



Permitting Services

RECOMMENDED FY27 BUDGET

\$50,257,681

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

255.03

 RABBIAH SABBAKHAN, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

Mission: The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) mission is to ensure the public's safety, health, and sustainability, and create an environment of economic vitality in Montgomery County.

Vision: The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services aspires to be a world-class permitting organization through timely, transparent, solution-driven services.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total recommended FY27 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$50,251,466, an increase of \$1,763,702 or 3.64 percent from the FY26 Approved Budget of \$48,487,764. Personnel Costs comprise 81.04 percent of the budget for 247 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 255.03 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 18.96 percent of the FY27 budget. The recommended budget includes a 25 percent increase in all permit fees, with the exception of residential-related permits, which will increase by 10 percent.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following are emphasized:

-  **A Growing Economy**
-  **A Greener County**
-  **Easier Commutes**
-  **Effective, Sustainable Government**

INITIATIVES

-  Drafted Executive Regulation 21-25, requiring all multi-family rental apartments to submit emergency safety plans for Fire Code Compliance (FCC) for review and approval, enhancing community safety and awareness.

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- ★ Using call data from Montgomery Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) to identify high-risk buildings and work with building owners to reduce calls to 9-1-1.
 - ★ Land Development will publish a guidance document to assist agrotourism businesses in understanding the requirements related to the development of their property. This document will be finalized in FY26.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ Developed and implemented a streamlined food licensing process for the Department of Health and Human Services, including the food licensing programs for the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg.
- ★ Updated the Design for Life program by adding new accessibility features eligible for credit and streamlining the application process for those features.

★ Accomplishments

- Completed the Recipe for Success initiative by aligning budget resources to stabilize restaurant permitting, enhance customer service consultations, and strengthen interagency coordination.
- Achieved a 98 percent completion rate for residential inspections on their scheduled dates.
- Led the adoption of the 2021 International Code Council codes and the Fire and Life Safety standards (NFPA 1 and NFPA 101).
- Secured a Department of Energy ten-million-dollar Net-Zero Energy for All grant to support a technical assistance program, public outreach and education, system upgrades for data collection, and a comprehensive third-party data evaluation.
- Earned the SolSmart Platinum designation, highlighting Montgomery County's commitment to advancing solar photovoltaic energy. Additionally, expanded the eSolar program to include residential projects integrating both solar PV and battery storage.
- Finalized a Memorandum of Understanding between DPS, the Office of Agriculture, and the Soil Conservation District to clarify responsibilities related to agritourism. Launched an online appointment system for prospective agritourism businesses, enabling joint consultations from all three agencies to provide coordinated guidance on processes and requirements.

★ Collaborations and Partnerships

- The DPS Zoning and Compliance Division is an active participant in the Development Review Committee (DRC), a standing interagency working group that ensures development applications, including site plans, preliminary plans, record plats, and conditional use requests are reviewed collaboratively and consistently before Planning Board action. Participating partners include the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (DOT), the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS), WSSC Water, utility companies, developers, and their consultants.
- DPS Zoning actively contributes to the development of local and state legislation by providing technical support to legislative attorneys and professional staff working on zoning text amendments, subdivision regulation amendments, and county and state bills. Collaborative organizations include the M-NCPPC Planning staff, County Council staff, County Executive staff, and County departments including the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), DEP, the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), and the Office of the County Attorney (OCA).
- Collaborated extensively with the OCA, DHCA, the Office of Consumer Protection, and the Regional Services Centers

to assist communities in resolving life-safety property issues.

- The FCC section joined the Anti-Hoarding Task Force and meets monthly with the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) to enhance DPS's preparedness for major emergency responses.
- The Sustainability, Energy, and Mechanical (SEM) section continues to provide technical assistance to DEP, and M-NCPPC. The SEM manager serves on the Technical Advisory Committee for DEP's Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) program, and the SEM team provides technical guidance to M-NCPPC to support the development of its elective measures program.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Barbara Suter of the Department of Permitting Services at 240-777-6244 or Anita Aryeetey of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2784 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable), with multi-program measures displayed at the front of this section and program-specific measures shown with the relevant program. The FY26 estimates reflect funding based on the FY26 Approved Budget. The FY27 and FY28 figures are performance targets based on the FY27 Recommended Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY28.

The department combines department and applicant time components when measuring "total time to issue a permit." These times may be impacted by satisfaction of related preconditions such as sediment control submissions, approvals, and outside agency approvals.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Administration

The Administration program provides goal and policy development, strategic planning, and leadership for all programs within the department. The administration also provides high level coordination with other county departments and agencies as well as the Office of the County Executive and the Montgomery County Council.

The administrative staff is responsible for daily operations and a full range of administrative task and programs including budget, fiscal management, human resources, data management, contracts, timekeeping, and fleet management.

DPS's Office of Information Technology (DPS-IT) leverages technology to deliver better services to the department that enable staff and the public to access resources at their convenience. DPS-IT's mission is to provide a robust and secure IT infrastructure to support mission-critical applications, mobile computing, and desktop support employing industry best practices. The IT unit has embarked on an IT modernization project to enhance multimedia improvement by enabling Microsoft Teams telephony and conference rooms. The IT unit partners with the Department of Technology Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) to incorporate technology enhancements to help DPS achieve its mission. IT services provided by TEBS will include, but will not be limited to, IT desktop and server support, LAN use, and cloud applications.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
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Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Number of permits issued (all DPS)	38,101	39,519	40,000	40,000	40,000
Number of inspections completed (all DPS)	163,378	169,467	169,000	169,000	169,000

FY27 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY26 Approved	11,873,355	26.13
Restore: Computer Maintenance Contract	756,951	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	16,591	(1.00)
FY27 Recommended	12,646,897	25.13

☀ Commercial Building Construction

The Commercial Building Construction program is responsible for ensuring public safety and performance through the effective adoption, application, and enforcement of commercial building, structural, electrical, mechanical, fire-safety, accessibility, and sustainability construction codes and standards. As the "First Preventers," this is accomplished through plan review and construction site inspections to verify and facilitate compliance with approved plans and regulations. This program processes applications for and issues building, mechanical, fire protection, and electrical permits. The program also responds to construction complaints as well as supports the County emergency management operations during natural disasters and other emergencies by providing property assessments during the recovery phase of a disaster.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Number of inspections completed by Commercial inspectors	38,682	39,464	40,000	40,000	40,000
Number of plan reviews completed by Commercial plan reviewers	19,541	19,246	19,000	19,000	19,000

FY27 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY26 Approved	9,478,715	56.00
Add: One Position for Permitting Services Commercial New Fast Track	111,355	1.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	500,945	1.00
FY27 Recommended	10,091,015	58.00

☀ Customer Support & Outreach

The Customer Support and Outreach Division is responsible for all administration and issuance of building, land development, and zoning-related permits, applications and licenses, information requests, pre-design consultations, and other specialty services. This division was formed to provide a multipronged approach to enhance methods for service delivery and communication for our clients. This heightened focus on service will include empowerment of staff to act as facilitators rather than regulators.

FY27 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY26 Approved	5,275,967	41.90
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	67,965	0.00
FY27 Recommended	5,343,932	41.90

☀ Land Development

The Land Development Division is responsible for ensuring the protection of the County's land and water resources; the protection of the environment[and the safety of residents and businesses through its engineering and inspection functions related to storm water management, sediment control, floodplain management, special protection areas, storm drain design and construction, roadside tree protection, tree canopy enhancement, well and septic system reviews and approvals, record plat approval, and work in the public right-of-way.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Number of inspections completed by Land Development inspectors	36,857	40,412	40,000	40,000	40,000
Number of plan reviews completed by Land Development plan reviewers	12,856	13,301	13,000	13,000	13,000
FY27 Recommended Changes			Expenditures	FTEs	
FY26 Approved			9,090,848	54.00	
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			176,251	0.00	
FY27 Recommended			9,267,099	54.00	

☀ Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance

The Residential Construction staff is responsible for ensuring public safety through the effective application of residential building, structural, electrical, mechanical, and energy conservation codes. This is accomplished through technical plan review and inspection processes.

The Fire Code Compliance staff is responsible for ensuring compliance with adopted National Fire Codes and Standards, the Montgomery County Fire Code, and the Maryland State Fire Prevention Code in existing buildings. This is accomplished through reviews and preventive inspection processes for businesses, schools, multi-family buildings, healthcare facilities, places of worship, and all other commercial buildings or occupancies.

The division staff respond to and investigate code violations and aid in recovery during disasters and other incidents.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Percent of plans for new residential construction receiving an initial review within 5 business days	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%
FY27 Recommended Changes			Expenditures	FTEs	
FY26 Approved			7,914,242	47.00	
Add: One Position for Fire Code Enforcement			157,858	1.00	
Decrease Cost: Eliminate Long-Term Vacancy			(93,813)	(1.00)	
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			146,845	1.00	
FY27 Recommended			8,125,132	48.00	

☀ Zoning and Code Compliance

The Zoning and Code Compliance Division protects the quality of life, public health, safety, and welfare of Montgomery County

residents. This is accomplished through the effective application and enforcement of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance development and use standards; Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) certified site plan requirements; and ensuring compliance of M-NCPPC certified site plan projects. Division Permit Specialists perform zoning reviews of plan applications prior to permit issuance, monitor applicant adherence to M-NCPPC certified site plans, and provide direct staff support to the Sign Review Board, M-NCPPC Development Review Committee, Predesign Consultation Services, and the Tower Committee - Transmission Facilities Coordination Group. Division field staff inspect for compliance with M-NCPPC certified site plan projects and conditional uses/special exceptions. Moreover, the division ensures zoning ordinance compliance through scheduled inspections, investigations of constituent complaints, and when necessary, issues civil citations, and enforces the orders issued by the Hearing Examiner, Board of Appeals, District Court, Circuit Court, and Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Number of inspections completed by Zoning inspectors	9,762	8,496	9,000	9,000	9,000
Number of plan reviews completed by Zoning reviewers	16,991	16,897	16,000	16,000	16,000

FY27 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY26 Approved	4,854,637	29.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(71,031)	(1.00)
FY27 Recommended	4,783,606	28.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY25	Budget FY26	Estimated FY26	Recommended FY27	%Chg Bud/Rec
PERMITTING SERVICES					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	28,600,827	30,374,276	30,032,603	31,567,514	3.9 %
Employee Benefits	7,743,550	8,653,295	8,124,038	9,161,900	5.9 %
Permitting Services Personnel Costs	36,344,377	39,027,571	38,156,641	40,729,414	4.4 %
Operating Expenses	4,667,738	9,460,193	7,800,565	9,478,267	0.2 %
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	50,000	—
Permitting Services Expenditures	41,012,115	48,487,764	45,957,206	50,257,681	3.7 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	244	246	246	247	0.4 %
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	252.03	254.03	254.03	255.03	0.4 %
REVENUES					
Building Permits	22,150,448	24,649,598	19,875,667	22,616,648	-8.2 %
Electrical Permits and Licenses	4,045,374	4,571,658	4,202,678	4,373,596	-4.3 %
Fire Code Enforcement Permits	2,141,184	2,012,462	1,876,631	2,512,757	24.9 %
Grading/Storm Drains/Paving/Driveway Permits	3,360,347	4,446,125	3,130,366	4,000,000	-10.0 %
Occupancy Permits	509,508	581,763	608,157	726,838	24.9 %

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY25	Budget FY26	Estimated FY26	Recommended FY27	%Chg Bud/Rec
Other Licenses/Permits	169,146	493,140	272,613	586,491	18.9 %
Sediment Control Permits	3,112,705	3,145,299	2,761,223	3,740,150	18.9 %
Sign Permits	189,048	201,696	219,980	250,000	23.9 %
Special Exception Fee	184,098	197,207	205,084	241,269	22.3 %
Stormwater Mgmt and Water Quality Plan Fee	204,939	197,207	183,042	327,385	66.0 %
Well and Septic	514,938	437,930	346,624	603,228	37.7 %
Automation Enhancement Fee	1,277	0	0	0	—
Other Charges/Fees	2,146,829	1,890,045	1,681,216	1,779,843	-5.8 %
Other Fines/Forfeitures	102,840	84,663	56,510	104,378	23.3 %
Miscellaneous Revenues	48,034	0	0	0	—
Investment Income	2,921,136	2,676,510	2,207,140	1,744,830	-34.8 %
Mechanical Construction Permit	2,205,764	2,173,243	2,244,392	2,450,664	12.8 %
Information Requests	0	139,756	137,058	151,185	8.2 %
Health Inspection: Restaurants	41,150	0	0	0	—
Permitting Services Revenues	44,048,765	47,898,302	40,008,381	46,209,262	-3.5 %

GRANT FUND - MCG

EXPENDITURES

Salaries and Wages	0	0	0	0	—
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Personnel Costs	0	0	0	0	—
Operating Expenses	6,981	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	6,981	0	0	0	—

PERSONNEL

Full-Time	0	0	0	0	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—

REVENUES

State Grants	9,941	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	9,941	0	0	0	—

DEPARTMENT TOTALS

Total Expenditures	41,019,096	48,487,764	45,957,206	50,257,681	3.7 %
Total Full-Time Positions	244	246	246	247	0.4 %
Total Part-Time Positions	0	0	0	0	—
Total FTEs	252.03	254.03	254.03	255.03	0.4 %
Total Revenues	44,058,706	47,898,302	40,008,381	46,209,262	-3.5 %

FY27 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

PERMITTING SERVICES

FY26 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION 48,487,764 254.03

Changes (with service impacts)

Add: One Position for Fire Code Enforcement [Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance]	157,858	1.00
Add: One Position for Permitting Services Commercial New Fast Track [Commercial Building Construction]	111,355	1.00

Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)

Increase Cost: FY27 Compensation Adjustment	1,367,516	0.00
Restore: Computer Maintenance Contract [Administration]	756,951	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Compensation Increases	214,520	0.00
Increase Cost: Risk Management Adjustment	86,900	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Lapsed Positions	62,356	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	55,972	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Personnel Costs	49,425	0.00
Decrease Cost: Eliminate Long-Term Vacancy [Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance]	(93,813)	(1.00)
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(102,987)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(141,324)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY26	(754,812)	0.00

FY27 RECOMMENDED 50,257,681 255.03

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY26 APPR Expenditures	FY26 APPR FTEs	FY27 REC Expenditures	FY27 REC FTEs
Administration	11,873,355	26.13	12,646,897	25.13
Commercial Building Construction	9,478,715	56.00	10,091,015	58.00
Customer Support & Outreach	5,275,967	41.90	5,343,932	41.90
Land Development	9,090,848	54.00	9,267,099	54.00
Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance	7,914,242	47.00	8,125,132	48.00
Zoning and Code Compliance	4,854,637	29.00	4,783,606	28.00
Total	48,487,764	254.03	50,257,681	255.03

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
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PERMITTING SERVICES**EXPENDITURES**

FY27 Recommended	50,258	50,258	50,258	50,258	50,258	50,258
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No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
Annualization of Positions Recommended in FY27	0	68	68	68	68	68
New positions in the FY27 budget are generally assumed to be filled at least three months after the fiscal year begins. Therefore, the above amounts reflect annualization of these positions in the outyears.						
Elimination of One-Time Items Recommended in FY27	0	(47)	(47)	(47)	(47)	(47)
Items recommended for one-time funding in FY27, including a new vehicle, IT equipment and uniforms, will be eliminated from the base in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	187	187	187	187	187
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	50,258	50,466	50,466	50,466	50,466	50,466

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY27 Recommended		FY28 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
One Position for Fire Code Enforcement	96,771	1.00	129,028	1.00
One Position for Permitting Services Commercial New Fast Track	108,055	1.00	144,073	1.00
Total	204,826	2.00	273,101	2.00

FY27-32 PUBLIC SERVICES PROGRAM: FISCAL PLAN

Permitting Services

FISCAL PROJECTIONS	FY26	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
	APPROVED	ESTIMATE	RECOMMENDED	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	PROJECTION
ASSUMPTIONS								
Indirect Cost Rate	19.98%	19.98%	13.01%	13.01%	13.01%	13.01%	13.01%	13.01%
CPI (Fiscal Year)	2.7%	2.4%	3.0%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
Investment Income Yield	4.1%	4.0%	3.3%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	35,662,933	36,871,930	22,235,329	12,022,465	22,331,999	23,164,186	23,977,540	24,721,955
REVENUES								
Licenses & Permits	43,107,328	35,926,457	42,429,025	43,383,678	44,203,630	44,990,454	45,782,287	46,592,634
Charges For Services	2,029,801	1,818,274	1,931,028	1,974,476	2,011,794	2,047,604	2,083,642	2,120,522
Fines & Forfeitures	84,663	56,510	104,378	106,726	108,743	110,679	112,627	114,620
Miscellaneous	2,676,510	2,207,140	1,744,830	1,610,610	1,610,610	1,610,610	1,610,610	1,610,610
Subtotal Revenues	47,898,302	40,008,381	46,209,261	47,075,490	47,934,777	48,759,347	49,589,166	50,438,386
ESFS Fee Increase				21,600,000	13,100,000	14,100,000	15,100,000	16,400,000
INTERFUND TRANSFERS (Net Non-CIP)								
Transfers To Debt Service Fund	(8,687,776)	(8,687,776)	(6,170,659)	(6,169,364)	(6,170,400)	(6,169,919)	(6,169,808)	(6,169,882)
Wheaton Redevelopment	(872,571)	(872,571)	(872,571)	(871,276)	(872,312)	(871,831)	(871,720)	(871,794)
Transfers To The General Fund	(7,815,205)	(7,815,205)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)
Indirect Costs	(7,815,205)	(7,815,205)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)	(5,298,088)
TOTAL RESOURCES	74,873,459	68,192,535	62,273,931	74,528,591	77,196,376	79,853,614	82,496,898	85,390,459
PSP OPER. BUDGET APPROP/ EXP'S.								
Operating Budget	(48,487,764)	(45,957,206)	(50,251,466)	(50,251,466)	(50,251,466)	(50,251,466)	(50,251,466)	(50,251,466)
Labor Agreement	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0
CPI-Fiscal Year for OE	n/a	n/a	n/a	(214,390)	(398,530)	(575,230)	(753,050)	(935,030)
Compensation Adjustment	n/a	n/a	n/a	(1,730,736)	(3,382,194)	(5,049,378)	(6,770,427)	(8,560,937)
Subtotal PSP Oper Budget Approp / Exp's	(48,487,764)	(45,957,206)	(50,251,466)	(52,196,592)	(54,032,190)	(55,876,074)	(57,774,943)	(59,747,433)
OTHER CLAIMS ON FUND BALANCE	0							
TOTAL USE OF RESOURCES	(48,487,764)	(45,957,206)	(50,251,466)	(52,196,592)	(54,032,190)	(55,876,074)	(57,774,943)	(59,747,433)
YEAR END FUND BALANCE	26,385,695	22,235,329	12,022,465	22,331,999	23,164,186	23,977,540	24,721,955	25,643,026
END-OF-YEAR RESERVES AS A								
PERCENT OF RESOURCES	35.2%	32.6%	19.3%	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%

Assumptions:

1. The projections are based on the Executive's recommended budget and include CPI, revenue, and resource assumptions in that budget. The projected future revenues and fund balances may vary based on changes to the EFSF, future labor agreements, increases in County administrative expenses, lease and maintenance expenses, and other factors not assumed here.
2. The fund balance policy is 30 percent of total resources.