

**Resolution on the  
Fairfax County Fiscal Year 2022 Advertised Budget**

Membership Approved March 25, 2021

Respectfully submitted to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

CC:

Fairfax County Chief Executive Brian Hill

Fairfax County School Board

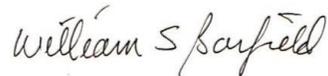
Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Scott Brabrand



David Edelman  
Budget Committee Co-Chair



Tim Thompson  
Budget Committee Co-Chair



William Barfield  
President

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (Federation) is an 80-year-old umbrella community organization representing thousands of Fairfax County residents in all magisterial districts.

We are now past the one-year anniversary of the Coronavirus pandemic. This once-in-a-century event has upended lives around the globe; Fairfax County is no different.

Children have spent the bulk of the school year learning online. They have missed much in their academic, social, and emotional development. Residents of the county have had their health impacted. The economy has taken a hit and many families have seen income drop or disappear as businesses closed. This has caused hardships in food security, housing, and other basic needs.

It is the dilemma of a crisis that as the needs of our most vulnerable residents increase, our revenues may not be sufficient to meet those needs. We respect the difficult balancing act which is now required of the Board of Supervisors (BOS).

Still there is hope. Locally, nationally, and globally, vaccines are being administered. If we reach herd immunity by the time we begin FY 2022, it is likely that economic activity can return to a semblance of normalcy. When this happens, many are optimistic that Fairfax County and the Commonwealth of Virginia are in a position to prosper. The question is: How do we best situate ourselves to recover when the pandemic begins to subside?

The uncertainties of projecting the path toward a “return to normal” necessitate a prudent approach toward this year’s budget. We believe that an overly austere budget, however, would handicap our ability to invest in important strategic initiatives. The Federation believes that the FY 2022 Budget should reflect a commitment to fulfilling our government’s core functions and planning strategically for a brighter future.

## II. FINDINGS

### A. Revenues

**WHEREAS**, Fairfax County revenues are estimated to grow approximately 1.5% in FY2022, representing about half of its typical 3% growth; and

**WHEREAS**, the contraction in economic activity required to mitigate the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic resulted in lower revenues than anticipated before the pandemic but the losses in both Commonwealth and County revenues were also smaller than anticipated at the outset of the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (the Act of 2021) was signed into law and will disburse two amounts for financial assistance to Fairfax County totaling approximately \$222 million; and

**WHEREAS**, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will also receive a substantial one-time financial payment directly from the Act of 2021 but the amount has not yet been calculated; and

**WHEREAS**, while the Budget Presentation of FY2022 on February 23, 2021 stated that in the second quarter of 2020 “[r]eal GDP decreased 31.4%”, the Bureau of Economic Analysis notes that in the third quarter real GDP increased 33.4%, so that GDP growth for 2021 as a whole was 4.1%<sup>1</sup>; and

### B. Employee Compensation

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2022 Advertised Budget does not include salary increases for any category of County employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2022 Advertised Budget includes funding for 109 new positions in various County agencies and the FCPS FY 2022 Advertised Budget includes 234 new positions; and

**WHEREAS**, spending represents a compromise between funding new positions and enhancing employee compensation in order to ensure high-quality services within a competitive labor market; and

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis - U.S. Department of Commerce <https://www.bea.gov/news/2021/gross-domestic-product-fourth-quarter-and-year-2020-second-estimate> (March 16, 2021)

### **C. Public Safety and Security**

**WHEREAS**, important public safety and security initiatives were unfunded in the FY 2021 budget, due to emergency priorities during the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, public safety and security remain a core function of our local government; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2022 Advertised Budget recommends funding increases for Safety and Security totaling \$12.50M and 46 Positions for the Body-Worn Camera program, South County Police Station staffing, support for the Office of the Commonwealth Attorney, Scotts Run Fire Station staffing, an increase in E-911 Call Capacity, Government Center campus security, and the Office of Emergency Management Support; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2022 Advertised Budget recommends funding increases of \$2.15M and 12 Positions for the Opioid Task Force and the Diversion First Initiative; and

### **D. Education Funding and School Transfer**

**WHEREAS**, the challenges of remote learning have led to an 83 percent increase in failing grades in just the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year, while likely widening the equity gap in academic achievement and damaging community support for FCPS; and

**WHEREAS**, our youngest learners throughout the division regardless of socioeconomic status have experienced profound difficulties receiving an appropriate education over the past year; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Northam has said that significant remediation measures will be required “to prevent irreparable learning loss and psychological damage,” including extensive summer classes, additional instructional time, or even year-round schooling, encouraging school divisions to “provide additional learning opportunities for any students who choose it”; and

**WHEREAS**, nearby Loudoun County has announced plans to run summer school programs for five weeks rather than the typical three, and will make recommendations for summer instruction to parents in order to help guide families; and

**WHEREAS**, during the course of the COVID pandemic FCPS has faced criticism that its actions have placed the needs of school staff over those of students; and

**WHEREAS**, a community’s budget represents its priorities, goals, and values; and

**WHEREAS**, the FCPS FY 2022 Advertised Budget was adjusted from the Superintendent's original proposal to increase employee salaries by 3%, while the County's Advertised Budget included no funding for employee pay increases; and

**WHEREAS**, the County and FCPS have spent many years building a collaborative budgeting and planning process in order to increase efficiencies, build trust between the two Boards, and help ensure that FCPS presents a realistic requested transfer amount rather than a wish list; and

#### **E. Public Works and Environment**

**WHEREAS**, in Fund 10030 (Contributory Fund) the FY 2022 Advertised Budget includes funds for Fairfax ReLeaf, a nonprofit focused on preserving trees, restoring forest cover, and planting 7,000 trees in 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, in Fund 30015 (Environmental and Energy Strategy Programs Fund) the FY 2022 Advertised Budget includes nearly \$1.3 million representing an increase of \$0.3 million from FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan, including funds for (among other items):

1. The Park Authority's ongoing Invasive Management Program, with an increase of \$50,000 from the FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan;
2. Energy efficiency improvements at selected vacant historic houses maintained by the Fairfax County Park Authority;
3. Electric vehicle charging stations at County facilities for use by employees, patrons, and the public;
4. Analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions related to Fairfax County's purchasing expenditures;
5. Installation of four water-bottle filling stations at the Newington and Ox vehicle maintenance facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, in Fund 40100 (Stormwater Services) the FY2022 Advertised Budget includes funds for (among other items):

1. Inspection, development, rehabilitation and outfall restoration for County conveyance system stormwater pipes and channels of which initially 5 percent exhibited conditions of failure;
2. Stream and Water quality improvements for County streams of which approximately 88 percent are in fair to very poor condition (based on biological data from 2019),

### **III. REQUESTED ACTIONS**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** based on all of the foregoing that the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations urges the Board of Supervisors to take the following actions in adopting the FY 2021 Fairfax County Budget:

#### **A. Revenues**

(1) The Board of Supervisors should maintain its joint efforts with FCPS to obtain Fairfax's fair share of funding from both the Commonwealth and federal government; and

#### **B. Employee Compensation**

(2) in lieu of pay raises and to the extent feasible, the Board of Supervisors should utilize unencumbered funds to provide one-time bonus funding to employees; and

(3) given the tradeoff between providing competitive compensation for existing employees and hiring new employees, both the County and FCPS should only fund new positions which are vital in the short term; and

#### **C. Public Safety and Security**

(4) to the extent possible given other budgetary constraints, the Board of Supervisors should restore funding to programs which were halted during the pandemic, including the Body-Worn Camera program, South County Police Station staffing, support for the Office of the Commonwealth Attorney, Scotts Run Fire Station staffing, increases in E-911 call capacity; Government Center campus security, and the Office of Emergency Management support; and

(5) the Board of Supervisors should also restore funding to the Opioid Task Force and the Diversion First Initiative; and

#### **D. Education Funding and School Transfer**

(6) FCPS should refocus its FY 2022 budget to center the needs of students by providing extended learning opportunities, including but not limited to robust summer programming that is proportionate to the scope of our children's learning losses this year; and

(7) to the extent that FCPS' request for a 3% increase in employee salaries was not amicable or coordinated with the County we urge a return to a cooperative budget development process; and

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(8) any unencumbered funds which are utilized to provide one-time bonuses to County employees should be shared with FCPS so they can provide such bonuses to their employees as well, particularly as they engage in remediation efforts; and

**E. Public Works and Environment**

(9) the Federation applauds the funding contribution to Fairfax ReLeaf and the Board of Supervisors should strongly consider increasing funding in the future to support Fairfax ReLeaf's environmentally critical mission to restore native trees; and

(10) the Federation applauds the budget increase for Fund 30015 and urges the Board of Supervisors to continue growing this fund in the future to support the County's environmental vision; and

(11) the Federation supports funding the ongoing Invasive Management Program and the Board of Supervisors should continue to increase the program's funds to enhance Fairfax County's ecological integrity and protect our natural areas; and

(12) the Board of Supervisors should fund efficiency improvements for all historic houses maintained by the Parks to reduce HVAC inefficiencies and energy waste in order for all vacant historic houses to be eligible for the Resident Curator Program; and

(13) the Federation supports funding for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations as part of Fairfax County's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce fossil-fuel consumption; and

(14) the Federation applauds funding a greenhouse gas analysis for the County's expenditures and urges the Board of Supervisors to act upon the analysis findings to reduce the County's climate impact; and

(15) the Board of Supervisors should continue installing water-bottle filling stations at County facilities to replace older, low-quality drinking fountains and to reduce plastic waste; and

(16) the Federation supports funding for inspecting, developing, and rehabilitating the County conveyance system to avoid any circumstances of total failure in the system; and

(17) the Board of Supervisors should strive to surpass the minimum Chesapeake Bay and local stream TMDL requirements and must take steps to reduce the number of County streams that are in very poor to poor condition to continue working toward Fairfax County's environmental vision; and

#### **IV. FURTHER REQUESTED ACTIONS**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that as both citizens' health and economic conditions improve in Fairfax County, the Board of Supervisors should consider all available measures to diversify Fairfax County's revenue base, many of which were envisioned in the FY 2021 Advertised Budget before revisions were required in reaction to the Coronavirus pandemic; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Federation praises Chairman Jeff McKay and the Board of Supervisors for providing clear, timely guidance for citizens throughout the Coronavirus pandemic on a variety of subjects, and for operating a continually updated COVID-19 Case Data Dashboard as well as a Fairfax-specific vaccine registration program which has helped guide our communities.