identify strategic issues, which were developed during the agency strategic planning efforts, link 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.

## Strategic Linkages

- ▶ **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 2013 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 Student Achievement Goals are included following the Key County Indicator presentation.

### 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. As a measure of the quality of its budget preparation, Fairfax County was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by meeting rigorous criteria for the budget as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communications device for the 28<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. In August 2012, Fairfax County was one of only 28 jurisdictions to receive ICMA's highest recognition for performance measurement, the "Certificate of Excellence." The County will continue to build on this success for future budget documents in order to enhance the accountability, transparency, and usefulness of the budget documents.

## Key County Indicators

### Introduction

The Key County Indicator presentation communicates the County's progress on each of the Vision Elements through key measures. 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 also compiles Benchmarking data, providing a high-level picture of how Fairfax County is performing compared to other jurisdictions of its size. Benchmarking data is presented within the program area summaries in budget Volumes 1 and 2.

#### **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 Healthy 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 actual data from FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012, and it includes a discussion of how the Indicators relate to their respective Vision Elements. In addition, the Corporate Stewardship Vision Element includes FY 2013 and FY 2014 estimates in order to present data related to the current budget. For some indicators, FY 2011 is the most recent year in which data are available, and FY 2012 Actuals will be included in the following year's budget document. All of the indicator data are for Fairfax County only, listed by Fiscal Year, unless otherwise noted in the text.

## Strategic Linkages

**👥 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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Ratio of Group A Index Crimes (Violent Criminal Offenses) to 100,000 County Population (Calendar Year)	86.44	79.13	75.04
Clearance rate of Group A Index Crimes (Violent Criminal Offenses) (Calendar Year)	NA <sup>1</sup>	61.30%	62.45%
Percent of time Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport units on scene within 9 minutes	82.6%	88.0%	85.0%
Fire suppression response rate for engine company within 5 minutes	41.0%	60.0%	56.0%
Percent of low birth weight babies (under 5 lbs 8 oz)	7.0%	7.0%	NA <sup>2</sup>
Immunizations: completion rates for 2 year olds	70.0%	69.0%	71.0%
Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) On-Time Graduation Rate	86.91%	91.40%	91.30%
Children in foster care per 1,000 in total youth population	1.15	1.18	NA <sup>3</sup>
Percent of seniors, adults with disabilities and/or family caregivers who express satisfaction with community-based services that are provided by Fairfax County to help them remain in their home/community	91.2%	93.0%	93.0%
Percent of restaurants operating safely	97.0%	97.5%	98.3%

<sup>1</sup> Due to the implementation of the new Records Management System, crime data for FY 2010 is not available.

<sup>2</sup> Prior year actuals on the percent of low birth weight babies are provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and FY 2011 is the most recent data available in time for budget publication.

<sup>3</sup> Prior year actuals on Children in foster care per 1,000 in total youth population are provided by the American Community Survey (ACS) of the United States Census Bureau, and FY 2011 is the most recent data available in time for budget publication.

Fairfax County is one of the nation's safest jurisdictions in which to live and work. In early 2010, the Police Department implemented a new records management system (RMS), which tracks and reports on all statistical data. Pursuant to the migration to the new RMS system, the reporting format has also migrated from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) to Incident-Based Reporting (IBR). Due to the change in formats, a direct comparison between 2010 and prior year crime numbers is not possible. Also, due to technical issues in data migration to the new system, clearance rate data for 2010 is not available. In FY 2012, the Fairfax County **ratio of Group A Violent Crimes** result of 75.04 incidences per 100,000 residents continues to reflect one of the lowest violent crime rates of any large jurisdiction in the United States.

The County also showed relatively consistent case **clearance rate of Group A Index Crimes**, which is an index of four major crimes (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). The annual Fairfax County case clearance rate of 62.45 percent was higher than preceding year's national average.

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). The five minute fire suppression response



## Strategic Linkages

standard of the NFPA was met 56.0 percent of the time in FY 2012. Advanced Life Support transport units arrived on the scene within 9 minutes or 85.0 percent of the time in FY 2012.

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: Prior year actuals on the percent of low birth weight babies are provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and FY 2011 is the most recent data available in time for budget publication). The County's FY 2011 incidence rate of 7.0 percent of low birth weight babies compares favorably against the state average of 8.0 percent. The FY 2012 immunization completion rate of 71.0 percent for two-year olds represents a two percentage point increase from FY 2011. Because of the downturn in the economy, there was an increase in clients coming to the Health Department for the first time, many who were not entering the system as infants and thus had incomplete immunizations; the Health Department will strive to achieve completion rates of 80.0 percent in FY 2013 and FY 2014. It is noted that by the time of school entry, many children are adequately immunized, although they may have lacked these immunizations at the age of two. Fairfax County also funds numerous programs to help children stay in school and provides recreational activities in after-school programs. These services contributed to the County's FY 2012 **Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) On-Time Graduation rate** of 91.3 percent. In FY 2011, the **ratio of children in foster care per 1,000** in the total population of children 0–17 years old was 1.18. Fairfax County remains committed to further decreasing the number of children in foster care as well as reducing 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. (Note: Prior year actuals on Children in foster care per 1,000 in total youth population are provided by the American Community Survey (ACS) of the United States Census Bureau, and FY 2011 is the most recent data available in time for budget publication).



**The Fairfax County Health Department is committed to protecting the health of County residents by ensuring restaurants operate safely.**

The County continues to be successful in **caring for older adults and persons with disabilities by helping them stay in their homes** as indicated by the 93.0 percent combined satisfaction rating for two support programs: Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) and Congregate Meals programs. ADHC satisfaction was 100.0 percent in FY 2012. Department of Family Services staff solicited input from Congregate Meal clients, including the growing ethnic client population, and continued to work with food vendors to revise food options accordingly. However, client satisfaction decreased from 87.0 percent to 86.0 percent in FY 2012. It should be noted that in FY 2011, the methodology changed for calculating congregate meal satisfaction by only collecting general quality data.

Fairfax County is committed to protecting the health of its residents, and in FY 2012, 98.3 percent of **restaurants operated 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. Studies have shown that high risk establishments, (those with complex food preparation; cooking, cooling and reheating) which are approximately 50 percent of Fairfax County restaurants, should be inspected at a greater frequency than low risk establishments (limited menu/handling) to reduce the incidence of food borne risk factors. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends that high risk establishments be inspected three times a year,

## Strategic Linkages

moderate risk twice a year and low risk once a year. Therefore, the Food Safety Program transitioned to a risk based inspection process in FY 2009.



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Acres of parkland held in public trust <sup>1</sup>	40,322	38,507	40,648
Miles of trails and sidewalks maintained by the County	644	647	649
Annual number of visitations to libraries, park facilities and recreation and community centers	11,963,753	11,485,816	11,418,849
Value of construction authorized on existing residential units	\$136,836,731	\$132,306,916	\$115,979,269
Annual percent of new dwelling units within business or transit centers as measured by zoning approvals	98.8%	75.0%	75.0%
Percent of people in the labor force who both live and work in Fairfax County	51.7%	54.1%	51.5%
Number of affordable rental senior housing units <sup>2</sup>	3,029	3,119	3,119

<sup>1</sup> Acres of parkland was restated in FY 2009, based on a Park Authority reconciliation of its historical records on Park Authority park acreage received and granted.

<sup>2</sup> The number of affordable rental senior housing units was restated in FY 2009 and FY 2010 to account for a miscalculation in previous reports.

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 amount of **acres of parkland held in public trust** is a preservation of open space that enhances the County’s appeal as an attractive place to live. This indicator measures parkland in the County held by the Fairfax County Park Authority, the Northern Regional Park Authority, state and federal governments, and other localities. In FY 2012, there was an upward adjustment in acres due primarily to revised calculations in Fairfax County, Fairfax City, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) acreage. These adjustments brought the FY 2012 total acreage to 40,648. 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 Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES). A GIS-based walkway inventory now provides a more accurate estimate of miles. By the end of FY 2012, DPWES maintained 649 miles of



*The County maintains 649 miles of trails and sidewalks in addition to the nearly 1,640 miles of trails and sidewalks maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation within Fairfax County’s boundaries.*

## Strategic Linkages

trails and sidewalks. In addition to miles maintained by the County, nearly 1,640 miles are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and over 320 miles are contained within County parks. In addition, nearly 1,140 miles of walkway are maintained by private homeowners associations. The number of walkways in the County contributes to the sense of community and connection to places. The County will continue to improve pedestrian access and develop walkways through the use of funding support from a variety of sources, including bond funding and the commercial and industrial real estate tax for transportation.

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. In the fall of 2004, the voters approved a Public Library Bond Referendum totaling \$52.5 million for library projects. Funding was provided for the Burke Centre and Oakton libraries and the renovation of four of the oldest libraries, including Richard Byrd, Martha Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Dolley Madison libraries. These new libraries and the library renovations are now complete. Based on the favorable construction market and savings in the renovation projects, design work for the renovation and expansion of the Woodrow Wilson Library began in February 2012. Renovations are expected to be complete in the fall of 2014. In addition, on November 6, 2012, voters approved a bond referendum in the amount of \$25 million to renovate four priority library facilities. These libraries include Pohick, Tysons Pimmit, Reston and John Marshall. The renovations will provide a more efficient use of the available space, meet customers' technological demands and better serve students and young children. In FY 2012, the number of visits to all library, parks and recreation facilities decreased to 11,418,849. This number is anticipated to increase in future years as the FY 2013 budget provided additional funding to allow the Library to add hours at both regional and community libraries beginning in September 2012.

Resident investment in their own residences reflects the perception of their neighborhood as a "livable community." While many residents have moved forward with home renovations despite the slowdown of the real estate market and economic uncertainty, many other residents have delayed renovation plans. FY 2010, FY 2011 and FY 2012 data reflect the continuing decline in the homeowner-reported **value of construction authorized on existing residential units**. These figures result from a combination of the slowdown in home improvement projects, lower actual construction costs due to market competition, and underreporting of project costs by homeowners. It is projected that the total value of issued construction permits will rise in the future as the housing market strengthens.

The measure for the **percent of dwelling units within business or transit centers as measured by zoning approvals** provides a sense of the quality of built environments in the County and the County's annual success in promoting mixed use development. The Comprehensive Plan encourages built environments suitable for work, shopping and leisure activities. The County requires Business Centers to include additional residential development to facilitate an appropriate mix of uses. In FY 2012, 75 percent of proffered residential units were within business or transit centers. An increase in this proportion is expected by the close of FY 2013, as approximately 98.42 percent or 1,809 of the 1,838 new residential units approved through the second quarter of FY 2013 are located within business or transit centers. Such a large proportion is attributed to the approval of a large mixed-use development zoning case within Tysons. It is anticipated that additional pending rezoning cases within Tysons, Reston and other transit centers will be approved during the remainder of FY 2013.

The **percentage of employed people who both live and work in Fairfax County** is currently above 51 percent and may be linked to both quality of life and access to mixed use development in the County. Additional residential development in business centers also increases the potential for the members of the workforce to live in proximity to their place of work. In addition, the County is actively promoting the

## Strategic Linkages

creation and preservation of affordable dwelling units to support those who both live and work within the County.

Continued production of **affordable senior housing** by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and others, as well as FCRHA preservation efforts, are helping to offset the loss of affordable senior rental units on the market. As of the close of 2012, the County maintained an inventory of 3,119 affordable housing units, including both publicly and privately owned rental apartment complexes. This number includes 55 units at the Chesterbrook facility, delivered in November 2007, that are specifically for low-income residents.



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Number of times County information and interactive services are accessed electronically (millions)	NA	13.6 <sup>1</sup>	21.1 <sup>2</sup>
Library materials circulation per capita	12.9	12.0	11.8
Percent of library circulation represented by materials in languages other than English	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%
Percent change in transit passengers	6.6%	1.17%	3.00%

<sup>1</sup> Beginning in FY 2011, the County began using a fundamentally different methodology and measure to gauge the access of County website pages from "hits" to "visits." A visit is an interaction, by an individual, with a website consisting of one or more requests for a definable unit of content. Visits are now viewed across the industry as a better indicator for measuring web traffic.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning in FY 2012, the County also began counting visits to other social media in addition to nearly 16 million website visits: Of the additional 5.1 million interactions are 1.5 million website searches, 2.1 million Facebook visits, approximately 690,000 SlideShare presentation views, more than 450,000 Flickr photo views, and nearly 120,000 mobile website visits.

An important measure of a community's quality of life is whether or not its residents can easily and conveniently access information, services and activities that are of interest. Fairfax County Government provides a wide range of resources and interactive platforms for people to access. For many years, Fairfax County has been a national leader in providing online services for people to conduct transactions such as paying taxes, requesting debris pickup and reserving library books. The County is now expanding these key resources to its mobile platform in response to a general shift in the public's usage patterns toward smartphones and tablet devices. Fairfax County also has a robust and nationally-known social media program that encourages interaction with and sharing of County information so residents can serve as information ambassadors to friends, neighbors and co-workers who may not otherwise have access (this is especially important during emergencies). By using tools like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and an emergency blog, Fairfax County delivers a high quality experience for residents on those platforms with relevant, timely and actionable information. The County also interacts directly with residents and reaches people in ways that were not possible a few short years ago. These efforts are paying dividends both for the exchange of information and improving awareness of County resources. For example, in a recent survey of County Facebook page fans, 81 percent of respondents said Fairfax County's use of Facebook has helped them learn more about their local government, programs and services. Evidence of the County's success in providing useful and convenient access to information and services can also be found in the FY 2012 measure of 21 million total interactions with key County online platforms (website visits, mobile website visits, number of website searches, emergency blog views, Facebook daily total reach, YouTube video views, Flickr photo views and SlideShare presentation views). These numbers will

## Strategic Linkages

continue to grow as the County invests more time on additional platforms to reach people in an increasingly fragmented communications world.

For residents of Fairfax County who do not have access to a computer at home or at work, or who 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 them 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. The utilization of Fairfax County libraries is demonstrated by the **library materials circulation per capita**, which was 11.8 in FY 2012. This high circulation rate indicates the availability of an extensive selection of materials and a desire for library resources among Fairfax County residents. In addition, interest in library resources can be seen in the number of unique visitors to the Library's website, which totaled 4,162,599 in FY 2012. For additional information on benchmarks, please refer to the Parks 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. As of 2009, 35.0 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 2012, 1.4 percent of library circulation was represented by materials in languages other than English. With a circulation of more than 13 million items by Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) in FY 2012, the 1.4 percent reported for the circulation of non-English materials represents a significant number of materials being used by a multi-language population.

Another important aspect of connecting people and places is actually moving them from one place to another. The County operates the FAIRFAX CONNECTOR bus service; provides FASTRAN services to seniors; and contributes funding to Metro and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE). The **percent change in transit passengers** measures the impact of County efforts as well as efforts of Metro and the VRE. The County experienced a 3.00 percent increase/decrease in Fairfax County transit passengers in FY 2012, up to 51.4 million in FY 2012 over 49.23 million in FY 2011. This increase was, in large part, attributable to a 5.4 percent increase in annual Metrobus trips originating in Fairfax County, from 9.0 million to 9.5, and a 8.7 percent increase in annual VRE ridership, from 1,030,656 to 1,119,888. There was a slight increase in the number of annual Metrorail trips originating in Fairfax County from 29,592,719 in FY 2011 to 29,899,000 in FY 2012.

In FY 2014, the County will continue its support of Metro Operations and Construction, CONNECTOR bus service, and the VRE subsidy. Additional General Fund support is required for the projected Metro jurisdictional subsidy and for critical CONNECTOR services. For more information, please see Fund 30000, Metro Operations and Construction, and Fund 40000, County Transit Systems, in Volume 2.

While transportation funding and improvements to date have been largely a state function, the County also has supported a large portion of local transportation projects in an effort to reduce congestion and increase safety. The County continues to broaden its effort to improve roadways, enhance pedestrian mobility, and support mass transit through funding available from the 2007 Transportation Bond Referendum and from the commercial and industrial real estate tax for transportation. This tax was first adopted by the Board of Supervisors in FY 2009, pursuant to the General Assembly's passage of the Transportation Funding and Reform Act of 2007 (HB 3202). The FY 2014 budget includes a rate of 12.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value, which is projected to provide approximately \$50.5 million in support of capital and transit projects, including continued support of CONNECTOR bus service from the West Ox Bus Operations Center, and funding of new bus services and increased frequencies.

## Strategic Linkages



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Total employment (Total All Industries, All Establishment Sizes, equaling the total number of jobs in Fairfax County)	580,912	585,181	597,442
Growth rate	0.8%	0.7%	2.1%
Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)	5.0%	4.5%	4.2%
Commercial/Industrial percent of total Real Estate Assessment Base	22.67%	19.70%	19.64%
Percent change in Gross County Product (adjusted for inflation)	3.20%	1.45%	0.59%
Percent of persons living below the federal poverty line (Calendar Year)	5.6%	5.8%	6.8%
Percent of homeowners that pay 30.0 percent or more of household income on housing (Calendar Year)	32.9%	31.6%	29.0%
Percent of renters that pay 30.0 percent or more of household income on rent (Calendar Year)	47.4%	44.2%	45.7%
Direct (excludes sublet space) office space vacancy rate (Calendar Year)	13.3%	13.8%	14.6%

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. 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 overall health of Fairfax County's economy.

**Total employment** illustrates the magnitude of Fairfax County's jobs base. After increasing a slight 0.7 percent in FY 2011, the total number of jobs in the County grew again in FY 2012 and rose 2.1 percent. For context, there are more jobs in Fairfax County than there are people in the entire state of Wyoming. 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 unemployment rate was 4.2 percent in 2012, the Commonwealth of Virginia experienced 5.9 percent unemployment (not seasonally adjusted) in the same period. The strength of the County's economy is even more apparent when compared to the national unemployment rate of 8.1 percent in 2012.

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. From FY 2001 to FY 2007, the Commercial/Industrial percentage declined from 25.37 percent to 17.22 percent, in part due to vacant office space early in this period and further exacerbated by the booming housing market attributable to record low mortgage rates that resulted in double-digit residential real estate assessment increases for several consecutive years. This imbalance increased the burden on the residential component to finance government services. Starting in FY 2008, when the housing market began to slow down, the Commercial/Industrial percentage increased for three consecutive years, reaching 22.67 percent in FY 2010 as a result of declining residential values. When nonresidential values declined a record 18.29 percent, the Commercial/Industrial percentage declined 2.97 percentage points to 19.70 percent in FY 2011 and another 0.06 percentage points in FY 2012. It rose to 20.77 percent in FY 2013, before it dropped again slightly in FY 2014 to 19.96 percent of the total Real Estate Assessment Base.

## Strategic Linkages

**Gross County Product (GCP)** is an overall measure of the County's economic performance. The percentage change in the GCP indicates whether the economy is expanding or contracting. Moody's Analytics estimates that GCP, adjusted for inflation, rose at a rate of 0.59 percent in 2012. GCP growth is expected to be moderate in 2013 and 2014.

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., \$20,000 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 6.8 percent poverty rate in FY 2012 is better than most, yet it still translates to nearly 74,000 persons living below the federal poverty level. *(Note: Census data are reported based upon the calendar year (CY) rather than the fiscal year and are typically available on a one-year delay. FY 2012 data represent CY 2011 data.)*

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**, 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 FY 2012, 29.0 percent of homeowners paid 30 percent or more of their household income on housing, while a substantially greater number of renters, 45.7 percent, paid 30 percent or more of their household income on rent. *(Note: Census data are reported based upon the calendar year rather than the fiscal year and are typically available on a one-year delay. FY 2012 data represent CY 2011 data.)*

Finally, the **direct (excludes sublet space) office space vacancy rate** reflects yet another aspect of the health of the business community. In the last couple of years, the direct vacancy rate has remained elevated in historical terms, and at year-end 2012 was 14.6 percent, the highest on record since 1992. Including sublet space, the overall office vacancy rate was 16.7 percent, up from 15.7 percent at year-end 2011. The increase in the vacancy rate is attributed to the threat of sequestration, as government contractors consolidate operations throughout the Washington area and retool operations in order to operate in an economic environment less dependent on government procurement spending. Total leasing activity during 2012 hit a five-year low with 9.7 million square feet of activity, down over 17 percent from year-end 2011. This is significantly lower than the record 13.6 million square feet of leasing activity experienced in 2010. Lease rates for new space are adjusting to market conditions. Many tenants are taking advantage of favorable rates and others are looking to capitalize on market conditions by consolidating operations in newer space near Metro. The Tysons market is uniquely positioned to take advantage of this trend with more than 26 million square feet of new space in the pipeline.

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. It should be noted that income growth does not affect Fairfax County tax revenues directly because localities in Virginia do not tax income; however, revenues are indirectly affected because changes in income impact the County's economic health.

## Strategic Linkages



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Unhealthy Air Days recorded on Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) monitors located in Fairfax County based on the EPA Air Quality Index (Calendar Year)	11	11	12
Overall Level of Stream Quality as a weighted index of overall watershed/stream conditions on a scale of 5 (Excellent) to 1 (Very Poor)	2.60	2.88	2.33
Percent of Tree Coverage in County (1)	40.5%	41%	50%
Number of homes that could be powered as a result of County alternative power initiatives	64,000	64,650	69,352
Solid Waste Recycled as a percentage of the waste generated within the County (Calendar Year)	42%	47%	51%

(1) Revised actuals based on a tree canopy study conducted by the University of Vermont Geospatial Laboratory.

The Environmental Stewardship Vision Element demonstrates the County's continued commitment to the environment. Rapid growth and development since the 1980's 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 continues to be demonstrated by the County's Solid Waste 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. The Wastewater Management Program achieved an Exemplary Environmental Enterprise (E3) rating. These designations are 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. In addition, in FY 2006, the County was presented with a National Association of Counties Achievement Award (NACo) for its efforts to improve air quality.

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 underlying principles of the Environmental 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 endorsed the continued staff effort to support the Environmental Stewardship Vision Element. In addition, the Environmental Coordinating Committee developed the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) to support the Board's Environmental Agenda. The EIP is a tactical plan with concrete strategies, programs and policies that directly support the goals and objectives of the



***In FY 2006 and FY 2007, the County was presented with National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Awards for its efforts to improve air quality and for its Environmental Improvement Program.***

## Strategic Linkages

Board's Environmental Agenda. In FY 2007, the County was presented with a NACo achievement award for its Environmental Agenda and EIP Programs.

Fairfax County partnered with a select group of counties across the United States and the Sierra Club to create a template for local governments to begin reducing their greenhouse gas emissions in favor of more environmentally friendly practices. This "Cool Counties" initiative was inaugurated at the NACo annual conference in July 2007. It identifies specific strategies and actions for the nation's 3,000 counties to adopt as part of the regional, national and global effort to pursue smarter, cleaner energy solutions. A number of "Cool County" strategies have already been implemented in Fairfax County, including the purchase of hybrid vehicles (now totaling approximately 116 vehicles, resulting in a savings of over 60,000 gallons of gas per year). DVS has also undertaken a Diesel Exhaust Retrofit project, in which it retrofitted 1,012 school buses, 167 Connector buses and 113 heavy duty trucks with exhaust after-treatments that reduce particulate emissions. In addition, on March 31, 2008, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution pledging to implement greenhouse gas emission reduction actions as part of the National Capital Region's Cool Capital Challenge.

Fairfax County continues to promote green building initiatives in both public and private facilities and has been recognized nationally for environmental construction initiatives. The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system includes several tiers. The goal for County projects greater than 10,000 square feet is silver certification. Currently, Fairfax County has achieved eight gold certifications (Virginia Department of Transportation Administration Building (construction managed by the County), Crosspointe Fire Station, Great Falls Fire Station, JoAnne Jorgenson Health Laboratory, Mount Vernon Mental Health Facility, Martha Washington Library, Dolley Madison Library and Richard Byrd Library); three silver certifications (Burke Center Library, Oakton Library and Thomas Jefferson Library); and one certified building (Fairfax Center Fire Station). Fairfax County also received Green Globe certifications from the Green Building Initiative's environmental assessment and rating system for two commercial buildings which include Foundations (formerly known as Girls Probation House) and Hanley Family Shelter. Other initiatives include, the utilization of teleworking (Fairfax County has more than 1,000 employees telework an average of one day a month). The Facilities Management Department continues to implement energy savings strategies in County facilities which include the installation of energy management control systems, heating, ventilating, air conditioning and efficient lighting controls, resulting in significant energy savings. DPWES is also undertaking a Water Reuse Project to use reclaimed water from the plant for irrigation purposes.

In addition, in October 2009, the County received approval for a U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Funding of \$9,642,800 was approved for specific EECBG projects, each of which is aligned with the EECBG program's defined purposes and eligible activities. Some of the projects included: heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems; energy management control systems; lighting and lighting control systems; an enterprise server consolidation project which will reduce power demands in the County's data centers by approximately 90 percent; PC power management; and a comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions inventory of County operations. These projects are now complete. The Fairfax County Department of Information Technology received the "Green 15" award for its PC power management initiative that automatically shuts down over 14,000 County computers after working hours, resulting in electricity savings for the County. Other on-going environmental initiatives are detailed below, include minimizing unhealthy air days, enhancing stream quality, expanding tree coverage, exploring alternative forms of energy, and recycling.

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

## Strategic Linkages

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for these criteria pollutants: ground-level ozone, particulate matter including both coarse and fine particulates (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), 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 for everyone; purple - very unhealthy; and maroon - hazardous. The Key County Indicator on unhealthy air days includes all of these color levels. In 2005, EPA revoked the one-hour ozone standard and completed the transition from the one-hour standard to a more stringent eight-hour ozone standard. Fairfax County, along with the metropolitan Washington region, continued its area designation “moderate non-attainment” of the eight-hour ground-level ozone standard. Fairfax County has implemented air pollution strategies including the previous purchase of wind energy credits, reducing County vehicle emissions through the purchase of hybrid vehicles, diesel retrofits and the use of ultra-low sulfur fuel, not allowing refueling of County vehicles except emergency vehicles on Code Red Days, transportation strategies including previous free FAIRFAX CONNECTOR bus rides on Code Red Days, teleworking, not allowing mowing of grass at County properties on Code Red Days, use of low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints, County building energy efficiency programs, tree canopy and planting activities, green building actions, community outreach and maintaining standards and procedures that promote healthy air. On April 28, 2008, EPA announced that the Metropolitan Washington DC, MD, VA area met the 1996 one-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard by the required attainment date and changed the area designation to “marginal”. The number of unhealthy air days in both FY 2010 and FY 2011 were 11, with a slight increase to 12 in FY 2012 as reported by the Virginia DEQ. EPA was proposing another revision to lower the ozone standard further to 0.06-0.07 ppm as recommended by the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee and they planned to adopt the exact standard in August 2010; however, EPA has extended the timeline. In the fall of 2011, EPA stated they will continue the on-going 5 year review of the updated science in compliance with the Clean Air Act before making any recommendations for changes to the standard. This is scheduled to be completed in 2013. The County’s Environmental Coordinating Committee continues to examine the adequacy of current air pollution measures and practices, education and notification processes, and codes and regulations to make further progress. 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). Since FY 2005, the County has participated as a media sponsor for the group’s public awareness campaign. It is noted that in FY 2010, the County’s air monitoring program was eliminated due to budget reductions; however, the monitoring responsibility was turned over to DEQ.

**Stream quality** in Fairfax County may affect residents’ recreational use of streams and other water bodies as well as the quality of our drinking water. Monitoring the health of our waterways and preparing watershed management plans provide a head start for the County in satisfying the federal and state regulatory requirements as dictated by the County’s MS4 permit and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) already established for several streams. A Chesapeake Bay TMDL was also established in December 2010 with the goal of restoring the Chesapeake Bay and eventually removing it from the national list of impaired bodies of water. Between 2005 and 2011, Fairfax County developed 13 watershed management plans for the County’s 30 watersheds in order to restore the health of local streams, meet regulatory requirements and help satisfy restoration goals for water quality and living resources for the Chesapeake Bay. All 13 plans have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors. These plans provide a systematic project framework for establishing restoration goals, implementation strategies, and prioritization of the most cost-effective projects that will help restore and protect our streams and watersheds countywide. Hard copies of the plans may be found in their respective Board of Supervisor’s office and local libraries. Additional information on watershed management planning may be found at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/DPWES/watersheds/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/DPWES/watersheds/). Since 2004, a stratified random sampling procedure has been used to assess and report the ecological conditions in the County’s streams.

## Strategic Linkages

A stream quality indicator (SQI) was developed from the annual benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring data to establish overall watershed/stream conditions countywide. The SQI 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 SQI continued to fluctuate over the last nine years between 2.03 at its low and 2.88 at its highest level as the County strives to meet the goal of a future average **stream quality index value** of 3 or greater (Fair to Good stream quality). 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). Fairfax County continues to work collaboratively with other area jurisdictions toward the common goal of a cleaner Chesapeake Bay.

**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. 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. Satellite image analysis of tree canopy coverage is conducted every five years to 10 years with staff estimating annual changes based on interim surveys. Recent improvements in remote sensing technologies have greatly increased the ability to detect small scattered pockets of tree canopy. Recent analysis conducted by the University of Vermont's Geospatial Laboratory utilizing state-of-the-art urban tree canopy detection techniques has estimated that the County has a tree canopy level of approximately 50 percent which is significantly higher than previous estimates of 40 to 45 percent. Staff is in the process of verifying the accuracy of this new tree canopy analysis data. If the analysis proves accurate, then the County's has exceeded its 30-year canopy goal of 45 percent; however, these higher canopy levels do not lessen the need to protect and manage tree and forest resources through strong conservation programs. Fairfax County will continue to lose tree canopy to land development in the future and land development processes must continue to ensure the preservation of this valuable asset in order to sustain the delivery of its numerous environmental and socio-economic benefits. Future tree canopy goals will require the community to plant over 2 million trees over the next 30-years and continue the protection and management of existing native forest communities. In recent years, the County has partnered with several non-profit organizations that leverage the use of volunteers, and provide significant opportunities for community involvement and environmental awareness associated with tree planting projects. These tree planting projects are also consistent with the overall stormwater goals to re-establish native plant buffers and increase the natural absorption of stormwater runoff associated with ground imperviousness.

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 (E/RRF) and from methane recovery at the County's closed landfills. Locally, average energy use per home equals 800 Kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month. FY 2012 electric sales from the County's resource recovery facility were approximately 50,934,000 kWh/month while methane-to-electricity project sales have averaged approximately 4,548,000 kWh/month. Over the last several years, the number of homes powered by alternative power initiatives has increased to 69,352 homes in FY 2012.

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. Fairfax County manages trash and recycling through the County's 20-Year Solid Waste Management Plan

## Strategic Linkages

approved by the Board of Supervisors in May 2004. This plan, mandated by state law and administered by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), documents the County's integrated management system and provides long-range planning for waste disposal and recycling for the next 20 years. Recycling initiatives in FY 2014 will include emphasis on recycling from commercial establishments. Fairfax County continues to administer and enforce requirements to recycle paper and cardboard from all residential and nonresidential properties, including multi-family residential properties. Additionally, cardboard generated from construction projects is required to be recycled. The intent of requiring this recycling is to maximize the amount of paper and cardboard removed from the waste stream to ensure sufficient waste disposal capacity for waste in the County's waste management system. The County's recycling rate is calculated on a calendar year basis according to state regulations and is due to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality on April 30 of each calendar year. The annual countywide estimated recycling rate of 51 percent (for calendar year 2012) exceeds the state-mandated requirement of 25 percent. Recycling information is collected under the authority of Fairfax County Code, Chapter 109.1, specifically Section 109.1-2-4. Solid waste collectors and certain businesses operating in the County are required to prepare an annual report due by March 1 of each year with information on the quantity of materials collected for recycling. The amount of solid waste recycled in Fairfax County is calculated by comparing the quantity of materials collected for recycling to the quantity of waste sent for disposal. Revenue is generated from the sale of recyclable materials, and since they are not disposed of, disposal fees are avoided for each ton of material recycled.



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual
Volunteerism for Public Health and Community Improvement (Medical Reserve Corps and Volunteer Fairfax)	16,058	20,770	22,735
Volunteer hours leveraged by the Consolidated Community Funding Pool	515,579	511,824	488,600
Residents completing educational programs about local government (includes Citizens Police Academy, Neighborhood College Program, and Fairfax County Youth Leadership Program) <sup>1</sup>	380	261	95
Percent of registered voters who voted in general and special elections	44.6%	49.1%	32.3%
Percent of Park Authority, Fairfax County Public Schools, and Community and Recreation Services athletic fields adopted by community groups	29.5%	31.0%	29.1%

<sup>1</sup> During 2012, the Neighborhood College program was temporarily suspended due to agency reorganization and human services system-wide efforts to identify and measure the impact of various programs, including the Neighborhood College, on the community.

**Volunteerism** for Public Health and Community Improvement is strongly evident in two local programs: the **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Volunteer Fairfax**. Fairfax County benefits greatly from citizens who are knowledgeable about and actively involved in community programs and initiatives. Nationally, the MRC consists of more than 203,000 volunteers organized into 973 individual units, whose purpose is to build strong, healthy, and prepared communities. MRC volunteers include medical and non-medical professionals alike, all trained to support their communities during times of emergency. At the local level, over 3,200 volunteers are enrolled in the Fairfax MRC. Volunteers participate in trainings, exercises and response activities to augment local resources used for protecting Fairfax residents health prior to, during, and after a public health emergency. Recruitment efforts during fiscal year 2012 yielded more

## Strategic Linkages

than 200 new members. These efforts included an online and print advertisement campaign and direct mailings to medical professionals. This recruitment effort was followed by an extensive effort in early fiscal year 2013 to remove inactive volunteers from the program. Volunteers who had been with the program for over a year, but had yet to complete their required minimum training, were given a number of opportunities to do so. Some did, but 1,128 who did not were removed from “active” status, and advised that if they wanted to return in the future and complete their ten hours of required training, they would be returned to “active” status.

Also during fiscal year 2012, Fairfax MRC volunteers participated in a number of trainings and exercises, as well as several real-world emergencies. Over 1,000 volunteers participated in a variety of trainings related to the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS), radiological emergency response, shelter operations, and mass fatality incident response. These 1,000-plus volunteers donated 2,671 hours in service to the County while participating in these activities.

Current and future MRC program efforts are focused on enhancing volunteer skills and capabilities by increasing the number of volunteers that have completed the core training requirements; offering trainings in more convenient locations; finalizing a volunteer handbook; and completing a unit strategic plan. Volunteers are also being engaged to support the 2013 Presidential Inauguration, and were placed in stand-by more during the 2012 Derecho storm and Hurricane Sandy. MRC will continue to engage volunteers with meaningful training and exercise opportunities to better prepare them to support the Fairfax County Health Department in responding to natural and man-made disasters and emergencies.

**Volunteer Fairfax**, a private, nonprofit corporation (created in 1975) to promote volunteerism through a network of over 900 nonprofit agencies, has mobilized people and other resources to meet regional community needs. Volunteer Fairfax connects individuals, youth, seniors, families and corporations to volunteer opportunities, honors volunteers for their hard work and accomplishments, and educates the nonprofit sector on best practices in volunteer and nonprofit management. Through various programs and services, Volunteer Fairfax has referred or connected 18,457 individuals in FY 2012 which equates to 55,683 hours volunteers contributed to Fairfax County with a value of \$1.2 million.

Volunteerism not only reflects a broad-based level of engagement with diverse organizations and residents throughout Fairfax 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** (CCFP), 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 the community. Numbers fluctuate from year to year since new and revamped programs are funded every two years. The decrease in volunteerism in FY 2012 is due in part to a reduction in programs funded by CCFP from 114 in FY 2011 to 112 in FY 2012.

In addition to its many volunteer opportunities, Fairfax County has designed several programs to educate citizens about local government. The **Citizens Police Academy** is an educational outreach program designed to provide a unique “glimpse behind the badge” as participants learn about police department resources, programs, and the men and women who comprise an organization nationally recognized as a leader in the law enforcement community. Participants learn about the breadth of resources involved in preventing and solving crime and the daily challenges faced by Fairfax County police officers. Academies are ten weeks in length and meet one night a week for 3.5 hours. Five-week academies may also be offered at the request of station commanders. The Fairfax County Citizens Police Academy was selected “best in the nation” in 2009 by the National Citizens Police Academy Association (NCPAA). In FY 2012, 95 residents completed this course.

## Strategic Linkages

The **Neighborhood College Program** aims to promote civic engagement by preparing residents to participate in local government and in their neighborhoods and communities. Participants are encouraged to utilize the knowledge, skills, and access gained from the class to engage in activities that will contribute to healthy neighborhoods and strong communities. The program provides information on local government, services, the community, and opportunities for involvement through presentations, panels, activities, group discussion, and fieldwork. In FY 2012, there were no Neighborhood College Programs. 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 25 high schools represented. The students are chosen based on a range of criteria including student activities and awards, written essays and recommendations. 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

Fairfax County has a civic-minded population. Voter participation levels in Fairfax County reflect a community that is well informed, engaged, and involved with local government to address community needs and opportunities. The percent of Fairfax County residents voting in recent elections generally has exceeded state averages. Although the turnout for the November 2011 General Election for state and county offices (FY 2012) was only 32.3 percent it exceeded turnout in many Virginia counties. A low turnout, however, normally indicates that voters are satisfied with their county representatives and services. The County's 32.3 percent turnout represents 192,087 citizens voting at the polls on Election Day and 14,548 voters who applied for absentee ballots. Additionally, nearly 2,000 civic minded citizens and nearly 300 high school students volunteered at County polling places to conduct the 2011 election.

Another aspect of an engaged community is the extent to which residents take advantage of opportunities to improve their physical surroundings and to maintain the facilities they use. The percent of athletic field adoptions – 29.1 percent in FY 2012 – by community groups is solid and evidenced by the consistent community support of approximately one-third of total fields over the recent period. Athletic field adoptions reduce the County's financial burden to maintain these types of public facilities and improve their quality. Analysis indicates that organizations in Fairfax County annually provide over \$4 million in support for facility maintenance and development. In addition to natural turf field maintenance, community organizations continue to develop synthetic turf fields by partnering with the County and funding the development independently. New incentives have recently been put into place to encourage groups to maintain and increase adoptions despite the current economic climate. The Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) continue to work with a very involved athletic community to design and implement the FCPS diamond field maintenance plan. This plan established an enhanced level of consistent and regular field maintenance at school softball and baseball game-fields. This benefits both scholastic users as well as community groups that are reliant upon use of these fields to operate their sports programs throughout the year. In FY 2011, the Fairfax County Athletic Council (FCAC) formed a committee to review the Friend of the Field and Field Adoption programs and recommend any suggestions to come up with ways to incentivize participation.

## Strategic Linkages



**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 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Estimate	FY 2014 Estimate
Average tax collection rate for Real Estate Taxes, Personal Property Taxes and Business, Professional, and Occupational License Taxes	99.70%	99.58%	99.35%	99.41%	99.44%
County direct expenditures per capita	\$1,089	\$1,091	\$1,130	\$1,216	\$1,182
Percent of household income spent on residential Real Estate Tax	4.62%	4.47%	4.42%	4.41%	4.50%
County (merit regular) positions per 1,000 citizens	11.06	11.05	11.17	11.13	11.05
Number of consecutive years receipt of highest possible bond rating from major rating agencies (Aaa/AAA/AAA)	32	33	34	35	36
Cumulative savings from both County bond sales as compared to the Bond Buyer Index and County refundings (in millions)	\$434.23	\$486.30	\$543.28	\$580.63	\$580.63
Number of consecutive years receipt of unqualified audit	29	30	31	32	33

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 (See chart above for “**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 since 1975, AAA from Standard and Poor’s Corporation since 1978 and AAA from Fitch Investors Services since 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 \$580.63 million since 1978. This savings was achieved as a result of the strength of County credit 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). In 2001, the GPP completed 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. Recent recognitions of sound County management include continuing annual recognition by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for excellence in financial reporting and budgeting, and receipt of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) 2012 Certificate of Excellence for the County’s use of performance data from 15 different government service areas (such as police, fire and rescue, libraries, etc.) to achieve improved planning and decision-making, training, and accountability. Fairfax County was one of 28 jurisdictions that earned this prestigious certificate out of 160 jurisdictions participating in ICMA’s Center for Performance Measurement.

## Strategic Linkages

---

The success in managing County resources has been accompanied by the number of **merit regular positions per 1,000 citizens** being managed very closely. Since FY 1992 the ratio has declined from 13.57 to 11.05 in FY 2014. The ratio has declined since FY 2010 due to position eliminations as part of budget reductions to address shortfalls, partially offset by an increase in merit status positions primarily as a result of changes to federal regulations. The long-term decline in the positions to citizen ratio indicates a number of efficiencies and approaches - success in utilizing technology, best management processes 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** of \$1,182 in FY 2014 reflect a small decrease from FY 2013. Budget shortfalls in recent years have prevented significant growth. Recent budgets have accommodated operating adjustments for new facilities, critical infrastructure requirements, population growth and workload increases within reduction levels. More cost per capita data, showing how much Fairfax County 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 2014 Adopted 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 Tax** decreased from FY 2010 to FY 2014, primarily reflecting growth in average household income. It should be noted that Fairfax County continues to rely heavily on the Real Estate Tax at least in part due to the lack of tax diversification options for counties in Virginia. In FY 2014, real property taxes total **62.0** percent of total General Fund revenues.

# Strategic Linkages

## Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Strategic Governance



### FCPS Overview

- **FY 2014, FCPS' total approved membership is 184,393; nation's 11<sup>th</sup> largest school district.**
- **196 schools and centers.**
- **Full-day kindergarten at all elementary schools.**
- **Needs-based staffing at all schools.**
- **Nearly ninety-five percent of FCPS graduates plan to continue to post-secondary education.**
- **In the 2012 U.S. News and World Report ranking of Best High Schools in America, FCPS received thirteen gold medal awards, one silver, and one bronze medal award. Of the 13 gold medal schools, five were ranked in the top 100 high schools nationally.**

The School Board's Strategic Governance Initiative includes beliefs, vision, and mission statements, and student achievement goals to provide a more concentrated focus on student achievement and to establish clearer accountability. In addition to specifying the results expected for students, the Board has created comprehensive departmental operational expectations that provide a guiding framework for both the Superintendent and staff members to work within. The Strategic Governance Initiative includes those operational expectations as well as student achievement goals as measures of school system success.

### Beliefs

- We Believe in Our Children.
- We Believe in Our Teachers.
- We Believe in Our Public Education System.
- We Believe in Our Community.

### Vision

- Looking to the Future
- Commitment to Opportunity
- Community Support
- Achievement
- Accountability

**FCPS students scored an average of 1659 on the SAT, exceeding both the state and national average for 2012:**

<b>FCPS</b>	<b>1659</b>
<b>VA</b>	<b>1510</b>
<b>Nation</b>	<b>1477</b>

### Mission

Fairfax County Public Schools, a world-class school system, inspires, enables, and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

### Student Achievement Goals

1. Academics
2. Essential Life Skills
3. Responsibility to the Community

### FCPS is Efficient

- **FCPS ranks 6<sup>th</sup> when compared to other local districts in average cost per pupil (FY 2013 WABE Guide).**

Fairfax County Public Schools' beliefs, vision, mission, and student achievement goals are discussed in more detail at:  
<http://www.fcps.edu/schlbd/bmv.shtml>

School system performance is monitored regularly throughout the year by the School Board to assure that reasonable progress is being made toward achieving the student achievement goals and that the system is complying with the Board's operational expectations.