

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY



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To the Citizens of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee:

FORMAL TRANSMITTAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

We are pleased to submit the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee (the Government) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008. Responsibility for both the accuracy of the data and the completeness and fairness of the presentation, including all disclosures, rests with the management of the Government. To the best of our knowledge and belief, the enclosed data is accurate in all material respects and is reported in a manner designed to present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the various funds and component units of the Government in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). All disclosures necessary to enable the reader to gain an understanding of the Government's financial activities have been included.

The Government is required to undergo an annual single audit in conformity with the provisions of the Single Audit Act, as amended, and U. S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. Information related to this single audit, including the schedules of federal and state financial assistance, findings and recommendations, and independent auditors' reports on the internal control structure and compliance with applicable laws and regulations, are not included herein but are reported separately.

In conformity with generally accepted accounting principles, as set forth in Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 14, The Financial Reporting Entity, and Statement No. 39, Determining Whether Certain Organizations are Component Units, this report includes all funds of the primary government and all component units. For purposes of this report, the primary government includes all departments and agencies of the Government which are not separate legal entities, including the Department of Water and Sewerage Services and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. The component units include those separate legal entities whose relationships with the primary government meet the criteria for inclusion defined in GASB Statements No. 14 and No. 39.

The Government is required to 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 intended to complement MD&A and should be read in conjunction with it. The Government's MD&A can be found immediately following the report of the independent auditors.

PROFILE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County is located in middle Tennessee at the hub of many air, rail and highway transportation routes. The Government provides a full range of services. These services include education; police and fire protection; waste management; construction and maintenance of highways, streets and infrastructure; traffic regulation and control; parking; health and social services; public housing; recreational and cultural activities; public libraries; planning and zoning; water and sewerage services; administration of justice; and general administrative services.

FACTORS AFFECTING ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONDITION

The local economy is a well-balanced blend of financial, agricultural, wholesale, retail, manufacturing and service industries. The local mix of these industries roughly reflects the national economy, with no single industry being predominant in the region. Computer technology, automotive, medical, private prison management, insurance, banking, publishing, telecommunications and entertainment companies and private educational institutions all find a home in Nashville. With a rich economic, social and cultural environment, the city consistently scores high in national rankings of preferred business locations, best places to live and favorable environments for the creation and development of businesses.

The Nashville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) economy has been slightly healthier than the national economy, with lower unemployment than the state and the nation.

The Government's two most significant locally generated revenue sources are property and sales taxes. The Government has no income tax.

MAJOR INITIATIVES

The Government continues to emphasize delivery of focused public services in a way that provides efficiency, effectiveness and value to the citizens of Nashville. The Government's major initiatives for fiscal year 2008, for fiscal year 2009 and for the future are discussed below.

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008: Substitute budget ordinance BL-2007-1398 appropriated a balanced budget of \$1,559,728,500 in the budgetary funds, an overall increase of 3.5% from the budget for fiscal year 2007. The property tax rate remained the same.

The FY2008 budget continued to make improvements in the Nashville community's priority areas:

- **Public Education** – The budget for Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) increased to \$591.5 million, an increase of approximately 5%. The Government increased its support for MNPS for FY08 by \$13.1 million from FY07 funding levels. Additional funding for MNPS was provided by the State of Tennessee as part of a statewide change in education funding and added approximately \$13.5 million to the increase for FY08. Priorities for these dollars included pay raises for teachers and staff, increased benefit costs, and opening new and expanded schools.
- **Public Safety** – This budget included funds for a variety of enhancements to Metro Nashville's public safety. These additions included increased funds for medical supplies for emergency responders, for overtime for fire suppression, and for fire prevention education; support for the Police Department's new computerized records management system and for overtime for special events; funds to meet additional demands for inmate health services; and additional support for the Juvenile Court's efforts in juvenile gang probation.
- **Neighborhood and Community Support** – For FY2008, the operating budget marked a number of targeted investments to improve the quality of life for all Nashvillians. Support for the Metro Transit Authority was increased by \$1.5 million to help maintain and expand service levels. More than \$1.7 million was added to cover the increased costs of waste collection and disposal. Additional funds were also provided for affordable housing for the homeless, additional animal control resources, and to cover the increased cost of vaccines. The continuing implementation of the Parks Master Plan led to the opening of new and improved nature and community centers during FY08.

- Valuing Our Employees – The budget provided funds for 2% overall pay increases, normal pay increments, and increased benefit costs, such as health insurance and pension costs.

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009: Substitute budget ordinance BL-2008-174 appropriated a balanced budget of \$1,570,199,400 in the budgetary funds, an overall increase of .67% from the budget for fiscal year 2008. The property tax rate remained the same. A major initiative was the reduction of several internal service fees that will save several million dollars by eliminating some duplicative internal government functions.

The FY2009 budget continued to make improvements in the Nashville community's priority areas:

- Public Education – The budget for Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) increased to \$620.7 million, an increase of approximately 5%. The MNPS FY09 budget increased by \$29.2 million from FY08 funding levels. Additional funding for MNPS came from \$6.5 million in new local dollars as well as approximately \$19.3 million from the School's accumulated undesignated fund balance, which had increased significantly in recent years. Priorities for these dollars include pay raises for teachers and staff, increased benefit costs, and opening new and expanded schools.
- Public Safety – The budget included funds for a variety of enhancements to Metro Nashville's public safety. These additions include increased operational funds for new School Resource Officers, funding to staff three new emergency medical service units, overtime for training and responsiveness for fire fighter and emergency medical responders, and additional support for the Juvenile Court's efforts to reduce truancy.
- Community Support – The budget included additional funding to address homelessness issues in Nashville and a new process for making grants to non-profit agencies that was more open and targeted to specific community needs such as after school programs and domestic violence.

These initiatives have all been addressed while ensuring the Government meets its fundamental objectives of maintaining a balanced budget, keeping taxes low, and investing in Nashville's future. Details of all improvements included in the fiscal year 2008 and 2009 budgets are described in the annual *Operating Budget* books published by the Department of Finance, Office of Management and Budget. They are also available on the GFOA-award-winning Citizen's Guide to the Budget at the web site www.nashville.gov/citizens_budget.

FOR THE FUTURE: The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County will focus on four major priorities:

EDUCATION:

This administration will continue to work toward improving our schools by encouraging our community to devote its attention, time, and financial resources to education. Funding has been made available to create an attendance center to be operated by our Juvenile Court. This will be a safe place where students and their families can come to address the root causes of attendance problems. It will focus on early and effective intervention and will lead to more students staying in school, graduating and becoming productive citizens.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

This administration is committed to improving public safety by and through the combined efforts of the Mayor's Office, the Police Department, and other departments. To support this priority, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department had the highest number of sworn officers in more than five years.

A primary function of the Nashville Fire Department, and of fire departments across the country, is to provide emergency medical services, or EMS. Additionally, based on the results of a recently released EMS transport management audit, the demand for EMS is expected to increase over the next several years as our population ages. This administration will continue to monitor these trends in this critical area of public safety.

LIVABILITY:

This administration will continue to address issues impacting the “livability” of our community by focusing on health services, parks, the arts, libraries, adequate public transportation and affordable housing. One recent major step in addressing the livability of our community was the appointment of a Green Ribbon Committee on Environmental Sustainability. This Committee will help ensure that Nashville continues to be a livable city with clean air, clean water, open spaces, public transportation infrastructure and a sustainable energy use profile that will benefit current and future generations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

This administration is committed to growing the local economy and to generating economic opportunities that will benefit all citizens. To support and enhance the economic vitality of our community, in October 2007 the Mayor asked the Metropolitan Development & Housing Agency (MDHA) to develop a plan to move forward on building a new downtown convention center. Pre-development work is underway and construction is set to begin in 2009. Also in October 2007, the Mayor appointed a Minority Business Advisory Council. The work of that group resulted in legislation filed in February 2008 to add a Procurement Nondiscrimination Program to the Metropolitan Procurement Code. This program establishes a new approach to ensure fairness and equality in opportunities for minority and women owned businesses to propose on contracts with Metro.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CASH MANAGEMENT: Cash temporarily idle during the year was primarily invested in the State of Tennessee Local Government Investment Pool. Investments are made either directly or through the Metro Investment Pool. Investments in the pension trust funds also include common stocks, U. S. Treasury Obligations, corporate bonds and other holdings.

The Government's investment policy is to preserve principal, minimize credit and market risks and maintain adequate liquidity while maximizing the rate of return on its portfolio. The investment policy encourages conservative, low risk investments and does not permit more risky methods to enhance investment returns. The majority of the cash deposits are held by financial institutions participating in the bank collateral pool administered by the State of Tennessee, thus ensuring that they are collateralized. Earnings continue to be realized as a result of the banking service agreement, which in part provides for the daily investment of demand deposit balances.

The primary government earned investment income of \$21.8 million for the year ended June 30, 2008.

RISK MANAGEMENT: The Government continued to operate a risk management program, which was initiated in 1978. As part of its comprehensive plan, resources are being accumulated in various internal service funds to meet potential losses. Accepted risk control techniques, including employee accident prevention training, have been implemented to minimize potential liability losses. In addition, the Government has elected to come under the Tennessee Tort Liability laws in order to limit its potential liability.

PENSION TRUST FUNDS: The pension system of the Government covers substantially all full-time employees. It consists of one pension plan that is open to new members and five pension plans that are closed to new members but are still used by some employees of the former City of Nashville, the former Davidson County and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

After recognizing contributions from other funds, employees, and the State of Tennessee, the General Fund is responsible for amounts necessary to fund the Metropolitan Employees' Benefit Trust Fund (which includes Division A, the closed plan, and Division B, the open plan) and the following four closed plans:

- The County Plan - Davidson County Employees' Retirement Fund
- The County Education Plan - Employees' Pension and Insurance Fund
- The City Plan - Closed City Plan Fund
- The City Education Plan - Teachers' Civil Service and Pension Fund

After recognizing contributions from employees and the State of Tennessee, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is responsible for funding the Metro Education plan – The Teachers' Retirement Plan Fund. The total net assets of all pension (and other employee benefit) trust funds were \$2.2 billion at June 30, 2008.

INTERNAL CONTROL STRUCTURE: Management of the Government establishes and maintains an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the Government are protected from loss, theft, or misuse and to ensure that adequate accounting data is compiled to allow for the preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. The internal control structure is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that: (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived, and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

BUDGETARY CONTROLS: The Government maintains budgetary controls in order to ensure compliance with legal provisions embodied in the annual appropriated budget approved by the Government's governing body, the Metropolitan Council. Activities of the General Fund, General Purpose School Fund and the GSD General Purposes, School Purposes and USD General Purposes Debt Service Funds are included in the annual appropriated budget. The Government maintains an encumbrance accounting system to provide management with information regarding obligations against appropriations. Budgetary compliance is based on expenditures during the period (GAAP), rather than expenditures and encumbrances (non-GAAP). Because appropriations lapse at June 30, encumbrances outstanding at June 30, 2008 are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements. Appropriations for fiscal year 2009 will provide authority to complete those transactions.

SINGLE AUDIT: As a recipient of federal and state financial assistance, the Government is responsible for ensuring that an adequate internal control structure is in place to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to those programs. As part of the Government's single audit, tests are performed to determine the adequacy of the internal control structure, including that portion related to federal financial assistance programs, as well as to determine that the Government has complied, in all material respects, with applicable laws and regulations. The results of the Government's single audit for fiscal year 2008, including any reported instances of significant deficiencies in the internal control structure or any violations of applicable laws and regulations, are reported separately.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT: Section 6.15 of the Metropolitan Charter requires an annual audit of accounts and other evidences of financial transactions of the Government and of its departments, offices and agencies by independent certified public accountants. The audit is performed by a firm chosen by a three-member audit board consisting of the Vice-Mayor, the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee of the Metropolitan Council, and the Chair of the Metropolitan Nashville Public School Board. The Government has complied with this requirement. The independent auditors' report and the non-major governmental, non-major enterprise, internal service and fiduciary funds' statements and schedules are included in the financial section of this report.

AWARDS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AWARDS: The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Government for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007. This was the 25th consecutive year that the Government has achieved this prestigious award. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized CAFR. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

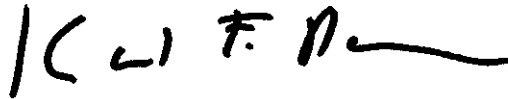
A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. We believe that our current CAFR continues to meet the Certificate of Achievement Program's requirements and we are submitting it to the GFOA to determine its eligibility for another certificate.

The GFOA presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to the Government for its annual budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007. In order to receive this award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan and as a communications device. The award is valid for a period of one year only. It is the Government's 17th year to receive this award.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Many individuals and organizations throughout the Government assisted in preparing this CAFR. To each of them we gratefully express our sincere appreciation for their dedicated contributions.

In conclusion, we acknowledge and express our appreciation for the strong support of the Metropolitan Council. The Council's support will continue to be vital as we work to further strengthen the financial management of the Metropolitan Government.

Sincerely,



Karl F. Dean
Mayor



Richard M. Riebeling
Director of Finance