

Full Disclosure in Fairfax County's FY2010 Advertised Budget Plan

WHEREAS Fairfax County's Fiscal Year 2010 Advertised Budget Plan ("FY2010 Advertised Budget") will include a variety of expectations, presumptions and recommendations with respect to revenue sources ("Revenue Sources") and funding levels for County services ("Funding Levels") including but not limited to the transfer to Fairfax County Public Schools ("School Transfer"), and will be a major basis for public comment in eventual hearings before the Board of Supervisors ("BOS") as the BOS prepares to adopt a final FY2010 Budget Plan; and

WHEREAS according to guidance previously given by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors ("BOS") the FY2010 Advertised Budget will also include as part of Revenue Sources any change in residential and commercial real property tax rates (collectively "Tax Rate") needed to support the Funding Levels, including the School Transfer, and the Tax Rate so advertised will represent the highest rate which may be later adopted by the BOS; and

WHEREAS in recognition of serious budget deficit issues caused by general economic conditions, but particularly the decline in residential real estate assessments which historically is the major source of County revenue, the County and Fairfax County Public Schools ("FCPS") have conducted lines of business reviews ("Reviews") aimed at identifying cost savings and have jointly conducted a series of open public dialogues and provided on-line comment opportunities (collectively "Dialogues") allowing citizens to comment on County services and budget priorities and make suggestions on addressing the expected deficit; and

WHEREAS County and FCPS websites detail the comments and suggestions from the Dialogues and indicate that participating citizens generally encouraged continuing Reviews and identification of new revenue sources but also demonstrated both satisfaction with current County service levels with FCPS, public safety and certain social services such as mental health as particular priorities, and an understanding that Tax Rates (as distinguished from actual tax bills) would need to increase or other sources found to avoid serious consequences to County services and to FCPS; and

WHEREAS in view of information from the Dialogues, public discourse on budgetary priorities and the appropriate balance of services and tax burden would be enhanced and would provide superior input to the BOS in adopting the eventual FY2010 Budget, if the FY2010 Advertised Budget included Funding Levels necessary to, at a minimum, maintain all current County services, including FCPS, including additional costs from growth, employee benefits and ordinary expectable compensation increases, other rising expenses or decline in state or federal funding, as well as necessary enhancements, together with the Revenue Source enhancements, including Tax Rates, which would be needed to support and balance those Funding Levels;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations, in order to improve and enhance public discourse on budgetary priorities and the appropriate balance between County services and tax burden, respectfully requests the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to direct the County Executive to include in the FY2010 Advertised Budget Plan at a minimum those Funding Levels and Revenue Enhancements, including Tax Rates, necessary to maintain both County and Fairfax County Public Schools services at current levels, including any additional costs related to growth, employee benefit and reasonable compensation increases, other rising costs or decline in state or federal funding, as well as any needed enhancements to services.