

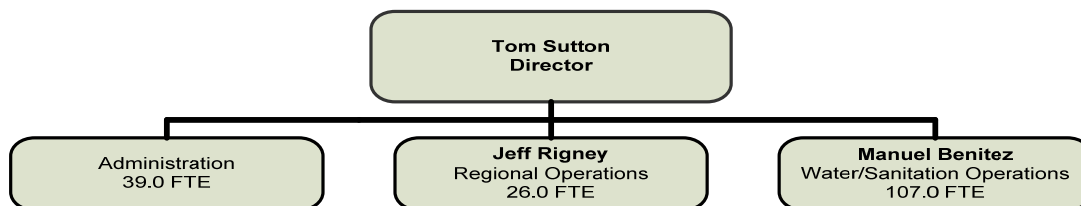
## SPECIAL DISTRICTS

### Thomas L. Sutton

#### I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Special Districts Department promotes safe, healthy, enjoyable and dynamic communities by providing essential programs and municipal services that meet the current and future needs of the communities served.

#### II. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



#### III. DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR SERVICES

The Special Districts Department provides direct administrative oversight to 94 dependent special districts (those governed by the Board of Supervisors). These districts provide a variety of municipal services throughout the County of San Bernardino, including water and sanitation, parks and recreation, road maintenance, television translator, and street light services. The administrative offices are located in San Bernardino and in Victorville. Satellite offices are located throughout the county within many of the communities served by the districts.

Districts and County Service Areas (CSA's) are legal entities authorized under California law and formed by the Board of Supervisors to provide municipal-type services, capital improvements and financial planning and management. The services and financial arrangements are tailored to meet the needs of a local area or region. These services are known as "extended services" because they are in addition to those services customarily funded by the general property tax levy. The desire and ability to pay for extended services are primary considerations in the communities' decision to form and operate a special district.

The Special Districts Department provides direct management and administrative oversight of the districts through six divisions: Regional Operations, Water/Sanitation, Budget/Finance, Engineering/Construction, Human Resources, and Information Services.

**The Regional Operations Division** administers and monitors the day-to-day activities of over seventy-four (74) districts countywide. The districts include all road, streetlight, open space, recreation and park, dam, cemetery, television translator and refuse districts. The Operations Division has a staff of 6 in-house employees that work with district employees, advisory commissions, municipal advisory councils and volunteers to provide services to each individual district.

In coordination with the Land Use Services Department, the division participates in the planning process with developers requesting to annex to special district utility systems. Staff oversees feasibility studies and cumulative impact studies for new developments. The division issues permits; inspects all developer proposed water and sewer line extensions, new service connections, tract maps, and streetlight installations; and provides services to other county departments and the public. Staff coordinates with the Public Works Department on Special Districts Department road matters and acts as liaison on behalf of the water and sewer districts with lines in county roads.

**The Water/Sanitation Operations Division** consists of nineteen (19) water and sewer county service area improvement zones and one (1) sanitation district that are collectively administered by the Special Districts Department under the Division of Water/Sanitation. The division, staffed with 108 positions, provides administrative, billing, collections, clerical, operations/maintenance, and project administration/engineering



support to the water and sanitation districts. The districts' service base ranges between 150 and 6,000 customers. The division's operation and maintenance functions are directed and performed on a regional basis. The main department office is located in San Bernardino, with regional offices located in Crestline and Victorville. The division maintains six (6) sub-regional operations/maintenance yards located throughout the communities served.

**The Administrative** functions of the department are executed through the following four divisions:

The Budget/Finance Division coordinates and oversees the preparation, presentation and publishing of the districts' budgets. It provides budget analysis for department funds, including revenue and expenditure review and appropriation accounting. This division oversees contracts, purchasing and acquisitions, including preparation, audit, and processing of all transfer and payment documents, and maintenance of current and historical document files. The division also coordinates submittal of the department's county fees, and lien administration for special taxes, assessment districts and community facilities districts.

Further, in order to preserve and strengthen district financial integrity, the division annually sets user charges for water and sewer services at levels sufficient to ensure that revenues equal or exceed expenses in each fiscal year.

In conjunction with the Engineering/Construction, Water/Sanitation and the Regional Operations Divisions, the division is responsible for processing applications and implementation of state and federal grants for new facilities and infrastructure.

The Engineering/Construction Division is responsible for managing the capital improvement program for the Special Districts Department and County Fire Department facilities. These responsibilities include interdepartmental coordination, engineering and construction and inspection services.

The division performs short and long-range planning for the infrastructure systems managed by Special Districts. These systems are continually evaluated to optimize efficiency, assure all maintenance is completed, and implement the latest state and federal regulatory requirements. This planning process creates the department's capital improvement plan (CIP). The division manages the design, bidding, and construction/inspection of these improvements.

The Human Resources Division provides all recruitment, classification, EEO, and labor relation activities for all board-governed special districts and administers the personnel rules for the board-governed special districts, five Memoranda of Understanding, and two compensation plans for non-represented special district employees. The Division also provides all payroll services for district employees.

The Information Services Division provides full information and telecommunications services and support to all districts. This division develops specifications and requirements for all computer hardware and software purchases to ensure consistency and full integration with the county's computer systems. The division handles coordination with contractors, vendors and county ISD to ensure that new facilities are constructed or enhanced to support department computer and telecommunications systems.

The Information Services Division maintains a staff of seven (7) personnel trained in network and communications infrastructure development and support, computer installation and support, database development and support, application development, and network management. The division also provides in-house support for all hardware, software, security systems, access control systems, telecommunications, and station-based radio systems, as well as developing and maintaining specialized applications for supporting unique functions within Special Districts.

#### **IV. 2005-06 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Continued progress regarding relocation of Big Bear Zoo onto Forest Service land.
- Created financing district for CSA 70 Glen Helen Sanitation. Accomplished district formation as well as construction of sewer treatment facility and other public infrastructure.

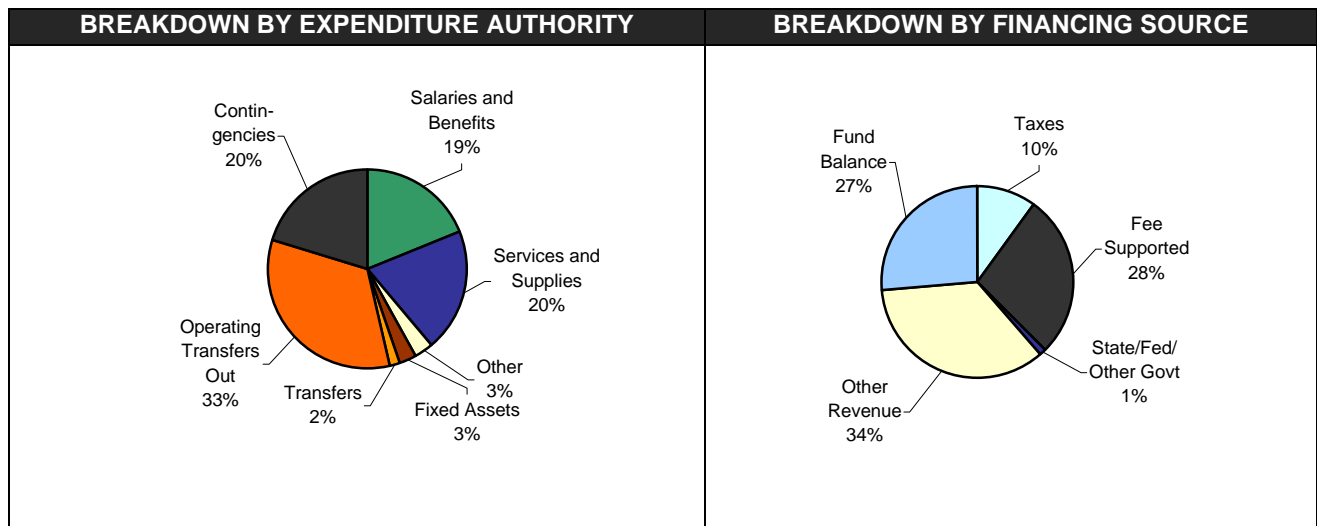


- Completed negotiations for purchase of Arrowhead Manor Water Company (AMWC) in Cedar Glen, a district that sustained catastrophic damage to water delivery system.
- Initiated the restructuring of department budget processes, which is now accommodates a higher degree of participation throughout the districts with the ultimate goal of developing a more user friendly system of budgeting and reporting.
- Opened first skateboard park owned by a San Bernardino County entity (Joshua Tree).

**V. 2006-07 SUMMARY OF BUDGET UNITS**

	2006-07			
	Appropriation	Revenue	Fund Balance	Staffing
Special Districts	70,730,217	51,971,825	18,758,392	175.0

**VI. 2006-07 BUDGET**



**VII. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

**GOAL 1: INCREASE CUSTOMER SERVICE LEVELS TO DISTRICT CUSTOMERS**

- Objective A: Decrease response time to utility service requests (water, sewer, roads, and streetlighting).*
- Objective B: Enhance Internet website to enable water and sewer customers to pay utility bills on-line.*
- Objective C: Enhance Internet website for district program information for all districts.*

MEASUREMENT	2005-06 (Actual)	2006-07 (Projected)	2006-07 (Estimated)	2007-08 (Projected)
1A. Percentage of service order/inquiry reports completed within seven working days after request for service (water, sewer, roads and streetlighting).	N/A	60%(4,493 annual orders within 7 days)	70% (5,242 annual orders within 7 days)	70%(5,242 annual orders within 7 days)
1B. Percentage of customers using alternative payment methods such as ACH, EFT, and credit cards through the division's internet website to pay utility bills.	N/A	18% (5,400 annual internet payments)	N/A	N/A
1C. Percentage increase of service and program related links on the department's internet website (base is 16 links).	N/A	50%	50%	50%

**Status**



Enhancing customer service is essential to the continued viability of districts that provide services to customers within the unincorporated areas of the county. The purpose of reducing the length of time between a customer's call for service and service order completion is to proactively ensure that responses to service interruptions are made in a timely and effective manner. The Water/Sanitation Division implemented a system that tracks service order requests, services requested/provided, progress status, and time lapsed between opening and completing service orders. The system provides an accurate measure of response times, and the estimated number/percentage of 2006-07 annual orders completed within 7 days exceeds the number/percentage that was originally projected. The internal tracking system for service requests submitted to the Operations Division is in the process of being refined during 2006-07 to allow for measurement of the turn-around time for responses to road, park and streetlighting district customers starting in 2007-08.

Special Districts Department experienced billing difficulties during 2005-06 that required a focused effort to bring system operations to a fully functional state. The department believes it is more important to strengthen billing processes before addressing other customer service concerns in 2007-08. However, the objective to enhance the website to accommodate customer utility bill payments on-line will be revisited in 2008-09.

Enhancing the department's internet website will maximize the department's resources to provide information and Internet services. All districts will benefit from an enhanced Internet website that provides district customers with information regarding programs and services in their communities, and up-to-date financial data. Further, the department will utilize the website for staff recruitment, Request for Proposals and project announcements. Increased links represent website structure designed to provide easy user access to department information.

<b>GOAL 2:</b>	<b>INCREASE STAFF PROFICIENCY TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS FOR ALL DISTRICTS</b>
----------------	---

*Objective A: Increase the number of dual/advanced certified water/wastewater field staff.*

*Objective B: Provide staff annual training in their respective fields.*

MEASUREMENT	2005-06 (Actual)	2006-07 (Projected)	2006-07 (Estimated)	2007-08 (Projected)
2A. Percentage increase of dual certifications for water/wastewater field staff.	N/A	10%	25%	20%
2B. Percentage of continuous training for district staff in their respective fields.	N/A	20%	30%	30%

### **Status**

Increasing the number of staff with dual certifications in the Water/Sanitation Division is indicative of the department's responsibility and commitment to promote health and safety and provide the communities served with essential services in an efficient and cost effective manner. This objective, as it relates to the water and wastewater operations staff, increases staff proficiency and will allow for crossover support between the water and wastewater operations of the districts. This will result in efficient service delivery, improved programs and services, and compliance with increasing regulatory requirements. Further, it may result in the department's ability to provide other enhanced services such as tertiary treatment, wastewater reuse and advanced water treatment. Estimated 2006-07 certifications are higher than projected due to availability of staff members in concert with timing of certification programs. The 2007-08 projected percentage increase is lower than 2006-07 as the department does not anticipate a continuation of such favorable timing.

Continuous education and training objectives will ensure that staff is current on new technologies, information, and practices that will assist districts in meeting their current and future needs. Thereby, the department will continue to encourage innovation and excellence in all phases of operations, administration and management. As stated above, continued favorable timing for staff and certification programs is not anticipated for 2007-08.



### VIII. 2006-07 APPROVED ADDITIONAL GENERAL FUND FINANCING (POLICY ITEMS)

**Policy Item 1: Utilize \$100,000 in ongoing funding to offset the cost of department staff that assist with County or public projects.**

**Policy Item 2: Utilize \$275,000 in one-time funding to provide Water System Improvements in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisorial District.**

**Policy Item 3: Utilize \$1,000,000 in one-time funding to upgrade and add facilities in Kessler Park in Bloomington.**

MEASUREMENT	2005-06 (Actual)	2006-07 (Projected)	2006-07 (Estimated)	2007-08 (Projected)
P1. Percentage of general fund support that is utilized to offset the cost of department staff that assist with County or public projects.	N/A	100%	100%	100%
P2. Percentage of completion for Water System Improvements	N/A	30%	30%	100%
P3. Percentage of completion for the upgrade and addition of facilities in Kessler Park.	N/A	20%	20%	100%

#### Status

- P1. Support received for county or public projects has been applied to multiple area/district undertakings. This helps districts by allowing additional services and purchases for projects without adversely affecting their respective operating budgets.
- P2. Planning, contracting and engineering work is to be accomplished in 2006-07.
- P3. 20% estimate represents completion of skateboard park, basketball court, irrigation system install and landscaping work in 2006-07.

### IX. 2007-08 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL GENERAL FUND FINANCING (POLICY ITEMS)

The department is not requesting any additional general fund financing for 2007-08.

### X. 2007-08 PROPOSED FEE ADJUSTMENTS

DESCRIPTION OF FEE REQUEST	SERVICE IMPACTS
1. Water/Sewer user fees and standby charges.	Additional or increased fees are set to align revenues with required expenditures, relative to operations and maintenance needs and inflationary factors.
2. General park and recreation fees.	Additional or increased fees are set to match revenues to requirements relative to continued needs and inflationary factors.

If there are questions about this business plan, please contact Thomas Sutton, Director, at (909) 387-5950.

