



# BROWN ARMSTRONG

*Certified Public Accountants*

To the Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara, California

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the County of Santa Barbara (the County) for the year ended June 30, 2011, and have issued our report thereon dated August 29, 2011. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, *Government Auditing Standards*, and OMB Circular A-133, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information in our engagement letter dated April 29, 2011. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **Significant Audit Findings**

#### *Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices*

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the County are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. During the fiscal year 2011, the County adopted the provisions of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*. We noted no transactions entered into by the County during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements were the year-end estimate of accruals for accounts payable, estimate for self-insurance liability, and estimate of contingent settlement liability with the State of California and contract service providers relating to the Santa Barbara County Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) Fund:

Management's estimate of the year-end payables is based on information received from the individual departments. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the estimate of payables in determining that it is reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. We also evaluated the self-insurance liability as determined by the County using actuarial reports prepared and provided by an independent third party. Furthermore, we reviewed management's analysis and supporting documents relating to contingent settlement liability with the State of California and contract service providers for ADMHS Fund and determined that it is reasonable and conservative.

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. The most sensitive disclosures affecting the financial statements were:

#### **MAIN OFFICE**

#### **4200 TRUXTON AVENUE**

SUITE 300  
BAK RSFIELD, CA 93309  
TEL 661.324.4971  
FAX 661.324.4997  
EMAIL info@bacpas.com

#### **560 CENTRAL AVENUE**

SHAFTER, CALIFORNIA 93263  
TEL 661.746.2145  
FAX 661.746.1218

#### **8050 N. PALM AVENUE**

SUITE 300  
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93711  
TEL 559.476.3592  
FAX 559.476.3593

#### **790 E. COLORADO BLVD.**

SUITE 908B  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91101  
TEL 626.240.0920  
FAX 626.240.0922



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Certified Public Accountants

- Note 13 Commitments and Contingencies
- Note 17 Retained Deficit
- Note 20 Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB)
- Note 22 Subsequent Events

*Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit*

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

*Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements*

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management has corrected all such misstatements. In addition, none of the misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to each opinion unit's financial statements taken as a whole.

*Disagreements with Management*

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

*Management Representations*

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated August 29, 2011.

*Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants*

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the County's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

*Other Audit Findings or Issues*

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to retention as the County's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

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This information is intended solely for the use of Board of Supervisors and management of the County of Santa Barbara and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

BROWN ARMSTRONG  
ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION



By: Eric H. Xin

Bakersfield, California  
August 29, 2011