



Comments from NAACP Fairfax County on Fairfax County's FY2027 Budget

April 14, 2026

Dear Chairman McKay and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on and recommendations for the FY2027 Budget, Chairman McKay, and members of the Board. My name is Les Shockley, and I am testifying on behalf of the Fairfax County branch of the NAACP, where Ms. Niki Zimmerman serves as President. Today, I am here to speak on budgetary issues important to the NAACP and the community that it serves.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing has long been a central priority for the NAACP. We are concerned that the county is not meeting its development targets, and we are concerned that continued underfunding will make these goals unattainable. I won't take the time to go into this at length, as you have heard or will hear other housing advocates state the case in more detail. We recognize the challenges of the current environment and continue to believe that the Board considers affordable housing to be of crucial importance. The county has fallen behind its 10,000 affordable unit goal by 2034. According to one report, 2,975¹ units have been created since 2019. We need to prioritize housing as the critical economic and community need that it is, and ask for the full 3/4 of a penny increase to 2 cents of the real estate tax rate in the 2027 budget.

Economic Emergency Reserve Fund

We are pleased that the Advertised budget includes an additional \$5.5 million to provide emergency rent, utility, and food assistance to those in

¹ Fairfax Healthy Communities

need. We ask the Board to be prepared to provide supplemental funding should the need grow beyond what is being funded.

Rent Support

We request that the Board allocate additional funding for rent support and legal assistance during pre-eviction to keep people housed. We see a growing need for increased emergency housing capacity and request that the Board meet this need in its budget.

Co-Responder Teams and Mobile Crisis Units

The **Co-Responder Teams and Mobile Crisis Units** are key resources for community members experiencing a behavioral health crisis and are part of the broader system of emergency response services in the community. The County has much to be proud of with this program that helps de-escalate issues and deal with those who are having mental health challenges.

The FY 2027 Advertised Budget includes funding for current staffing for the Co-Responder Teams and MCU. Thank you for your continued support of this program.

The Public Defender's Office

The Public Defender's Office represents low-income individuals who have been arrested, many of whom suffer from drug dependency or mental illness. The county currently provides a 15% supplement — less than the 25% provided by surrounding counties. The FY 2027 Advertised Budget contains no changes to the Public Defender funding formula. While routing funds through the Indigent Defense Commission allows for greater administrative flexibility, inadequate funding remains an issue that only raising the supplement to 25% will address. The NAACP supports the Public Defender's Office request for an increase in the supplement to 25%, or \$300,000. If the office is adequately staffed, detention times for minor offenses can be reduced — along with the county's costs for housing, food, and security for inmates. It's an investment that has a measurable payback

Education

Promoting education has always been a fundamental principle for the NAACP. Fairfax County takes pride in its schools, and we believe the children educated in our school system deserve the best teachers. We support the full funding of the second year of the collective bargaining agreement between the Fairfax County Public Schools and the Fairfax Education Union, ratified by the Fairfax County School Board. Let's keep our teachers in the county.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and recommendations. If you have any questions, please contact me at budget@fairfaxnaacp.org or 703-395-8061.

Sincerely,

Les Shockley
NAACP Fairfax County Branch
Budget Committee Chair
2nd Vice President