

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
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Agenda Number:

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Department: Clerk-Recorder-Assessor/ROV
Budget Unit: 062
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TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Kenneth A. Pettit
Clerk-Recorder-Assessor & Registrar of Voters

STAFF CONTACT: Dana R. Bentley, Departmental Analyst
Extension 2214

SUBJECT: Authorization to Participate in 2001-2002 State-County Property Tax Administration Program.

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors to sign Agreement for 2001/02 State-County Property Tax Administration Program with the State of California (Attachment 1);
- b) Authorize the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor & Registrar of Voters, and County Administrator, to notify the State Department of Finance of Santa Barbara County's election to renew, for a seventh year, its loan agreement with the State providing for the continuation of the State-County Property Tax Administration Program in the amount of \$926,817 (See Appendix 1- Renewal Letter dated January 15, 2002).

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

This program is consistent Board Goal Number 1 -- Reanalyze, reform, and respond to the changing nature of County resources and responsibilities.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Assembly Bill 818 (Vasconcellos) was signed into law by Governor Wilson on October 21, 1995 and it established the State-County Property Tax Administration Program. AB719 (Torlakson) continued the Property Tax Administration Program through the 99-00 fiscal year, and AB1036 adds a final year of the loan program. Effective for the 01-02 fiscal year, the program becomes a grant program under AB589.

Approval of the current contract will provide our County with another 926,817, for a seven year funding total of \$6.5 million.

On January 15, 2002 the Board exercised its option to participate in the Property Tax Administration Program for a seventh year. In fiscal year 00-01, Santa Barbara County's participation in the Program funding will be used to:

- reduce property tax assessment backlog related to new construction, assessment appeals, changes of ownership, and Proposition 8 declines in value;
- enhance the County Assessor property tax administration system.

Adoption of staff's recommendation will mean that the State will provide the County with \$926,817 in funding for one year.

Mandates and Service Levels:

Backlog Reduction Objectives

In accordance with the Agreement for State-County Property Tax Administration Program (attached), the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor has agreed to decrease backlog workload in the following areas:

- New Construction Appraisal
- Reappraisable Transfers
- Defense of Assessment Appeals
- Mandatory Business Audits
- Proposition 8 Assessment Reviews

With the increased staff funding provided by the Property Tax Administration Program, the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor has been able to meet the agreed upon goals as stated in the attached Agreement.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There is no increase in net county cost resulting from participation in this program. As all Property Tax Administration positions are currently allocated to the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor, there are no facility impacts.

Approval of the recommendations will provide that the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor property assessment functions receive a maintenance of effort funding level of at least \$4,211,001 and a staffing level of 65.8 full-time positions (comprising the Department's Assessor Division staff). Adoption of maintenance of effort

funding and staffing levels is required in order for our County to participate in the Property Tax Administration Program.

Special Instructions:

That the Clerk of the Board forward Santa Barbara Property Tax Administration contract to the Mary Ann McMullin, California State Department of Finance by April 30, 2002. Also, send copies of signed Board Letter to Dana Bentley, Departmental Analyst and Jason Jewell of the Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's office.

Concurrence:

County Administrator, and County Counsel.