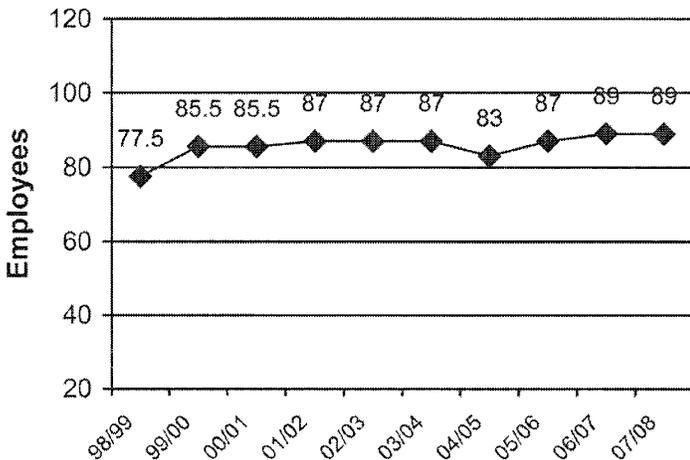


**MISSION STATEMENT**

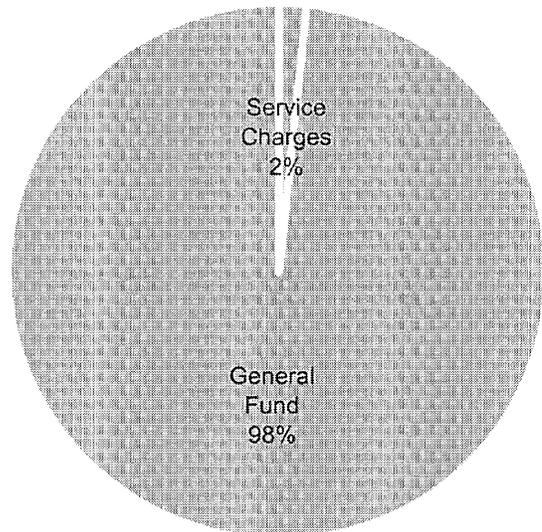
The Assessor and staff seek excellence in providing information, services, and accurate property assessments through our personal commitment to integrity, mutual respect, and teamwork.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2007-08	2007-08
<u>Financial Summary</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Requested</u>	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Adopted</u>
Revenues	\$ 639,579	\$ 219,823	\$ 134,500	\$ 134,500	\$ 134,500
Salary and Benefits	6,485,117	6,686,738	7,310,145	7,486,785	7,486,785
Services and Supplies	697,747	919,214	885,520	892,122	892,122
Fixed Assets	28,605	17,509	12,000	12,000	12,000
**Gross Expenditures	\$ 7,211,469	\$ 7,623,461	\$ 8,207,665	\$ 8,390,907	\$ 8,390,907
General Fund Support (G.F.S.)	\$ 6,571,890	\$ 7,403,638	\$ 8,073,165	\$ 8,256,407	\$ 8,256,407

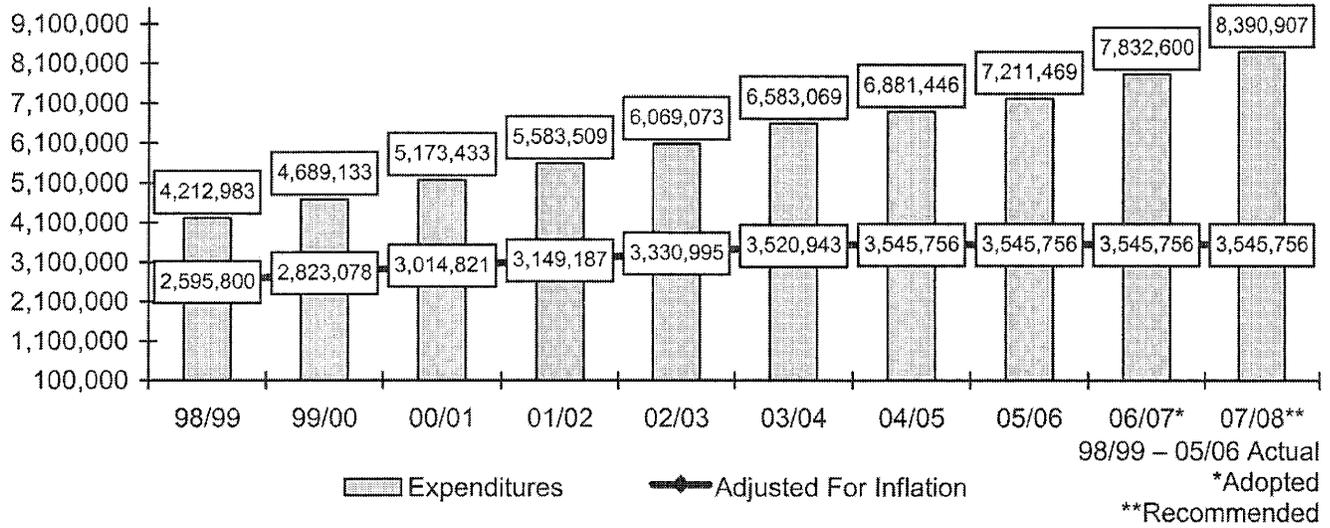
**Number of Employees**  
(Full Time Equivalent)



**Source of Funds**



# 10 Year Expenditures Adjusted For Inflation



## SERVICE PROGRAMS

### Administration

Oversee the preparation of all property assessments, manage human resource functions and issues, coordinate office operations, develop and monitor the department budget, coordinate accounts payable and payroll.

Total Expenditures: \$671,273 Total FTE: 6

### Assessment Valuation, Reviews, and Appeals

Review and assess the value of secured real property (i.e. land and buildings) when there are changes in ownership, new construction, declines in market value, disaster relief, and other appraisal events. Review, audit, and assess the value of unsecured business property (i.e. business equipment, boats, aircraft, etc.). Assessments appealed by property owners are reviewed, processed, tracked, and staff presents recommendations to the Assessment Appeals Board.

Total Expenditures: \$4,111,544 Total FTE: 39

### Assessment Standards/Automation

Analyze and track legislation pertaining to property taxes; develop and implement procedures upon passage of new legislation; compile and deliver internal and state mandated reports to appropriate agencies; oversee training for staff; implement and monitor the automated systems within the Assessor's office.

Total Expenditures: \$839,091 Total FTE: 8

### Public Service

Provide information to the public regarding property assessments and property tax laws in person, over the telephone, and by written communication including pamphlets, public service announcements, the Internet, and annual notifications, etc.

Total Expenditures: \$335,636 Total FTE: 6

### Roll Preparation

Update and maintain the property assessment records. This includes creating and maintaining property parcel maps, verifying and updating ownership data when property ownership is altered, maintaining exemptions, updating valuation data and property attributes, processing revised assessments, maintaining the supplemental tax records, and other functions.

Total Expenditures: \$2,433,363 Total FTE: 30

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

The Assessor is responsible for locating, identifying the ownership, and determining the value of real and business personal property within the County of San Luis Obispo. The Assessor must complete an annual assessment roll showing the assessed values for all properties. The most recent local assessment roll totaled more than \$35.3 billion in assessed value.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE 2006/07 FISCAL YEAR****Customer Service**

- The Assessor's website was upgraded and redesigned this year. It has a more professional look, is better organized, and is easier to use. It allows the public to conveniently download parcel maps and locate property information from their home or business. A customer survey form is also available on the website and can be returned to our office via e-mail.
- Providing excellent customer service was emphasized by the Assessor. Seven staff members who frequently provide service at our public counter attended the Employee University's *Public Service Excellence* class. Additional staff will attend this training in 2006/2007. Feedback from the public on Customer Survey forms regarding our service has been very positive (99%).

**Internal Business Processing Improvements**

- The Assessor's staff increased production from 93% to 95% which added approximately \$91 million to the assessment roll during 2005/2006 despite starting their workload a month later due to the previous year's extension of the roll deadline. The Assessment Evaluation Services (AES) *Valuation*, *Photo Management*, and *GIS Maps* modules and the newly implemented AES *Workflow* module were instrumental in this achievement. *Workflow* allows the appraisers to organize and manage their work electronically without the need to request printouts from the Information Technology Department (ITD) saving time and paper, and to store notes electronically thereby reducing time spent in locating handwritten notes and transferring them to other documents. Also, supervisors have an increased ability to manage the workload of their staff in real time for greater efficiency.

**Financial Improvements**

- By utilizing Employee University, National Management Association, and other courses held in San Luis Obispo County, hosting a California Assessors' Administrative Services Association (CAASA) Exemption Level I class, and providing in-house training approved by the State Board of Equalization, the Assessor's office saved approximately \$18,000 in travel expenses for staff education.
- Despite the loss of state funding from the Property Tax Administration Program (PTAP), the Assessor's net county cost for 2005/2006 was within 1% of our appropriated budget. This was accomplished through salary savings from vacant positions and the elimination of some service and supply expenses.

**Learning and Growth**

- All staff certified with the State Board of Equalization completed their required annual training. This assures fair and accurate assessments for property owners. All certified staff was available to address the appraisal workload and none had to be reassigned to non-appraisal duties due to revocation of their certification for lack of training hours.
- Continuing education was emphasized for all staff, both certified and non-certified. Assessor's staff averaged 40+ hours of education per person in 2005/2006. Participation in continuing education assures accurate assessments for property owners and high quality services to the public.

**MAJOR FOCUS FOR 2007/2008 FISCAL YEAR****Customer Service**

- Expanding the amount of property attribute information displayed on our website using the Attribute Inventory Rewrite (AIR) format will provide taxpayers with more extensive property attribute information.
- Increasing public outreach by participating in additional business fairs and continuing to meet with real estate groups, title companies, mobilehome associations, and the local business community will provide taxpayers an opportunity to obtain assessment information and assistance without the need come to our office.

**Internal Business Processing Improvements**

- The AES *Workflow* module used successfully by the appraisal section last year will be implemented in the Property Transfer section of the office this year to improve the processing of property ownership records. This will allow staff and supervisors the ability to monitor and manage the workflow electronically in real time, eliminating the need to request work status printouts thus saving time and paper.
- The Assessor's office will soon begin using the Document Imaging System (IDM) for electronically storing documents. At the beginning of this process, selected types of documents will be archived using IDM. Over time, more document categories will be included. By implementing the program in phases, we will be able to focus on training staff to use the system and controlling the quality of the electronically saved documents. The end result will be less storage space needed for documents and quicker access to documents by staff.

**Financial Improvements**

- The newly implemented e-SDR (Standard Document Record) program will provide all local businesses the option of filing their annual Business Property Statement on-line. This will benefit business owners and reduce the amount of time our front counter and auditor-appraiser staff spend in processing paper forms returned to our office by regular mail. Time saved by staff can be redirected to more pressing work items.

**Learning and Growth**

- Our office will host the California Assessors' Association (CAA) Annual Conference in October 2007 and will also volunteer to host a *Change in Ownership* or *Exemption* classes offered by CAASA. This will afford certified staff an opportunity to complete their required annual training hours, and increase their knowledge and skills, without the expense to the county for out-of-town travel. Providing staff training helps to ensure the consistent application of laws and procedures.

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2007/2008 FISCAL YEAR****Reinstate State Funding**

State funding from the Property Tax Administration Program (PTAP) was eliminated in 2005/2006. These funds provided 10% (\$736,288) of the Assessor's annual budget. Assembly Bill 83 was introduced last year to initiate the State-County Property Assessment and Revenue for Education Funding Program (PARE) to replace PTAP. This bill is sponsored by the California Assessors' Association who are working with the State Department of Finance and members of the Legislature to ensure its successful passage.

**Increasing Workloads**

Last year we were able to complete a large portion of the backlog of work items and we are confident we will complete 98% of the workload in 2007/2008 (barring any unforeseen circumstances). The real estate market is showing significant signs of softening which may mean an increase in applications for reduced property assessments. This will increase the Assessor's workload for several years because properties granted a reduced assessment must be valued each year until the value returns to the original assessed value.

**New Property Tax System**

The IT Executive Steering Committee's strategic plan includes migrating from the Mainframe computer to client/server platforms. The Assessor, Auditor, and Tax Collector have been meeting to develop a plan to find and fund a suitable property tax system to replace the Mainframe.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommended 2007-08 budget for the Assessor's Office provides for \$562,307 in General Fund support, a 7% increase over FY 2006-07 adopted levels. Salaries and benefits are increasing 7% or \$542,944 primarily due to prevailing wage and pension increases. The 3.25% pension related expenses increased the department's salaries and benefits accounts by \$162,198. Services and supplies have increased by \$27,363 or 3% over 2006-07 adopted levels. Increases in the majority of these accounts are associated with the normal cost of doing business. The restoration of historic map book project is being reinstated and a new copier is proposed to be purchased which contributes to the overall increase in services and supplies accounts. Revenues are projected to decrease slightly by \$4,000 or 2% over current levels. This decrease is attributed to more documents, such as maps, being available for free on the Assessor's web site. While this availability of free information on the web site contributes to the reduction in revenue for the Assessor's Office, access to on-line information has provided

greater service for the public. As noted in the department's narrative above, the Assessor, along with the California Assessor's Association, continue to work with the State Legislature on a replacement funding program for the Property Tax Administration Program. At such time that a new program is in place, the Assessor's Office will return to the Board with a recommendation on how the funds should be allocated.

**BOARD ADOPTED CHANGES**

None.

**GOALS/PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

<b>Department Goal:</b> To levy fair and equitable assessments on real property (i.e. land and structures) in an accurate and timely manner by using accepted appraisal principles and prevailing assessment practices.						
<b>Communitywide Result Link:</b> A well-governed community.						
<b>1. Performance Measure: Percentage of the assessment roll completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.</b>						
<b>02-03 Actual Results</b>	<b>03-04 Actual Results</b>	<b>04-05 Actual Results</b>	<b>05-06 Actual Results</b>	<b>06-07 Adopted</b>	<b>06-07 Actual Results</b>	<b>07-08 Target</b>
97%	94%	93%	95%	98%	97%	98%
<b>What:</b> Measures the assessments that are appraised before the June 30 <sup>th</sup> deadline.						
<b>Why:</b> Incomplete assessments will generate inaccurate tax bills. As the assessments are completed after the year-end deadline, the Assessor, Auditor-Controller, and Tax Collector must process revised assessments and tax bills. These revisions increase the costs of preparing the assessment roll and property taxes. In addition, property owners are inconvenienced by revisions to their assessments and the associated delays.						
<b>How are we doing?</b> While we strive to achieve 100% completion of the assessment roll, there are situations that prevent the completion of all work items prior to June 30 <sup>th</sup> each year. Typically, a small number of incomplete work items remain at roll turnover due to delays in obtaining information or the need for additional research. New technology was utilized by staff (i.e. AES [a mass appraisal system] and APEX [a sketching program]) which helped increase the number of work items completed by each appraiser; however, unanticipated vacancies in the appraiser career series reduced the number of appraisers available to address the workload. Although we achieved a 2% increase in completed work items, we did not achieve our stated goal of 98%.						
<b>2. Performance Measure: The number of assessment appeals filed for every 1,000 assessments.</b>						
<b>02-03 Actual Results</b>	<b>03-04 Actual Results</b>	<b>04-05 Actual Results</b>	<b>05-06 Actual Results</b>	<b>06-07 Adopted</b>	<b>06-07 Actual Results</b>	<b>07-08 Target</b>
.67	.72	.57	.50	1	.50	< 1
<b>What:</b> When property owners disagree with their property's assessed value, they may file for an assessment appeal hearing before the Assessment Appeals Board. The number of real property appeals is used as an indicator of accuracy and equity among assessments. A low number of appeals are associated with a greater degree of accuracy and the property owner's satisfaction with their assessments.						
<b>Why:</b> The Assessor strives to make accurate and thorough assessments when property is initially valued in an effort to control the costs associated with producing the assessment roll.						
<b>How are we doing?</b> The 2006/07 actual results indicate the Assessor's office has maintained a low assessment appeal ratio with 91 appeals filed for 2006/2007. This equates to .50, which is below our stated goal of 1 appeal filed for every 1,000 assessments. The 2006/07 data for other counties will be available in January 2008, but we anticipate that amongst the 11 similar sized counties, we will again be ranked as having one of the lowest assessment appeal ratios.						
<b>3. Performance Measure: The number of completed assessments per appraiser on staff.</b>						
<b>02-03 Actual Results</b>	<b>03-04 Actual Results</b>	<b>04-05 Actual Results</b>	<b>05-06 Actual Results</b>	<b>06-07 Adopted</b>	<b>06-07 Actual Results</b>	<b>07-08 Target</b>
1,875	1,938	1,941	1,977	2,000	2,183	2,000
<b>What:</b> This measurement compares the size of the workload per appraiser from year to year.						
<b>Why:</b> This indicator tracks changes in production as new procedures or automated systems are introduced.						
<b>How are we doing?</b> The appraisal staff increased production per appraiser during the 2006/07 fiscal year. This increase in production stems from increased utilization of automated valuation programs (AES, APEX) as well as 817 hours in overtime. In addition, an Assessment Technician II was assigned to the appraisal section to assist appraisers with the less technical tasks allowing appraisers to focus on their appraisal workload and thus increase their production.						

**4. Performance Measure: Net County Cost per assessment.**

02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Actual Results	06-07 Adopted	06-07 Actual Results	07-08 Target
\$29.04	\$33.79	\$34.29	\$37.50	\$48.00	\$40.62	\$42.00

**What:** This measurement is the net county cost (General Fund support) divided by the total number of assessments.

**Why:** The Assessor's office strives to make the most effective use of all available resources in order to produce assessments at a reasonable cost.

**How are we doing?** For 2006/07, loss of the Property Tax Administration Program (PTAP) funds (\$736,288), reduced revenues, and an increase in salary costs had a significant impact on the Assessor's costs. Salary expenses rose due to the cost of living adjustment; however, unanticipated vacant positions provided sufficient salary savings to absorb the COLA increases allowing the Assessor to hold costs below the 2006/07 adopted target cost for each assessment. For 2007/08 the remaining savings in the PTAP trust account will be spent on items encumbered in previous budget years. The Assessor continues to work with the California Assessor's Association, State Legislators, and the Governor's Office to establish a new program to replace PTAP funding.

**Department Goal:** To provide high quality services to the public and taxpayers.

**Communitywide Result Link:** A Well-Governed Community.

**5. Performance Measure: The percentage of responses rating the Assessor's services as satisfactory or higher.**

02-03 Actual Results	03-04 Actual Results	04-05 Actual Results	05-06 Actual Results	06-07 Adopted	06-07 Actual Results	07-08 Target
Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	85%	84%	90%

**What:** This measures the favorable responses regarding the Assessor's services.

**Why:** To assure that the public and taxpayers receive high quality service from the Assessor's office.

**How are we doing?** In July 2006, the Assessor's staff made the customer survey available in the Assessor's public lobby and on the Assessor's web page. Twenty-five surveys were received in 2006/2007 at the front counter, by mail, or via our web site. All surveys received ranked our service at Above Satisfactory or Outstanding with the exception of four. These four had negative comments regarding the information available on our web site. In response to this feedback, a committee has been created to upgrade the accuracy of the information available and, within the governing privacy laws, to make additional information available to the public. The committee will be dedicated to ongoing web site improvement, and we anticipate the percentage of positive feedback to increase.