

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The following Executive Summary provides background about San Diego County's General Management System (GMS). The purpose of this summary is to explain the following:*

- ❖ *What the GMS is;*
- ❖ *Why the GMS is necessary;*
- ❖ *When and where the GMS is applied;*
- ❖ *Who is responsible for GMS implementation; and most important*
- ❖ *How GMS implementation is achieved.*

*The more extensive narrative introduced by this summary comprises the County's GMS Manual, explaining in detail each GMS component, including activities, responsibilities, and timelines.*

## **WHAT**

The Mission of the County of San Diego is to provide the best possible services to County residents. Like any organization with an ongoing mission, the County engages in a continuous cycle of planning, implementing plans, monitoring implementation, and then re-evaluating and renewing the planning process. The County's comprehensive guide for managing this cyclic process is the General Management System.

The GMS is the basic blueprint/instruction manual for County operations. It guides planning, implementing, and monitoring of all County functions and processes that affect delivery of services to San Diego County residents, businesses, and visitors.

The GMS process begins with long-range, five-year **Strategic Planning**. This is followed by short-term, two-year **Operational Planning**, which encompasses the budget process. **Monitoring and Control** takes place throughout the year. Evaluation mechanisms are used to ensure that goals are tracked, plans followed, and risks identified. **Functional Threading** maximizes efficient use of personnel and material resources by coordinating staff and linking the functions they perform. **Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition** encourages continuing progress by rewarding those who meet and exceed goals. The system completes a full circle in a fiscal year and begins again with a review of the Strategic Plan and development of a new Operational Plan. More detail on each of the five GMS components will follow.

The GMS is a "living" document, which will continue to evolve. The GMS lays out the process used by the County to meet needs residents have today. At the same time, the

GMS must help plan for the challenges we will face and quality of life we will want tomorrow.

### **WHY**

The purpose of having a General Management System is to optimize efficient application of resources. These resources include not just taxpayer dollars, but all San Diego County assets, including our unique natural and cultural resources, the expertise and creativity of County employees, and the informed interest of County residents.

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Our County has an annual budget of more than \$3.9 billion and roughly 18,000 employees who serve nearly three million residents spread over more than 4,000 square miles. Coordination, fiscal and operational discipline, and shared commitment are vital. The GMS facilitates and organizes the goal setting process. GMS then links goal setting – long-range planning and resource allocation – to goal attainment, which includes monitoring, evaluation, cooperation, motivation, and recognition.

A coherent management system also helps ensure that County employees adhere to core principles, promoting a culture that values our employees, partners, and customers and institutionalizes continuous improvement and innovation.

### **WHEN & WHERE**

On April 21, 1998, the Board of Supervisors accepted the GMS as the formal comprehensive guide for planning, implementing, and monitoring all functions and processes that affect delivery of services to the residents of San Diego County. The County developed the GMS process following the severe fiscal crisis that threatened County programs and solvency in the mid-1990s. However, the GMS is much more than a crisis management tool for putting the County's fiscal house in order.

The GMS helps ensure that sound planning, preparedness, and improvement become permanent organizational ethics. With the GMS as a guide, the County continues to use strong fiscal management practices, while remaining focused on providing superior services to County residents. The principles and procedures outlined by the GMS are meant to apply to every County function on an ongoing basis.

### **WHO**

Every County employee should have knowledge of the GMS and their role in its implementation. Achieving goals requires that those who do the work share a sense of ownership and responsibility.

County management defines and communicates GMS objectives. Lines of authority flow from the Board of Supervisors to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Assistant CAO (ACAO), and the five Group General Managers/Deputy CAOs. These senior managers supervise appointed Department Heads, from whom authority flows down to line staff.

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Despite the crucial role of management, successful GMS application depends on strong and effective leadership at all levels of County service. Every County employee is expected to help set goals, strive to achieve them, and be rewarded for achievement.

**HOW**

The GMS consists of a closed loop set of five overlapping components. Together these components form an ongoing cycle. Each component helps the County ask and answer crucial questions:

GMS COMPONENT	QUESTION ASKED	COMPONENT DESCRIPTION
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<i>Where are we going?</i>	Strategic Planning is long-range (five-year) planning. It is an effort to anticipate what significant needs, challenges, and risks are likely to develop. Long-range planning means assessing not just where we are now, but where we will want to be. Strategic planning allows development of goals and action plans to meet needs before those needs occur.
<b>Operational Planning</b>	<i>How do we plan to get where we're going?</i>	Operational Planning focuses on short-term planning for the two upcoming fiscal years. This includes adoption of an annual budget and approval in principle of a second year spending plan. Operational Planning allocates resources to specific programs and services in order to implement the Strategic Plan.
<b>Monitoring and Control</b>	<i>Are we on track?</i>	Monitoring and Control is the process of evaluating operational functions and programs to assess performance and risks. This process allows the County to track whether we are adhering to our strategic goals and Operational Plan and to make

		necessary adjustments. Monitoring and Control includes evaluations that occur on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis.
<b>Functional Threading</b>	<i>Are we working together?</i>	Although County operations are divided into distinct Groups, Departments, and Divisions, the County has many critical functions and goals that cut across organizational lines. Functional threading ensures coordination and engages cooperation across Group/Department lines to pursue goals, solve problems, and share information. Such efforts allow the County to leverage the considerable working knowledge and experience of its talent pool.
<b>Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition</b>	<i>Are we sharing goals and encouraging success?</i>	County employees must personalize GMS goals. This requires setting clear expectations for employees, providing incentives, evaluating employees' performance, and rewarding those who meet or exceed expectations. Motivation, Rewards and Recognition encourages the individual excellence and initiative needed to achieve County objectives.