

Proposed Budget FY2027

February 17, 2026

County Administrator: Bill Ashton

Balancing Community Needs with Fiscal Reality

Through Efficiency, Value and
Focused Priorities



STAFFORD
Virginia

FY2025 Budget awarded GFOA's Distinguished Budget Award (36th consecutive year)

FY2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report awarded GFOA's Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting (43rd consecutive year)

Maintained Stafford's three AAA bond ratings, secured first ever AAA bond rating for Utilities for Smith Lake and Little Falls treatment facility improvements

New high school and two elementary schools under construction, with two more in the pipeline

Have four major road safety improvement projects under construction, for a total of more than \$70,000,000, plus multiple other transportation projects in design

Named a Stroke Smart Community

Increase in New Meals and Transient Occupancy Tax going directly to the School's Operating Budget, and to support Parks capital projects

Economic Development Launched Legacy Business Recognition Program

Created Data Center and Solar Farm ordinances, as well as a dedicated webpage with info on data centers

Stafford won third place for best technology practices in the 2205 Digital Counties Survey



STAFFORD
Cares

Added two new farms to the PDR program for a total of 1,317 protected acres plus partnered with NVCT to add more acreage to Crow's Nest

Renovated the Board Chambers and lobby of the Government Center to provide better service to residents

Created an interactive water outage map for Utilities customers

Built a new \$8.5 million cell at the Regional Landfill

Helped open the African American Heritage Trail

Opened the first park in Rock Hill – Friends of Havoc Dog Park

Created first ever Transportation Master Plan

Little Falls and Aquia wastewater treatment plants won Platinum Performance Awards

Stafford Won a National Government Experience Award, Stafford won VACo and NACo awards for the Start on Success high school student program for disabled students

Treasurer's Office achieved Accreditation

Sheriff's Office applied and made Stafford a Certified Crime Prevention Community

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Stafford County 2025 Profile

MEDIAN HOME
MARKET PRICE

\$545,000

UNEMPLOYMENT

3.4%

POPULATION

168,900

OWNER-OCCUPIED
RATE

80.5%

MEDIAN INCOME

\$137,807

POVERTY RATE

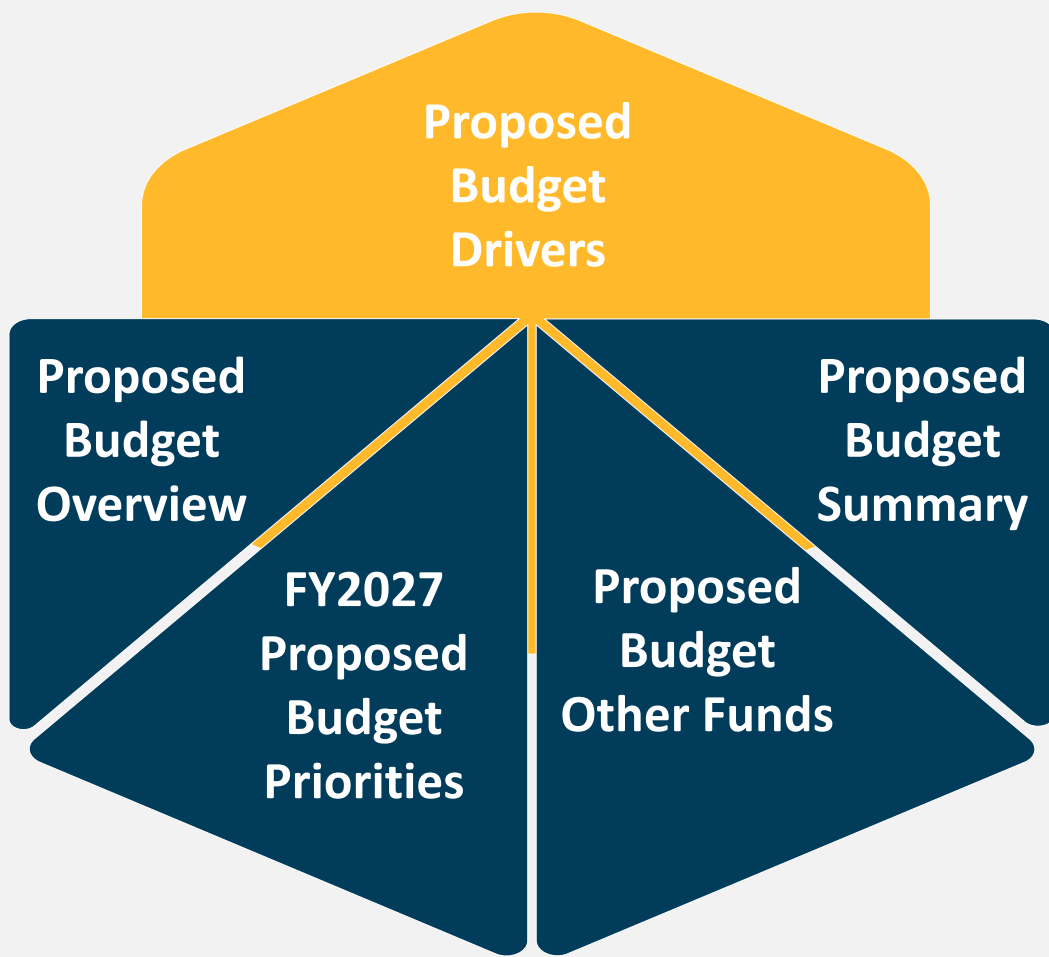
5.40%

Stafford Rankings

7 Comparable Jurisdictions

Albemarle County
Chesterfield County
Hanover County
Henrico County
James City County
Prince William County
Spotsylvania County
Stafford County





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Education Drivers

By the numbers:

~+900

New Students

Based on the division's ten-year projection model, student enrollment is projected to grow modestly over the next five years at 3%

\$9M

New Debt

Education-related debt now represents more than 78% of total County debt, largely driven by the construction of three new schools over a two-year period

\$10.6M

New Operations

New school facilities require ongoing operational support and significant investment to maintain and operate effectively

\$17.6M

CIP Major Projects

Beyond three new schools, additional needs include two rebuilds, an arts wing, and system upgrades

Mandatory, Community Partners and Inflationary Drivers

\$4.5M

Public Safety

ARPA Costs
Motorola and Radio Costs
Computer-Aided Dispatch

\$4.5M

Partners

Rappahannock Regional Jail
Juvenile Detention Center
Library

\$2.1M

Ongoing Costs

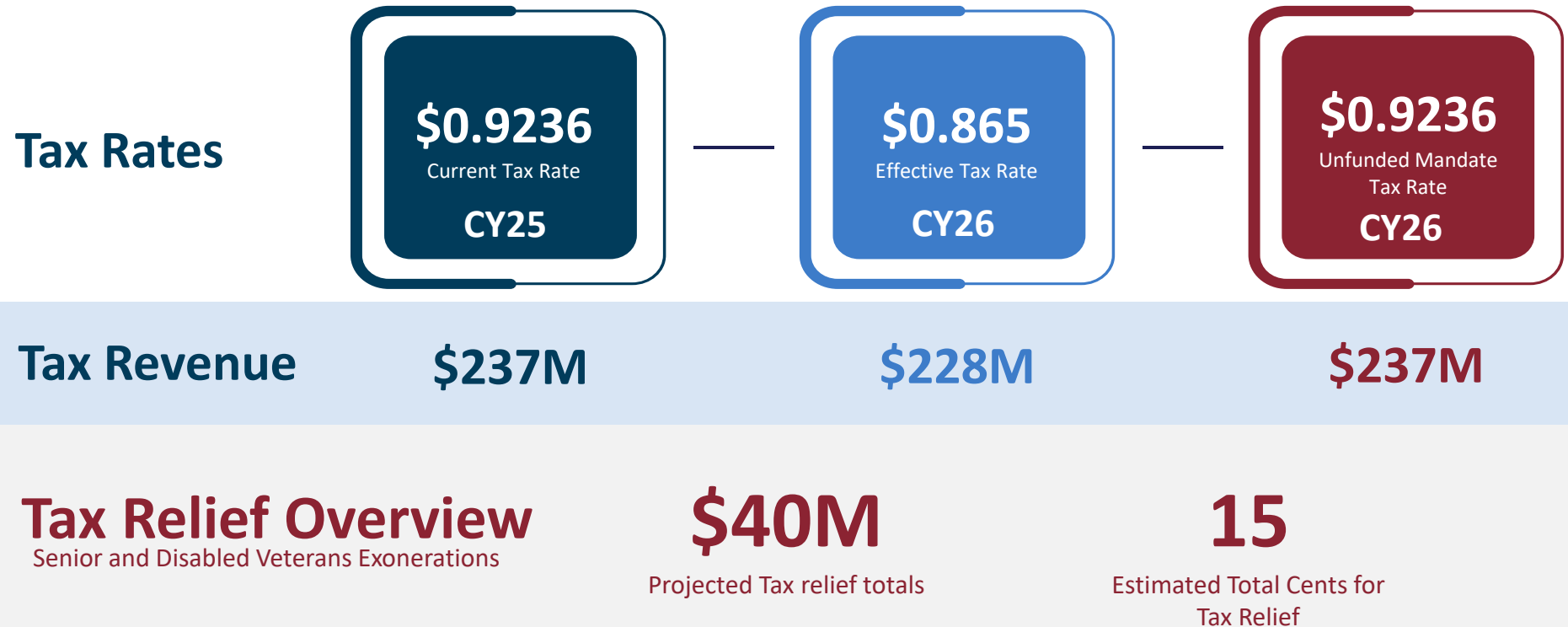
Contracts and Inflation Increase
Technology and M365 Expenses
Building and Maintenance Costs

\$1.3M

Mid-Year Decisions

Social Services and
Commonwealth Attorney
Positions
Mid-Year Pay Increases

Unfunded Mandate Drivers – Declining Revenue Base



Reflects mandatory community commitments and rising service costs

\$12.5M

New schools add debt service and ongoing operating costs

\$19.2M

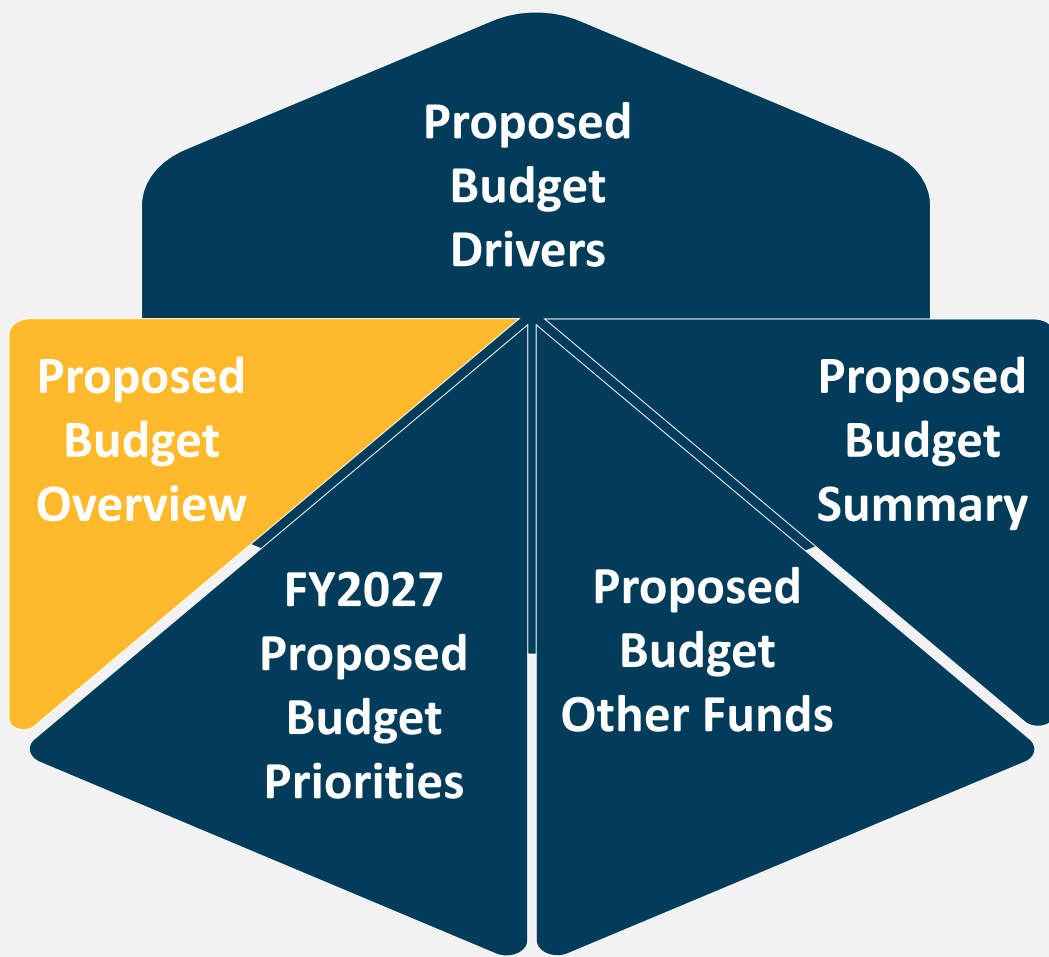
Unfunded tax relief mandates continue to increase

\$12M

16.6 cents

The FY2027 budget was developed with a baseline requirement of a nearly \$44 million increase to fund public safety, education, and rising costs.

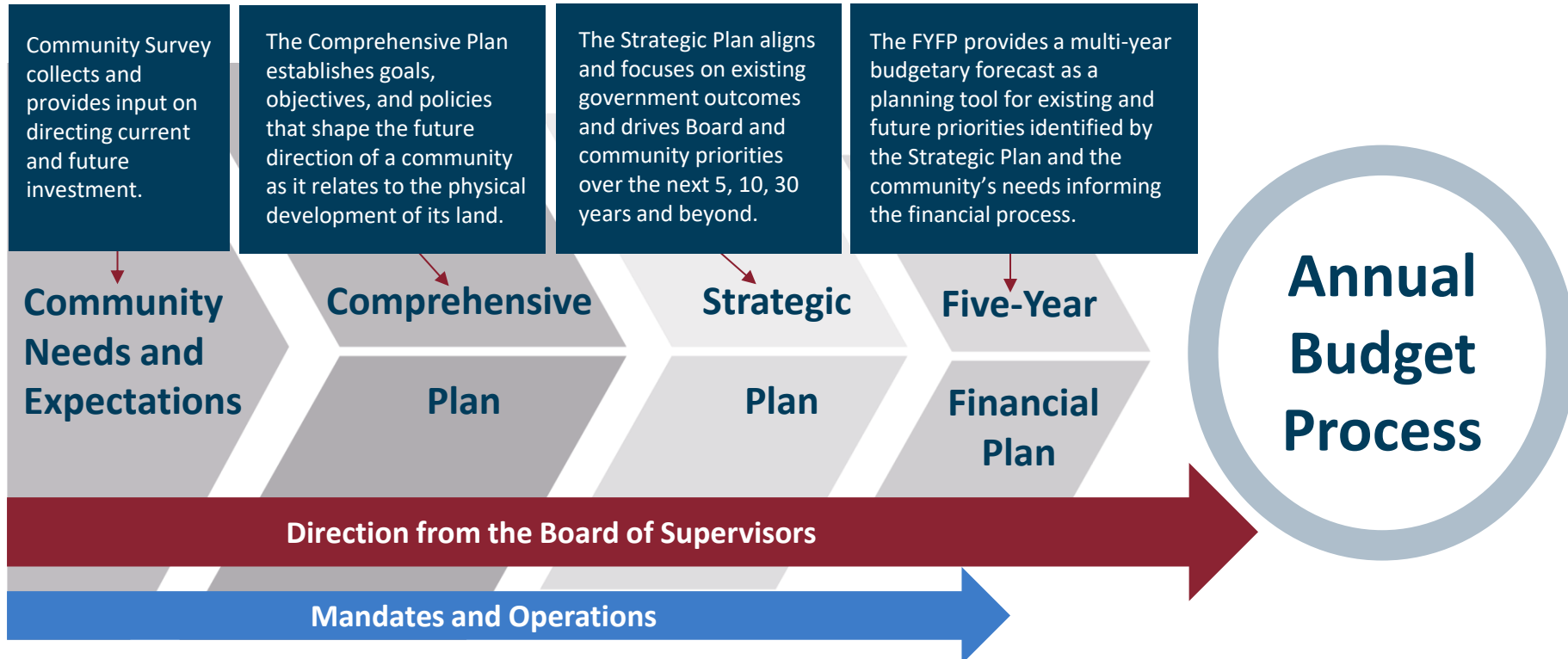
FY27 Budget Drivers



Balancing Community Needs with Fiscal Reality

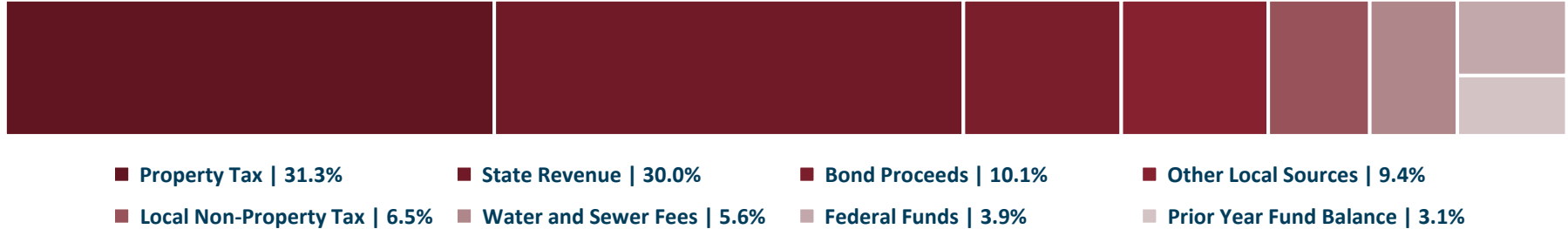
Through Efficiency, Value and Focused Priorities

Financial Planning Process

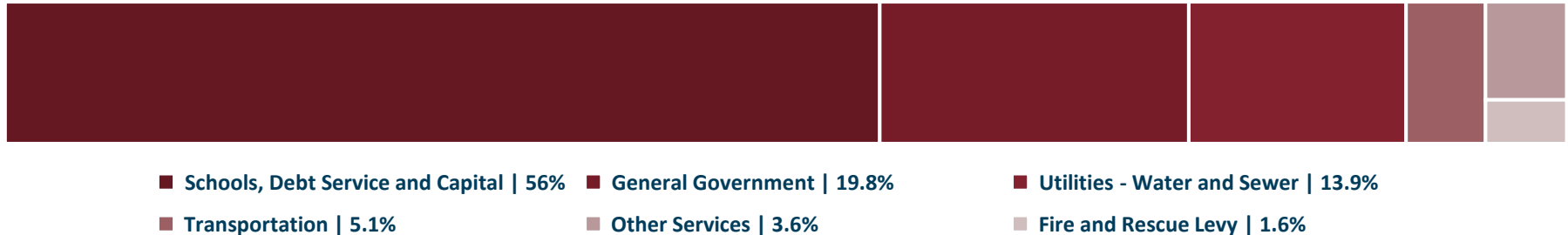


Proposed Budget Overview – FY2026 All Funds

All Funds Revenues



All Funds Expenditures



All Funds Total: \$1,127,212,614

Proposed Budget Overview – FY2027 General Fund

General Fund Revenues



■ Property Tax 69.9%	■ Local Non-Property Taxes 12.9%	■ State Revenue 4.5%	■ One Time Revenue 3.7%
■ Shared Expenses 1.9%	■ Charges for Services 1.6%	■ Use of Money and Property 1.5%	■ Miscellaneous Revenue 1.3%
■ Federal Revenue 1.1%	■ Permits, Fees, and Licenses 1.1%	■ Fines and Forfeitures 0.2%	■ Transfers In/Other 0.2%

General Fund Expenditures



■ Education 49.5%	■ Public Safety 23.4%	■ Non-Departmental 7.1%
■ General Government 5.6%	■ Health and Social Services 4.9%	■ Parks, Recreation and Cultural 3.8%
■ Judicial Administration 3.0%	■ Public Works 1.6%	■ Community Development 1.1%

General Fund Total: \$498,568,038

Budget Overview

Revenues

Proposed FY27 Tax Rate | **\$0.985**
(\$0.9236 FY26 Adopted)

Proposed FY27 Fire Levy | **\$0.014**
(\$0.0131 FY26 Adopted)

Property tax revenue increase | **10.4%**

Increase in tax relief | **38%**

Consumption tax revenue increase | **10.2%**

Median assessed home value | **\$477,100**

Average tax bill | **\$4,699**

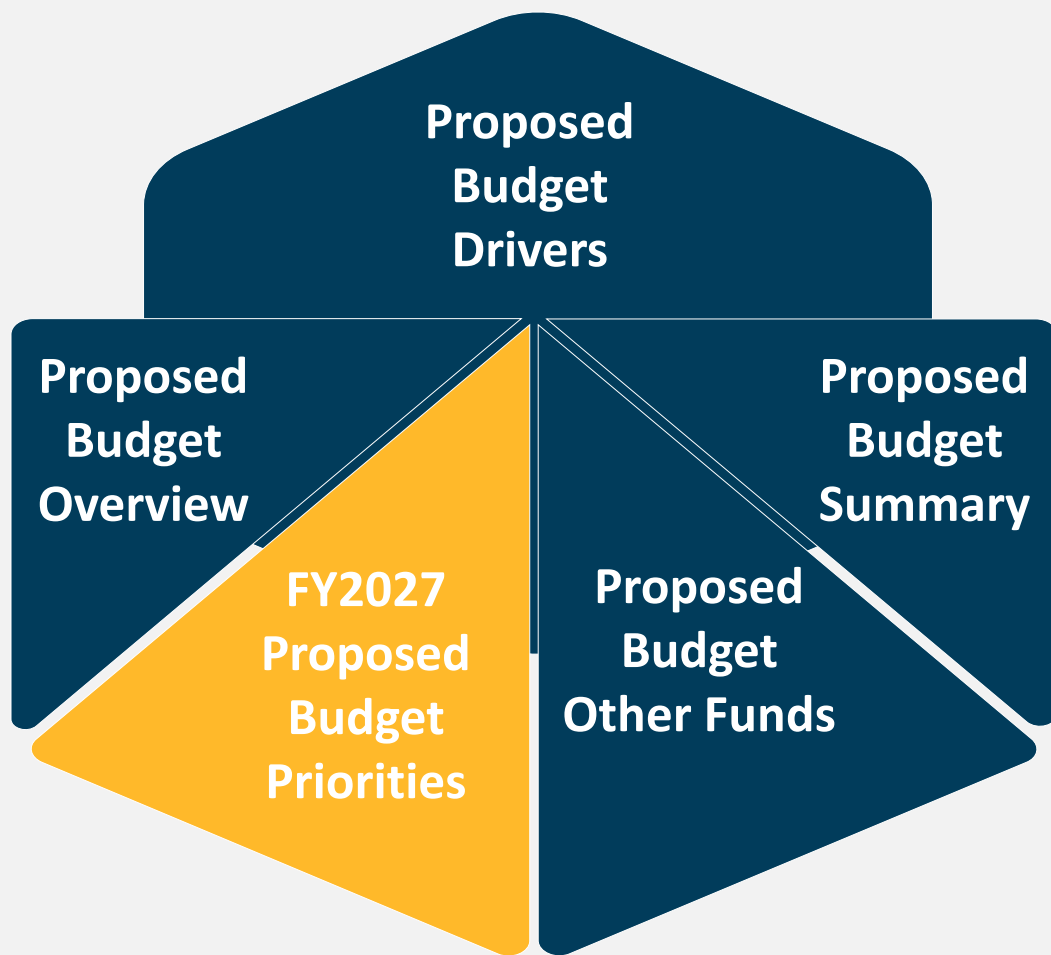
Expenditures

Overall General Fund increase | **9.9%**

Overall School Operating Fund increase | **10.5%**

General Fund Operating Budget Drivers

- Education Funding \$24.0M
- Transportation \$9.4M
- Public Safety Support \$6.3M
- General Gov. Support \$3.6M



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PROPOSED BUDGET PRIORITIES

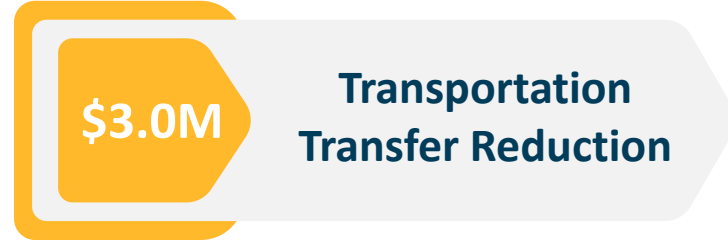
Balancing Community Needs with Fiscal Reality

Through Efficiency: Stewardship in a
Constrained Revenue Environment

Value: Safeguarding Educational and Workforce
Outcomes

Focused Priorities: Strategic Advancement
Despite Revenue Constraints

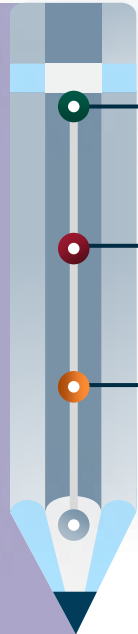
Budget Efficiencies



Prioritizing Educational Value

The FY27 Proposed
Budget includes a:

\$24M
Increase



\$10.5M

New Schools Operations and
Public Day School Increases

\$4.5M

Pay increases for School teachers
and staff

\$9.0M

Three new schools' impact to
debt service

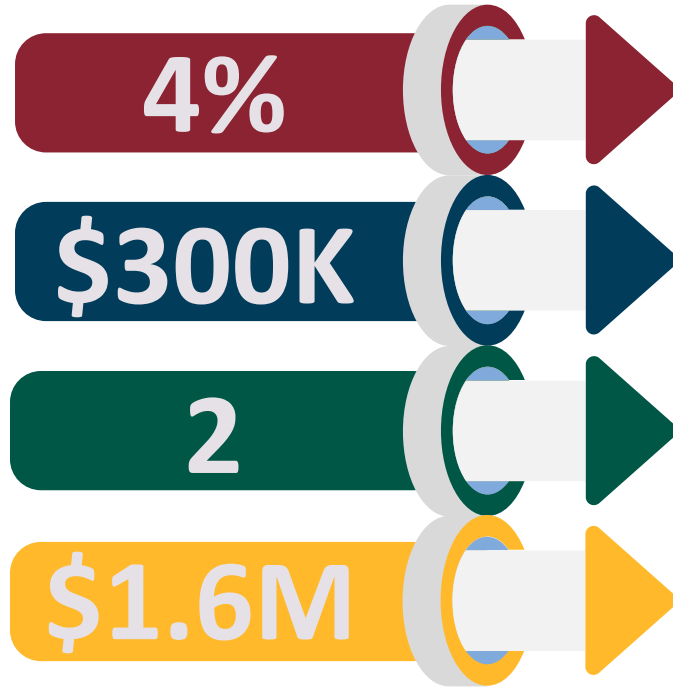


ENGAGE IN PARTNERSHIPS TO
PROVIDE QUALITY EDUCATIONAL
AND WELLNESS OPPORTUNITIES



Valuing a High-Performing Workforce

The Proposed Budget Includes:



Adjusted compensation across public safety and general government to remain competitive in the labor market and competitiveness

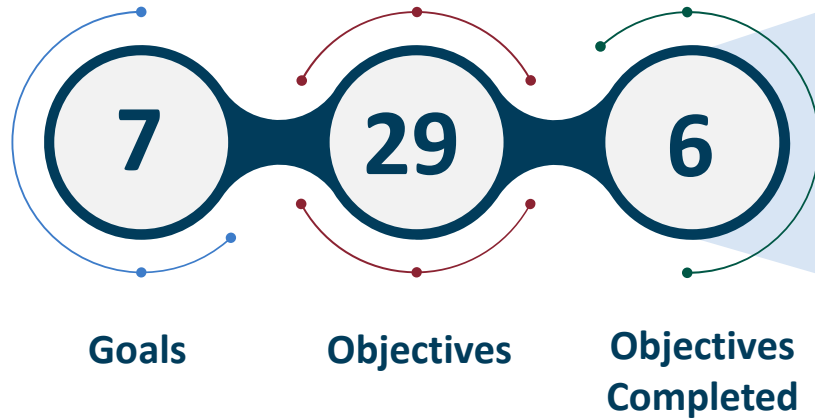
Targeted compensation adjustments for Fire and Rescue and the Sheriff's Office to account for overtime demands and address pay compression

Two new positions in the Proposed Budget—one in Procurement and one in Fire and Rescue—both are revenue-neutral

Ongoing increases in the health insurance market necessitate higher employer contributions to sustain competitive, comprehensive coverage for our workforce

Focused Priorities

The Board approved a new Strategic Plan set of Five-Year priorities in 2023 for the Stafford County 2040 Vision – 2024-2029.



1.1 Transportation

Establish consistent Board discussions throughout the year, focusing on multimodal transportation efforts that incorporate education, funding, and planning.

2.1 Education

Remain committed to ongoing communication with the School System to address and elevate educational challenges facing the community.

2.3 Wellness

Engage the community through current and new events and programs, in collaboration with identified community partners and organizations.

4.5 Growth

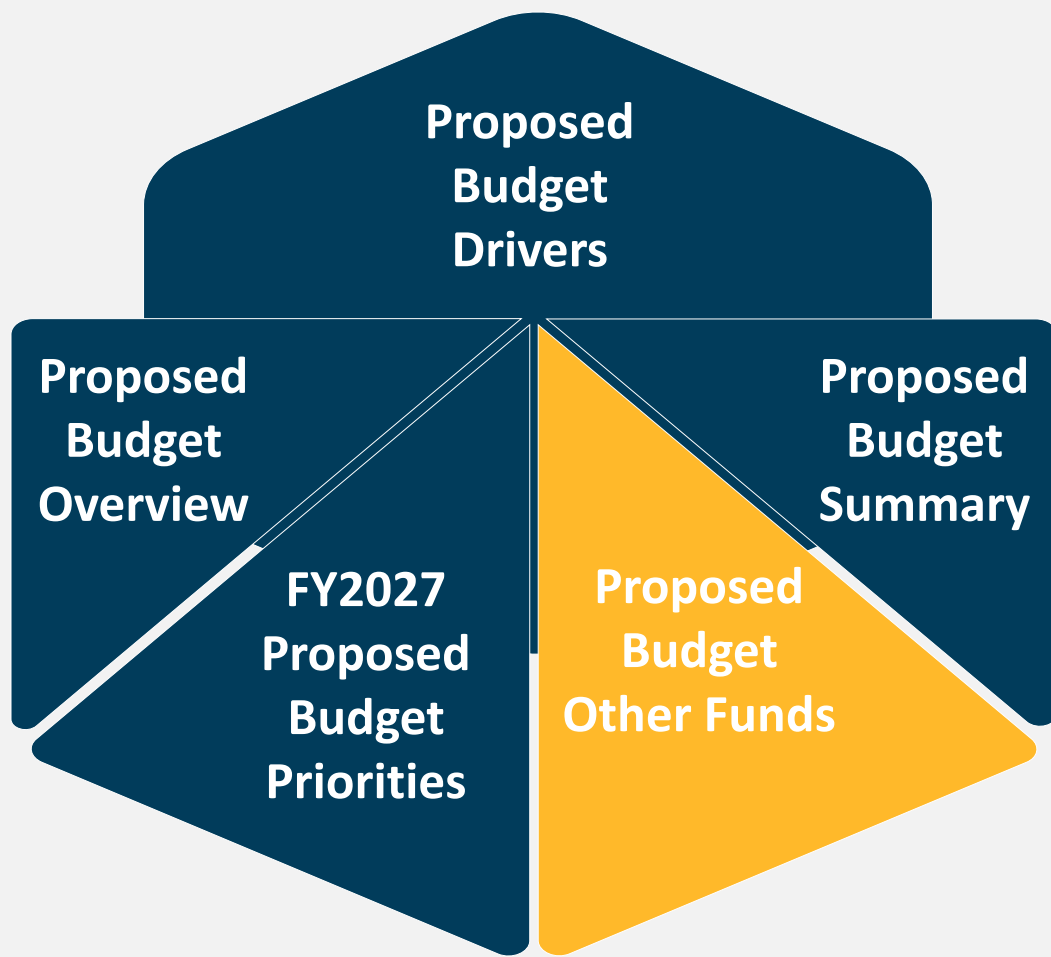
Research and present actionable solutions for workforce housing.

6.1 Public Safety

Continue efforts to reassess Stafford County's public safety salary scale to maximize retention and recruitment.

7.1 Governance

Evaluate and propose Board support options that focus on community outreach and communication.



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FY2027 Capital Program

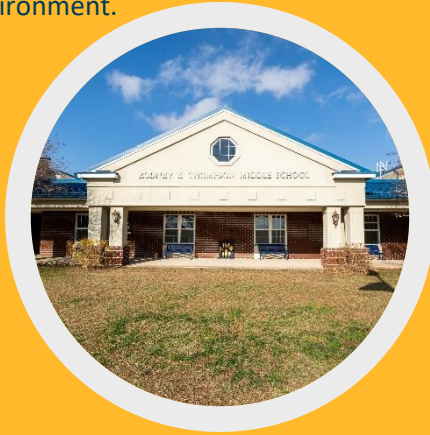
\$18.3M

Efforts continue on the new Courthouse facility, which will replace the current one located at the Government Center.



\$9.7M

The Rodney Thompson Middle School project replaces end-of-life mechanical systems and provides a refreshed learning environment.



\$700K

The Carl Lewis Community Center replacement will add an ADA-accessible hall, a commercial kitchen, and improved parking.



\$5.1M

The North Stafford High School Fine Arts Wing project will add and renovate dedicated orchestra, drama, and music spaces to support the fine and performing arts programs.



Transportation Fund \$4.9M



DEVELOP A MULTIMODAL
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

\$4.3M

US-17 Business
STARS Improvements

Stefaniga Road and
Mountain View Road
Intersection
Improvement

Transportation remains a key budget priority, with continued investment supporting critical roadway projects, enhancing connectivity, and accommodating continued growth.



IMPROVING ROADS
FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

\$20.0M

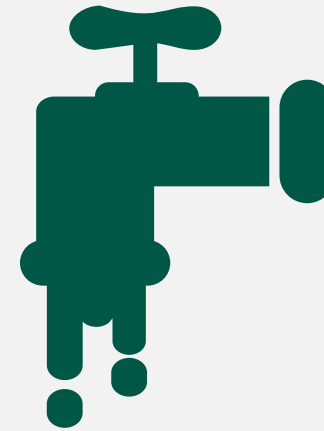
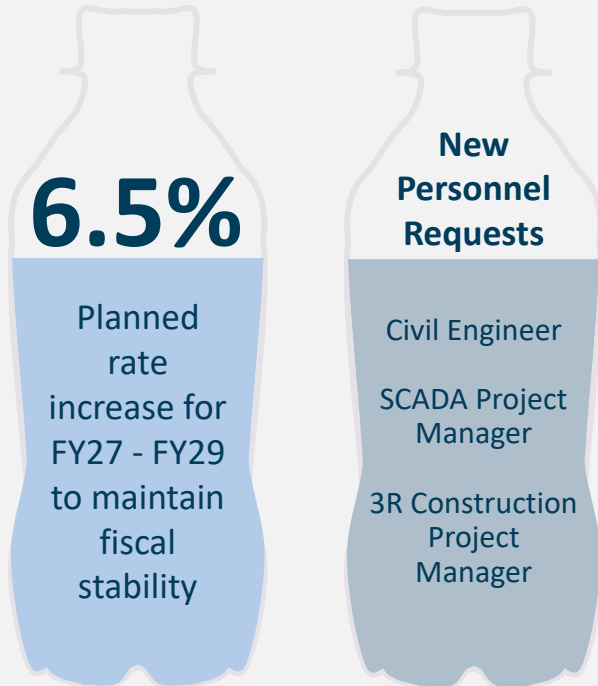
Enon Road and Route 1 Improvements

\$15.6M

Projects in Design:

- Route 628 Left Turn Lanes at Route 1
- Shelton Shop Road Improvements
- Leeland Road Widening
- Route 1 and Layhill Road Intersection Improvements

Utilities Fund



\$166M

Total Fund

Major Capital Improvements

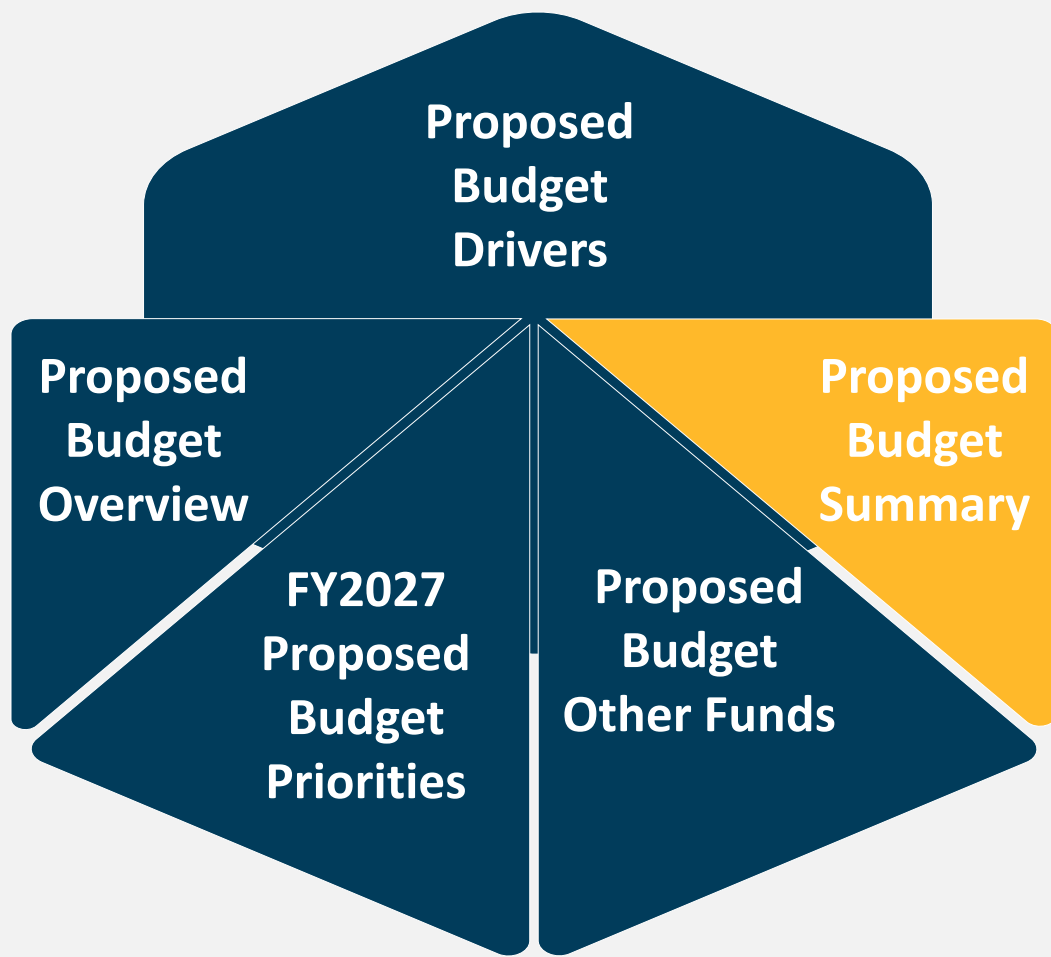
Little Falls Run Wastewater Plant Upgrades

Smith Lake Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

PFAS – Water Regulatory Planning

New Utilities Facility

The proposed 6.5% utility rate increase for FY27–FY29 continues the prior rate strategy and is based on an updated, independent rate study. Supports long-term stability and predictable, customer-friendly rate adjustments.



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Feb
2026**17** County Administrator Proposes FY2027 Budget**18** Individual Meetings with BoS Members**24** Budget Work Session (BWS): General Fund**26** Joint SB/BoS BWS: Schools Presents Budget NeedsMar
2026**03** Authorize the Advertisement of Public Hearings: FY2027 Budget, FY2027-2036 CIP, VPSA Bond Issuance, and CY2026 Tax Rates**24** BWS: General Fund, CIP, and other topics to provide additional information prior to the public hearings**31** BWS: Other FundsApr
2026**07** Special Called Public Meeting: FY2027 Budget, FY2027-2036 CIP, VPSA Bond Issuance, CY2026 Tax Rates**08** Individual Meetings with BoS Members**16** Joint SB/BoS BWSApr
2026**20** BWS: Finalize Proposed Budget**21** Public Hearings and Adopt: Utilities Rates and Other Ordinances, if needed**21** Adopt CY2026 Tax Rates, FY2027 Budget, FY2027-2036 CIP, and VPSA Bond Issuance

March 30 – April 6, 2026 Schools' Spring Break
CIP - Capital Improvements Plan

FY2027 BUDGET CALENDAR

WWW.STAFFORDCOUNTYVA.GOV/BUDGET

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Responsible Stewardship. **Focused Priorities.**
Protecting Educational and Workforce Outcomes While
Advancing the Community in a Constrained Revenue
Environment.

