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Roadmap to Smart Government

As Chair of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, it is my job to balance our budget in a responsible and thoughtful way. You will find as you review my first executive budget for the fiscal year 2002 – 2003 that I have done just that.

I am confident that even as we face the challenge of a series of revenue shortfalls, this budget maintains Multnomah County's essential services – our critical public safety system, our vital safety net social services, and also the more general community functions, like libraries, that enrich our daily lives. I believe this Executive Budget is balanced not only in terms of the bottom line, but also in its attention to our core services, our policy priorities, and our direction.

This budget is a road map to smart government. Smart government uses taxpayer money wisely, is fiscally sound, and balances the needs and wants of the community. It is a government that is sustainable and effective regardless of what comes our way in the future.

Over the past year, we have seen our State and regional economies suffer, with sizeable revenue shortfalls affecting all levels of government. Multnomah County feels the impact of the recession in the continuing under-performance of our local Business Income Tax and in the fallout from a recent legislative special session that has cut into a number of State-funded, County-run programs.

Because of the need to rebalance the current year budget, this Executive Budget process is exceptional. In December of 2001, the Board approved a budget package addressing a \$22 million deficit for the current fiscal year. We worked diligently to identify additional revenue, and were able to cut our budget shortfall in half. The remaining \$11 million has been partially balanced by the Board's decision (working with the Sheriff) to mothball the Troutdale correctional facility, as well as by reducing library hours and delaying implementation of specific programs. We have also made substantial administrative reductions.

The Board's rebalancing efforts, and the resulting changes to services, departments, and administrative processes, have delayed preparation for the 2002-2003 budget cycle. However, these efforts have also provided the foundation for the budget before you, helping to ensure the County's fiscal integrity as well as the continuation of services critical to our community.

This year's budget process has been influenced by many factors, including the State special sessions and the economy, but the challenge of having to do more with less is not unique to this jurisdiction or this budget cycle.

I strongly believe that my Executive Budget avoids financial risks by presenting a responsible, sustainable proposal that stays true to our policy priorities and core mission, and keeps our essential services to the community intact.

Economic Reality

We are beginning to see a slow recovery from the national economic downturn that continues to have a tremendous effect on Oregon and Multnomah County. But recovery isn't yet assured, and has yet to hit our pocketbooks. For the past two years, we have had less cash on hand, while at the same time experiencing an increased need for County-run and supported programs. The stress of the economy has hit our community's most vulnerable citizens, resulting in job loss, decreased household income, and a sharp increase in the demand for health and social services.

This jurisdiction will not stand by and hope that the economy improves. We will continue play an active role in economic development.

That is why I proposed (and the Board unanimously approved) entering into a critical Community Partnership Agreement with the Cities of Portland and Gresham, the Portland and East County Chambers of Commerce, and the Association of Portland Progress. Its goal is to assess what it's like to do business in the area and, specifically, to assess the impact of our tax structure. Commissioner Rojo de Steffey, our representative to this committee, deserves credit for her leadership in this effort.

This is smart government.

Multnomah County manages a total budget of over a billion dollars, 33% of which are received from the State. Approximately 21% is a pass-through of federal dollars. We also tap creative funding sources like grants, as well as other non-traditional means to augment and subsidize the important work we do. The County has many and varied sources of revenue and funding. Our primary challenge today is managing the transition of our fluctuating General Fund.

Our General Fund relies on steady and sufficient streams of revenue from property taxes, the Business Income Tax, various fees, and secondary revenues.

In the 1990's our region experienced a series of boom years during which the economy grew steadily. We are now experiencing the results of a leveling-off and decline of our economy. The County must now adjust to a flat budget. In January of this year, our Budget Office predicted a General Fund revenue shortfall of *\$10.8 million*. At the same time, predictions were that in order to maintain our superior bond rating, we would need to contribute upwards of \$5.9 million to our Reserve Funds.

In looking at the critical services at risk of reduction or elimination with a \$16.7 million gap in the budget, I worked with the Budget Office to develop a mid-range plan to build up our Reserve Funds over time while still retaining our Aa1 bond rating, which is absolutely critical to Multnomah County's fiscal health.

The clear commitment of Commissioner Serena Cruz to our essential services led me to reduce our contribution required for this year to our Reserve Funds to \$2 million. This is based on an aggressive three-year plan that will meet the goal, show the appropriate trend, and preserve our bond rating.

In the final analysis, we are faced with the challenge of making tough choices to the tune of approximately *\$13 million*.

Other Impacts

The State of Oregon is experiencing the same financial difficulties that we are – only on a larger scale. They have had a recent series of Special Sessions and months of budget negotiations between and among the legislative and executive branches to fill a gap of over \$800 million.

In order to balance the State budget, the Legislature and the Governor adopted several reductions that have a direct impact on County-run programs. Of the Governor's cuts, the most direct impacts to Multnomah County are the reductions in Oregon Project Independence funding; domestic violence grants; and vital alcohol, drug and mental health treatment programs.

In addition to the County's \$13 million General Fund shortfall, the effects of the State reductions, totaling approximately \$5 million, have placed further burdens on our ability to serve our community.

The State's work is not done; there remain a number of unknowns. The Governor intends to call the Legislature back into a third Special Session this year for another budget rebalance exercise to address factors that may contribute to an additional shortfall. These factors include a potential decline in the May revenue forecast and the negative consequence of Congress' Federal Economic Stimulus Package, which adds an additional \$148 million shortfall to the State General Fund.

In addition, there has been a change in federal priorities, resulting in the loss of critical grant funding for our Community Courts and programs supported by the Violence Against Women grant. The Board is faced with the challenge of continuing to support innovative programs which no longer receive federal funding.

Finally, the Shilo decision concerning urban renewal taxes will affect our FY '03 budget; we won't know the full impact of the decision until September '02, and will determine then if any action is necessary.

Fiscal Integrity

We have a clear challenge. The question then becomes how do we face that challenge head on and address it responsibly?

Most people experiencing declining income wouldn't think to put some of their limited resources into savings. Often our first thoughts are how can we spread our paychecks to cover expenses, without serious consideration of how our expenses fit into the longer-term picture and add value to our lives.

But any wise economist, seasoned accountant, or successful entrepreneur will say that maintaining ample savings and critically evaluating expenses is exactly what should be done in lean financial times. *This is exactly what we've done in this Executive Budget.*

We've balanced the budget responsibly by taking a careful look at how all our services and programs fit with our core mission and add value for the community, as well as being fiscally prudent and putting something in the bank.

Reserves

Smart governments establish reserves as a hedge against economic hard times. We dipped into our reserves in FY '01, when the business income tax fell. Replenishing these reserves as soon as possible is the responsible and smart way to do business.

The rebalance effort replaced over \$ 4 million in our reserves. My FY '03 budget adds another \$2 million. This progress ensures that we will maintain our superior Aa1 bond rating.

We have used available, one-time-only resources to bridge funding for some services into the future, when we know how the economy will perform, in a way that is fiscally sound and will not jeopardize our essential service capacity.

My Executive Budget stays true to the Board's adopted policy recommending 10% of total General Fund revenues to be secured in two separate reserves. The reserves will provide a cushion in desperate times and extreme emergencies. *This is smart government.*

During last fall's rebalance, the Board dedicated the vacation accrual resources no longer required or needed for a single purpose to one of these reserves. With the accrual of interest, this will eventually bring one Reserve to the necessary goal. Additionally, the rebalance process augmented our second General Fund reserve by approximately \$4.1 million.

But we're not there yet. As I started preparing my FY 03 budget, we still had about \$5.9 million to go to reach 10% of our total General Fund.

Given our current financial condition and my commitment to maintaining our critical services, I recognize we can't afford to give \$5.9 million to reserves during this budget cycle. But we can do something. *And we have – in a manner that doesn't harm essential services.*

Again, my Executive Budget includes a \$2 million contribution to our General Fund Reserves and outlines a comprehensible plan that, over the course of four years, will bring us to our goal – securing our bond rating and contributing to our overall, long-term fiscal health.

We cannot always predict the future of the economy or the future needs of the community, but we must be amply prepared for the unknown. One way to do that is to make sure we have money in the bank.

Without fiscal integrity and sustainable financial strength, everything else we do becomes irrelevant – in fact, impossible.

Guiding Principles

Throughout every budget process, I am constantly reminded of all the important things the County does. In looking at our current revenue shortfall, I am also reminded that we can no longer do it all. But we can, and *will*, stay true to our purpose, and maintain those functions that are most important to the public and those who depend upon our services.

In addressing our revenue challenge, I have looked at all County functions with three guiding principles in mind:

- How does this fit with our core service mission?
- How does this play into our sustainable financial strength? and
- How does this function or program add value for the community?

I have also taken into serious consideration our ability to leverage resources, invest in best practices, and maintain our matching funds to get the best value for every dollar. In doing so, this Executive Budget reflects a comprehensive, balanced approach that holds the line on our essential services

It is extremely difficult to see where something fits in our system and define its value if you look at programs, services, and departments in isolation. It is my belief that we need to start viewing what we do in terms of integrated systems of care. This will allow us to better determine and measure the value of a County function or service.

Systems of Care

Everything we do in Multnomah County should be able to fit logically in a System of Care, or Service Category. So what are our Systems of Care? What exactly does and should the County do?

We are responsible for protecting the public and helping to ensure safe neighborhoods, for performing vital safety net health and human services, and for running many highly utilized and valuable general functions.

Public Safety:

Multnomah County is the principal provider – along with city police departments – of community public safety services. Within Multnomah County, the Chair, the Board, the Sheriff, the District Attorney, and the Department of Community Justice share the job of protecting the public and ensuring the safety of our neighborhoods.

Public safety is a main component of our quality of life. Our citizens need to feel secure in their homes, on the street, at work - anywhere they go in the County. *We keep people safe.*

Our public safety agencies do a remarkable job. I believe Multnomah County is a prime example of an effective, truly integrated system that includes prosecuting and incarcerating offenders, juvenile justice, community and drug treatment courts, and parole and probation functions.

In this day and age we are at the point where we know what works in terms of effective drug, alcohol, and mental health treatment in our criminal justice system, and we must be committed to supporting proven treatment programs.

I am acutely aware that any policy or budget decision made affects the system. Maintaining the integrity of our *comprehensive* public safety system is one of my administration's top priorities.

Safety Net Services:

There are many people living in Multnomah County who depend on us to provide not only a means to improve their quality of life, but also the necessary assistance for basic survival. It is our obligation to support people who face the challenges of poverty, homelessness, disabling conditions, and addiction.

It's our job to provide access to quality health and mental health care for those who live on the margin and who are vulnerable. *There is no where else they can turn.*

Our community looks primarily to our Health Department, Department of County Human Services to provide these critical services.

Investments and Support to Kids in School:

The Office of School and Community Partnerships was created to provide necessary supports to help kids succeed in school. It is imperative that this jurisdiction invest in the future. Our future depends on the success and well-being of the people who live here - especially the next generation.

The Board recognizes that for every dollar spent on early childhood, school-based services, and proven after-school programs, the return is more than we can statistically measure. I especially appreciate Commissioner Lisa Naito's commitment and leadership in early childhood supports.

Healthy, stable children are much more likely to succeed in school and ultimately, in life. *School success and support of our public education system is central to the work and commitments of my administration.*

It is this jurisdiction's responsibility as well as a Board priority to help ensure that children come to school ready to learn, that their families receive the support they need to succeed at home, and that we do all we can to help our public schools.

Smart government makes investments. Multnomah County will stay the course with our support to children and families – especially those who face the challenges of poverty. Twenty years from now we will all see a significant return on our investment – in healthier and more stable families, in decreased juvenile crime, and in more kids staying, learning, and growing in school.

In the meantime, the yield is growing every day a student stays in school, a child sees the written word, and parents are able to put food on the table.

General Community Services:

Beyond providing critical public safety and safety net services, the County also performs a number of essential business and community services. We are responsible for land use planning, transportation, and road maintenance. We manage seven of the bridges in the area. We handle animal control. We run a multi-jurisdictional emergency management office. And we operate our public libraries.

While we have made significant administrative reductions in our general community services, this Executive Budget sustains our smart business practices capacity.

Libraries: Our libraries are among the few public services that are free to the user. They are also among the best-used County services. Over 82% of Multnomah County residents have a library card. Every year, 21 books are checked out for every man, woman, and child in the County. Our libraries are extremely valuable to the community, to our neighborhoods and to our public schools.

All 18 of our neighborhood libraries depend on over 50% of their operating funds from a voter-approved levy that will soon expire. The remainder of the library budget comes primarily from the General Fund. *My Executive Budget maintains our General Fund contribution to the libraries.*

Although this budget holds the line on the County's contribution to the library system, *our libraries are still at risk.* This May, voters in Multnomah County will be asked to renew the levy and their commitment to our libraries. If the levy fails, our libraries will face an immediate financial crisis. A year from now, without a levy renewal, serious reductions will be necessary.

Initiatives

Smart government maintains its essential services while operating within its means. Smart government must also be flexible and able to respond to changing social environments and community needs.

We live in different times. Unthinkable national tragedy and rapidly evolving demographics have brought about significant change. Changes that historically occur over generations have happened nationally and locally within a year.

Multnomah County must be prepared to address change, even in times of economic instability. My Executive Budget includes initiatives that confront evolving changing needs and priorities of our community and that have a relatively small price tag.

Emergency Preparedness: Emergency preparedness is a responsibility of County government. Multnomah County is the primary player in our region's emergency response. We are the public health responder for the entire region. We have public safety, communications, transportation, and recovery planning responsibilities for our community, our employees and our facilities.

While our Health Department, Sheriff's Office, and the Office of Emergency Management coordinate preparedness efforts, in a broad disaster situation, virtually every entity of County government would become involved.

My Executive Budget includes enhancements to the County's state of emergency preparedness in a constrained financial environment. Based on the recommendations of a leadership task force headed by my Chief of staff, a number of actions for both the immediate and the long term have already been taken to better prepare the County in the event of an emergency.

Diversity: As I have stated before, it is clear the face of Multnomah County is changing. The demographics in our area are shifting and it is essential for us – in all we do – to consider the varying needs of our rapidly evolving population.

East Multnomah County has seen the largest increase in diverse communities. I want to publicly acknowledge Commissioner Lonnie Roberts for his advocacy on behalf of the changing needs of East Multnomah County.

My Executive Budget invests in my commitment to addressing diversity both aggressively and directly in three specific areas in which the County plays a significant role:

- As a major employer, we want our workforce to reflect our community at all levels.
- As a significant business partner, we want to contract and purchase goods and professional and construction services from diverse businesses and vendors in our Community.
- As the jurisdiction responsible for health and human services, Community Justice, and general government services, we aspire to deliver those services in a manner that is sensitive to and competent concerning the cultural differences in our County.

Specifically, my initiative funds:

- *aggressive recruitment and outreach strategies* to improve the diversity of our workforce and those with whom we do business;
- the improved *ability to monitor and report our progress*;
- better coordination of our *investments in cultural competency* so that we optimize our resources; and
- *specific funding to provide technical assistance, certification, and regional support to the Minority, Women, and Emerging Small Business program.*

Additionally, it is imperative that we improve our contracting practices in ways that reflect fairness to workers and businesses in the community.

Achieving Balance

Smart government achieves a balanced budget in lean times both by making sure our expenditures match our revenue *and* by distributing reductions surgically among service categories and systems of care. I believe this is the only way that we can maintain our fiscal integrity *and* our essential services.

This is a substantially different approach than applying equal percentage cuts applied across departments. Given the nature of our fiscal condition, tough choices could not be avoided, but nonetheless, *this Executive Budget achieves a true, sustainable balance.*

Public Safety

Our public safety functions are highly dependent on the County's General Fund. *If*, similar to many past budget processes, this Executive Budget proposed a straight, across-the-board, percentage reduction, the future of public safety would be grim. *This is not what we've done.*

I believe my Executive Budget reflects my commitment to public safety. It does not cut into our ability to keep our community safe. We have maintained the ability to prosecute and jail offenders. We have maintained our community and neighborhood drug courts. We have maintained our parole and probation capacity. And we have continued our investment in effective drug, alcohol, and mental health treatment.

We've done it in a way that balances the need for public safety, the service needs of Multnomah County's most vulnerable, and our valuable general community functions.

I am seeking \$3 million (out of a \$91 million dollar General Fund budget) of budget reductions in the Sheriff's Office, without reducing our current jail bed capacity. I will continue to collaborate with the Sheriff and our public safety partners to identify cost savings that maintain our ability to adequately incarcerate offenders and preserve the efficacy of our entire public safety system.

The District Attorney's Office budget was exempted from making General Fund reductions. However, due to the loss of a number of essential federal grants, his office has been asked to absorb approximately \$275,000 necessary to maintain the neighborhood District Attorneys and our Community Court program.

I believe this will provide the District Attorney the capacity to prosecute the full range of offenders.

With the combined \$1 million in State cuts, we have experienced a staggering loss to our alcohol and drug treatment programs –for both children and adults - in County Human Services, Health and Community Justice. It is a Board priority to maintain support for proven drug and alcohol treatment, particularly in the criminal justice system. This is an investment that in the long run can provide great cost savings, because those who struggle with addiction don't end up cycling in and out of our courts and jails.

My Executive Budget maintains the General Fund support for treatment services in our jails as well those administered through the Department of County Human Services. We did make an immediate reduction to treatment service contracts in the area of Community Justice, but we intend to backfill this reduction with other revenue soon.

I am continuing a strong commitment to alcohol and drug treatment for offenders as an investment in breaking the cycle of crime. Though the Department of Community Justice is reducing General Fund investment in residential drug and alcohol treatment beds, the state has agreed to utilize County General Fund as match for additional federal Medicaid funds in order to reduce or eliminate the impact of this cut on services provided in Multnomah County.

This budget maintains the integrity and effectiveness of our public safety system. However, if our General Fund revenue sources continue to decline, Multnomah County must seriously consider asking the voters to dedicate resources to public safety.

Safety Net Services

As a result of considerable State cuts, many important human services offered by Multnomah County have been significantly weakened. Due to the State-required “restructuring” of Oregon Project Independence, we are losing \$1.1 million in funding for the program. This is devastating loss for low-income seniors who may no longer have the opportunity to stay in their home during their golden years. There may also be significant financial impacts to the County when those same seniors are forced into costly nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

The State has also reduced domestic violence and sexual assault grants by approximately \$100,000 in funding. This is significant by itself, but it also means a likely additional loss of federal funds.

With substantial blows to human services from the State, we could not afford to lessen our capacity to serve a growing number of people who depend on us. *This Executive Budget includes only minimal program reductions in health and mental health. Additionally, we have kept whole our homeless youth and family services.*

We were able to find sizeable administrative cost savings in the newly merged Department of County Human Services. Much of the savings (about \$850,000) came from addressing top-level management redundancies resulting from the merger of the two separate departments.

My Executive Budget, while making some clear reductions in targeted program areas, *keeps whole our safety net services.*

Investments and Support to Kids in School

As I’ve said before, we have an obligation to support and invest in our kids. We must continue our investments in early childhood programs and maintain our support to our public schools and community partners who work directly with children and families to improve their lives.

And we will. Even as we have applied an appropriate constraint level to these budgets, my Executive Budget maintains our early childhood programs, Family Resources Centers, Caring Communities, other school-based services, as well as the multi-jurisdictional Schools Uniting Neighborhoods.

Our newly created Office of School and Community Partnerships took reductions to a few specific programs, allowing us to continue our efforts to align and integrate school-based services, strengthen existing partnerships with the community and local school districts, and play an integral role in the lives of *all* children around the County.

We have changed our level of investment in the School Attendance Initiative and reengineered our ability to provide outreach to kids in order to keep them in school. We have refocused our resources to be centered on the needs of the child *and* their family.

The School Attendance Initiative (SAI) has been a critical part of the County's efforts to help our children succeed in school. Through partnership with the schools, family centers, and culturally specific youth services, SAI has served 12,277 students in three years. Of these students 4,420 have reached the benchmark of 90% attendance which educators believe is required to achieve at grade level. SAI's ultimate goal is student achievement. In a small sample of Portland Public Schools students returned to school through SAI, the percentage of students meeting academic standards in math increased by 112%.

General Community Services

As mentioned, the County provides a number of general community and business services. In balancing our need to maintain our public safety system and safety net services, we had to take a hard look at our general services and see how they fit with our core mission.

Over time, Multnomah County has developed partnerships and supported non-profit and community programs that fall out of the realm of the County's core mission. Given our budget shortfall, we can no longer afford to fund programs that don't fall in the category of essential services.

My Executive Budget includes a reduction in funding for the Regional Arts Council, and elimination of funding for the Metropolitan Human Rights Commission and the Oregon State University Extension Service. This was a tough call to make, as these are all valuable programs, but given our fiscal condition and the risk to our essential services, it was one that had to be made.

Animal Control

The County provides Animal Control to all of the jurisdictions within our area. This consolidated service is funded with a combination of General Fund and program revenues from licenses and shelter fees. Service demands continue to increase as the community grows and becomes more urban.

In the upcoming fiscal year, the combination of General Fund constraint and a five-year trend of declining program revenues have created a critical funding situation for Animal Control. The challenge facing the County is how to fund the best balance of services that provide protection and care of animals and the protection of the public from injury and nuisances caused by animals.

The Animal Control program has received three independent evaluations over the past 18 months: a Citizen's Task Force Report; the National Animal Control Association program revaluation; and the recent Animal Control Audit by County Auditor Suzanne Flynn. The recurring theme in these evaluations was a recommendation to expand shelter hours and services to better meet the needs of the public. The department explored and considered three service-level options for the Animal Control budget.

The selected proposal will enhance current shelter service levels, and maintain emergency field services for injured animals, animal bites, and cruelty investigations. But it will substantially reduce our capacity to respond to neighborhood nuisance problems.

The budget also includes an aggressive campaign to market licensing, to increase the number of animals in the community with identification. This will aid Animal Control in our efforts to reunite

lost and stray animals with their owners, while at the same time increasing revenue to help sustain critical services. The licensing campaign target is \$200,000 in new license revenue for FY03.

In other areas of general service, we were able to find almost \$400,000 in administrative reductions in the Department of Business and Community Services. Streamlining general and business services within the County is smart government.

Ongoing Process

Traditionally, the County's budget process begins in the fall of every calendar year—allowing the Chair, the Board, and other County elected officials ample time to plan and engage in outreach to determine community priorities in balancing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Last fall's rebalance efforts limited our ability to begin working on the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. However, we engaged in community outreach during the mid-year rebalance and learned of their concerns, interests, and priorities. Again, the rebalance set the stage both fiscally and developmentally for this year's budget. I have kept in mind the concerns and priorities of community stakeholders, our partners, and our clients in putting together this Executive Budget.

There will be many meaningful opportunities for the community to talk to the Board and to me about the budget. We will be conducting a series of public hearings and individual stakeholder meetings. Beginning May 2nd, citizens will be able to provide testimony on-line *all hours of the day*. Multnomah County residents, our employees, community partners, and anyone who has access to the Internet can submit testimony to the Board throughout the process. All of our budget briefings in the months of May and June will be broadcast live on cable and rebroadcast on cable television and the web.

Most Multnomah County residents have Internet access, and free access is easily available by heading to one of our neighborhood public libraries. This is an innovative step in public engagement, and one of many that the County has developed or is in the process of developing. It also creates an opportunity for the many individuals and families whose busy lives and jobs prevent them from coming to a budget meeting.

I encourage all citizens of Multnomah County to participate and to share their thoughts with the Board throughout the budget process.

Walking in Their Shoes

We do great things at Multnomah County. We're in the business of improving peoples' lives. In times of fiscal challenge, we can't lose sight of our mission. We can't lose sight of those we serve, those who work here, and those who depend on us to keep them safe and supported.

When looking at our economic picture, I'm reminded of the small business owners struggling to balance their own budgets.

In contemplating reducing social services, I think of Laddie Reed and those for whom he advocates. These are our clients, our customers, and our responsibility.

In deciding where we can trim expenses in public safety, I think of the fourteen year old who's entering our justice system for the first time. I think of the elderly woman who lives alone in fear because she has become a crime victim. The job we do determines whether he will return to his

family and the community or begin cycling through the system, and whether or not she will be able to remain safe and living in her own home.

In identifying cost savings, I reflect on our employees and how hard they work and their unfailing dedication to their jobs and the public.

Throughout this budget process and every day at Multnomah County, these are the people we should have on our minds, all the time, in whatever we do.

Acknowledgements

No budget is the result of a single person's efforts. The Executive Budget has been developed over time with critical participation and input from more people than can be named.

This Budget is a reflection of the ongoing, collaborative leadership of the Board of County Commissioners, the District Attorney, the Sheriff and the Auditor. It is also interdependent on the persistent, hard work of our Budget Office, Department Directors, County employees, and labor organizations.

And every budget is governed by public needs and interests as well as input and feedback from our clients.

Together we have held the line on our core mission and essential services, and have drawn a road map that leads to sustainable, smart government.