

NEWS

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San Bernardino County adopts balanced budget

The Board of Supervisors Tuesday unanimously adopted a balanced and on-time budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year which begins July 1st. However, the county remains fully aware the state's fiscal crisis could severely damage this successful effort to maintain vital services for San Bernardino County residents.

"This budget gives us appropriation authority but we intend to be extremely cautious going forward," said County Administrative Officer, Mark Uffer. "We will continue to stay tightly focused on preserving our vital services while we wait for word from the state on what they intend to do to address their serious budget issues" said Mr. Uffer.

The vast majority of county departments were forced to cut 8 percent from their budgets for the coming fiscal year in addition to 8 percent that was cut for the current year. The budget also reflects a voluntary decision by the unions that represent most county employees, including Sheriff's deputies and other sworn public safety officers, to forgo a previously agreed-upon pay increase.

"Thanks to the foresight of our fiscal team, and the sacrifices of staff, the county has been able to continue providing services now when they are needed the most," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Gary Ovitt. "The county hopes the state likewise chooses fiscal responsibility over short-sighted schemes that will just make our problems worse."

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The budget approved today calls for total spending of \$3.8 billion, which represents a reduction of more than \$60 million from the 2008-2009 year budget. A few modifications were included at today's adoption:

- The Board agreed to provide up to \$65,000 in funding in 2009-10 to maintain support for the University of California Cooperative Extension that provides educational research and various programs to County residents,
- The Board directed the County Administrative Office to bring back action in the coming weeks to authorize an increase to the County Service Area Revolving fund of one million dollars to further assist lending to the County's CSA's,
- The Board gave direction to transfer growth in the County's Payment In Lieu of Taxes funding, to a special reserve fund dedicated for fire protection services in unincorporated areas.

The County of San Bernardino provides a remarkable array of vital services to the 2 million people who live in what is by far the largest geographic county in the contiguous 48 states.

The diverse collection of services provided by the county includes police and fire protection, elections, regional parks, aid to abused and neglected children and seniors, airports, immunizations, libraries, aid to the mentally ill, a state-of-the-art acute care hospital and trauma center, landfills, road construction and maintenance, museums, financial support to needy families, business attraction and retention, animal care and control, flood control, vital records, assistance to military veterans, and much more.

To view the budget visit www.sbcounty.gov