



Glossary of Terms

501(c)3	Exempt tax status afforded to nonprofit organizations meeting certain criteria.
Accrual Basis of Accounting	A method of accounting that recognizes the financial effect of transactions, events, and inter-fund activities when they occur, regardless of the timing of related cash flows.
Actual(s)	Revenues and expenditures that occur in a prior fiscal year. Actuals differ from budgeted figures in that they represent the real disbursements and/or collections that take place subsequent to budget adoption.
Adjusted Gross Income	Adjusted Gross Income is the key before-tax definition of income used by the IRS to compute individual income tax liabilities and is defined as: "all income that is received in the form of money, property, and services and that is not explicitly exempt by law."
Adopted Budget	A plan of financial operations approved by the Board of Supervisors highlighting major changes made to the County Administrator's Proposed Budget. The Adopted Budget reflects approved tax rates and estimates of revenues, expenditures, transfers, and departmental goals, objectives, and performance/workload indicators. This document is commonly referred to as the Adopted Budget.
Annual Budget	An itemized listing of the amount of all estimated support and revenue that an organization anticipates receiving, along with a listing of all estimated costs and expenses that will be incurred in the operation of the organization over one fiscal year.
Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)	This official annual report, prepared by the Department of Finance and Budget, presents the status of the County's finances in a standardized format. The ACFR is organized by fund and contains two basic types of information: (1) a balance sheet that compares assets with liabilities and fund balance, and (2) an operating statement that compares revenues and expenditures.
Appropriation	A legal authorization granted by the Board of Supervisors to a specified organization, such as a unit of the County government or an affiliated regional organization, to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is limited in dollar amount and when it may be spent, usually expiring at the end of the fiscal year.
Appropriation Resolution	A legally binding document prepared by the Department of Finance and Budget which delineates by fund and department all expenditures and revenues adopted by the Board of Supervisors which are reflected in the Adopted Budget.
Assess	To place a value on property for tax purposes.
Assessed Valuation	The appraised value of a property for purposes of property taxation. The assigned valuation covers real and personal property at 100 percent valuation.
Assessment	A charge of money collected by the government from people or businesses for public use.
Asset	Owned resources, possibly held by Loudoun County, which have a monetary value.
Audit	A formal examination of an organization's or individual's accounts or financial situation.



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Basis Point	Equal to 1/100 of one percent. For example, if interest rates rise from 6.50 percent to 6.75 percent, the difference is referred to as an increase of 25 basis points.
Balanced Budget	A financial plan in which total expenditures equal total revenue and/or fund balance.
Base Budget	The cost of continuing existing levels of service in the upcoming budget year.
Benchmark	A factor or standard used to assess the effectiveness of a service or program in comparison with other organizations or jurisdictions.
Bond	A written promise to pay a specified sum of money (called the principal) at a specified date in the future, together with periodic interest at a specified rate. In the budget document, these payments are identified as debt service. Bonds may be used as an alternative to tax receipts to secure revenue for long-term capital improvements. County debt, to which the full faith and credit of the County is pledged, is approved by voter referendum. The State Constitution mandates taxes on real property sufficient to pay the principal and interest of such bonds. The majority of bonds issued for County and School construction projects are known as general obligation bonds.
Bond Rating	The rating of bonds as a statement of a locality's economic, financial, and managerial condition. The bond rating represents the business community's assessment of the investment quality of a local government.
Budget	A specific plan which identifies a plan of operations for the fiscal year, states the expenditures required to meet that plan of operations, and identifies the revenue necessary to finance the plan. The annual County budget is established by the Board of Supervisors' Appropriation Resolution.
Budget Calendar	Schedule of key dates which a government follows in the preparation and adoption of the budget.
Business, Professional, and Occupational License (BPOL)	Refers to the license tax that is levied upon the privilege of doing business or engaging in a profession, trade, or occupation in the County.
Capital Asset Preservation Program Fund	A fund established to ensure a consistent means of financing and planning for major countywide maintenance efforts. This fund provides a mechanism for the replacement and rehabilitation of major components of the School and County physical plant including structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and site-related efforts.
Capital Expenditures	Expenditures on all fixed assets with a value greater than \$10,000 and an expected life of 5 years or more.
Capital Facilities	Fixed assets, primarily buildings, acquired or constructed by the County.
Capital Improvement Program	The County's plan for future capital project expenditures. The six-year plan covers public facilities, resulting in the construction or acquisition of fixed assets, primarily buildings, but also including parks, land, landfills, etc.
Capital Outlay	Expenditures for items of a substantial nature that are expected to have a useful life of more than one year. Examples include personal computers, vehicles, radios, and furniture.



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Carryover Funds	Unexpended funds from the previous fiscal year which may be used to make payments in the current fiscal year. This is also referred to as the beginning fund balance.
Children’s Services Act for At-Risk Youth (CSA)	This is a joint project of the Departments of Family Services; Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Developmental Services; Finance and Budget; Finance and Procurement; Juvenile Courts; the School System and community service providers and private citizens. CSA is funded jointly by the State and the County. The project goal is to maintain, strengthen and reunify at-risk youth and their families.
Code of Virginia	The titles, chapters, articles, and sections of this Code contain the laws of the State.
Codified Ordinance	Regulation related to a specific code, such as the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)	See Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR).
Constituent	A resident in an electoral district.
Constitutional Officers	Officers or agencies directed by elected officials (Clerk of the Circuit Court, Commissioner of the Revenue, Commonwealth's Attorney, Sheriff, and Treasurer) whose positions are established by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia or its statutes.
Contractual Services	Services rendered to a government by private firms, individuals, or other governmental agencies.
County Seat	An administrative center of a community. Leesburg is the County Seat of Loudoun County.
County Zoning Map	The unincorporated areas of Loudoun County are divided into districts indicated on the Zoning Map. It is the final authority as to the current zoning status of land and water areas, buildings, and other structures in the County.
County Zoning Ordinance	This zoning ordinance was adopted by the County in conformance with the provisions of Title 15.1, Chapter 11, Article 8, of the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its purpose is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. The zoning ordinance is a means of controlling land use. For example, zoning ordinances can help to prevent traffic congestion, protect historic areas, and control population density.
Debt	An obligation resulting from the borrowing of money.
Debt Service	Funding as defined by the State Auditor of Public Accounts that finances and accounts for the payment of principal and interest on bonds.
Department	Basic organizational unit of the County government which is functionally unique in its service delivery responsibilities.
Depreciation	Expiration in the service life of capital assets attributable to wear and tear, deterioration, action of the physical elements, inadequacy, or obsolescence.
Division	Major organizational subunits.



Glossary

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)	The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) provides a central location to determine situational status, coordinate actions, and make critical decisions during emergency and disaster situations. Emergency Management staff maintains the EOC during routine operations. Personnel from various departments and agencies in the county along with key organizations outside the County comprise the EOC staff during activation.
Encumbrance	A reservation of funds for an anticipated expenditure prior to actual payment of an item. Funds are usually reserved or encumbered once a contract obligation has been signed, but prior to the actual disbursement of the cash payment.
Enhancement	“Enhancement” is a general term used for new initiatives that may consist of: (1) expansions or improvements to an existing program, (2) establishment of a new program, (3) a proposal to fund from local dollars a program which has previously been supported by non-local sources of revenue, or (4) an increase in revenue due to a new fee or an increase in fee rates.
Enterprise Funds	Funds used to account for operations (a) that are financed through dedicated user fees, or (b) where the Board of Supervisors has decided to appropriate funding for specific operations using a periodic determination of revenues earned, expenses incurred, and/or net income.
Equalization	An annual assessment of real estate to ensure that assessments accurately reflect current market values. Equalization revenue is the annual increase or decrease in collected revenue resulting from adjustments to the assessment of existing property in the County. This annual increase or decrease is due to value changes rather than to new construction.
Expenditures	Decreases in net financial resources not properly classified as other financing uses.
Facilities Standards Manual	A document by the Board of Supervisors which sets out specific regulations and design standards for such facilities as water/sewer service, roads and streets, soils review, etc.
Fiduciary Fund	Funding used to account for assets held by the County in a trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governments, and/or funds.
Fiscal Impact Model	A 20-year model developed to help the County plan for future population growth. The fiscal impact model determines the financial impact of growth on the County Government, quantifying the need for services and projecting the related expenditures for providing these services.
Fiscal Policy	A statement of the guidelines and goals that will influence and guide financial management practices.
Fiscal Trends	The statistical section of the document that provides a broad range of trend data covering key financial indicators with historical and current data. The fiscal trends section also contains demographic and miscellaneous data useful in assessing the County government’s financial condition.
Fiscal Year	This is the period of time measurement used by the County for budgeting and accounting purposes. The fiscal year consists of the twelve months beginning on July 1st and ending June 30th.



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FTE	Full-Time Equivalent, considering all full-time and part-time staff positions. Each full-time position working at least 1,950 hours per year is counted as one FTE. For part-time positions, one FTE consists of a cumulative 1,950 work hours per year.
Fund	A fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts recording cash and other financial resources, together with all related liabilities and residual equities, or balances and changes therein. Funds are segregated for the purpose of carrying out specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions or limitations.
Fund Balance	The amount of money or other resources remaining unspent or unencumbered in a fund at a specific point in time. This term usually refers to funding available at the end of the fiscal year.
Fund Type	A group of funds that have similar activities, objectives, or funding sources as defined by the State Auditor of Public Accounts.
GAAP	An acronym for Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, this term refers to uniform minimum standards for financial accounting and recording.
General Fund	The primary location of all financial activity associated with the ordinary operations of County government. Most taxes are accrued into this fund and transfers are made to the School, Debt Service, and Capital Projects funds as appropriate.
General Obligation Bond Financing	General Obligation bonds are approved by voter referendum and carry the full faith and credit of Loudoun County.
General Plan	An official public document, which is the product of citizen participation, the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors, County staff, and consultants. The General Plan is a long-range guide for growth, land use, and development decisions in the County and provides a framework for consistent future decision-making.
Geographic Information System (GIS)	The Geographic Information System (GIS) is a computer system used to assemble, store, manipulate, and display information about land in the County. GIS is a multi-departmental resource integrated with several of the County's other computer systems. It is used to manage and analyze land information, produce maps in support of the assessment process, manage zoning and health information, assist with the planning process, addressing County residences, and landfill management.
Goals	A general statement of purpose. A goal provides a framework within which the program unit operates; it reflects realistic constraints upon the unit providing the service. A goal statement speaks generally toward end results rather than toward specific actions (e.g., "minimize unemployment among disadvantaged youth").
Grant	A contribution by one organization to another. The contribution is usually made to aid in the support of a specified function, such as health care, housing, crime prevention, etc.
Intergenerational Equity	This is one of the concepts that underlie the issuance of long-term debt for capital projects. If a facility has an expected useful life of 20-40 years, there is a rationale for linking the payment for the facility to the beneficiaries of the facility. In other words, future users of the facility will also pay their share of the construction cost of the facility through debt service payments.



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Intergovernmental Revenue	Revenue from other governments, such as the State and Federal government, in the form of grants, entitlements, shared revenue, or payments in lieu of taxes.
Landfill Fee Waiver	The forgoing of the tipping fee charged for use of the County's landfill. Organizations which are granted fee waivers must meet the following criteria: (1) the organizations must apply for the exemption, (2) the organization must be a governmental or nonprofit entity with IRS 501 status, and (3) the organization must provide a service for the public good.
Lease Purchase	A method of financing that allows the County to construct or acquire property and pay for it over a period of time by installment payments rather than an outright purchase. The time payments include an interest charge, which is typically reduced because the lessor does not have to pay income tax on the interest revenue.
Levy	The imposition of taxes for the support of government activities.
Liabilities	Obligations incurred in past or current transactions requiring present or future settlement.
Liquidity	Funds consisting, or capable, of ready conversion into cash.
Regional Gasoline Tax	This is a 7.6 cent per gallon tax on gasoline sold in the County. Regional gasoline tax collections are directed to a special account maintained by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC).
Local Tax Funding	Represents funds that the Board of Supervisors may allocate from general tax revenues to supplement revenues received by a program.
Long-Term Debt	Debt with a maturity of more than one year after the date of issuance.
Merit Increase	An increase in an employee's base salary granted based on meeting certain performance standards and approval by the Board.
Mission Statement	A written description stating the purpose of an organizational unit (department or agency) and its function.
Modified Accrual Basis of Accounting	Basis of accounting according to which (a) revenues are recognized in the accounting period in which they become available and measurable and (b) expenditures are recognized in the accounting period in which the fund liability is incurred (if measurable). Under this approach, immature interest on general long-term debt and certain similar accrued obligations are recognized when due.
Non-Revenue Receipt	Assets received by the County which are not in the form of cash, such as federal food commodities received at the Juvenile Detention Home and donated land from developers in the form of proffers. These are entered in the County records at their fair market value at the time of receipt.
Object Classification	A grouping of expenditures on the basis of goods or services purchased, such as personal services, materials, supplies, equipment, etc.
Objective	A statement of purpose defined more specifically than a goal. Objectives describe specific measurable outputs within a designated timeframe (e.g., "increase the number of children qualifying as Level I swimmers by 20%").



Glossary

Obligation	A future expenditure requirement incurred by voluntary agreement or legal action.
Overlapping Debt	The debt issuer's (County's) proportionate share of the debt of other local governmental units such that the issuer (the County) is located either wholly or partly within the geographic limits of the other units. The debt is generally apportioned based upon relative assessed value. For example, debt issued by a regional organization with which the County is affiliated would be overlapping debt of the County.
Overmatch	The amount of local tax funding over and above the amount required to leverage federal and state grant revenue.
Parcel Mapping	The process of producing maps of land parcels in the County. These parcels serve as units for assessing taxes.
Pay-As-You-Go	A term used to describe the practice of financing certain capital expenditures using current revenue as opposed to borrowing.
Performance Measures	Data collected to assess a program's progress toward achieving established objectives and goals.
Personal Property	A category of property other than real estate, identified for purposes of taxation, including personally owned items, corporate property, and business equipment. Examples include automobiles, motorcycles, trailers, boats, airplanes, business furnishing, and manufacturing equipment. Goods held for sale by manufacturers, wholesalers, or retailers (i.e., inventory) are not included.
Policy	A high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures of the governing body.
Private Contributions/Donations	These donations are usually from private citizens, typically one-time, non-recurring donations of cash or property.
Proffer	An offer of cash or property. This usually refers to property, cash, or structural improvements, offered by contractors/developers to the County in land development projects. An example is a proffer of land from a developer to the County.
Program	This is a plan or unit under which action may be taken towards meeting an individual or set of goal(s) in the provision of a particular service. Examples of County government programs include fleet management, field services, outpatient services and the Loudoun Youth Initiative.
Property Tax Rate	The rate of taxes levied against real or personal property expressed as dollars per \$100 of assessed valuation of the property taxed.
Proposed Budget	A plan of financial operations submitted by the County Administrator to the Board of Supervisors. This plan reflects estimated revenues, expenditures, transfers, and departmental goals, objectives, and performance/workload indicators. In addition, sections are included to show major budgetary/financial policies and guidelines used in the County's fiscal management. The document is commonly referred to as the Proposed Budget.
Proprietary Fund Types	Funds that account for County activities which are similar to private sector businesses. These funds measure net income, financial position and changes in financial position.



Glossary

Prorate Tax System	A system in which taxes are assessed proportionally during the year.
Public Service Property	Property specifically designated for public service use, as determined by the State Corporation Commission. This category includes designated real property, such as land and buildings and other property, such as computers, copiers and cash registers.
Rating Agencies	The organizations which provide publicly available ratings of the credit quality of securities issuers. The term is most often used to refer to the nationally recognized agencies, Moody's Investors Service, Inc., Standard & Poor's Corporation, and Fitch Investors.
Real Property	Real estate, including land and improvements (building, fencing, paving), classified for purposes of tax assessment.
Referendum	The principle or practice of submitting to popular vote a measure passed on or proposed by a legislative body or by popular initiative.
Regional Organization	Organizations to which the County is either a member or contributes as a funding source.
Resolution	A formal expression of opinion will, or intent voted by an official body or assembled group.
Revenue	An increase in assets or financial resources. Revenue types are from local sources, from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Federal Government, and from Non-Revenue Receipts (other Financing Sources).
Revolving Loan Fund	A fund established by the Board of Supervisors for County government, School, and Fire and Rescue company capital projects. Loans from the fund must be repaid back into the fund.
Rollback taxes	Amount of the difference between the taxes calculated for a property with and without the exemption for the previous five years.
Short-Term Debt	Debt with a maturity of less than one year after the date of issuance.
Special District	An independent unit of local government organized to perform a single governmental function or a restricted number of related functions. Special districts usually have the power to incur debt and levy taxes; however, certain types of special districts are entirely dependent upon enterprise earnings and cannot impose taxes. Examples of special districts are the Route 28 Special Improvement District and the Metrorail Service District.
State and Federal Grant Fund	A governmental fund type used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources (other than for major capital projects) that are legally restricted to expenditure for specified purposes.
State Compensation Board	A State Board that determines the rate of State funding toward the total cost of office operations for Constitutional Officers.
Step Increase	An increase in base salary from the dollar amount of one step to the dollar amount of the next higher step on a grade and step pay plan. A step increase typically occurs due to a merit increase, which is approved by the Board.
Task Force	A group of individuals organized to discuss and research a particular topic. Task forces are often used as advisory groups on a given topic.



Glossary

Tax Base

The aggregate value of taxed items. The base of the County’s real property tax is the market value of all real estate in the County. The base of the personal property is the market value of all automobiles, trailers, boats, business equipment, etc., which are taxed as personal property by the County. The tax base of a sales tax is the total volume of taxable sales.