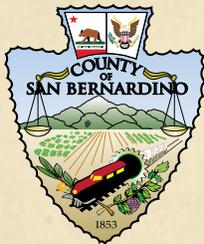


# Message from the CAO



*Mark H. Uffer*  
County Administrative Officer



When I became County Administrative Officer five years ago, I knew the County of San Bernardino had one of the best collections of talent in all of government. However, 2008 was the year I came to fully appreciate the degree of dedication and creativity possessed by the county’s elected officials, managers, and employees.

Despite the constant and growing threat of fiscal distress, our county managed to develop new and better ways to manage our resources, deliver services, protect the public, create recreational and cultural opportunities, and develop our economy while coping with the advancing downturn.

This report outlines our major accomplishments from the past year in the five service areas highlighted by the Board of Supervisors during the 2008 State of the County event – Public Safety, Healthy Communities, Arts, Culture & Tourism, Economic Development & Recovery, and Green County – as well as Good Government, which is the underlying theme of everything we do.

What makes these accomplishments, some of which were honored with national and international awards, particularly significant if not downright amazing is the fact they were achieved in a climate of fiscal uncertainty. And it is within this ominous climate that the county racked up its greatest achievement of 2008: Maintaining its fiscal health against all odds.

The credit for this ultimately goes to the Board of Supervisors, which for years has resisted the temptation to spend heavily during the boom years in order to save for the eventual busts. However, I believe the Board would also give the credit to the budget staff of my office, which has consistently managed the county’s revenues and expenditures in such a way that guarantees top-notch public services and the completion of vital capital improvements while building healthy reserves and wisely managing staffing levels.

This, along with clear communication to the Board, the public, and the county organization, is a big part of the reason our county has been able to avoid layoffs and reductions in vital services despite a historic and sudden reduction in property and sales tax revenues.

The only question now is how long the current downturn will last, and whether even the best management practices will be enough to carry us through a long fiscal drought without having to resort to draconian measures.

I can’t answer this without a crystal ball. No one can. But what I can promise is that your county will continue to manage your tax dollars wisely, provide the best in customer service, continue moving forward with projects that will make the future a better place, and keep open the lines of communication.

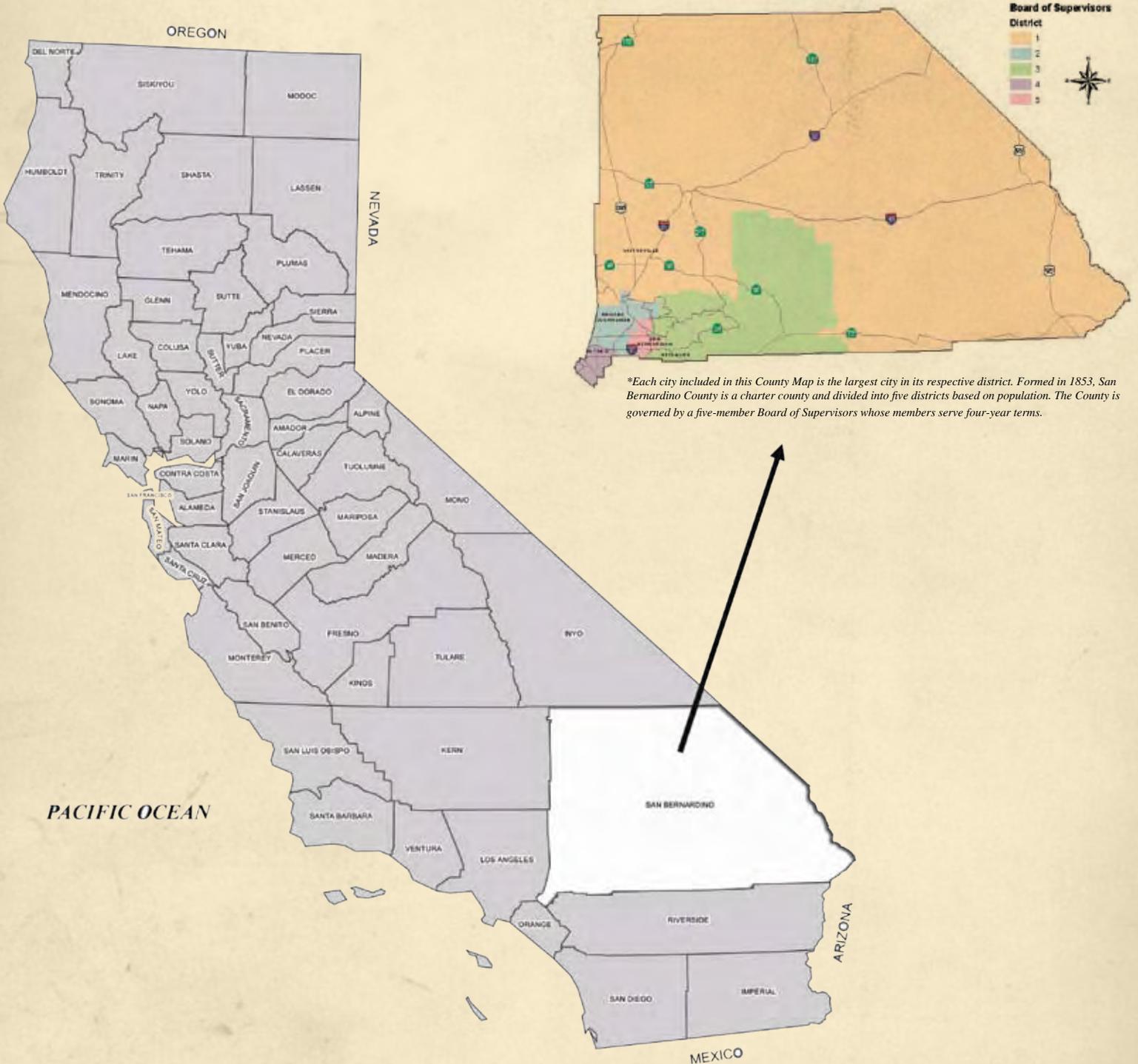
In the meantime, I thank you for your patience and support.

Sincerely,  
Mark H. Uffer  
County Administrative Officer

# COUNTY PROFILE

At more than 20,000 square miles, San Bernardino County is the largest county in the continental United States and provides a vast array of opportunities for its citizens.

San Bernardino County is larger than nine different states and boasts an economy that ranks among the 50 largest in the world. As one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States, this developing region offers its population a temperate climate, a variety of quality educational and recreational facilities, and an ideal centralized location for access to destinations throughout all of Southern California and the southwestern United States.



PACIFIC OCEAN