

**FY 2009-10
First Quarter
General Fund
Budget Status Report**



November 16, 2009



City and County of San Francisco

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This report informs the Mayor and Board of Supervisors that the Controller's Office is revising its General Fund revenue and expenditure forecasts based on new information available since the FY 2009-10 budget was passed. As shown in Table 1, our updated forecasts show a current year General Fund shortfall of \$53 million if current revenue trends continue and if spending is maintained at current and proposed service levels. This projected shortfall exceeds the uncommitted balance of \$25 million in General Reserve and prior year fund balance by \$28 million. Until this shortfall has been addressed, the Controller's office will not be able to certify funds from the General Fund Reserve for other appropriations.

The components of the projected shortfall are as follows:

A. Pending Supplemental Appropriations using \$8.0 Million of General Fund Reserve: The total approved and pending supplemental appropriations request the use of \$8.0 million from the General Fund Reserve. This includes one approved supplemental appropriation using \$0.2 million from the General Fund Reserve for emergency aid relief. The supplemental appropriations currently pending at the Board of Supervisors include shifting \$0.2 million of savings from the State Budget reserve to increase the General Fund Reserve, the use of \$7.1 million from the General Fund Reserve to restore positions expected to be laid off or rehired at lower paying job classes on November 15, 2009, and the use of \$0.9 million from the General Fund Reserve to restore positions laid off or rehired at lower paying job classes in FY 2008-09.

**Table 1. Potential FY 2009-10 General Fund Revenue and Expenditure
Variance to Budget, \$ Millions**

Based on data available through November 13, 2009, assuming spending continues at budgeted or requested service levels

| | Revenue Surplus (Shortfall) | Expenditure Savings (Deficit) | Net GF Savings (Shortfall) |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A. Supplementals requesting General Fund Reserve | | | |
| Approved | | | |
| Emergency Aid Relief Supplemental - Use \$150K of GF Reserve | | (0.2) | (0.2) |
| Pending at the Board of Supervisors | | | |
| State Budget Impact - shift \$150K savings to GF Reserve | | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| DPH - Position Restoration Supplemental (Daly) | | (7.1) | (7.1) |
| DPH - Position Restoration Supplemental (Avalos) | | (0.9) | (0.9) |
| Subtotal Supplementals | | (8.0) | (8.0) |
| B. General Revenues Variance to Budget | | | |
| Property Tax | (35.0) | - | (35.0) |
| Payroll Tax | (24.8) | - | (24.8) |
| Sales Tax-Related | (8.6) | - | (8.6) |
| Hotel Room Tax | 28.0 | - | 28.0 |
| Property Transfer Tax | 6.1 | - | 6.1 |
| Other General Revenues | (4.8) | - | (4.8) |
| Pre-Audit Surplus Prior Year Fund Balance | 1.0 | - | 1.0 |
| Reduced General Fund baseline transfer to MTA | - | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| Reduced General Fund baseline transfer to Library | - | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Subtotal General Revenues | (38.1) | 2.6 | (35.5) |
| C. Departmental revenue and expenditure variance to budget | | | |
| Assessor | | (0.9) | (0.9) |
| City Planning | (1.7) | - | (1.7) |
| Fire Department | (5.1) | - | (5.1) |
| Human Services | (2.0) | 9.1 | 7.1 |
| Juvenile Probation | (1.0) | - | (1.0) |
| Public Defender | - | (1.7) | (1.7) |
| Public Health | 18.3 | (17.4) | 1.0 |
| Sheriff | 9.3 | (13.3) | (4.0) |
| Superior Court | | (3.2) | (3.2) |
| Subtotal Departmental Variance to Budget | 17.8 | (27.4) | (9.6) |
| Total Estimated General Fund Impacts | (20.3) | (32.8) | (53.1) |
| FY 2009-10 Budgeted General Fund Reserve | | | 25.0 |
| Shortfall in Excess of General Fund Reserve | | | (28.1) |

B. General Revenues Net \$35.5 Million Shortfall— General revenues include the following:

- **Pre-Audit Surplus General Fund Balance:** The FY 2009-10 budget assumed \$94.5 million of prior year fund balance. Our pre-audit results indicate that we will close the prior year with approximately a \$1 million surplus above the \$94.5 million assumed in the budget.
- **Property Tax:** The \$35.0 million shortfall is primarily due to increased set-asides required from current year revenues in response to the over 4,000 appeals covering more than \$29 billion in assessed valuation filed before the September 15, 2009 deadline. This estimate will be updated as appeals are heard and we gather more data as to the magnitude of actual refunds awarded.
- **Payroll Tax:** A \$24.8 million shortfall is forecast. Our FY 2009-10 revenues for payroll tax are primarily from taxes due in calendar year 2009. After the budget was finalized, we received data for the period of January–March 2009 showing a 9.5% drop in seasonally-adjusted payrolls, with declines forecast for the remainder of 2009 as businesses adjusted to the economic downturn.
- **Sales Tax-Related:** The \$8.6 million shortfall projection builds upon recent data showing a steeper than expected decline in sales tax receipts.
- **Hotel Tax:** The \$28.0 million projected surplus takes into account July–September receipts that showed a smaller decline than assumed in the budget, and assumes that receipts through the rest of the year will be modestly higher than last year.
- **Property Transfer Tax:** The \$6.1 million projected surplus is based on a 5% year-over-year increase in receipts from July–October 2009, with similar increase levels projected through year-end.
- **Other General Revenues:** The \$4.8 million shortfall in other general revenues compared to budget includes a \$2.8 million shortfall in projected interest revenue due to continuing low interest rates and reduced cash balances, along with minor projected surpluses and shortfalls in other revenue categories.
- **Reduced Baseline Transfers to Municipal Transportation Agency and Public Library:** The San Francisco Charter establishes baseline funding levels for the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) and the Public Library. These baselines are indexed to overall growth or reduction in aggregate General Fund discretionary revenues. The revenue shortfalls discussed result in reduced transfers to the MTA and the Public Library of \$2.6 million.

C. Departmental Revenue and Expenditure Variances to Budget \$9.6 Million Shortfall

- **Assessor's Office:** The \$0.9 million projected excess expenditure requirement is based on the Department's analysis of additional City Attorney hours needed to represent the City in large commercial property tax appeals. The expected number of such appeals has increased sharply this fiscal year compared to the prior year.
- **City Planning:** The \$1.7 million projected revenue shortfall is due to lower than anticipated volumes of building permit fees, environmental review fees, conditional use fees, and other fees.
- **Fire Department:** The \$5.1 million projected revenue shortfall consists of:
 - \$2.0 million fire prevention fee revenue shortfall related to the continued slowdown in construction,
 - \$0.5 million ambulance billing shortfall as more private ambulances enter the market, and
 - \$2.6 million potential shortfall in budgeted recoveries from external agencies receiving fire suppression and emergency medical services.
- **Human Services:** The \$2.0 million revenue shortfall estimate is from the Department's updated projections regarding federal and state reimbursements for prior year claims. The \$9.1 million estimated expenditure savings represents:
 - \$6.7 million savings representing six months of reduced In-Home Support Services (IHSS) worker county share of wages due to litigation staying the State from their budgeted reduction in State support for those wages. This litigation is further discussed in Section D below,
 - \$5.0 million savings from closing out excess balances of encumbrances remaining from the prior year, and
 - \$2.6 million projected spending requirements above budget anticipated in County Adult Assistance Programs (CAAP) aid based on rising caseload trends.
- **Juvenile Probation:** The \$1.0 million revenue shortfall estimate is based on the new State revenue sharing allocation from Vehicle License Fees coming in below budgeted levels.
- **Public Defender:** The \$1.7 million excess expenditure projection represents \$1.3 million above budgeted levels required to maintain current staffing and a further \$0.4 million requested by the Public Defender to hire into vacant unfunded positions.
- **Public Health:** The projected \$1.0 million surplus for all funds consists of the following:
 - **General Fund Programs:** The projected \$0.8 million revenue shortfall in primary care is related to Health Care Coverage Initiative revenues and net patient revenues. The projected \$2.5 million expenditure deficit is primarily is due to expected overspending in salaries and fringe benefits.
 - **Laguna Honda Hospital:** The projected \$5.6 million expenditure deficit is in salaries and fringe benefits.
 - **San Francisco General Hospital:** The projected \$19.1 million revenue surplus is due to a \$15.4 million surplus in net patient revenue and a \$7.7 million surplus in Safety Net Care Pool revenue due to updated forecasts of Medicaid Waiver payments by the California Association of Public Hospitals and actual revenues

received to date. This is offset by a \$4.0 million shortfall in projected revenue from the Health Care Coverage Initiative that provides funding for the Healthy San Francisco program. The projected \$9.3 million expenditure deficit is in salaries and fringe benefits.

- **Sheriff:** \$10.6 million of expected revenue surplus and expenditure requirement relates to an anticipated contractor settlement related to the County Jail #3 replacement project later this fiscal year. The Sheriff anticipates requesting appropriation of these funds to complete work deferred from that project, including demolition of the old jail on the site. The revenue surplus is offset by a \$1.3 million anticipated shortfall in funds available from the Superior Court to reimburse for court security. A further \$2.7 million projected expenditure deficit in salaries and fringe is due to the increase in jail population requiring more security.
- **Superior Court:** The projected expenditure deficit of \$3.2 million in the indigent defense program is due to a continuing trend of increased referrals from the Public Defender.
- **Assumes release of \$45 million reserve:** This projection assumes that the Budget and Finance Committee releases the \$45 million on reserve pending the Controller's estimate of State and local revenue impact on the City and County's budget.

D. Major Factors That Could Change These Estimates

- **Commercial Property Tax Appeal Awards:** A key assumption underlying our forecast relates to the amount of property tax revenue that will need to be set aside for settlement of appeals. The greatest uncertainty relates to the fair assessment value of commercial properties as of the January 2009 reference period for the FY 2009-10 property tax assessment. At that time there were almost no major commercial transactions taking place due to unavailability of credit and investor uncertainty about the state of the economy. We will update our estimates as we learn more about appeal settlements and decisions.
- **Potential new MediCal Revenue for San Francisco General Hospital:** Recently passed State legislation proposes a change in the State's MediCal plan that would impose new fees on private hospitals, increase federal reimbursements and direct additional funds to both public and private hospitals. This proposal requires federal approval and is likely to be effective retroactively. However, when the approval would be granted or how much San Francisco General Hospital would receive is unknown at this time. The Controller will inform the Mayor and Board when new revenue can be certified from this source.
- **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Litigation:** In response to legal challenges, a federal court has stayed the State's planned reduction in the level of support provided to counties for IHSS worker wages. As long as the stay remains in effect, or if the State loses its case, the effect will save the Human Services Agency approximately \$1 million per month. This projection assumes 6 months of savings. If the stay remains in effect beyond December 2009 or if the State loses its case, there could be up to \$6 million further savings to the City. If the State were to win a ruling allowing the retroactive

imposition of their wage support reduction back to July 1, 2009, that would result in an additional cost to the City of \$6 million. Separate litigation related to eligibility changes imposed by the State on IHSS clients could also have a substantial impact on the City's expenditure levels in this program, but the Human Services Agency does not currently have an estimate as to the magnitude of the potential savings or additional costs of alternative outcomes of this litigation.

- **Pace of Economic Recovery:** This report's revenue projections rely upon the most recent information available as to tax receipts and leading economic indicators. We will update these projections as new information becomes available.

E. Next Steps

Based on this projected negative balance, the Mayor and the Board should take steps to reduce expenditures or increase revenues in the current year in order to bring the budget back into balance. Because the estimated revenue shortfall is greater than the available balance in the General Fund Reserve, the Controller cannot certify the availability of funds from the Reserve until these actions are implemented.

Our office will provide regular updates on the status of our projected revenues and expenditures compared to budget over the course of the fiscal year. Please feel free to contact me at (415) 554-7500 should you wish to discuss this information in more detail.