

# Proposed Budget Plan COUNTY COUNSEL



Board of Supervisors  
March 30, 2010



## Mission Statement

**The County Counsel's Office provides high quality and timely legal services to:**

- Board of Supervisors,
- All County departments and agencies,
- Elected officials,
- Boards and Commissions,
- School districts and Special districts,
- and other public agencies

so that they may carry out their responsibilities in a manner fully consistent with the law. The County Counsel's Office provides legal representation to clients in disputes before administrative agencies and the courts with the goal of achieving the best results in a timely manner.



## County Counsel Divisions

- General Law
- Litigation
- Social Services / Probate
- Schools and Special Education
- Special Districts

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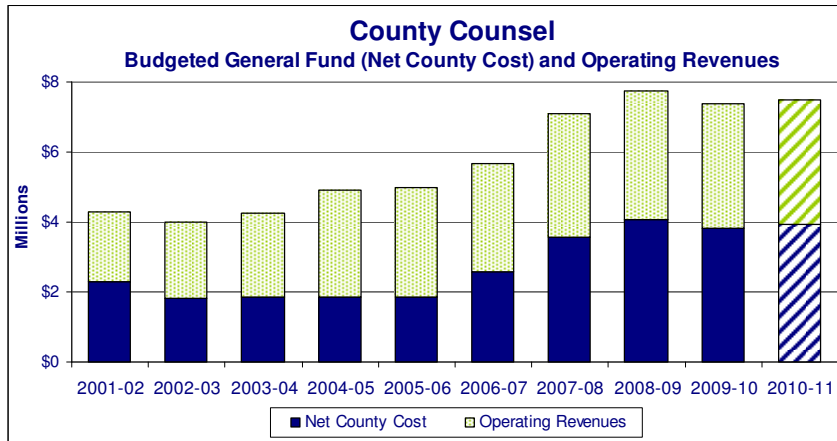
## FY 2009-10 Budget Summary

<b>Total Positions</b>		<b>40</b>
<b>Total Sources</b>		<b>\$9,947,859</b>
Operating Revenues	\$3,568,444	
General Fund (Net County Cost)	\$3,829,955	
Fund Balance (one-time)	\$2,549,460	
<b>Total Uses</b>		<b>\$9,947,859</b>
Operating Expenditures	\$8,153,109	
Reserves (one-time)	\$1,794,750	

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## Ten-Year Funding Trend Operating Revenues and General Fund FY 2002 to Estimated FY 2011



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## FY 2010-11 Budget Target General Fund Contribution (Net County Cost)

<b>Base: FY 2009-10 Net County Cost</b>	<b>\$3,829,955</b>
Retirement Increase	\$448,998
Other Salary and Benefits	\$33,247
Revenue Offsets	\$0
Other Adjustments	\$7,455
Reduction Target (10%)	(\$382,996)
	<b>\$106,704</b>
<b>FY 2010-11 Net County Cost</b>	<b>\$3,936,660</b>

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## **Reductions Already Made FY 2008 through FY 2010 Adopted Budget**

- **Deferral of technology upgrades**
- **Deferral of non-ergonomic furniture replacement**
- **Increased VTO participation**
  - Currently 40% staff participation
- **Unfilled positions (salary savings)**
  - Legal Secretary
  - Lead Legal Secretary
  - Deputy County Counsel (until FY 2008-09)
- **Current vacancy rate is 7.5% (3 positions)**
- **No positions eliminated**

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## **Planning and Priority-Setting Process**

- **Who Was Involved?**
  - Management Team
- **Budget Scenario Planning Process**
- **Criteria Used to Develop Budget Reductions**
  - Reviewed budget-related materials provided by the County Manager's Office
  - Reviewed time records to identify which clients have used the services of County Counsel's most often and the types of services provided
  - Distributed on-line survey to department staff to solicit employee suggestions and/or recommendations to develop budget scenarios

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## Mandated Services

### County Counsel MUST Provide:

- **State Law mandates**
  - Government Code
  - Elections Code
  - Revenue & Taxation Code
  - Welfare & Institutions Code
  - Penal Code
- **County Charter mandates**
- **San Mateo County Ordinance Code mandates**



## Discretionary Services

All County Counsel services are mandated, by virtue of the fact that we provide legal services and representation that must be provided by persons licensed to practice law. There is no specified maintenance of effort level.

On the other hand, there is a considerable amount of discretion as to the level of services provided, in large measure dependent on the number and frequency of client requests for legal advice and assistance, and the complexity and urgency of the matter for which assistance is requested.



## Proposed Reductions TOTAL = \$474,271

- **Budget Balancing Strategies used**

- Identify opportunities to increase revenues and reduce costs.
- One non-general fund client was identified which had not initially been invoiced for services.
- Opportunities to increase fee rates were reviewed and an increase to billing rates considered.
- Elimination of positions also considered.

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## Proposed Reductions TOTAL = \$474,271

- **Implementation July 1, 2010**

- One attorney position became vacant with elevation of attorney to Superior Court bench; position to be eliminated.
- One vacant support staff position to be eliminated.
- One Non-General Fund client not historically invoiced for services will be invoiced beginning July 1, 2010.
- Proposed 1% increase in Planning fees not yet implemented (pending comprehensive countywide review of fees)

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## Proposed Reductions TOTAL = \$474,271

- **Impacts**

- Client/customer impact
  - Possible reduction in timeliness of services and advice;
  - Possible reduction in services to general fund clients
- Community impact
  - Indirect, but similar reduction in timeliness of services to community as a result of reduction of timeliness of advice to clients

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## Proposed Reductions TOTAL = \$474,271

- **Impacts**

- Impacts on other departments, providers
  - Departments are our clients; therefore impact (noted in previous slide) is direct
- Short-term vs. long-term
  - Effect will be immediate and ongoing

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## Proposed Reductions TOTAL = \$474,271

- Estimated Amount
  - One-time vs. ongoing
    - Savings, if all strategies implemented, would be \$474,271 (12% of NCC)
  - Partial vs. full year
    - \$34,054 of total savings dependent on implementation of Planning fee increase; remaining is full year savings
- Estimated Positions
  - 2 positions

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## Looking Ahead FY 2011-2012 and FY 2012-2013

- **Core services that will remain**
  - All of our core services will remain with the level of services dependent on the frequency of services requested and complexity of matters for which services are requested, and the frequency and complexity of litigation filed by third parties.
- **Major initiatives to continue to meet performance goals**
  - Continue to seek opportunities to optimize responsiveness to client needs without sacrificing quality of service, by better use of technology and shared legal resources, particularly by strengthening relationships with other County Counsel offices.

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## Looking Ahead FY 2011-2012 and FY 2012-2013

- **Process moving forward**
  - Continue to assess how changing financial situation will impact services requested by clients, particularly with regard to income generating clients.
  - Will review billing structure to determine if total cost recovery should be reflected in billing rates.
  - Will be mindful of the impact of an increase in rates on departments and outside agencies.

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## DISCUSSION



THANK YOU