

# INTRODUCTORY SECTION



# COUNTY OF EL PASO

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

EDWARD A. DION, CPA, CIO  
COUNTY AUDITOR  
edion@co.el-paso.tx.us  
www.co.el-paso.tx.us/auditor

ROOM 406, COUNTY COURTHOUSE BUILDING  
500 EAST SAN ANTONIO STREET  
EL PASO, TEXAS 79901-2407  
(915) 546-2040  
(915) 546-8172 FAX

March 30, 2009

To the Honorable District Judges, County Court at Law Judges,  
County Probate Judges, Commissioners Court Members,  
Citizens of El Paso County and the Financial Community:

*Texas Local Government Code, §114.025*, requires that the County Auditor publish in April of each year, subsequent to the close of each fiscal year, a complete set of financial statements presented in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards by a firm of licensed certified public accountants. Pursuant to that requirement, we hereby issue the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) of the County of El Paso, Texas (County) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008.

This report consists of management's representations concerning the finances of the County. Therefore, management of the County assumes the responsibility for accuracy, completeness, fairness and reliability of the financial data presented in this report, including all disclosures. To provide a reasonable basis for making these representations, management of the County has established a comprehensive internal control framework that is designed both to protect the government's assets from loss, theft, or misuse and to compile sufficient reliable information for the preparation of the County's financial statements in conformity with GAAP. Because the cost of internal controls should not outweigh their benefits, the County of El Paso's comprehensive framework of internal controls has been designed to provide reasonable rather than absolute assurance that the financial statements will be free of material misstatement. As management, we assert that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, this financial report is complete and reliable in all material respects.

This report is designed to present fairly the financial position and results of financial operations of the County in all material respects and to demonstrate compliance with applicable finance-related legal and contractual provisions. This report adheres to the principal of full disclosure to the best of our ability so that the readers may better understand the County's financial affairs.

Gibson, Ruddock, Patterson, LLC, an independent certified public accounting firm has audited the County of El Paso's financial statements. The goal of the independent audit was to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements of El Paso County for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008, are free of material misstatement. The independent audit involved examining on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements; assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by

management; and evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. Based on the independent audit performed by our external auditors, they have concluded that there was a reasonable basis for rendering an unqualified opinion that the County of El Paso's financial statements for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008, are fairly presented in conformity with GAAP. The independent auditor's report is presented as the first component of the financial section of this report.

Additionally, the independent audit of the financial statements of the County of El Paso was part of a broader, federally mandated "Single Audit" designed to meet the special needs of the federal grantor agencies. Standards governing Single Audit engagements require the independent auditor to report not only on the fair presentation of the financial statements, but also on the audited government's internal controls and compliance with legal requirements, with special emphasis on internal controls and legal requirements involving the administration of federal awards. These reports are available in the County of El Paso's separately issued Single Audit Report by Gibson, Ruddock, Patterson, LLC. The County's Single Audit was prepared pursuant to provisions in the Single Audit Act and the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 of the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, entitled *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations* and the *State of Texas Single Audit Circular*. The County's single audit for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2008 disclosed no material weaknesses in the internal control structure. Furthermore, this CAFR is presented according to the reporting model established by GASB 34 and related statements.

GASB Statement No. 34, labeled by GASB as "the most significant change in the history of government financial reporting", mandated that by FY 2002, governments comparable to the County of El Paso amend their financial reporting to provide additional information about their fiscal health.

GAAP require that management provide a narrative introduction, overview, and analysis to accompany the basic financial statements in the form of Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A). This letter of transmittal is designed to complement the MD&A and should be read in conjunction with it. The County of El Paso's MD&A can be found immediately following the report of the independent auditors.

### **El Paso County Government Profile**

El Paso County was created from Bexar District in 1849, organized in 1850, and incorporated in 1871. Parts of El Paso County were taken to form Culberson County in 1911 and Hudspeth County in 1915. The County was named for being a well-known pass through the Rocky Mountains. It is the most western county in Texas, and is about equidistant from Houston, Texas, Los Angeles, California and Denver, Colorado. Also, bordered on the east side by Hudspeth County, El Paso County is just to the north of the International Boundary between the United States of America and the Republic of Mexico, and touches Doña Ana County in New Mexico. County government in Texas is, for many people, the primary and most accessible level of government. County governments are political subdivisions of the State. The State has created 254 counties. Initially, the counties were primarily created to facilitate the judicial system. As a result of State legislative changes over the years, county governments in Texas are involved not only with the judicial system, but also the delivery of health and welfare services, public safety, cultural and recreational activities, and construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. In comparison to

some of the other states, Texas counties have only a very limited ordinance making authority, as specifically granted by the State legislature.

Counties in Texas have many comparable characteristics and are similarly organized. Each county has a governing body called Commissioners Court. The Commissioners Court is composed of five members. One member, the county judge, is elected at large to a four-year term. The other four members are county commissioners. Each county commissioner is elected from a precinct to a four-year term. County judges have judicial responsibilities in all but the largest urban counties. In large urban counties, such as El Paso County, the county judge has no judicial responsibilities. Instead, the El Paso County Judge is often referred to as the County's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In all Texas counties, the County Judge presides over commissioners court meetings.

The Commissioners Court serves as the executive branch of county government. Among a myriad of constitutional and statutorily imposed duties and responsibilities, the five members of commissioners court have the exclusive responsibility and authority over a multitude of areas in the operation of county government. To name a few, the Commissioners Court is responsible for approving the county's operating budget and budgetary amendments, setting ad valorem property tax rates, auditing and directing settlement of all claims against the County. Additionally, this body appoints certain county officials and board members. The Commissioners Court also determines when propositions to issue bonds will be submitted to the voters.

The County is a strategic cross-roads for continental north-south and east-west traffic. The County spans a geographic area of about 1,058 square miles. The County enjoys fairly sound economic diversification. Being that El Paso is in the heart of the Southwest, many businesses are attracted to the El Paso/Juarez region. As of January 1, 2008 the City Planning, Research and Development Department estimated the County population at 780,613. The City of El Paso, the County seat, is estimated as having a population of 644,638. El



Paso is the largest City in the United States that borders Mexico. According to the Texas State Comptroller of Public Accounts in its 2008 Annual Cash Report, based on population, El Paso is the sixth largest city in Texas. Larger than Boston, Seattle, and Denver, the City of El Paso is the 21<sup>st</sup> largest city in the U.S. Combined with its sister city Juarez, the El Paso metro area holds more than 2.5 million people, making it the world's largest population center on an international border. With four international ports of entry, El Paso is a primary intersection for regional trade in the Southwest. In 2008, Forbes ranked El Paso the seventh fastest-growing large U. S. city and the nation's tenth fastest-growing real estate market. According to the El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation, El Paso is the only metropolitan area in Texas to grow at a faster economic pace in 2008 than in 2007.

Only the Rio Grande River separates El Paso County from neighboring Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. According to estimation by local officials, the population of Ciudad Juarez is 1,563,973. The geographic location of El Paso encourages enterprising businesses the unique versatility of being internationally known while remaining in the United States.

With Interstate 10 running east to west through El Paso and its proximity to Interstate 25 and Mexico's Pan American Highway, this area represents a trade corridor with accessibility to rail lines and four international ports of entry with Mexico. Over a number of years, the County has been actively involved in the creation of a new port of entry in Fabens. Funding in the amount of \$2,500,000 was budgeted within the Capital Project Fund in fiscal year 2002 on a project basis in support of preliminary assessment and design as negotiations between the United States and Mexico governments continue. As of fiscal year 2008, capital appropriations related to this project totaled \$11,000,000 while year-to-date expenditures as of September 30, 2008 totaled \$6,141,067. Funds expended to date relate to environmental assessment, bridge design and the purchase of land and right-of-way necessary for this project. A significant amount relates to efforts to secure a presidential permit to move forward on construction of the port of entry. Based on the fact that a presidential permit was issued in fiscal year 2005, El Paso County continues its negotiations with federal, state and international officials on the timely construction of this bridge in unison with other agency facilities and anticipates completion by January 2012. Revenue bonds are anticipated to fund the construction of this bridge beginning in fiscal year 2010, provided other agencies fund and construct their facilities in a timely manner. Additional information on El Paso County may be obtained by visiting El Paso County's website at <http://www.epcounty.com/history/history2.htm>.

Commissioners Court is considered financially accountable for El Paso County Hospital District (District) and its activities are included in this CAFR. As a component unit, the District is included in this CAFR because the El Paso County Commissioners Court, the County's governing body, has the legal duty to exercise financial accountability over it by appointing its board members, approving its budget and setting its tax rate. Nonetheless, the District is a completely separate and dissimilar organization that is governed by the *Texas Constitution, Article 9, § 4* and the *Health and Safety Code, Chapter 281*, a different set of constitutional and statutory laws. All accounting and budgeting records of the District are maintained by the District, audited by an independent accounting firm and reported on in much greater detail in their various interim and annual financial reports. Copies of any of the District's financial reports can be obtained directly from the District.

The County's Budget is prepared and adopted annually as a balanced budget as required by Texas law. A balanced budget is achieved by ensuring that the amounts budgeted in a fiscal year for expenditures do not exceed the projected revenues, to include any available fund balances. The appropriations of the activities of the General, Special Revenue, Enterprise, and Debt Service Funds are included in the annual budget. Also, budgets are adopted for the major capital construction projects and grants. Grant and capital project budgets may be included in the adopted budget when pertinent information is available; otherwise, these funds are budgeted throughout the year as relevant financial information becomes available.

The County's appropriations for departments are approved at the character level, representing personnel, operating and capital line items. The Court has a standing order not to allow departments to transfer salary appropriations to non-salary line items without specific authorization from the Commissioners Court.

The County's budgetary and accounting records are organized and operated on a fund basis. A "fund" is a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts recording cash and other financial resources, which are segregated for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions or limitations.

Funds are categorized by type to indicate both the sources of the fund's financial resources and the nature of activities financed. There are three broad categories of funds used in governmental accounting: governmental, proprietary, and fiduciary funds.

### Factors Affecting Financial Condition

Information presented in these financial statements is perhaps best understood when considered from a broad perspective of the specific environment within which the El Paso County operates.

El Paso MSA Employment by Industry					
Amounts in Thousands					
ELPaso Metropolitan Statistical Area Profile obtained from the Texas Workforce Commission					
Industry Types	September 2007	Amount Change	Percentage Change	September 2008	Percent of Total
Construction	15.10	0.60	3.97%	15.70	5.61%
Manufacturing	20.40	-0.90	-4.41%	19.50	6.96%
Trade	45.50	-0.20	-0.44%	45.30	16.17%
Trans., Ware, & Util.	13.60	0.40	2.94%	14.00	5.00%
Information	5.20	-0.20	-3.85%	5.00	1.79%
Financial Activites	11.50	0.30	2.61%	11.80	4.21%
Services	98.00	3.70	3.78%	101.70	36.31%
Total Government	64.80	2.30	3.55%	67.10	23.96%
<b>Total Labor Market</b>	<b>274.10</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>2.19%</b>	<b>280.10</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

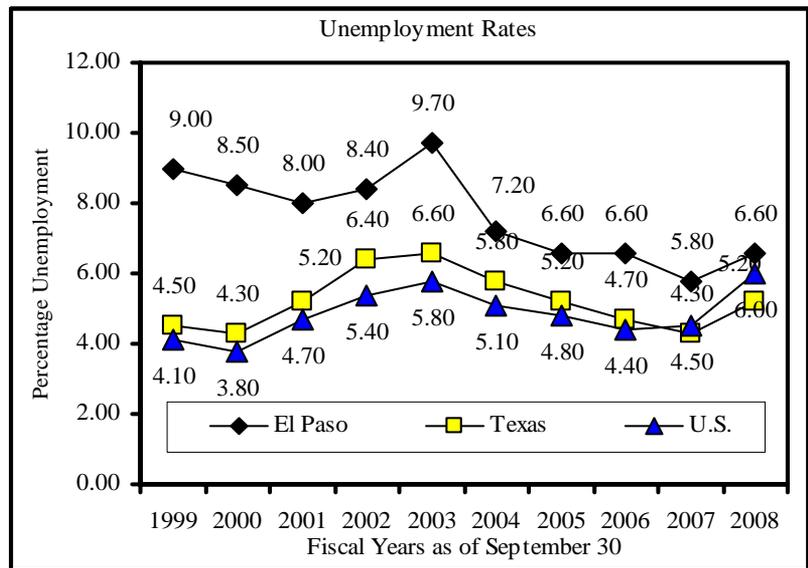
**Local Economy.** The El Paso region is still seeing positive movement in the economy, or 2.19% overall, as reflected on the chart above. Government remains vital to the economy as our single largest economic driver is the Fort Bliss Military Base. The Army's Fort Bliss regional military complex will see a net increase of nearly 28,000 active-duty personnel and an additional 1,500 to 2,000 full time civilian workers by 2013 (up from 8,300 civilian workers as of July 2008). This is the largest projected net gain for any military installation in the U.S. The increases are part of Defense Department projects including Army Modular Force initiative, global repositioning, and the 2005 Base Realignment (BRAC) process. This has signaled plans to expand the army and restructure brigade combat teams, support brigades and combat services across the country. In addition to the 28,000 additional soldiers, the Army estimates about 34,000 family members will accompany these personnel to El Paso. The largest net growth is expected in 2010 and 2011. Annual payroll at Fort Bliss will jump from \$360 million to nearly \$1.5 billion, and the Army will invest nearly \$5 billion in new facilities and infrastructure by 2013. Being that the El Paso area serves as a vital retail trade center for far West Texas and northern Mexico, the County's economy is bolstered by a variety of sectors. The regional economy is predominantly comprised of agriculture, agribusiness, manufacturing, tourism, wholesale and retail trade, and government. Farming and ranching have been mainstays of the economy for more than 100 years. El Paso County has developed an economy that is driven largely by manufacturing, international trade,

military training, wholesale and retail trade, and educational services. In recent years, more focus has been placed on tourism and outdoor recreation as a significant component of the economy.

The chart on the prior page reflects a high level summary of El Paso's changes in the employment industry components. Although El Paso's unemployment rate remains higher than that of Texas as well as that of the United States as depicted below, as the national economy stabilizes, El Paso should continue to see future employment gains. Historical trends indicate El Paso's gains should surpass that of the rest of Texas.

El Paso evolved from an agricultural economy to what it is today, an international center of trade and manufacturing with an increasing population. According to the Texas A&M Real Estate Center, the city's top five private employers in 2008 are Tenet Healthcare Corporation-Sierra Providence Health Network (6,587 employees), T&T Staff Management (4,200), Echosphere Corporation (2,900), Las Palmas Del Sol Regional Healthcare System Ltd. (2,300) and GC Services (1,710). The top five public employers are Fort Bliss (29,000), the El Paso Independent School District (ISD) (9,000), Ysleta ISD (7,200), the City of El Paso (6,000), Socorro ISD (5,041) and the University of Texas at El Paso (3,400).

According to the Texas Workforce Commission's October 2008 issue of Texas Labor Market Review, the statewide unemployment rate was 5.4 percent in September. When compared to the same time last year, this was .80 percent higher. As reflected on the graph above, El Paso's unemployment rate for September was 6.6 percent in comparison to 5.8 percent in September 2007.



Over the past fiscal year, between September 2007 and September 2008, El Paso added 6,000 jobs overall. Further analysis reflects that 7,300 job gains resulted which netted with 1,300 employment losses. Some of the various job gains occurred in construction, 600, transportation, 400, financial activities, 300, and the service sectors 3,700 and government, 2,300. The major decline occurred in the total manufacturing sector which lost 900 jobs. Other job reductions were experienced in trade and information service sectors, which both lost 200 jobs. These sectors combined only comprise 24.92 percent of El Paso's employment market. The reduction continued in the manufacturing sector and remains to be attributable to apparel manufacturers shifting a portion of operations from El Paso to Mexico and Asia in order to reduce manufacturing costs. This is consistent with the nationwide trend of cost cutting within the apparel manufacturing sector.

El Paso's cultural and business ties as a border region with Mexico drive its economy. The renewed attraction of El Paso County as a favorable business environment, coupled with continued

moderately low interest rates, continues to stimulate local construction activity. The El Paso labor market will gain an estimated 53,000 new jobs from the expansion of Ft. Bliss between 2006 and 2013. Indirect and induced impacts will create nearly one additional job in El Paso for each one generated at Ft. Bliss. Due to the nature of our border economy and labor markets, El Paso continues to thrive as reflected in its employment trends.

The strong dollar and a slow U.S. recovery battered El Paso's international economy in 2002 through 2003 with a rebound in sales and use taxes in fiscal years 2004 through 2008. El Paso continues to transition from a goods-producing economy to a service economy. Overall, in line with positive economic conditions in the state and in the nation, positive indications remain on the financial outlook given our low government taxes, abundance of labor, and moderate wage rates.

**Long-Term Financial Planning.** County strategies and plans are integrated into all departmental budgets to ensure unified efforts within County government to achieve the goals and objectives of the County. Texas county government operates under a balanced budget as required by law. This does not mean that estimated revenues must always be exactly equal to expenditures. In most of the annual operating budgets, the Commissioners Court members usually decide to use a portion of fund balances reserves to balance the revenues to appropriations. As a sound financial management practice, members of the Commissioners Court consistently emphasize maintaining sufficient undesignated fund balance levels (unreserved net assets) to meet first quarter obligations of payroll and operating costs and furthermore, this assists in maintaining financial stability and retaining or enhancing the County's bond ratings.

Over the years, the County has emphasized stabilization of ad valorem property tax rates. The court increased its tax rate to \$0.361434 in fiscal year 1999 and maintained this same rate through fiscal year 2002. During these years, the County was fortunate to receive various uncertified and unbudgeted cash reimbursements, which resulted in significant fund balance gains. The drawback to this was that various Commissioners Courts subsequently set expenditure levels significantly higher than sustainable actual future revenues.

As a result, subsequent tax rate increases were necessary and in fiscal year 2004 the rate was set at \$0.410817 and the same rate of \$0.432259 in 2005 and 2006. In addition, revenue generating initiatives to more efficiently collect various county fines and fees were implemented. As a result of reappraisal and new values being added to the taxable base, El Paso County's rate was reduced in 2008 from \$0.391390 to \$0.342437.

Fund balance refers to the excess of assets over liabilities in governmental funds. As stated in the County's financial policies, for the purpose of financial planning, fund balance is defined as the cumulative surpluses or deficits resulting from the difference between expenditures and revenues in any one fiscal year. The cumulative effect of yearly fund balance amounts is furthermore addressed as a fund balance reserve. When evaluating fund balance reserves, it is vitally important to maintain sufficient positive fund balance reserves in order to avoid borrowing to meet short term operating needs.

As a rule of thumb, since the General Fund is the County's main operating fund, the County strives to maintain an undesignated general fund balance of, at a minimum, equal to projected cash needs for the first fiscal quarter to meet operating obligations (approximately \$12-15 million net

cash outflow) or 10-15 percent of the total general fund adopted operating budget in any one fiscal year. At the present level, this means that the County should strive to maintain a minimum undesignated general fund balance of at least \$31,341,544 based on the fiscal year 2009 General Fund budget of \$208,943,625. By maintaining a low fund balance, the County remains vulnerable to the lowering of its bond ratings. Lower bond ratings may ultimately result in more costly future borrowing at higher interest rates, and therefore, increased interest expense in response to an entity's declining financial position depicted at any one point in time. In essence, having some amount of fund balance gives the County the financial ability to cover unanticipated revenue losses or significant unanticipated expenditures, should they occur.

Historically speaking, up until fiscal year 2002, actual expenditures were less than amounts budgeted and total actual revenues exceeded total expenditures. Even with these favorable trends, the County was not able to achieve its reserve goal in force at that time of 10 percent undesignated general fund balance until fiscal year 1998. Continued persistence and emphasis on building and maintaining some amount of reserves has resulted in a stable fund balance reserve in the General Fund. A myriad of factors contributed to the stable results on the General Fund's financial position. It is noteworthy to mention that the actions of Commissioners Court throughout the year had a contributing effect of enhancing a favorable expenditure budget variance, or unspent budget balance, within the General Fund.

Despite the Court's fiscal restraints, fiscal year 2008 resulted in expenditures outpacing revenues by \$5,508,742, including transfers-out of \$665,759 to the debt service fund related to excess sales tax and thus slightly reducing the general fund balance. Revenues and other sources grew by approximately \$8.1 million or 4.70 percent, mainly attributable to growth in tax revenues of approximately \$8.3 million or 6.85 percent. Intergovernmental increased by approximately \$1.2 million or 33.09 percent due to increases in reimbursements such as Judiciary Support totaling \$446,861 or 144.43 percent, Federal Drug Cases totaling \$378,116 or 37.29 percent, Indigent Defense totaling \$227,027 or 59.48 percent, Prosecutor Longevity of \$87,487 or 116.55 percent, tobacco settlement totaling \$81,603 or 56 percent. These increases were netted with declines in reimbursement for Juror Pay and legal fees totaling \$67,284 and \$61,976 or 23.94 and 24.54 percent, respectively. Charges for services netted growth of \$480,406 or 1.49 percent. Increases were experienced in areas such as City Prisoners totaling \$1,462,589 or 70.75 percent, Criminal Alien Housing totaling \$494,672 or 132.07 percent, County Tax Assessor Fees totaling \$138,983 or 9.10 percent and a variety of other line items aggregating \$602,040. At the same time, various line items within charges for services declined such as Federal Prisoners totaling \$1,535,843 or 10.70 percent, County Clerk Fees totaling \$451,933 or 8.82 percent, State AG Child Support totaling \$149,795 or 11.81 percent, plus other line items that declined in the aggregate \$226,100.

Any increases were offset by declines such as fines and forfeits by \$249,707 or 4.38 percent mainly due to County Attorney Bond Forfeitures totaling \$245,221 or 20.36 percent. Additionally, interest earnings netted a decline totaling \$1,020,820 or 28.05 percent. This was attributable to interest earnings on investments declining by \$2,011,748 or 65.49 percent while interest from bank deposits grew by \$990,928 or 174.62 percent. Miscellaneous revenue declined by \$403,440 or 18.31 percent. Within this category, various line items saw growth such as Phone Commissions totaling \$168,232 or 72.79 percent, which were netted with declines in such areas as expenditure reimbursements totaling \$136,586 or 60.77 percent and a multitude of other items aggregating \$69,490. Last but not least, Other Financing Sources such as transfers-in from other funds

decreased by \$158,347 or 12.96 percent. Overall, expenditures grew by \$13.1 million or 7.63 percent, mainly attributed to salaries and benefits.

For fiscal year 2009, the Court decreased its use of fund balance in the budget by \$940,816 or 4.29 percent for a total of \$20,983,026. As a result, the County ended fiscal year 2008 with an undesignated fund balance of \$20,749,502, and slightly missed its target goal with a ratio of 9.93 percent of the fiscal year 2009 adopted general fund budget of \$208,943,625.

It is vitally important that the Commissioners Court remain focused on trends of the general fund, especially in light of the shortfalls in prior fiscal years and impacts from the local economy. It is imperative that the Commissioners Court continue to focus on revenue enhancement in order to adequately fund present and future mandates placed on County government. The fiscal year 2009 budget incorporated additional funding for the sheriff's department and other mandated functions, such as new courts, while the majority of other departments experienced level funding to operating accounts. Departments will continue to be challenged with increasing efficiencies in order to operate within their budgets. More than ever, monitoring of expenditures will be paramount in forecasting budget inadequacies and identifying potential excesses.

For the future, it is anticipated that in fiscal year 2009 the Court will continue to face funding challenges. Some of those challenges will be additional operating cost of new facilities, automatic contractual collective bargaining salary adjustments for the sheriff's department and continued adherence to the County's salary-step-plan. Specific monitoring will remain focused on revenues related to hotel occupancy and sales and use taxes as they tend to be impacted negatively during times of national and international conflict due to the nature of El Paso County's proximity to the international border. Also, expenditure growth due to inflation and the possibility of new mandates will be challenges faced by the Court.

Finally, as a result of the trend of shifting of unfunded mandates by both federal and state levels to local government, it is anticipated that additional financial burden will continue to be experienced by the County and ultimately local taxpayers if other sources of funding are not identified. The County will be tasked with identifying new or additional revenues to counter these expenditures. At its discretion, the Court will probably continue to utilize some amount of fund balance which is healthy in the sense that it keeps the County from building up excessive reserves and reduces a future burden on taxpayers. Based on the amount of fund balance utilized to balance the 2009 budget, the Court must remain cautious in planning for the budget in fiscal year 2010 in the absence of either continued cost containment initiatives or additional revenue enhancement efforts. It is imperative that County Government continually strive to maintain steady increases in revenue while costs are on the rise.

**Major Initiatives.** In early December 2007, the County issued \$59,835,000 in certificates of obligation bonds for improvement to: flood control projects, parks, the county courthouse and new county courthouse annexes, both detention facilities and the upcoming port of entry mainly for land acquisition and development of infrastructure. The County also issued \$9,940,000 in taxable certificates of obligation for the remodeling and upgrade of the east side baseball and softball Sportspark. The private operation of this park is currently under negotiation. The County also

issued \$48,550,000 general obligation refunding bonds which resulted in an approximate net present value savings of \$1.4 million to the taxpayers of the County.

**Awards and Acknowledgements.** The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the County of El Paso for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2007. This was the nineteenth consecutive year that the County of El Paso has received this prestigious award. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, the County published an easily readable and efficiently organized CAFR. This report satisfied both GAAP and applicable legal requirements. We believe that our current CAFR continues to meet the Certificate of Achievement Program's requirements and we are submitting it to the GFOA to determine its eligibility for another certificate.

Additionally, the County of El Paso received the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its annual budget document for the 2008 fiscal year beginning October 1, 2007. This was the fourteenth consecutive year that the County of El Paso has received this prestigious award. In order to qualify for the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, the County's budget document was judged to be proficient in several categories, including as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device. A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only.

The preparation of this report would not have been possible without the efficient and dedicated services of the County Auditor's staff. I would like to express my appreciation to all members of the department who assisted and contributed to the preparation of this report. Credit also must be given to the Commissioners Court for their unfailing support in maintaining the highest standards of professionalism in the management of the County of El Paso's finances. I express my sincere thanks to the Council of Judges and other County officials, Department Heads, and employees for their roles in directing the financial affairs of the County in a responsible and professional manner.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward A. Dion  
County Auditor

# Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Presented to

County of El Paso  
Texas

For its Comprehensive Annual  
Financial Report  
for the Fiscal Year Ended  
September 30, 2007

A Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting is presented by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada to government units and public employee retirement systems whose comprehensive annual financial reports (CAFRs) achieve the highest standards in government accounting and financial reporting.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. L. R.", is positioned above the title "President".

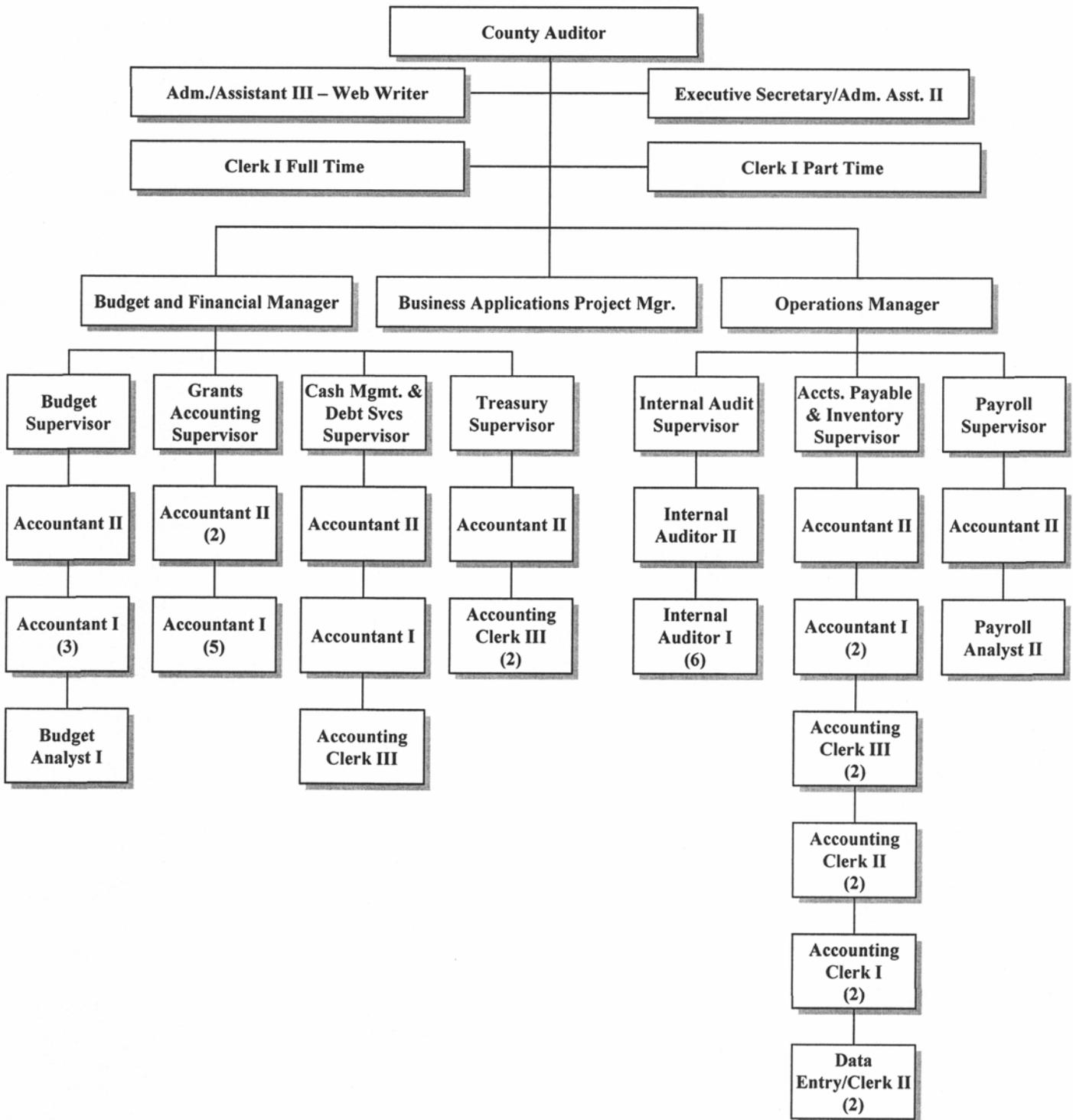
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey R. Emer", is positioned above the title "Executive Director".

Executive Director

# County of El Paso Auditor's Office

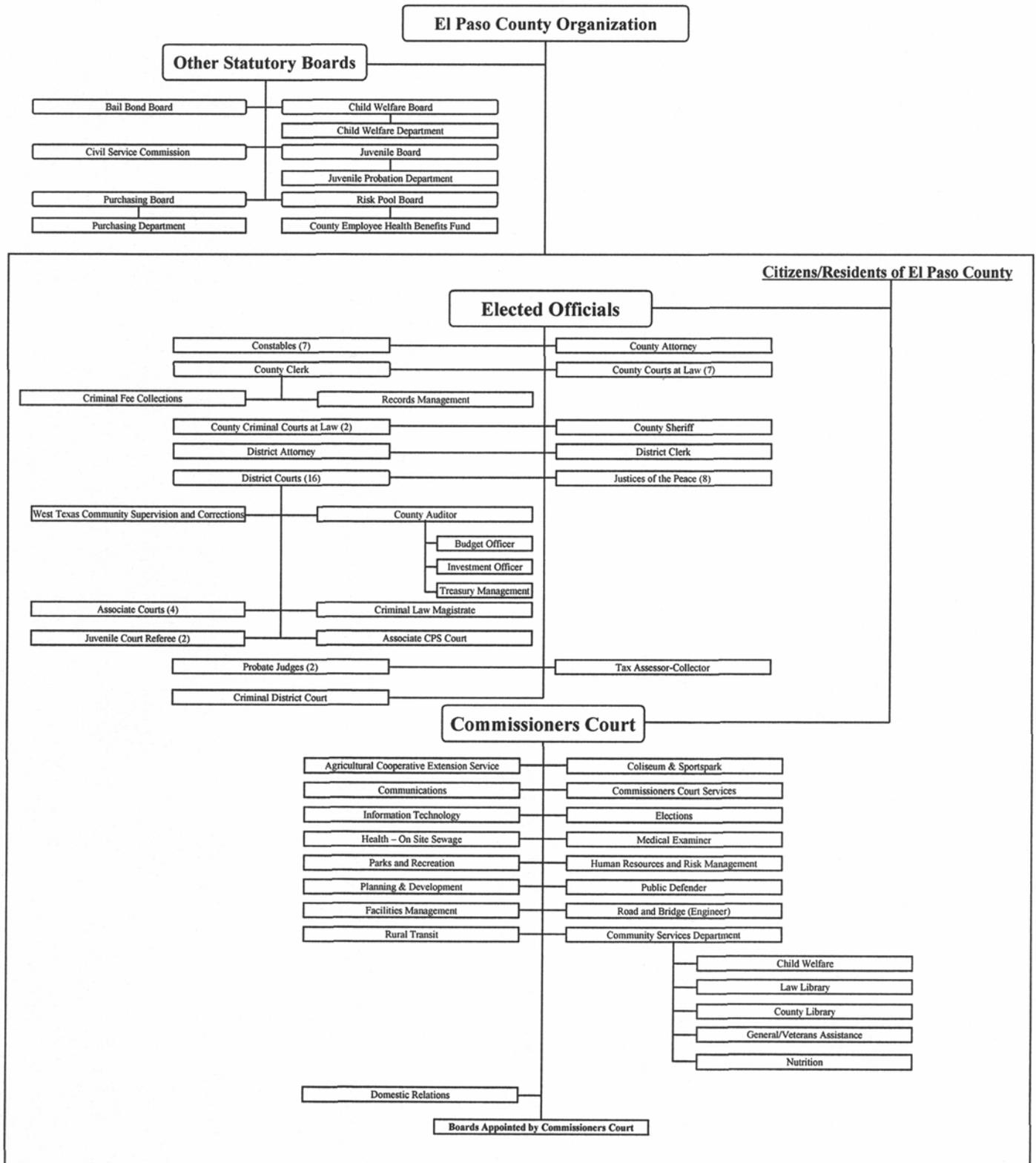
## Organizational Chart As of September 30, 2008



# County of El Paso, Texas

## Organizational Chart

### As of September 30, 2008





# Directory of Principal Officials



## Commissioners Court (The Governing Body)

County Judge, Anthony Cobos	Room 301, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2098
County Commissioner, Precinct Number 1, Luis Sarinana	Room 301, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2014
County Commissioner, Precinct Number 2, Veronica Escobar	Room 301, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2111
County Commissioner, Precinct Number 3, Miguel Teran	Room 301, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2144
County Commissioner, Precinct Number 4, Daniel R. Haggerty	Room 301, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2044

## Council of Judges

Local Administrative Judge, 384th Judicial District, Patrick M. Garcia	Room 906 County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2134
34th Judicial District, William E. Moody, District Judge	Room 905 County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2101
41st Judicial District, Mary Anne Bramblett, District Judge	Room 1006, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2149
65th Judicial District, Alfredo Chavez, District Judge	Room 1105, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2102
120th Judicial District, Maria Salas-Mendoza, District Judge	Room 605, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2103
168th Judicial District, Guadalupe Rivera, District Judge	Room 602, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2141
171st Judicial District, Bonnie Rangel, District Judge	Room 601, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2100
205th Judicial District, Kathleen Olivares, District Judge	Room 1002, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2107
210th Judicial District, Gonzalo Garcia, District Judge	Room 1005, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2130
243rd Judicial District, David C. Guaderrama, District Judge	Room 901, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2168
327th Judicial District, Linda Y. Chew, District Judge	Room 606, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2032
346th Judicial District, Angie Juarez Barill, District Judge	Room 701, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2119
383rd Judicial District, Mike Herrerra, District Judge	Room 1101, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2132
388th Judicial District, Patricia Macias, District Judge	Room 902, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3850
409th Judicial District, Sam Medrano, Jr., District Judge	Room 702, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 834-8209
448th Judicial District, Christopher Antcliff, District Judge	Room 603, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2010
Associate CPS Court, Oscar Gabaldon, Associate Judge	Room 1104, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2147
Associate Family Court 1, Jose Juarez, Associate Judge	Room 1103, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3859
Associate Family Court 2, Kathleen Anderson, Associate Judge	Room 1102, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3871
Associate Family Court 3, Robyne Bramblett, Associate Judge	Room 902, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3850
Associate Family Court 4, Jesus Rodriguez, Associate Judge	Room 604, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2071
County Court at Law Number 1, Ricardo Herrera, Judge	Room 802, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2011
County Court at Law Number 2, Julie Gonzalez, Judge	Room 801, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2145
County Court at Law Number 3, Javier Alvarez, Judge	Room 1001, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2183
County Court at Law Number 4, Alejandro Gonzalez, Judge	Room 805, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2190
County Court at Law Number 5, Carlos Villa, Judge	Room 806, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2004
County Court at Law Number 6, Sue Kurita, Judge	Room 1106, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3868
County Court at Law Number 7, Thomas A. Spieczny, Judge	Room 902, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 543-3877
County Criminal Court 1, Alma Trejo, Judge	Room 705, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 834-8241
County Criminal Court 2, Robert Anchondo, Judge	Room 704, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 834-8232
County Probate Court No. 1, Yvonne Rodriguez, Judge	Room 703, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2161
County Probate Court No. 2, Eduardo A. Gamboa, Judge	Room 803, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-8183
Juvenile Court Referee 1, Richard L. Ainsa, Judge	6400 Delta, Juvenile Probation Bldg, (915) 849-2552
Juvenile Court Referee 2, Maria T. Leyva-Ligon, Judge	6400 Delta, Juvenile Probation Bldg, (915) 849-2560
Magistrate I, James T. Carter, Judge	600 East Overland, Municipal Crt Bldg, (915) 546-2077

## Other Principal Officials

County Attorney, José R. Rodríguez	Room 503, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2050
County Auditor, Edward A. Dion	Room 406, County Administrative Offices, (915) 546-2040
County Clerk, Delia Briones	Room 105, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2071
County Purchasing Agent, Piti Vasquez	Room 300, County Administrative Offices, (915) 546-2048
County Sheriff, Jimmy Apodaca	3850 Justice Drive, (915) 538-2217
County Tax Assessor and Collector, Victor A. Flores	500 East Overland, Room 101, (915) 546-2140
District Attorney, Jaime Esparza	Room 203, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2059
District Clerk, Gilbert Sanchez	Room 103, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-2021
Human Resources Director, Betsy C. Keller	Room 223, County Administrative Offices, (915) 546-2218
Public Defender, M. Clara Hernandez	Room 501, County Courthouse Bldg, (915) 546-8185