Fiscal Policy

INTRODUCTION

Definition and Purpose of Fiscal Policy

Fiscal policy corresponds to the combined practices of government with respect to revenues, expenditures, and debt management. Fiscal planning, generally done within the context of the Public Services Program (PSP)/Operating Budget and the Capital Improvements Program (CIP)/Capital Budget, reflects and helps shape fiscal policy.

The budget process not only reflects those fiscal policies currently in force, but is itself a major vehicle for determining and implementing such policies. The fiscal policy statements presented on the following pages are not static. They evolve as the economy and fiscal environment change and as the County population and requirements for government programs and services change.

The purposes of fiscal policy for the PSP/Operating Budget are:

- **Fiscal Planning for Public Expenditures and Revenues.** Fiscal policy provides guidance for good public practice in the planning of expenditures, revenues, and funding arrangements for public services. It provides a framework within which budget, tax, and fee decisions should be made. Fiscal policy provides guidance toward a balance between program expenditure requirements and available sources of revenue to fund them. Fiscal planning considers long-term trends and projections in addition to annual budget planning.
- **Setting Priorities Among Programs.** Clearly defined and quantified fiscal limits encourage setting priorities by government managers and elected officials, thus helping to ensure that the most important programs receive relatively more funding.
- **Assuring Fiscal Controls.** Fiscal policies relating to County procurement of goods and services, to payment of salaries and benefits, to debt service, and to other expenditures are all essential to maintaining control of government costs over time.

Organization of this Section

Following are the major fiscal policies currently applied to the PSP/Operating Budget and financial management of Montgomery County (see the Recommended CIP for policies that relate more directly to the CIP). Numerous other fiscal policies that relate to particular programs or issues are not included here but are believed to be consistent with the guiding principles expressed below.

The presentation of fiscal policies is in the following order:

- Policies for fiscal control
- Policies for expenditures and allocation of costs
- Short-term fiscal and service policies
- Current CIP fiscal policies
- Policies for governmental management

- Policies for revenues and program funding
- Fiscal policy for user fees and charges
- Framework for fiscal policy

FISCAL CONTROL POLICIES

Structurally Balanced Budget

The County must have a goal of a structurally balanced budget. Budgeted expenditures should not exceed projected recurring revenues plus recurring net transfers minus the mandatory contribution to reserves for that fiscal year. Recurring revenues should fund recurring expenses. No deficit may be planned or incurred.

Reserves

The County must have a goal of maintaining an unrestricted General Fund balance of five percent of the prior year's General Fund revenues and building up a total reserve of ten percent of revenues including the Revenue Stabilization Fund by FY20, as defined in the Revenue Stabilization Fund law (Section 20-65, Montgomery County Code).

Use of One-Time Revenues

One-time revenues and revenues in excess of projections must be applied first to restoring reserves to policy levels or as required by law. If the County determines that reserves have been fully funded, then one-time revenues should be applied to non-recurring expenditures which are one-time in nature, PAYGO for the CIP in excess of the County's targeted goal, or to unfunded liabilities. Priority consideration should be given to unfunded liabilities for retiree health benefits (OPEB) and pension benefits prefunding.

PAYGO

The County should allocate to the CIP each fiscal year as PAYGO at least ten percent of the amount of general obligation bonds planned for issue that year.

Fiscal Plan

The County should adopt a fiscal plan that is structurally balanced, and that limits expenditures and other uses of resources to annually available resources. The fiscal plan should also separately display reserves at policy levels, including additions to reserves to reach policy level goals.

Budgetary Control

The County will exercise budgetary control (maximum spending authority) over Montgomery County government through County Council approval of appropriation authority within each department and special fund in two categories: Personnel Costs and Operating Expenses; over the Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery College through appropriations in categories set forth by the State; over the County's portion of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) activities through approval of work programs and budgets; and over the Washington Suburban Transit Commission through appropriation of an operating contribution.

Budgetary control over the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is exercised following joint review with

Prince George's County through approval of Operating and Capital Budgets, with recommended changes in sewer usage charges and rates for water consumption.

Budgetary control over the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and the Montgomery County Revenue Authority is limited to approval of their capital improvements programs and to appropriation of an operating contribution to the Housing Opportunities Commission.

Financial Management

The County will manage and account for its Operating and Capital Budgets in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) as set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Basis of Budgeting/Accounting Method

The County's basis of accounting used in the preparation and presentation of its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is consistent with GAAP for governments.

The County maintains its accounting records for tax supported budgets (the General Fund, special revenue funds, and Capital Projects fund supported by general tax revenues) and permanent funds on a modified accrual basis, with revenues recorded when available and measurable, and expenditures recorded when the services or goods are received and the liabilities are incurred. Accounting records for proprietary funds and fiduciary funds, including private-purpose trust funds, are maintained on the accrual basis, with all revenues recorded when earned and expenses recorded at the time liabilities are incurred, without regard to receipt or payment of cash. Agency funds are also accounted for on the full accrual basis of accounting.

The County's basis of budgeting for tax-supported and proprietary and trust fund budgets is consistent with the existing accounting principles except as noted below.

- The County does not legally adopt budgets for trust funds.
- The County legally adopts the budgets for all enterprise funds.
- For the Motor Pool and Central Duplicating Internal Service Funds, the appropriated budgets for those funds are reflected in the appropriated budgets of the operating funds (General Fund, special revenue funds, etc.) that are charged back for such services, and in a reappropriation of the prior year's Internal Service Fund fund balance. For the Liability and Property Coverage Self-Insurance and Health Self-Insurance Internal Service Funds, appropriation exists both in a separate legally adopted budget for each fund, and in the appropriated budgets of the operating departments that are charged back for such services.
- Debt service payments and capital outlay are included in the operating budgets of proprietary funds.
- Proprietary fund budgets do not include depreciation and amortization. Instead, capital outlay and construction costs, as applicable, are budgeted in the operating and capital funds, respectively, at the time of purchase and/or encumbrance. Proprietary fund budgets also do not include bad debts.
- The County does not budget for the retirement of Commercial Paper Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs). The outstanding balance of any BANS issued are retired with the issuance of general obligation bonds.
- Certain amounts, such as those relating to the purchase of new fleet vehicles and certain inter-fund services such as permitting and solid waste services, are budgeted as fund expenditures but are reclassified to inter-fund transfers for accounting purposes.
- Year-end GAAP incurred but not reported (IBNR) adjustment amounts in the self-insurance internal service funds are not budgeted; any such adjustments to IBNR claims reserve as of year-end are incorporated into the budget preparation process of the following fiscal year.

- Proprietary fund budgets include the annual required contribution to pre-fund retiree health insurance benefit costs; however, certain pre-funded retiree health insurance related costs in the proprietary funds and General Fund may be reclassified for accounting purposes.
- Proceeds from debt issued specifically for Montgomery Housing Initiative (MHI) affordable housing/property acquisition is classified as a resource in the MHI fund.
- The County does not budget for the annual change in fair market value of its investments, which is included in revenue for accounting purposes.
- The County does not budget for the operating results of the Montgomery County Conference Center, owned by the County and administered by a third party; instead, the budget includes cash distributions between the parties that represent distribution of net operating revenues and reimbursement for net operating losses.

Internal Accounting Controls

The County will develop and manage its accounting system to provide reasonable assurance regarding: (1) the safeguarding of assets against loss from unauthorized use or disposition; and (2) the reliability of financial records for preparing financial statements and maintaining accountability for assets. "Reasonable assurance" recognizes that: (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and (2) the evaluation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

Audits

The County will ensure the conduct of timely, effective, and periodic audit coverage of all financial records and actions of the County, its officials, and employees in compliance with local, state, and federal law.

POLICIES FOR EXPENDITURES AND ALLOCATION OF COSTS

Content of Budgets

The County will include in the Operating Budget all programs and facilities which are not included in the Capital Improvements Program. There are three major impacts of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) on Operating Budgets: debt service; current revenues applied to the CIP for debt avoidance or for projects which are not debt-eligible; and presumed costs of operating newly opened facilities. Please refer to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) section in this document for more detail.

Expenditure Growth

The Charter (Section 305) requires that the County Council annually adopt and review spending affordability guidelines for the Operating Budget, including guidelines for the aggregate Operating Budget. The aggregate Operating Budget excludes Operating Budgets for: enterprise funds; grants; tuition and tuition-related charges of Montgomery College; and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. County law implementing the Charter requires that the Council set expenditure limits for each agency, as well as for the total, in order to provide more effective guidance to the agencies in the preparation of their budget requests.

Spending affordability guidelines for the Capital Budget and Capital Improvements Program are adopted in odd-numbered calendar years. They have been interpreted in subsequent County law to be limits on the amount of general obligation debt and Park and Planning debt that may be approved for expenditure for the first and second years of the CIP and for the entire six years of the CIP.

Any aggregate budget that exceeds the guidelines then in effect requires the affirmative vote of seven Councilmembers for approval.

The Executive advises the Council on prudent spending affordability limits and makes budget recommendations for all agencies consistent with realistic prospects for the community's ability to pay, both in the upcoming fiscal year and in the ensuing years.

Consistent with the Charter (Section 302) requirement for a six-year Public Services Program, the Executive continues to improve long-range displays for operating programs.

Allocation of Costs

The County will balance the financial burden of programs and facilities as fairly as possible between the general taxpayers and those who benefit directly, recognizing the common good that flows from many public expenditures, the inability of some citizens to pay the full costs of certain benefits, and the difficulty of measuring the relationship between public costs and public or private benefits of some services.

Tax Duplication Avoidance

In accordance with law, the County will reimburse those municipalities and special taxing districts which provide public services that would otherwise be provided by the County from property taxes.

Expenditure Reduction

The County will seek expenditure reductions whenever possible through efficiencies, reorganization of services, and through the reduction or elimination of programs, policies, and practices which have outlived their usefulness. The County will seek interagency opportunities to improve productivity.

Shared Provision of Service

The County will encourage, through matching grants, subsidies, and other funding assistance, the participation of private organizations in the provision of desirable public services when public objectives can be more effectively met through private activity and expertise and where permitted by law.

Public Investment in Infrastructure

The County will, within available funds, plan and budget for those facilities and that infrastructure necessary to support its economy and those public programs determined to be necessary for the quality of life desired by its citizens.

Cost Avoidance

The County will, within available funds, consider investment in equipment, land or facilities, and other expenditure actions, in the present, to reduce or avoid costs in the future.

Procurement

The County will make direct or indirect purchases through a competitive process, except when an alternative method of procurement is specifically authorized by law, is in the County's best interest, and is the most cost-effective means of procuring goods and services.

In order to align costs with designated resources for specific programs or services, the County will generally first charge expenses against a restricted revenue source prior to using general funds. The County may defer the use of restricted funds based on a review of the specific transaction.

SHORT-TERM FISCAL AND SERVICE POLICIES

Short-term policies are specific to the budget year. They address key issues and concerns that frame the task of preparing a balanced budget that achieves the County Executive's priorities within the context of current and expected economic realities.

In May 2015, the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the Maryland Court of Appeals in the *Wynne* income tax case, which held that the State of Maryland's failure to allow a credit with respect to the County income tax for out-of-state income taxes paid to other states for certain income earned in those states violates the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution. As a result of the decision, the County's revenue baseline has been reduced to reflect the retroactive liability from past income tax filings as well as the ongoing annual impact related to the change in the taxability of this source of income. The annual impact of this ruling is estimated to be approximately $30 million, and the repayment to the State for retroactive liability from past income tax filings is estimated to be $143 million spread over 20 quarters starting in the third quarter of FY21. The County's revenue forecasts reflect this repayment schedule.

The FY20 budget development was impacted by FY18 actuals and reduced FY19 and FY20 revenue estimates. FY18 revenue growth unexpectedly slowed to an anemic 0.3%, or $14.5 million over FY17 actuals. Changes in the Federal tax code and a deceleration of property assessment growth contributed to reductions in FY18 income and property taxes compared to estimates. And slow downs in real estate transactions resulted in reductions in FY18 recordation and transfer tax collections. As a result of these revenue shortfalls, overtime and fuel overspending for Fire and Rescue Services, and higher than estimated Transit fuel costs, the County ended FY18 $44 million below the anticipated reserves target. In FY19, the County now anticipates a shortfall in income and property tax revenues in excess of $64 million, primarily driven by lower than anticipated income tax receipts. The January and February 2019 income tax distributions were significantly lower than expected, attributable primarily to continued changes in taxpayer behavior related to federal tax law. H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA), was signed into law in December 2017, enacting substantial changes to Federal income tax policy. The impact that the provisions of this law will have on the County's economic and fiscal outlook is still uncertain. Statewide, estimated quarterly income tax payments were down by more than 30% in the final quarter of Calendar Year 2018. As a result of these revenue trends, FY20 income tax estimates have been reduced by over $42 million, and property tax revenues have been reduced by over $22 million compared to previous estimates. By February, 2019, the Budget Director estimated an FY20 budget gap of over $186 million based on updated, reduced revenue estimates, reserve requirements, and contingency planning for weather events.

The following additional factors and events shaped the budget environment and helped to drive budget planning for FY20:

- Low inflation has resulted in a relatively small increase in expected property tax revenues in FY20.
- Increased costs associated with labor agreements, the operating costs of new facilities, and other costs related to programmatic obligations.
- The need to address prior underbudgeting for some Fire and Rescue, Correction and Rehabilitation, and Transit services.
- Uncertainty regarding potential reductions in Federal and State revenues or costs shifted to the County by the State.
- Lingering uncertainty regarding the economic and fiscal impacts of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.
- Uncertainty regarding the economic and programmatic impacts of other possible changes in Federal budgets, policies, and laws.

To cope with these fiscal challenges while ensuring that the County Executive's priorities are met, the County implemented a number of short-term policies and initiatives to control FY19 spending and reduce the FY20 budget gap:

- Implemented a mid-year savings plan to reduce spending across all departments and agencies. The Savings Plan approved by Council included $45.7 million in savings from County Government, Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission;
- Identified areas for further analysis to reduce overspending in selected departments;
- Maintained a position exemption process requiring special approval to fill most vacancies;
- Continued restrictions on new procurements over $50,000, including procurements funded by current revenue in the Capital Improvements Program;
- Maintained systems for identifying turnover cost savings to avoid the need for reductions that negatively impacted services;
- Required that departments with projected overspending in their mid-year expenditure analysis implement corrective actions; and
- Continued initiatives undertaken to maintain the County's fiscal policies and its commitments to the bond rating agencies to protect its AAA bond rating.

In preparing the FY20 operating budget submissions, departments were asked to submit budget reductions of 2 percent for public safety departments and 4 percent for non-public safety departments. At the same time, the County Executive emphasized that the County would continue to focus on preserving core services consistent with the Executive's priority outcomes.

After the departments submitted their budgets, the Office of Management and Budget coordinated several high-level working groups or "clusters." The clusters focused on the following cross-cutting issues affecting multiple departments:

- Thriving Youth and Families,
- Safe Neighborhoods,
- Digital Evidence Management (e-Discovery).

The clusters included all departments affected by - or affecting - the cluster issue. Department heads or designees attended cluster meetings. The purpose of these clusters, which facilitates a collaborative approach to budgeting in the County, was to review existing programs and policies within the County and determine if there were enhancements or efficiencies which could be made across County Government. The cluster analysis was incorporated into the County Executive's decision making process.

Since his inauguration in December, 2018, the County Executive has committed to take the following actions to further strengthen the County's future budget practices:

- Adopt a two year budget and ten year fiscal plan to ensure financial sustainability;
- Align budgets and budget decision making to achieve Key Priority Outcomes;
- Evaluate reserves and revenue estimating policies to mitigate revenue volatility;
- Initiate a new revolving Innovation Fund to pilot initiatives that can efficiently improve customer service and performance results;
- Implement a Lean business process improvement program; and
- Increase public input into the budget process.

There were also challenges in developing the Recommended Biennial FY19-24 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) as the County chose to: 1) maintain reduced levels of General Obligation debt to improve future operating budget flexibility, 2) reallocate tax-supported cash contributions from the capital budget to support FY20 operating budget needs, and 3) subsequently provided budget amendments to address large cost increases in several projects and significant reductions in impact tax funding. In order to maintain support for key priorities such as education, economic development, core infrastructure and critical transportation projects with reduced resources, very few new projects were included in the Recommended Biennial FY19-24 CIP, and a number of previously approved projects were reduced or deferred.

Together with the long-term policies described elsewhere in this chapter, the short-term policies described here have allowed the County to construct a balanced, fiscally responsible FY20 budget consistent with current economic and fiscal realities while achieving the County Executive's key priority outcomes.

CURRENT CIP FISCAL POLICIES

Policy on Eligibility for Inclusion in the CIP

Capital expenditures included as projects in the CIP should:

- Have a reasonably long useful life, or add to the physical infrastructure and capital assets of the County, or enhance the productive capacity of County services. Examples are roads, utilities, buildings, and parks. Such projects are normally eligible for debt financing.
- Generally have a defined beginning and end, as differentiated from ongoing programs in the PSP.
- Be related to current or potential infrastructure projects. Examples include facility planning or major studies. Generally, such projects are funded with current revenues.
- Be carefully planned to enable decision makers to evaluate the project based on complete and accurate information. In order to permit projects to proceed to enter the CIP once satisfactory planning is complete, a portion of "programmable expenditures" (as used in the Bond Adjustment Chart) is deliberately left available in a set-aside for future needs.

Policy on Funding CIP with Debt

Much of the CIP should be funded with debt. Capital projects usually have a long useful life and will serve future taxpayers as well as current taxpayers. It would be inequitable and an unreasonable fiscal burden to make current taxpayers pay for many projects out of current tax revenues. Bond issues, retired over approximately 20 years, are both necessary and equitable.

Projects deemed to be debt eligible should:

- Have a useful life at least approximately as long as the debt issue with which they are funded.
- Not be able to be funded entirely from other potential revenue sources, such as intergovernmental aid or private contributions.
- Special Note: With a trend towards more public/private partnerships, especially regarding projects aimed at the revitalization or redevelopment of the County's central business districts, there are more instances when public monies leverage private funds. These instances, however, generally bring with them the "private activity" or private benefit (to the County's partners) that make it necessary for the County to use current revenue as its funding source. It is County fiscal policy that financing in partnership situations ensure that tax-exempt debt is issued only for those improvements that meet the IRS requirements for the use of tax-exempt bond proceeds.

Policy on General Obligation Debt Limits

General obligation debt usually takes the form of bond issues, and pledges general tax revenue for repayment. Paying principal and interest on general obligation debt is the first claim on County revenues. By virtue of prudent financial management and the long-term strength of the local economy, Montgomery County has maintained the highest quality rating of its general obligation bonds, AAA. This top rating by Wall Street rating agencies assures Montgomery County of a ready market for its bonds and the lowest available interest rates on that debt.

Debt Capacity

To maintain the AAA rating, the County considers the following guidelines in deciding how much additional County general obligation debt may be issued in the six-year CIP period:

Overall Debt as a Percentage of Assessed Valuation. This ratio measures debt levels against the property tax base, which generates the tax revenues that are the main source of debt repayment. Total debt, both existing and proposed, should be kept at about 1.5 percent of full market value (substantially the same as assessed value) of taxable real property in the County.

Debt Service as a Percentage of the General Fund. This ratio reflects the County's budgetary flexibility to adapt spending levels and respond to economic condition changes. Required annual debt service expenditures should be kept at about ten percent of the County's total General Fund. The General Fund excludes other special revenue tax supported funds.

Overall Debt per Capita. This ratio measures the burden of debt placed on the population supporting the debt and is widely used as a measure of an issuers' ability to repay debt. Total debt outstanding and annual amounts issued, when adjusted for inflation, should not cause real debt per capita (i.e., after eliminating the effects of inflation) to rise significantly.

Ten Year Payout Ratio. This ratio reflects the amortization of the County's outstanding debt. A faster payout is considered a positive credit attribute. The rate of repayment of bond principal should be kept at existing high levels and in the 60-75 percent range during any ten-year period.

Per Capita Debt to Per Capita Income. This ratio reflects a community's economic strength as an indicator of income levels relative to debt. Total debt outstanding and annual amounts proposed should not cause the ratio of per capita debt to per capita income to rise significantly above about 3.5 percent.

These ratios will be calculated and reported each year in conjunction with the capital budget process, the annual financial audit and as needed for fiscal analysis.

Policy on Terms for General Obligation Bond Issues

Bonds are normally issued in a 20-year series, with 5 percent of the series retired each year. This practice produces equal annual payments of principal over the life of the bond issue, which means declining annual payments of interest on the outstanding bonds, positively affecting the pay-out ratio (see Debt Limits, below). Thus annual debt service on each bond issue is higher at the beginning and lower at the end. When bond market conditions warrant, or when a specific project would have a shorter useful life, then different repayment terms may be used. General Obligation bonds are secured by the unlimited taxing authority pledge of the County.

Policy on Other Forms of General Obligation Debt

The County may issue other forms of debt as appropriate and authorized by law. From time to time, the County issues Commercial Paper/Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs) for interim financing to take advantage of favorable interest rates within rules established by the Internal Revenue Service.

Policy on Use of Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are secured by the pledge of particular revenues to their repayment in contrast to general obligation debt, which pledges general tax revenues. The revenues pledged may be those of a Special Revenue fund, or they may be derived from the funds or revenues received from or in connection with a project. Amounts of revenue debt to be issued should be limited to ensure that debt service coverage ratios shall be sufficient to ensure ratings at least equal to or higher than ratings on outstanding parity debt. Such coverage ratios shall be maintained during the life of any bonds secured by that revenue stream.

Policy on Use of Appropriation-backed Debt

Various forms of appropriation-backed debt may be used to fund capital improvements, facilities, or equipment issued directly by the County or using the Montgomery County Revenue Authority or another entity as a conduit issuer. Under such an arrangement, the County enters into a long-term lease with the conduit issuer and the County lease payments fund the debt service on the bonds. Appropriation-backed debt is useful in situations where a separate revenue stream is available to partially offset the lease payments, thereby differentiating the project from those typically funded with general obligation debt. Because these long-term leases constitute an obligation of the County similar to general debt, the value of the leases is included in debt capacity calculations.

Policy on Issuance of Taxable Debt

Issuance of taxable debt may be useful in situations where private activity or other considerations make tax-exempt debt disadvantageous or ineligible due to tax code requirements or other considerations. The cost of taxable debt will generally be higher because investors are not able to deduct interest earnings from taxable income. Taxable debt may be issued in instances where the additional cost of taxable debt, including legal, marketing, and other up-front costs and the interest cost over the life of the bonds, is outweighed by the advantages in relation to the financing objectives to be achieved.

Policy on Use of Interim Financing

Interim Financing may be useful in situations where project expenditures are eligible for long-term debt, but permanent financing is delayed for specific reasons, other than affordability. Interim Financing should have an identified ultimate funding source, and should be repaid within the short-term. An example for interim financing would be in a situation where an offsetting revenue, such as land sale proceeds, will be available in the future to pay off a portion of the amounts borrowed, but the exact amounts and timing of the repayment are uncertain.

Policy on Use of Short-Term Financing

Short-term financing (terms of seven years or less) may be appropriate for certain types of equipment or system financings, where the term of the financing correlates to the useful life of the asset acquired, or in other cases where the expected useful life is long, but due to the nature of the system, upgrades are frequent and long-term financing is not appropriate. Short-term financings in the CIP are also of a larger size or magnitude than smaller purchases typically financed with short-term Master Lease financing.

Policy on Use of Current Revenues

Use of current revenues to fund capital projects is desirable as it constitutes "pay-as-you-go" financing and, when applied to debt-eligible projects, reduces the debt burden of the County. Decisions to use current revenue funding within the CIP have immediate impacts on resources available to annual operating budgets, and require recognition that certain costs of public facilities should be supported on a current basis rather than paid for over time.

Current revenues from the General Fund are used for designated projects which have broad public use and which fall outside any of the specialized funds. Current revenues from the Special and Enterprise Funds are used if the project is associated with the particular function for which these funds have been established.

The County has the following policies on the use of current revenues in the CIP:

- Current revenues must be used for any CIP projects not eligible for debt financing by virtue of limited useful life.
- Current revenues should be used for CIP projects consisting of limited renovations of facilities, for renovations of facilities which are not owned by the County, and for planning and feasibility studies.
- Current revenues may be used when the requirements for capital expenditures press the limits of bonding capacity.
- Except for excess revenues which must go to the Revenue Stabilization Fund, the County will, whenever possible, give highest priority for the use of one-time revenues from any source to the funding of capital assets or other nonrecurring expenditures so as not to incur ongoing expenditure obligations for which revenues may not be adequate in future years.

Policy on Use of Federal and State Grants and Other Contributions

Grants and other contributions should be sought and used to fund capital projects whenever they are available on terms that are to the County's long-term fiscal advantage. Such revenues should be used as current revenues for debt avoidance and not for debt service.

Policy on Minimum Allocation of PAYGO

PAYGO is current revenue set aside in the operating budget, but not appropriated, and is used to replace bonds for debt eligible expenditures. To reduce the impact of capital programs on future years, the County will fund a portion of its CIP on a pay-as-you-go basis. Pay-as-you-go funding will save money by eliminating interest expense on the funded projects. Pay-as-you-go capital appropriations improve financial flexibility in the event of sudden revenue shortfalls or emergency spending. It is the County's policy to allocate to the CIP each fiscal year as PAYGO at least ten percent of the amount of general obligation bonds planned for issue that year.

Policy on Operating Budget Impacts

In the development of capital projects, the County evaluates the impact of a project on the operating budget and displays such impacts on the project description form. The County shall not incur debt or otherwise construct or acquire a public facility if it is unable to adequately provide for the subsequent annual operation and maintenance costs of the facility.

Policy on Taxing New Private Sector Development

As part of a fair and balanced tax system, new development of housing, commercial, office, and other structures should contribute directly toward the cost of the new and improved transportation and other facilities required to serve that development. To implement this policy, the County has established the following taxes:

Impact Tax - Transportation. The County Council established new rates and geographical boundaries for transportation impact taxes in November 2016, and rates were subsequently increased in February 2018. These taxes are levied at four zone rate schedules: transit-oriented and urban Red Policy Areas (former Metro Station Policy Areas), mixed urban/suburban Orange Policy Areas (formerly part of the general impact district), suburban Yellow Policy Areas (formerly part of the general impact tax district), and rural Green Policy Areas (e.g. agricultural reserve).

Impact Tax - Schools. Most residential development in Montgomery County is subject to an impact tax for certain school facilities. The rates are the same countywide but vary by housing type, commensurate with the average student generation rates of that type of residential development. The County Council established new School Impact Tax rates effective February 2018.

School Facilities Payment. A school facilities payment is applied at subdivision review to residential development projects located in a school cluster where enrollment exceeds adopted standards. The school facilities payment is made on a per-student basis, based upon standard student generation rates of that type of residential development. As of March 1, 2017, the School Facilities Payment only applies to development projects that were included in a preliminary plan of subdivision prior to this date.

Development Approval Payment (DAP). In November 1993, the Council created an alternative voluntary review procedure for Metro Station Policy Areas as well as limited residential development. The DAP permits development projects to proceed in certain areas subject to development restrictions. Due to the voluntary nature of this payment, DAP revenue is an unpredictable funding source and is not programmed for specific transportation improvements until after the revenue has been collected. In October 2003, the County Council revised the Annual Growth Policy to replace the Development Approval Payment with an alternative payment mechanism based upon impact tax rates.

Development Districts. Legislation enacted in 1994 established a procedure by which the Council may create a development district. The creation of such a special taxing district allows the County to issue low-interest, tax-exempt bonds that are used to finance the infrastructure improvements needed to allow the development to proceed. Taxes or other assessments are levied on property within the district, the revenues from which are used to pay the debt service on the bonds. Development is, therefore, allowed to proceed, and improvements are built in a timely manner. Only the additional, special tax revenues from the development district are pledged to repayment of the bonds. The County's general tax revenues are not pledged. The construction of improvements funded with development district bonds is required by law to follow the County's usual process for constructing capital improvements and, thus, must be included in the Capital Improvements Program.

Systems Development Charge (SDC). This charge, enacted by the 1993 Maryland General Assembly, authorized WSSC to assess charges based on the number and type of plumbing fixtures in new construction, effective July 19, 1993. SDC revenues may only be spent on new water and sewerage treatment, transmission, and collection facilities.

GOVERNMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Productivity

The County will seek continuous improvement in the productivity of County programs in terms of quantity of services relative to resources expended, through all possible strategies.

Employee Involvement

The County will actively encourage and make use of the experience and expertise of its workforce for optimum program effectiveness and cost-efficiency of public service delivery through training, teamwork, employee empowerment, and other precepts of quality management.

Intergovernmental Program Efforts

The County will seek program efficiencies and cost savings through cooperative agreements and joint program efforts with other County agencies, municipalities, regional organizations, and the State and Federal governments.

Alternative Service Delivery

The County will consider obtaining public service delivery through private or non-profit sectors via contract or service agreement, rather than through governmental programs and employees, when permitted by law, cost-effective, and consistent with other public objectives and policies.

Risk Management

The County will control its exposure to financial loss through a combination of commercial and self-insurance; self-insure against all but highest cost risks; and aggressively control its future exposure through a risk management program that allocates premium shares among agencies based on loss history.

Employee Compensation

The County will seek to provide total compensation (pay plus employee benefits) that is comparable to jobs in the private sector; comparable among similar jobs in the several County departments and agencies; and comparable between employees in collective bargaining units and those outside such units.

The government will act to contain the growth of compensation costs using various strategies including organizational efficiencies within its departments and agencies, management efficiencies within its operations and service delivery, and productivity improvements within its workforce.

Pension Funds

The County will, to assure the security of benefits for current and future retirees and the solvency of the Employee Retirement System of Montgomery County, provide for the judicious management and investment of the fund's assets through the Board of Investment Trustees (BIT), and strive to increase the funding ratio of assets to accrued liability. The BIT also selects the service providers and investment options available for employees participating in the Retirement Savings Plan and the Deferred Compensation Plan. The Montgomery County Union Employees Deferred Compensation Plan is administered by the three unions representing Montgomery County employees.

Retiree Health Benefits Trust

The County phased-in full pre-funding of its Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC), from the previous pay-as-you-go approach, beginning with contributions to one or more trust funds established for that purpose, over an eight-year period beginning with FY08. This approach allows the County to use a discount rate higher than its operating investment rate for accounting and budgeting purposes, which will result in lower costs and liabilities than if the County did not have a Trust in place.

Surplus Property

The County will maximize the residual value of land parcels or buildings declared excess to current public needs through public reuse, lease to appropriate private organizations, or sale, in order to return them to the tax base of the County. Disposition of goods which have become obsolete, unusable, or surplus to the needs of the County will be accomplished through bid, auction, or other lawful method to the purchaser offering the highest price except under circumstances as specified by law.

Fiscal Impact Reviews

The County will review proposed local and State legislation, regulations, and master plans for specific findings and recommendations relative to financial and budgetary impacts and any continuing and potential long-term effects on the operations of government.

Economic Impact Statements

The County will review proposed local and State legislation, and regulations for specific findings and recommendations relative to economic impacts for any continuing and potential long-term effects on the economic well-being of the County.

Resource Management

The County will seek continued improvement in its budgetary and financial management capacity in order to reach the best possible decisions on resource allocation and the most effective use of budgeted resources.

POLICIES FOR REVENUES AND PROGRAM FUNDING

Diversification of Revenues

The County will establish the broadest possible base of revenues and seek alternative revenues to fund its programs and services, in order to:

- Decrease reliance on general taxation for discretionary but desirable programs and services and rely more on user fees and charges;
- Decrease the vulnerability of programs and services to reductions in tax revenues as a result of economic fluctuations; and
- Increase the level of self-support for new program initiatives and enhancements.

Revenue Projections

The County will estimate revenues in a realistic and conservative manner in order to minimize the risk of a funding shortfall.

Property Tax

The County will, to the fullest extent possible, establish property tax rates in such a way as to:

- Limit annual levies so that tax revenues are held at or below the rate of inflation, or justify exceeding those levels if extraordinary circumstances require higher rates;
- Avoid wide annual fluctuations in property tax revenue as economic and fiscal conditions change; and
- Fully and equitably obtain revenues from new construction and changes in land or property use.

A 1990 amendment to the County Charter (Section 305), "Question F," limits the annual increase in real property tax revenue to the rate of inflation plus that associated with new construction, rezoning, changes in property use, and development districts. As a result of a Charter amendment approved by voters in 2016, this limit may not be overridden without an affirmative vote of all current Councilmembers.

County Income Tax

The County will maintain the rate for the local personal income tax within the limits specified in the Maryland Annotated Code, Tax-General Article, Section 10-106.

Special Districts

The County has established special districts within which extra services, generally not performed countywide, are provided and funded from revenues generated within those districts. Examples are the Urban, Recreation, and Parking Lot Districts. The County will also abolish special districts when the conditions which led to their creation have changed.

Most special districts have a property tax to pay all or part of the district expenses. Such property taxes are included in the overall limit set on annual real property tax revenue increases by Section 305 of the County Charter.

Special Funds

The revenues and expenditures of special districts are accounted for in special revenue funds or, in the case of Parking Lot Districts, in enterprise funds. As a general principle, these special funds pay an overhead charge to the General Fund to cover the management and support services provided by General Fund departments to these special fund programs.

When the fund balances of special funds grow to exceed mandated or otherwise appropriate levels relative to district public purposes, the County may consider transferring part of the fund balance to support other programs, as allowed by law. For example, a portion of the PLDs' fee revenue is transferred to the Urban Districts.

Enterprise Funds

The County will, through pricing, inventory control, and other management practices, ensure appropriate fund balances for its enterprise funds while obtaining full cost recovery for direct and indirect government support, as well as optimal levels of revenue transfer for General Fund purposes.

One-Time or "Windfall" Revenues

Except for excess revenues which must go to the Revenue Stabilization Fund (see below), the County will, whenever possible, give highest priority for the use of one-time revenues from any source to the funding of capital assets or other nonrecurring expenditures so as not to incur ongoing expenditure obligations for which revenues may not be adequate in future years.

Intergovernmental Revenues

The County will aggressively seek a fair share of available State and Federal financial support unless conditions attached to that assistance are contrary to the County's interest. Where possible, Federal or State funding for the full cost of the program will be requested, including any indirect costs of administering a grant-funded program. For reasons of fiscal prudence, the County may choose not to solicit grants that will require an undeclared fiscal commitment beyond the term of the grant.

User Fees and Charges

The County will charge users directly for certain services and use of facilities where there is immediate and direct benefit to those users, as well as a high element of personal choice or individual discretion involved, rather than fund them through general taxation. Such charges include licenses, permits, user fees, charges for services, rents, tuition, and sales of goods. This policy will also be applied to fines and forfeitures. See also: "Policies for User Fees and Charges," later in this Fiscal Policy section.

Cash Management and Investments

The objective of the County's cash management and investment program is to achieve maximum financial return on available funds while assuring a high level of safety. Cash will be pooled and invested on a daily basis reflecting the investment objective priorities of capital preservation, liquidity, and yield.

Reserves and Revenue Stabilization

The County will maintain an unrestricted General Fund balance (or, an "operating margin reserve") of five percent of prior year's General Fund revenues and the Revenue Stabilization Fund (or, "rainy day"). This budget satisfies the County's policy to increase and maintain the budgeted total reserve of the General Fund and the Revenue Stabilization Fund at 10 percent of Adjusted Governmental Revenues by FY20. As defined in the Revenue Stabilization Fund law, Adjusted Governmental Revenues include the tax supported revenues of the County government, Montgomery County Public Schools (less the County's local contribution), Montgomery College (less the County's local contribution), and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, plus the revenues of the County Government's grant fund and capital projects fund.

Reserves in the County Government's other tax supported funds should be minimized to support the policy of maximizing reserves in the General Fund.

The County's Revenue Stabilization Fund was established to accumulate funds during periods of strong economic growth in order to provide budgetary flexibility during times of funding shortfalls. Contributions of at least 0.5 percent of Adjusted Governmental Revenues up to the 10 percent total reserve goal must be made to the Revenue Stabilization Fund. If greater, 50 percent of certain excess revenues must be transferred to the Fund. By an affirmative vote of six Councilmembers, the Council may transfer any amount from the Fund to the General Fund to support appropriations which have become unfunded.

The budgeted reserve levels for non-tax supported funds are established by each government agency and vary based on the particular fiscal requirements and business functions of the fund as well as any relevant laws, policies, or bond covenants.

The table at the end of this chapter displays the projected ending fund balance for each major fund in the County's operating budget and includes an explanation of changes greater than ten percent.

POLICIES FOR USER FEES AND CHARGES

To control the growth of property taxation as the County's principal revenue source, there is a need to closely allocate certain costs to those who most use or directly benefit from specific government programs and services. Fees and charges are those amounts received from consumers of government services or users of facilities on the basis of personal consumption or private benefit rather than individual income, wealth, or property values. Significant government revenues are and should be obtained from licenses, permits, user fees, charges for services, transit fares, rents, tuition, sales, and fines. The terms "fee" and "charge" are used here interchangeably to include each of these types of charges.

Purpose of User Fee Policy

Access to programs and services. The imposition of and level of fees and charges should be set generally to ensure economic and physical access by all residents to all programs and services provided by the government. Exceptions to this basic public policy are: the pricing of public goods (such as parking facilities) in order to attain other public policy objectives (such as public use and support of mass transit); and using a charge to enforce compliance with laws and regulations, such as fines for parking violations.

Fairness. User fees and charges are based on the idea of equity in the distribution of costs for government programs and services, with the objective of sharing those costs with the individual user when there is individual choice in the kind or amount of use, and of adjusting charges in accordance with individual ability to pay when there is no choice.

Diversification of revenue sources. User fees and charges enhance the government's ability to equitably provide programs and services which serve specific individuals and groups and for which there is no other alternative provider available. The policy objective is to decrease reliance on general revenues for those programs and services which produce direct private benefits and to fund such programs and services through revenues directly related to their costs and individual consumption.

Goals

Goals for the imposition of user fees and charges include:

- Recovery of all, or part, of government costs for the provision of certain programs and services to the extent that they directly benefit private individuals or constituencies rather than the public at large;
- Most efficient allocation of available public resources to those programs meeting the broadest public need or demand;
- More effective planning and alternative choices for future programs, services, and facilities through "market" information from actual user demand;
- Improved cost-effectiveness and accountability for the spending of public funds by allowing individual citizens to choose their level of use from among those programs, services, and facilities where individual choice may be exercised; and
- Ensuring dedicated sources of funds to cover the costs of programs and services of direct benefit to designated special areas or user groups rather than the County as a whole.

Criteria

Within these goals, government officials must consider a variety of factors in deciding whether to employ fees and charges and what rates to charge. Each proposal for a new or increased fee is evaluated according to these criteria.

Public benefit. Many programs benefit the public as a whole as well as those who directly use the service. By definition, all programs offered by government have some public benefit or they should not be undertaken. However, the rate set must balance the private benefit with the public good so that there is maximum overall benefit to the community, and the costs are fairly allocated.

This balance may be achieved either by specifying a percentage of cost recovery (from users) or by a tax subsidy for each service (from the general public). The greater the public benefit, the lower the percentage of cost recovery that is appropriate. On one end of the scale, public utilities such as water and sewer should be paid for almost entirely on the basis of individual consumption, with full cost recovery from consumer-users; on the other, public education and public safety (police and fire service) are required for the overall public good and so are almost entirely supported through general taxation.

In between are services such as public health inspections or clinic services which protect the public at large but which are provided to specific businesses or individuals; facilities such as parks which are available to and used by everyone; and playing fields, golf courses, or tennis courts which serve only special recreational interests. Services that have private benefit for only a limited number of persons (such as public housing, rent or fuel subsidies) should not be "free" unless they meet very stringent tests of public good, or some related criteria such as essential human needs.

Ability to pay. Meeting essential human needs is considered a basic function of government, and for this reason programs or services assisting the very poor are considered a "public good" even though the benefit may be entirely to individuals. Whether to assess fees and how much to charge, depends on the ability to pay by those who need and make use of programs and services provided by government.

Without adjustment, fees are "regressive" because rates do not relate to wealth or income. For this reason, services intended mainly for low-income persons may charge less than otherwise would be the case. Policies related to fee scales or waivers should be consistent within similar services or as applied to similar categories of users. Implementation of fee waivers or reductions requires a means for establishing eligibility that is fair and consistent among programs. The eligibility method also must preserve the privacy and dignity of the individual.

User discretion. Fees and charges are particularly appropriate if the user has a choice about whether or not to use a particular program or service. Individuals have choices as to: forming a business that requires a license; use of particular recreational facilities; obtaining post-secondary education; or in transportation and related facilities. When fines represent a penalty to enforce public law or regulation, citizens can avoid the charge by compliance; fines should be set at a point sufficient to deter non-compliant behavior. The rates for fines and licenses may exceed the government cost of providing the related "service" when either deterrence or rationing the special "benefit" is desired as a matter of public policy.

Market demand. Services which are fee-supported often compete for customer demand with similar services offered by private firms or by other public jurisdictions. Fees for publicly-provided goods cannot be raised above a competitive level without loss of patronage and potential reduction in cost-effectiveness. Transit fares, as a user charge, will compete with the individual's real or perceived cost of alternative choices such as the use of a private automobile. In certain cases, it may be advisable to accept a loss of volume if net revenue increases, while in others it may be desirable to set the fee to encourage use of some other public alternative.

Specialized demand. Programs with a narrow or specialized demand are particularly suitable for fees. The fee level or scale may be set to control the expansion of services or programs in which most of the public does not need or elect to participate. Services that have limitations on their availability may use fee structures as a means of rationing available capacity or distributing use over specific time periods. Examples include golf courses, parking, and transit fares, all of which have differentiated levels related to time of use. Even programs or services which benefit all or most residents may appropriately charge fees if their benefits are measurable but unequal among individuals. Charges based on consumption, such as water and sewer provision, are examples. In addition, because they do not pay taxes, non-residents may be charged higher rates than residents (as with community college tuition), or they may be charged a fee even if a program is entirely tax supported for County residents.

Legal constraints. State law may require, prohibit, regulate, or preempt certain existing or proposed user charges. In general, local government has no authority to tax unless specifically authorized by State law. Localities are generally able to charge for services if those charges are authorized by local ordinance and not prohibited, regulated, or preempted by State law. If a proposed fee is legally construed as a tax, then the fee may be invalidated until authorized as a tax by the State. Federal or State law may also prohibit or limit the use of charges for certain grant programs, and other Federal or State assistance may require the local authority to "match" certain amounts through imposition of charges. It should be noted that law on such issues is frequently in dispute; particular fees, or the level of charge, may be subject to legal challenge.

Program cost. The cost of a program or service is an important factor in setting user charges. Costs may include not only the direct personnel and other costs of operating a program, but also indirect costs such as overhead for government support services. In addition, a fee may be set to recover all or part of facilities construction or debt service costs attributable to a program. Recovery of any part of the costs of programs benefiting specific individuals should identify and consider the full cost of such programs or services to acknowledge the cost share which will be borne by the public at large.

Reimbursement. A decision on whether to use fees is influenced by the possibility of reimbursement or shifting of real costs that can lower the net cost to the resident. For example, some County taxes are partially deductible from Federal or State income tax, while fees and charges may not be deducted. Hence, the same revenue to the County may cost less to the resident if it is a tax rather than a fee. Charges may also be reimbursed to (shifted from) the paying individual from (or to) other sources, either governmental or private. For example, ambulance transport charges may be payable under health insurance. In general, the County will use fees to minimize the real cost to residents, within the context of equity and other criteria noted.

Administrative cost. The government incurs administrative costs to measure, bill, and collect fee revenues. In general, it is less expensive to collect tax revenue. If a potential user fee revenue will cost more to collect than it will produce, it may not be appropriate to assess a fee even if otherwise desirable and appropriate. It is important to develop ways to measure the use of services which do not cost more than the usefulness or fairness of doing the measurement. For example, "front footage" has been used as a measurement basis for assessing certain charges related to road improvements and supply of water and sewer, to avoid the administrative cost of precisely measuring benefit. Similarly, the cost of effective collection enforcement must be weighed against total benefits of the charge, including the value of deterrence if the charge is punitive.

Preserving the real value of the charge. During the period when a fee has been in effect, costs have usually risen and inflation has cut the real value of revenue produced by the fee. In some instances, adjustments to user charges have either not been imposed or have lagged behind inflation. The rate of the charge should be increased regularly to restore the former value of the revenue involved. Most fees and charges should be indexed so that their per unit revenues will keep up with inflation.

FRAMEWORK FOR FISCAL POLICY

Legal Framework

Fiscal policy is developed and amended, as necessary, according to:

- Federal law and regulation;
- Maryland law and regulation;
- Montgomery County Charter; and
- Montgomery County law and regulation.

Fiscal Planning Projections and Assumptions

Various trends and economic indicators are projected and analyzed for their impacts on County programs and services and for their impact on fiscal policy as applied to annual Operating Budgets. Among these are:

- Inflation, as measured by change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV area, is an important indicator of future costs of government goods and services, including anticipated wage and salary adjustments. The CPI change also specifies the increase in property tax revenue allowed by Section 305 of the Charter without a unanimous vote of nine Councilmembers.
- Growth of population and jobs, which are principal indicators of requirements for new or expanded programs and services.
- Demographic change in the numbers or location within the County of specific age groups or other special groups, which provides an indication of the requirements and costs of various government services and programs.
- The assessable property tax base of the County which is the principal indicator of anticipated property tax collections, a major source of general revenues.
- Personal income earned by County residents, which is a principal basis for projecting income tax revenues as one of the County's major revenue sources, as well as being a basis for determining income eligibility status for certain government programs.

- Employment growth and unemployment rates within the County, as indicators of personal income growth as a revenue source, as well as being indicators of various service or program needs, such as day care or public welfare assistance.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

The application of fiscal policy in the financial management of annual operating expenditures must be in conformity with GAAP standards. This involves the separate identification of, and accounting for, the various operating funds; adherence to required procedures such as transfers between funds and agencies; and regular audits of general County operations and special financial transactions such as the disbursement of Federal grants.

Credit Markets and Credit Reviews

The County's ability to borrow cost-effectively depends upon its credit standing as assessed by the three major credit rating agencies: Moody's, Standard and Poor's, and Fitch. While key aspects of maintaining the highest credit rating are related to the management of the County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), others are directly applicable to the annual Operating Budgets:

- Maintenance of positive fund balances (reserves) to ensure continued County liquidity for debt repayment; and
- Assurances through County law and practice of an absolute commitment to timely repayment of debt and other obligations.

Intergovernmental Agreements

Fiscal policy for operating budgets must provide guidance for, and be applied within, the context of agreements made between the County and other jurisdictions or levels of government relative to program or service provision. Examples include agreements with:

- Incorporated municipalities or special tax districts for reimbursement of the costs of various services provided by those units for their residents which would otherwise have to be expended by the County;
- State agencies for shared costs of various social service programs and for participation in various grant and loan programs;
- Federal agencies to obtain support to meet mutual program objectives through programs such as the Community Development Block Grant; and
- Prince George's County on the annual approval of the budgets of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Change in Ending Fund Balance

	FY19 Approved Ending Fund Balance	FY20 Recommended Ending Fund	Change in Fund Balance	% Change
TAX SUPPORTED				
Montgomery County Government				
County General Fund	154,083,662	172,197,275	18,113,613	11.8%
Bethesda Urban District	83,120	83,438	318	0.4%
Silver Spring Urban District	90,180	95,816	5,636	6.2%
Wheaton Urban District	51,408	52,840	1,432	2.8%
Mass Transit	195,422	264,241	68,819	35.2%
Fire	152,384	129,822	-22,562	-14.8%
Recreation	248,971	46,353	-202,618	-81.4%
Revenue Stabilization Fund	337,953,203	361,043,419	23,090,216	6.8%
Montgomery College				
Emergency Repair Fund	393,178	456,427	63,249	16.1%
Current Fund MC	4,297,877	4,055,352	-242,525	-5.6%
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission				
Administration Fund	970,825	995,598	24,773	2.6%
Park Fund	3,363,803	3,950,225	586,422	17.4%
NON-TAX SUPPORTED				
Montgomery County Government				
Water Quality Protection Fund	4,364,225	10,143,927	5,779,702	132.4%
Cable Television	67,010	1,371,359	1,304,349	1,946.5%
Community Use of Public Facilities	4,058,050	3,429,758	-628,292	-15.5%
Bethesda Parking District	12,529,924	12,373,038	-156,886	-1.3%
Montgomery Hills Parking District	0	0	0	N/A
Silver Spring Parking District	5,029,272	5,767,419	738,147	14.7%
Wheaton Parking District	392,133	606,532	214,399	54.7%
Permitting Services	8,965,633	11,590,938	2,625,305	29.3%
Solid Waste Collection	1,058,050	-3,396,515	-4,454,565	-421.0%
Vacuum Leaf Collection	261,577	214,601	-46,976	-18.0%
Liquor Control	2,135,810	2,142,459	6,649	0.3%

Explanation of Changes in Fund Balance Greater Than 10%:

- **General Fund, Mass Transit, Fire, and Recreation**
  The County's policy is to maximize tax supported reserves in the General Fund, which is limited by the County Charter to five percent of the prior year's General Fund revenues. Reserves in the property tax special funds have been minimized as much as possible consistent with this reserve policy.
- **Emergency Repair Fund MC**

The ending fund balance is increasing because FY18 spending was less than anticipated.

- **Park Fund**
  The projected ending fund balance is consistent with fund balance policy.
- **Water Quality Protection Fund**
  The change in fund balance is due to changes in CIP current revenue funding and anticipated capital and operating budget expenditures based on updated progress towards meeting the County's MS4 permit.
- **Cable Television**
  The projected ending fund balance reflects a reduction in transfers to bring the fund balance in line with the policy level
- **Community Use of Public Facilites**
  The fiscal plan assumes a one time use of surplus funds to replace the on-line booking system shared by CUPF, the Recreation Department, and M-NCPPC. This use is shown as a current revenue transfer in FY20 and FY21 to the CIP project, Shared Agency Booking System Replacement (P722001).
- **Silver Spring Parking District**
  The change in fund balance is primarily related to a projected increase in revenue associated with rate changes.
- **Wheaton Parking District**
  The change in fund balance is due to a projected increase in revenue associated with the expansion of collection of hours.
- **Permitting Services**
  The year end fund balance assumes the Enterprise Fund Stabilization Factor (EFSF) at 5% effective FY20. The EFSF is the factor by which the fee calculation is adjusted to cover the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) labor and operating expenses, and to avoid future rate spikes.
- **Solid Waste Collection**
  The change in fund balance is due to cost increases for refuse collection contracts and a $4 million dollar loan in FY18 from the Disposal fund that is now reflected as a liability but was not displayed in the FY19 Recommended budget.
- **Vacuum Leaf Collection**
  The change in fund balance reflects higher than expected motor pool charges.