```
                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │   Director   │
                        └──────┬───────┘
                               │  ┌──────────────┐
                               ├──│ Assistant to │
                               │  │ the Director │
                               │  └──────────────┘
    ┌──────────┬───────────────┼───────────────────┬──────────────┐
┌─────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│Assistant│ │  Emergency   │ │   External   │ │   Employee   │
│Director │ │Communications│ │Communications│ │Communications│
└─────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
      ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
      │ Customer │ │ Freedom of   │ │  Finance/    │
      │ Service  │ │Information Act│ │Administration│
      └──────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
```

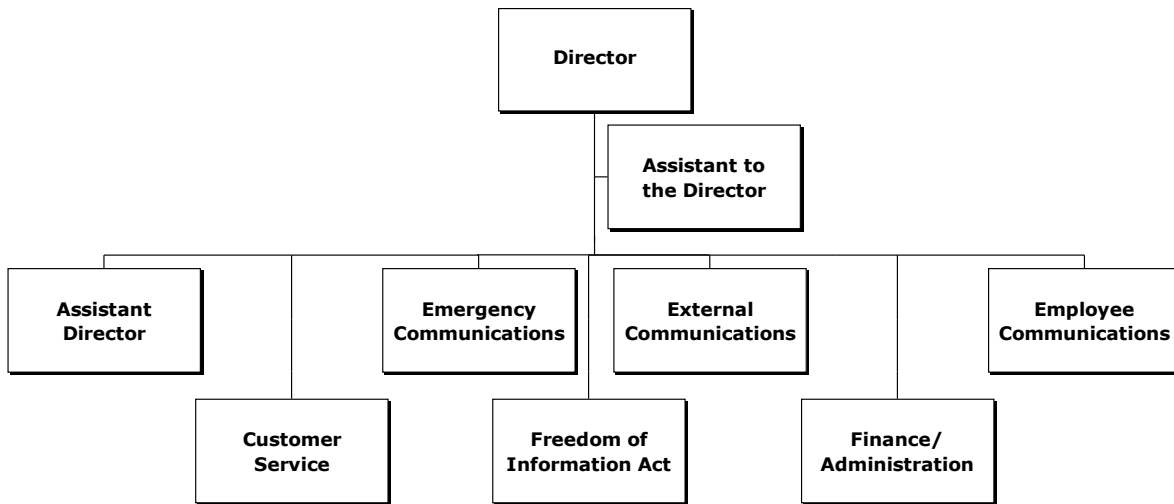## Mission

To lead coordinated communications and customer service from a countywide perspective that connects our residents with information about their government's services, operations and policies. To increase public awareness of hazards and to communicate appropriate actions to take before, during and after emergencies. To ensure clear, open and timely communications to and from our employees in order to maintain an informed and motivated workforce.

AGENCY DASHBOARD			
Key Data	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
1. Facebook Reach (all County accounts)	28,313,758	58,827,954	91,759,813
2. Twitter Reach (all County accounts)	23,550,698	56,295,975	67,575,979
3. NewsCenter Page Views[1]	NA	706,391	710,462
4. County YouTube Minutes Watched	408,656	558,436	623,771
5. Emergency Information Blog Views[2]	349,977	343,718	98,287
6. 703-FAIRFAX Customer Service Interactions	62,816	61,977	61,217
7. NewsWire Posts	1,869	2,459	2,656
8. NewsLink Emails to Employees	246	248	248
9. Team Fairfax Insider Issues	24	22	22

[1] NewsCenter began August 2015 (FY 2016); therefore, FY 2016 data represents 11 months.

[2] FY 2014 Emergency Information Blog Views are primarily related to major weather events. FY 2017 had an extremely mild winter with little snow.

Office of Public Affairs

Focus

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) provides essential information to the public, elected and appointed officials, County agencies and the media concerning County programs and services and is the central communications office for the County. The Director serves as the County media spokesperson, and as a liaison with the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors. OPA also manages countywide compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA).

OPA coordinates a comprehensive, centralized public affairs program for the County and also provides communications consulting to other agencies. Employee internal communications, countywide Web content management, social media, customer service and emergency communications are also part of the agency's critical functions.

OPA focuses on three main areas of communication: external, employee, and emergency. This structure facilitates the best use of OPA staffing to address the following strategic issues: enhance access to information both internally and externally; improve crisis and emergency communications; publish content

> **The Office of Public Affairs supports the following County Vision Elements:**
>
> *Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities*
>
> *Creating a Culture of Engagement*
>
> *Connecting People and Places*
>
> *Practicing Environmental Stewardship*
>
> *Maintaining Healthy Economies*
>
> *Building Livable Spaces*
>
> *Exercising Corporate Stewardship*

through numerous tools and engage the public; provide information proactively to the media; and deliver communication consulting to agencies without public information officers, as well as support those agencies with communications staff. Strategies to address these critical issues include increasing collaboration with agencies, enhancing information on the County's intranet and internet, and continuing to explore tools for reaching diverse audiences.

OPA remains proactive in anticipating the needs of the public and media by providing timely information. In addition to maintaining the County's presence on www.fairfaxcounty.gov, OPA manages the use of several social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Nextdoor, and Flickr, allowing direct communication with the public. The reach through these tools has grown exponentially over the past few years and enables the amplification of a common message through multiple channels.

As part of the *FY 2016 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved funding and established responsibility for the countywide Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program in OPA. The focus is on coordinating compliance with the VFOIA, promoting the County's commitment to transparency, improving the efficiency of the VFOIA response process, monitoring requests and enhancing accountability. Strategies to address these goals include implementing a countywide FOIA policy, providing quarterly training to County employees, ensuring open and frequent communication and collaboration with agency points of contact, and establishing and maintaining a centralized system to track all FOIA requests.

External Communications

OPA provides critical leadership in communicating with many external audiences about important issues, deadlines, and events. This includes serving County residents, the business community, nonprofits, faith communities, media and many other key groups by sharing relevant, timely and actionable information through the following tools:

- www.fairfaxcounty.gov
- Fairfax County NewsCenter
- NewsWire
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Flickr
- SlideShare
- Nextdoor
- Surveys
- Media
- 703-FAIRFAX Phone and Email Customer Service
- Mobile Apps
- Ask Fairfax! Online Discussions
- Podcasts, Internet Radio and SoundCloud
- Email Newsletters
- Printed Materials

In FY 2017, OPA continued to build on its successful Fairfax County Government NewsCenter platform, which serves as the central focal point for publishing news for residents. OPA's vision for NewsCenter is simple: to selectively package, promote and publish relevant, timely and actionable audience-focused information for the community. Most of the content focuses on the needs of residents and what is practical in their daily lives. NewsCenter has been recognized with several awards, including a Governor's Technology Award and a National Association of Counties Achievement Award.

OPA continues its social media oversight role, approving new accounts, analyzing metrics from all County accounts, setting standards and working in partnership with more than 70 social media publishers across the County. This role is essential as social media tools constantly evolve and change. A new area of focus in FY 2018 that will continue for the future is addressing legal issues related to official social media accounts. The law is generally years behind where society is, so courts are just starting to issue rulings that impact the County in many ways. OPA has worked closely with the Office of the County Attorney to address these new legal requirements for official social media accounts.

During FY 2017, in addition to work on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, OPA led the County's presence on Nextdoor, a new social media network for neighborhoods that has proven to be a valuable platform for reaching residents and tailoring messages to where they live in the community.

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, OPA heavily invested staff time to partner with the Department of Information Technology to reconstruct the County's website. The two agencies developed the website's structure, designed new webpages, migrated content from the existing site, trained County staff on how to use the new web content management software, and led usability testing with members of the public. This

complicated, yet necessary project has required many hours of staff work and dozens of opportunities for community feedback with a project that features four main goals:

1. Refine the information architecture.
2. Redesign the website.
3. Rethink search results.
4. Replace the core content management system.

OPA also works to ensure that important information from across all County agencies is shared on a variety of platforms (web, mobile, customer and social) through many different tools daily. By engaging the public every day in answering questions and providing information, OPA enables Fairfax County residents to better understand how their government works and the services it provides. For example, Facebook surveys show that more than 85 percent of respondents agree that OPA's use of social media helps them understand their government better. During the January 2016 blizzard, that satisfaction number reached 95 percent.

Both the media and the public's use of social media to access information about Fairfax County continues to increase significantly. Consequently, OPA will continue to measure the effectiveness of the various tools in order to make the best use of resources.

Employee Communications
OPA continues to focus on sharing relevant and actionable information with the County workforce. Important topics include budget, benefits, training, career management and executive communications. Beyond this essential information, internal communications also highlight the personal and professional accomplishments of County employees in order to foster engagement and community.

Additionally, OPA supports the information and collaboration needs of the County workforce, providing consultative support to agencies as well as project and initiative teams that want to use FairfaxNet to communicate effectively, maximize efficiency and measure progress. Collaborative workspaces are used to track documents, share updates, solicit feedback, assign tasks, facilitate informal discussions, schedule meetings and events, and more. These efforts previously required the use of multiple tools on various platforms.

OPA also continues to offer consultation and training to agencies transitioning away from print internal communications. Interest in blogs remains high. This medium provides flexibility, helps eliminate delays in information sharing, offers actionable content and allows for the inclusion of audio and video. Blogs provide immediacy, flexibility and a venue for employees to weigh in on topics that impact them. The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board and the Department of Procurement and Material Management are among those that transitioned to the blog format during FY 2017. In addition to efficiency and reduced costs, blogs allow agencies to share their content more easily beyond their own staff. Blog posts from numerous County agencies are highlighted in the internal daily email, NewsLink.

Production continues on Team Fairfax Insider (TFI), the countywide, biweekly employee newsletter available in print and digital versions. TFI remains an important source of information on key topics that impact all employees and also provides a valuable forum for executive communications and the Employees Advisory Council. It works in concert with NewsLink and the FairfaxNet Spotlight section, and is particularly valuable for employees whose job functions do not include regular computer access. Fairfax County's NewsCenter continues to repurpose content from Team Fairfax Insider, highlighting the work of County staff.

complicated, yet necessary project has required many hours of staff work and dozens of opportunities for community feedback with a project that features four main goals:

1. Refine the information architecture.
2. Redesign the website.
3. Rethink search results.
4. Replace the core content management system.

OPA also works to ensure that important information from across all County agencies is shared on a variety of platforms (web, mobile, customer and social) through many different tools daily. By engaging the public every day in answering questions and providing information, OPA enables Fairfax County residents to better understand how their government works and the services it provides. For example, Facebook surveys show that more than 85 percent of respondents agree that OPA's use of social media helps them understand their government better. During the January 2016 blizzard, that satisfaction number reached 95 percent.

Both the media and the public's use of social media to access information about Fairfax County continues to increase significantly. Consequently, OPA will continue to measure the effectiveness of the various tools in order to make the best use of resources.

Employee Communications
OPA continues to focus on sharing relevant and actionable information with the County workforce. Important topics include budget, benefits, training, career management and executive communications. Beyond this essential information, internal communications also highlight the personal and professional accomplishments of County employees in order to foster engagement and community.

Additionally, OPA supports the information and collaboration needs of the County workforce, providing consultative support to agencies as well as project and initiative teams that want to use FairfaxNet to communicate effectively, maximize efficiency and measure progress. Collaborative workspaces are used to track documents, share updates, solicit feedback, assign tasks, facilitate informal discussions, schedule meetings and events, and more. These efforts previously required the use of multiple tools on various platforms.

OPA also continues to offer consultation and training to agencies transitioning away from print internal communications. Interest in blogs remains high. This medium provides flexibility, helps eliminate delays in information sharing, offers actionable content and allows for the inclusion of audio and video. Blogs provide immediacy, flexibility and a venue for employees to weigh in on topics that impact them. The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board and the Department of Procurement and Material Management are among those that transitioned to the blog format during FY 2017. In addition to efficiency and reduced costs, blogs allow agencies to share their content more easily beyond their own staff. Blog posts from numerous County agencies are highlighted in the internal daily email, NewsLink.

Production continues on Team Fairfax Insider (TFI), the countywide, biweekly employee newsletter available in print and digital versions. TFI remains an important source of information on key topics that impact all employees and also provides a valuable forum for executive communications and the Employees Advisory Council. It works in concert with NewsLink and the FairfaxNet Spotlight section, and is particularly valuable for employees whose job functions do not include regular computer access. Fairfax County's NewsCenter continues to repurpose content from Team Fairfax Insider, highlighting the work of County staff.

OPA also produces and distributes NewsLink daily, featuring announcements, classes, events and resources, upcoming retirements and leave donation requests. Additionally, NewsLink includes a comprehensive list of links to media coverage regarding Fairfax County. This valuable feature gives employees insight into how Fairfax County is being discussed in the community.

Another function is maintaining a countywide calendar of key dates and events for employees. In FY 2019, OPA will continue to implement and coordinate additional products and tools for internal communications, reflecting the attributes of a high-performance 21st century workforce.

Emergency Communications

As required by the Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan, OPA coordinates and disseminates all emergency information related to major incidents affecting more than two County agencies. Accordingly, OPA continues to recognize emergency communications as one of its major lines of business and the need for continued emphasis on emergency communications and dissemination of emergency information to the public, Board of Supervisors, County employees, and other partner agencies and stakeholders, including the media.

During activations of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), OPA staff are key players in the incident command organizational structure, serving as the EOC Command and General Staff Public Information Officer (PIO), while the Director of OPA serves on the Senior Policy Group of key County leadership. Additional OPA staff serve in the Joint Information Center (JIC) as assistant PIOs, creating and disseminating all emergency-related content during an EOC activation. OPA activates the County's JIC, which serves as the central clearinghouse for emergency information, whenever the EOC is activated above a monitoring level.

The increased use of communication tools and the changing way residents receive information means that OPA must recognize and adapt to be able to effectively distribute emergency news and information to various audiences and stakeholders. As such, OPA uses multiple communication tools and channels. These tools include the emergency blog (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog) and County website; Facebook, including Facebook Live video, and Twitter (both County and agency-specific accounts); YouTube; Instagram; Nextdoor; Flickr; SoundCloud; emails, text and pager messages from Fairfax Alerts and the Emergency Alert Network (EAN) for employees; Fairfax County Government Radio online; the emergency information hotline, as well as internal hotline numbers for County employees; RSS news feeds; video (in addition to YouTube, OPA utilizes video online and on Channel 16); media interviews; the County app; regional websites such as www.ReadyNOVA.org; conference calls; and Ask Fairfax online chats before, during and after emergencies to communicate with target audiences.

Emergency blog views have remained relatively steady the past two calendar years – 337,290 views in CY 2015 and 348,248 in CY 2016. It should be noted that views on the blog are greatly influenced by emergency events – such as large-scale emergencies like Hurricane Sandy in October 2012 (390,720 views) – and winter weather events, which traditionally occur in January and February. The following shows the trend for blog views in those winter months:

- Jan/Feb 2014 – 247,298 views
- Jan/Feb 2015 – 185,245 views
- Jan/Feb 2016 – 300,298 views
- Jan/Feb 2017 – 19,251 views

With just 19,251 views in January/February 2017, due to an extremely mild winter with no appreciable snow until March (35,614 views), total FY 2017 blog views reflect a substantial decrease from previous fiscal years, down to 98,287 from the FY 2016 level of 343,718.

Worth noting about blog views is that in addition to the actual number of views, each time an article/update is published, nearly 5,000 subscribers (email and WordPress notification) receive the complete article and therefore do not need to visit the blog for the information. While a valuable service, this distribution does decrease the number of views/visitors to the blog since all the information from that post is in the recipient's email inbox. An additional 244,465 Twitter accounts are reached by publishing blog articles to Twitter directly through RSS integration. These 244,000-plus Twitter accounts reach thousands who follow them. Also worth mentioning is that OPA does not rely on the emergency information blog as the sole communications tool to reach the public who use a variety of methods to receive their information such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, traditional media, etc.

In addition to emergency communications and response, the Emergency Information Officer and other OPA staff as necessary continue to be involved in planning County tabletop and functional exercises to ensure smooth operations during actual emergencies. In FY 2018, OPA participated in two significant exercises – one locally focused on a complex, coordinated attack at multiple locations in Fairfax County as well as a regional exercise to test the County's Radiological Emergency Response Plan.

Virginia Freedom of Information Act
The countywide FOIA program is a new line of business within OPA that enhances public access to County information and public records. In response to the General Assembly amending Section 2.2-3704.1 and enacting a new Section 2.2-3704.2 of the VFOIA of the <u>Code of Virginia</u>, which became effective July 1, 2016, the Board of Supervisors established a countywide FOIA program. The countywide FOIA officer serves as Fairfax County's main point of contact for FOIA requests and coordinates the County's compliance with VFOIA, providing strategy and direction to agencies on how to respond to the growing volume and complexity of FOIA requests.

OPA executes the countywide FOIA policy through strategies that ensure a compliant, consistent and transparent FOIA response process. The objectives of the program are to coordinate compliance with VFOIA, promote the County's commitment to transparency, improve the efficiency of the FOIA response process, and enhance monitoring and accountability of FOIA requests.

Since its establishment in FY 2017, the countywide FOIA program has strengthened compliance with VFOIA, developed a countywide FOIA policy, worked with DIT to develop and implement a countywide FOIA tracking solution, collaborated with and provided clear and consistent guidance to all County agencies and their designated points of contact, and provided quarterly training to County employees.

Office of Public Affairs

Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Adopted	FY 2018 Revised	FY 2019 Advertised
FUNDING				
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	$1,455,532	$1,680,574	$1,680,574	$1,814,485
Operating Expenses	183,483	122,501	151,178	147,501
Subtotal	**$1,639,015**	**$1,803,075**	**$1,831,752**	**$1,961,986**
Less:				
Recovered Costs	($283,640)	($239,882)	($239,882)	($239,882)
Total Expenditures	**$1,355,375**	**$1,563,193**	**$1,591,870**	**$1,722,104**
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	20 / 20	20 / 20	21 / 21	21 / 21

1	Director	2	Information Officers IV	2	Information Officers I
1	Assistant Director	1	Public Safety Information Officer IV	1	Administrative Assistant V
2	Management Analysts IV	4	Information Officers III	2	Administrative Assistants IV
1	Management Analyst II	2	Information Officers II	1	Administrative Assistant III
1	Communications Specialist I				

TOTAL POSITIONS
21 Positions / 21.0 FTE

FY 2019 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2018 Adopted Budget Plan *are necessary to support the FY 2019 program.*

♦ **Employee Compensation** $133,911

An increase of $68,911 in Personnel Services includes $39,248 for a 2.25 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and $29,663 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2018. An additional $65,000 is associated with a position added in FY 2018 as a result of workload requirements.

♦ **Gang Prevention** $25,000

An increase of $25,000 is required to support the County's effort to respond to and prevent gangs in Fairfax County. Gang prevention is a multiagency collaboration between the Police Department, Office of Public Affairs, Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, and Fairfax County Public Schools. Funding is designed to help the County better provide education, prevention, enforcement, and coordination in responding to gangs.

Changes to FY 2018 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2018 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2018 Adopted Budget Plan. *Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2017 Carryover Review, and all other approved changes through December 31, 2017.*

♦ **Carryover Adjustments** $28,677

As part of the *FY 2017 Carryover Review,* the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered funding of $20,824 in Operating Expenses for inspection and repair of radio sites throughout the County. In

addition, the Board approved unencumbered carryover of $7,853 associated with the Incentive Reinvestment Initiative to be reinvested in employee training, conferences, and other employee development and succession planning opportunities.

♦ **Position Adjustments** **$0**
The County Executive approved the redirection of 1/1.0 FTE position to Agency 13, Office of Public Affairs, due to workload requirements.

Key Performance Measures

	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
Indicator	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Estimate/Actual	FY 2018	FY 2019
Percent change in Facebook reach (main account)	107.2%	74.5%	2.3% / (6.7%)	1.5%	1.5%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2019-advertised-performance-measures-pm

Performance Measurement Results

OPA's platforms to deliver information continue to undergo dramatic changes to meet the public's changing expectations and to successfully leverage technology to address constrained resources. Of particular note is the tremendous growth in the use of social media. From NewsCenter, a countywide news and engagement website, to social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Nextdoor, Flickr and SlideShare, OPA strives to provide a variety of means for the public and the media to receive County-related information and engage with their local government.

The County's main Facebook account is currently used as a performance measurement indicator to track the growth in use of that social media tool for customers – the public and the media – to obtain important information about Fairfax County. After several years of significant growth in the main County Facebook account, reach leveled off in FY 2017 with a slight decrease of 6.7 percent, from 7,816,731 in FY 2016 to 7,289,177 in FY 2017 as additional agencies obtained accounts and increased their own reach. It also reflects the mild winter experienced as previous years' severe weather resulted in considerably more posts and reach than in FY 2017. It is anticipated that this trend will not continue and that the main county Facebook account reach will continue to grow modestly to meet communication needs.

It should also be noted that overall Facebook reach for all County accounts increased from 58,827,954 in FY 2016 to 91,759,813 in FY 2017, an increase of 56 percent. This reflects growth in the number of County accounts from the original one maintained by OPA to a total of 19 in FY 2017. This trend can be expected to continue as additional agencies leverage technology to expand their own reach.

The percentage of respondents satisfied with the County's main Facebook information was 89 percent for FY 2017. OPA continued to expand the use of Facebook through Facebook Live to stream live events, which has been received very positively and reflects another way to meet the public's need for information.