



What is a budget?

Office of Management & Budget



What is a budget?

- A. A car rental company
- B. A statement of an organization's values and priorities
- C. A 565-page document published by OMB
- D. A way of balancing income and expenditures



A budget is four things

- **A budget is a statement of facts:** *this is what we spent last year*
- **A budget is a forecast:** *this is how much things will cost next year*
- **A budget is a plan:** *this is what we'll do and how we'll pay for it*
- **A budget is a commitment:** *here is how we can afford this long-term*



A budget is a statement of facts



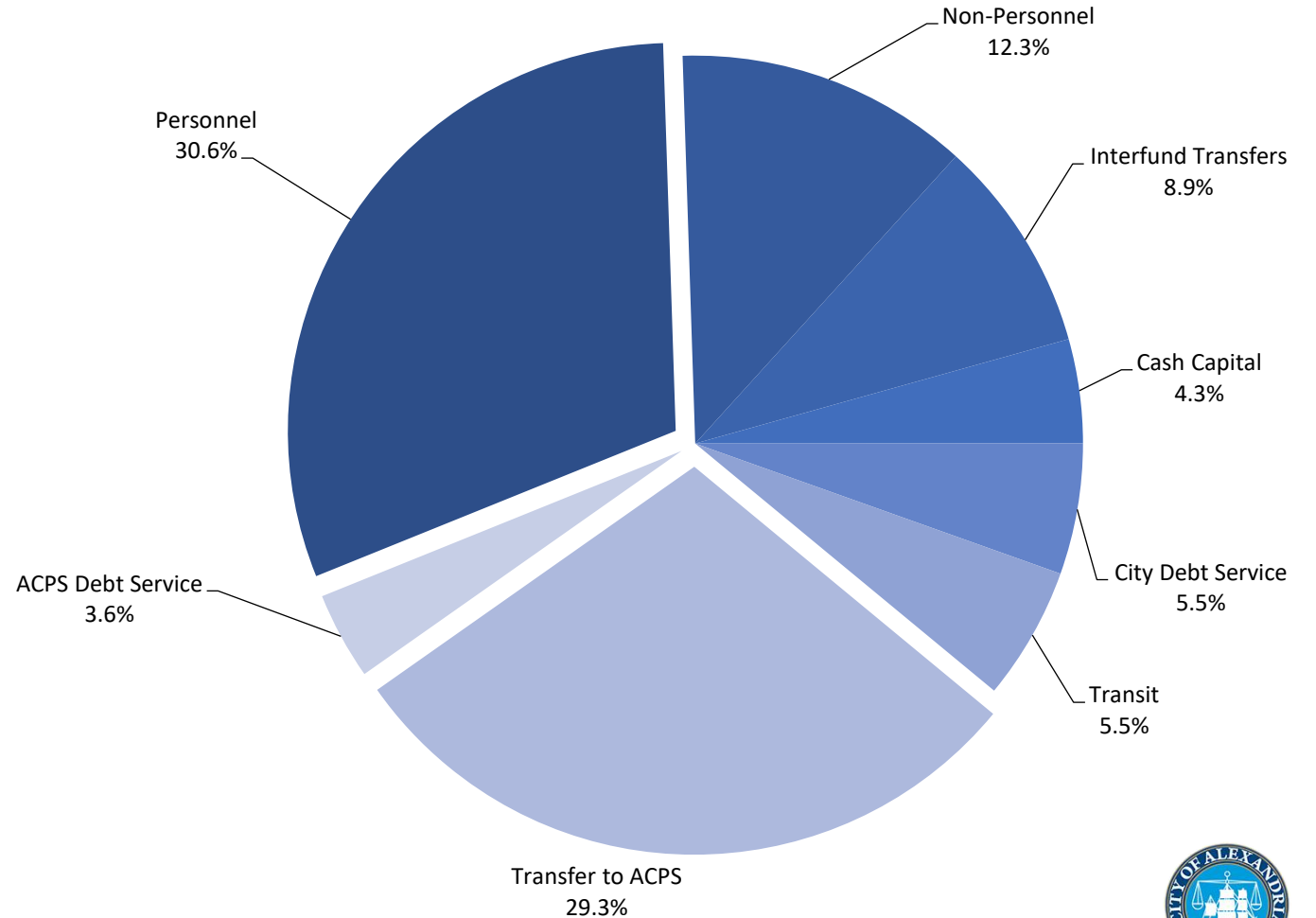
- Before we can look forwards, we have to look backwards:
 - What did we plan to spend vs. what did we actually spend?
 - Were our revenue forecasts accurate?
 - What positions did we hire for and which ones are vacant?
- Getting an accurate picture of the past year requires coordination with Finance, HR, and City leadership



Budget snapshot - expenditures



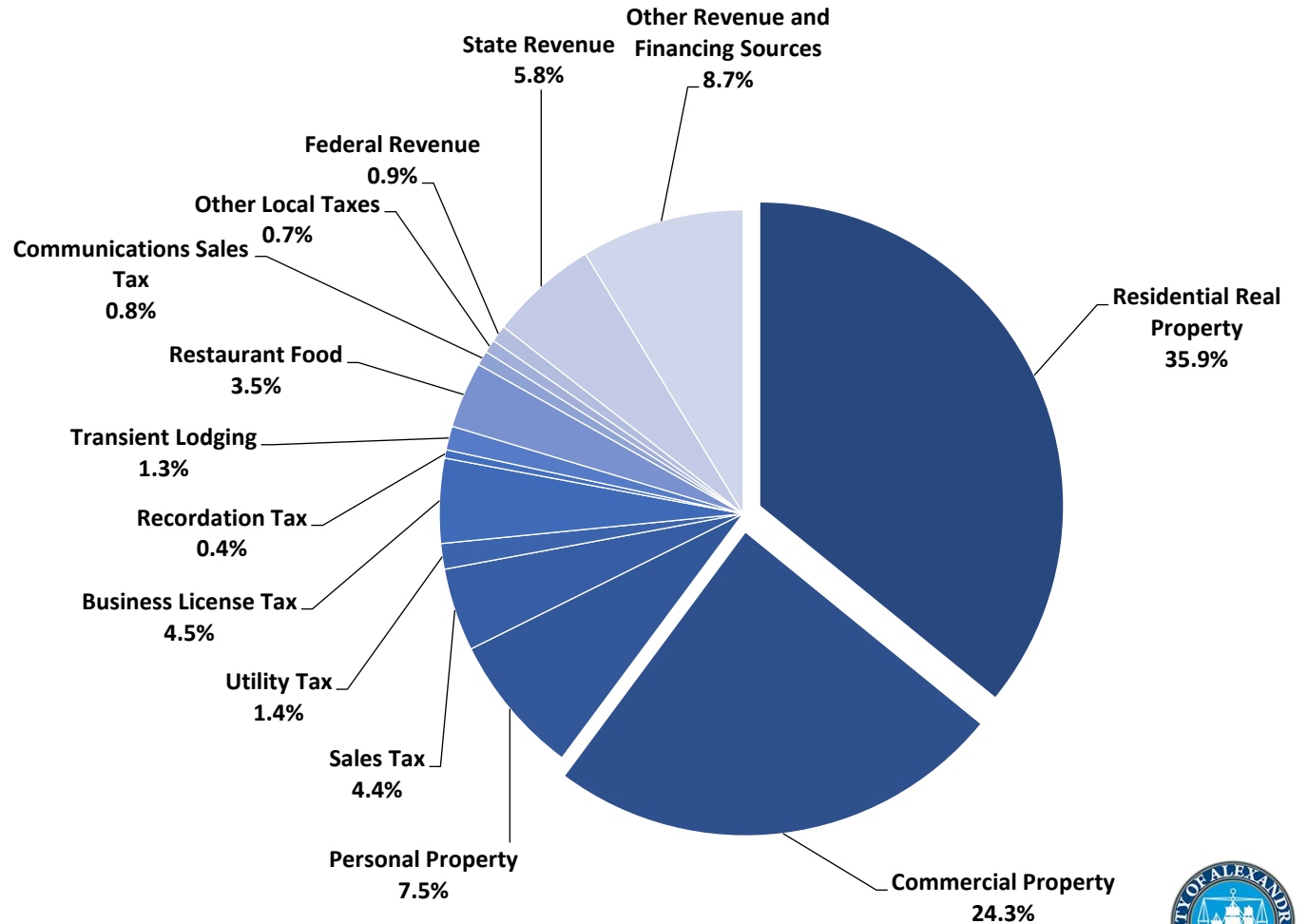
- **Approved FY24:**
\$884,328,028*
- Mostly:
 - Schools
 - Staff



Budget snapshot - revenues



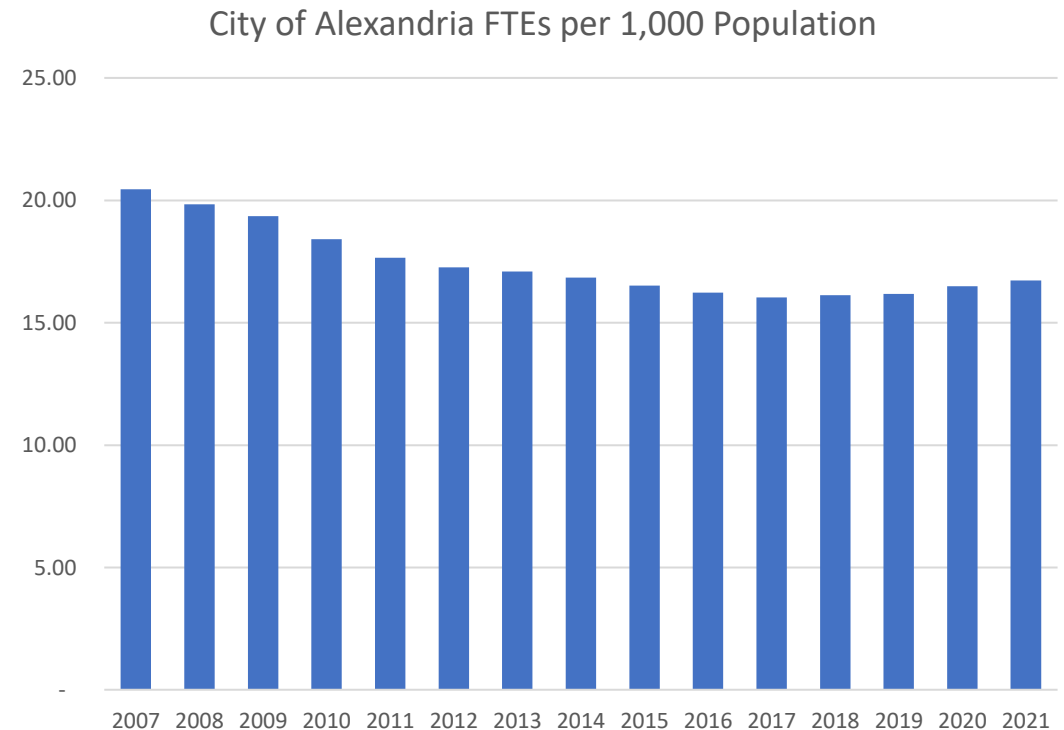
- **Approved FY24:**
\$884,328,028
- **Mostly:**
 - Property taxes



Budget snapshot - staff



- **Approved FY24:**
2838 FTEs*
- Mostly:
 - Police (437)
 - Fire (348)
 - Community & Human Services (620)



*Does not include ACPS



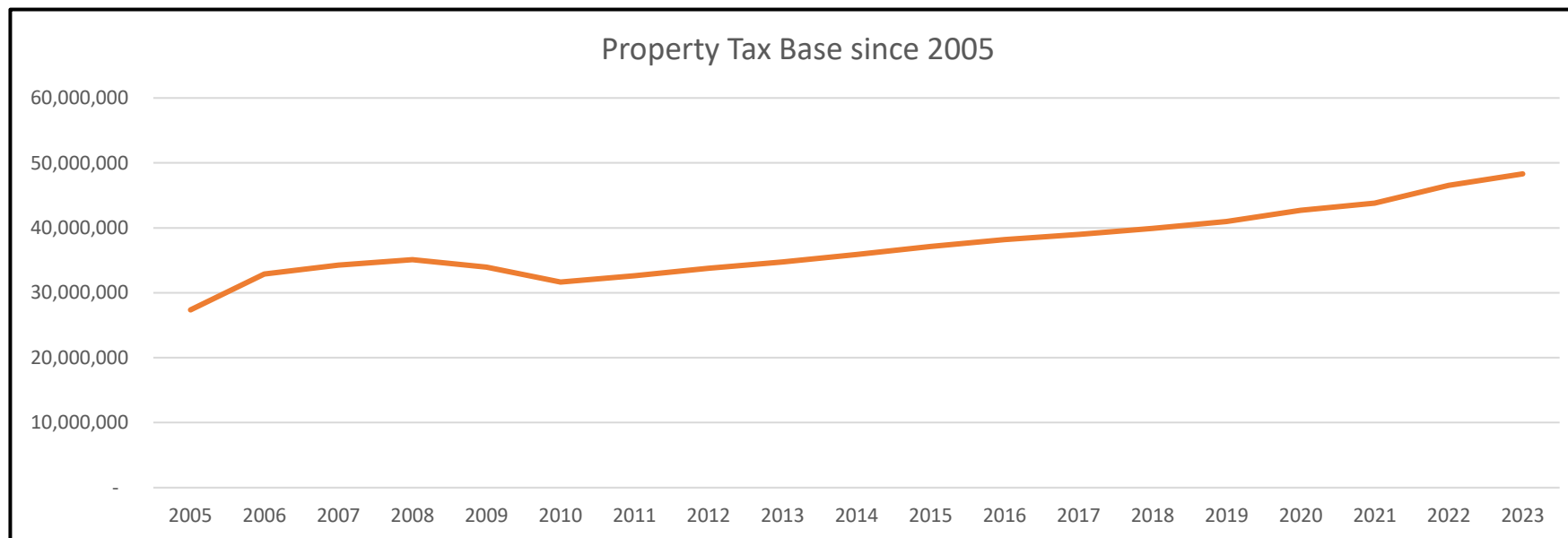
A budget is a forecast



- We need to know what to expect:
 - What will our revenues be like next year?
 - How much will we need to pay people?
 - What will basic services like internet and utilities cost?
- Expected costs and revenues give us a bottom line to work from



Consistent projections are key



A budget is a plan



- Planning requires weighing trade-offs and making choices:
 - Is it possible to make our operations more efficient?
 - What kinds of new services are people asking for? What would it take to offer those services?
 - Do we have the right staff? Where do we need to build capacity?
- This involves extensive deliberation at all levels of City government



FY 2024 Highlights



- Accountable, Effective, and Well-Managed Government Focus Area
 - +\$40,000 to support technology and language translation services
 - +\$500,000 to support diverse small business
 - ITS receives continued support for virtual public meeting platform
- Healthy and Thriving Residents Functional Area
 - +\$100,000 to continue rental assistance services for the community.
 - +\$170,000 added in general fund support to provide eviction prevention assistance to households in Alexandria.



FY 2024 Highlights of Interest



- **Livable, Green, and Prospering City Functional Area**
 - Four-year commitment to DASH's fare free program as awardee of TRIP grant funding from the State
 - +\$120,000 added for service expansions on DASH Line 33 (King St Metro to Potomac Yard Center via Mt Vernon Ave)
- **Safe, Secure, and Just Community Functional Area**
 - +\$490,000 to support speed monitoring devices to school crossing zones prioritized by Transportation & Environmental Services
 - +\$10,000 to Community Cookouts - to increase interaction between residents and Public Safety personnel



A budget is a commitment



- A good plan we can't afford is a bad plan
- The City is **legally required** to adopt a balanced budget, and long-term planning ensures costs are sustainable over time:
 - Annual reduction targets
 - Multi-year forecasting
 - Winning grants and federal funds
 - Strategic partnerships



How can you participate?

- Listen to the City Manager's FY 2025 Proposed Budget Presentation *or* attend the Public Presentation – February 2024
- Attend weekly City Council work sessions – February 2024 through May 2024
- Sign-up to speak on the proposed budget at the Budget Public Hearing – March 2024
- Attend or sign-up to speak at the Tax Rate Public Hearing – April 2024
- Attend FY 2025 Budget & Tax Rate Adoption Meeting – May 2024



Questions?

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