

## **Office of Public Affairs**

### **► Agency Mission**

To provide timely, accurate, and accessible information to increase the understanding of and participation in the affairs of Fairfax County government and to promote awareness of public services and facilities, County ordinances and regulations, as well as emergency health and safety issues, while ensuring legal mandates regarding public information are met.

### **► Trends/Issues**

#### **Trends**

As Fairfax County moved toward the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the County government began examining its direction and making changes to enhance its service to the community. The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) was part of that process and during the past 12 months, the organization and operation of the office have been closely evaluated. As a result of the evaluation, OPA developed a reorganization plan designed to enhance service delivery. The purpose of this business process redesign was to restructure the organization and function of OPA to address: the changing environment of communications; the increasing emphasis placed on communication by the Board and the County Executive's Office; the increasing demand for information assistance from County agencies; and the need to involve citizens in the communication process.

Recognizing that OPA will be called on to meet these challenges without any significant increases in staffing or financial resources, OPA continually identifies strategies to make the most effective use of existing resources.

#### **Issues**

Since 1975, many of Fairfax County's demographics have dramatically increased. The number of households, median family income, minority populations, the County budget, and the number of County employees have increased by 100 percent or more and population has increased over 85 percent. The agency actually has fewer positions and less funding today than it did a decade ago.

When populations, diversities, budgets, and programs increase to this extent, the concurrent communication demands increase by at least as much. Yet the ability to meet those demands has decreased. As a result, the agency is challenged daily to meet the communication needs of the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive, County staff, the media and County residents.

With 11 merit positions, two limited-term positions and a budget of \$850,000, OPA communicates with approximately 970,000 citizens at an annual cost of 88 cents per person. In order to meet the increasing demands for communication service, the agency has reallocated resources, found creative ways to meet increasing demands, such as the use of interns, and implemented technological advancements. To meet the County's growing communication needs, the agency will continue to analyze and make changes to its policies, procedures and methods as necessary.

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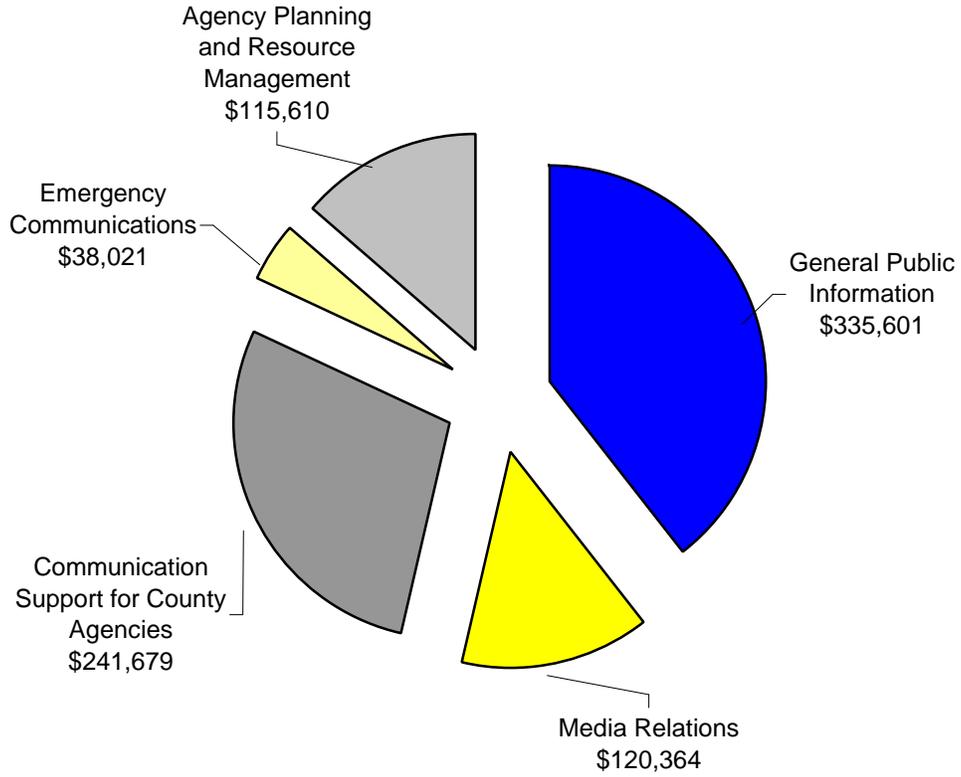
► **Summary of All Agency CAPS**

<b>CAPS Number</b>	<b>CAPS Title</b>	<b>CAPS Net Cost</b>	<b>CAPS Number of Positions/SYE</b>
13-01	General Public Information	\$335,601	4/3.65
13-02	Media Relations	\$120,364	2/2.25
13-03	Communication Support for County Agencies	\$241,679	2/2.4
13-04	Emergency Communications	\$38,021	1/0.7
13-05	Agency Planning and Resource Management	\$115,610	2/2
<b>TOTAL Agency</b>		<b>\$851,275</b>	<b>11/11</b>

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Total FY 2002 Adopted Budget Expenditures = \$851,275

Total FY 2002 Adopted Budget Net Cost = \$851,275