



# LEADING

THE WAY TO FISCAL HEALTH

BY JON JOHNSON AND CHRIS FABIAN

Those who choose a management career in government finance find themselves in the unenviable position of being the visible public steward over monies entrusted to their organization by taxpaying citizens to support programs and services. By virtue of this position, government finance officers assume (or, perhaps more accurately, are thrust into) a position of leadership, not only in their organizations but in the communities they serve. The comfortable role of budget guru, bean counter, or numbers person surrounded by spreadsheets, trend graphs, and databases is quickly being replaced by a new role as the “leading” expert in terms of the organization’s financial health and wellness. Finance officers for local governments are expected to internalize and model the traditional leadership values of integrity, transparency, accountability, and trust. Uniquely, this position of financial leadership also requires meticulous attention to detail and an ability to “see into the future,” which then manifests itself in the delivery of accurate information to the top elected and appointed decision-makers in the organization as well as those who make their decisions in the voting booth.

As the fiscal reality facing government entities across the nation becomes more challenging to manage, and the necessary financial choices become more difficult to make, the leadership role of the government finance officer must assume a new and more critical dimension. The most important leadership role must be that of a true diagnostician — capitalizing on analytical skills and using them to quickly and accurately diagnose the symptoms causing the organization’s fiscal “dis-ease,” assessing the factors causing these financial maladies and then properly prescribing the right treatment or treatments to lead the organization back to a picture of fiscal health. This new dimension of leadership requires finance officers to more thoroughly test and analyze the underlying causes of the fiscal distress — or, for those few jurisdictions that aren’t experiencing any distress, to understand the reasons for this enviable condition. Finance officers must assemble all the facts and data at their disposal and do the analytical work to identify, quantify, and verify their suspicions about the factors that have led the organization to its current fiscal situation. Based on this hard but critical work, the financial leader must diagnose the problems and recommend the appropriate actions.

Economic conditions have caused governments to spike a fever, making the need for fiscal stabilization paramount. Although it is increasingly difficult, the first step in the treatment regimen is spending within your means.

The first step is a quick assessment of some basic information that will allow the diagnostician to eliminate those areas that don’t seem to be causing the organization any problems. Then, focus on those areas where the preliminary high-level assessment points toward some tell-tale symptoms that need to be treated to restore the organization to an acceptable level of fiscal health. A simple fiscal health diagnostic approach can uncover the root cause of the organization’s ailments through further analytical tests.

Exhibit 1 depicts the basic steps for achieving fiscal health, the first step toward fiscal wellness and long-term financial sustainability. By analyzing each of these five areas and applying some basic diagnostic tests, any organization can isolate the potential sources of their fiscal issues and focus more in-depth analysis on them.

### **SPEND WITHIN YOUR MEANS**

In October 2008, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities declared that 21 states will face shortfalls in the next year, citing the ability to access credit markets for short term borrowing and large budget deficits as the primary concerns. The state of California is “borrowing” against next year’s personal income tax withholdings to resolve the current year’s shortfall. Municipalities are suffering from similar maladies, as evidenced by the City of Vallejo, California, which filed for bankruptcy in August 2008.<sup>1</sup> The New York Times recently reported on the trend of cities debating about privatizing public infrastructure, with major entities like Chicago’s Midway Airport turning to the private markets to “finance a tidal wave of infrastructure projects” that could no longer be funded with traditional sources or the municipal bond market.<sup>2</sup>

Increases in costs — often fixed costs — are outpacing revenue growth in most jurisdictions. At the same time, governments are experiencing skyrocketing expenses for employee compensation fueled by soaring cost increases in employer-provided health care. In addition, the costs associated with infrastructure keep escalating, especially the materials and equipment needed to repair aging assets. But local governments’ sources of revenue are going in the opposite direction. The property tax base is being pummeled by the home mort-

## Exhibit I: Achieving Fiscal Health

DIAGNOSTICS	TREATMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Account for Impact of External/Economic Influences? Do we incorporate economic trends into our forecasts? Are we accurate?</li> <li>Incorporate/Consolidate Long-Term Plans into Forecasts?</li> <li>Plan for Ongoing Replacement and Maintenance Costs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform Trend Analysis and Forecasting: Identify and assess key influences on revenue sources and expenses.</li> <li>Use Decision-Making Software to Incorporate and Communicate Long-Term Impacts: Model impacts of decisions with interactive decision-support tools.</li> </ul>

### Incorporate Economic Analysis and Long-Term Planning into Decision Making

DIAGNOSTICS	TREATMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start with Revenue? Do we begin fiscal discussions with available revenues, rather than expenses?</li> <li>Distinguish Between Ongoing versus One-Time Revenues and Expenses?</li> <li>Distinguish Between General Government and Program Revenues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve Ongoing Alignment: Ongoing costs can be funded only with ongoing revenue.</li> <li>Achieve One-Time Alignment: Fund one-time costs with unreserved fund balance, one-time sources (e.g., grants), dedicated ongoing revenue.</li> <li>Create Incentives for Self-Sustaining Programs: Allow programs to keep 100 percent of revenue generated.</li> </ul>

### Spend Within the Organization's Means



### Be Transparent About the True Cost of Doing Business

DIAGNOSTICS	TREATMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate Program Costs Shouldered by Users? Do we know what overhead, administrative, and internal services we provide, how much they cost, and how each customer influences the demand for service?</li> <li>Organization Knows the Products Offered and How Much They Cost (Direct and Indirect)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Internal Service Funds: Appropriately align supply/cost of service with customer demand.</li> <li>Use Full-Cost Plan: Appropriately align cost and supply of service with demand for all overhead and admin programs.</li> <li>Program Inventory: Identify each program the organization offers.</li> <li>Program costing: Price each program (direct and indirect costs).</li> </ul>

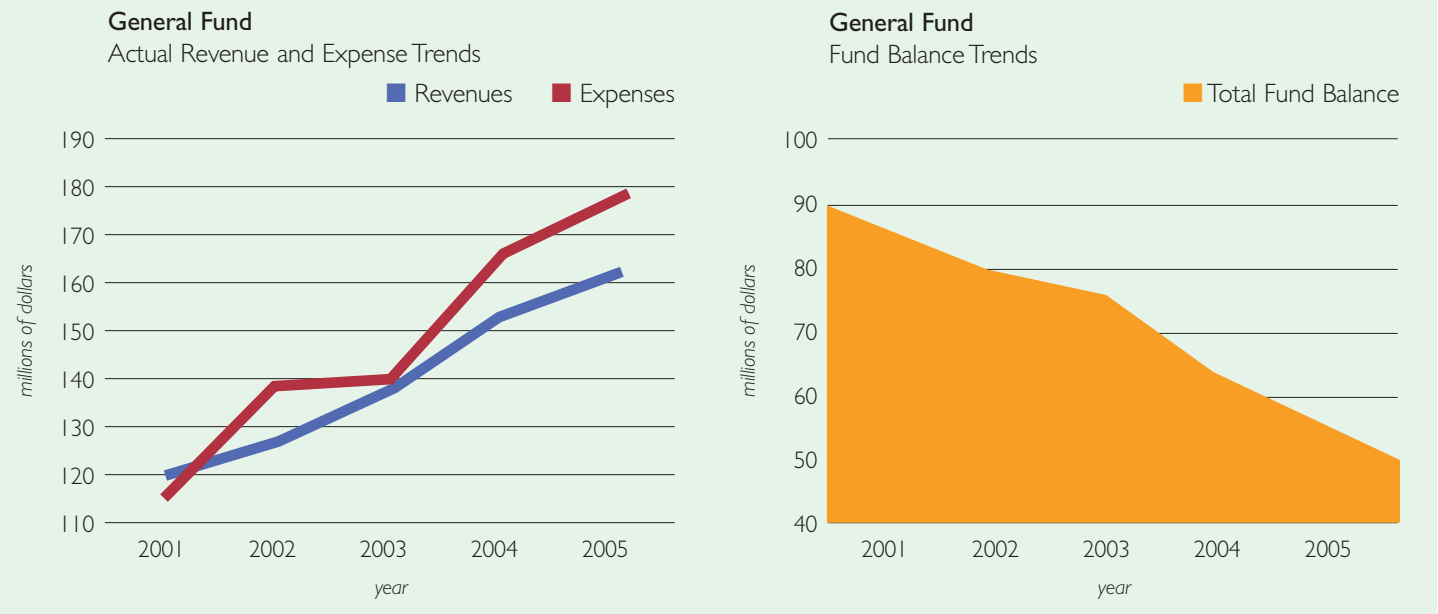
### Understand Variances (Budget versus Actual)

DIAGNOSTICS	TREATMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgeting for too Many Contingencies? Does every department budget for unforeseen events?</li> <li>Ongoing Operational Budgets Include Cyclical (One-Time) Costs?</li> <li>Consistent Budget versus Actual Variances Year to Year?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate Contingency Funding for Acceptable Level of Unforeseen Events. Hone Salary and Benefit Forecasting Tools: Costs saved and unplanned due to vacancies or turnover can be significant.</li> <li>Ensure Variances are Minimal and Explainable.</li> </ul>

### Establish and Maintain Reserves

DIAGNOSTICS	TREATMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reserve Requirements? Are we clear about the reserves we must set aside (policy or mandate)?</li> <li>Reserves We Keep? Do we know of every reserve we maintain, how much we maintain, and why we maintain them?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Reserve Policy: Establish clear policy to guide how much money to reserve, across the organization.</li> <li>Inventory Reserves and Keep What Is Needed: Reserve only what is necessary, and eliminate resource allocations where possible.</li> </ul>

## Exhibit 2: Ongoing Fiscal Health versus One-Time Fiscal Health



gage crisis, the credit markets have melted down, and the prices for basic goods and services are volatile. As a result, sales tax collections are being slammed, and revenue forecasts for the next five years do not indicate that a cure for this trend is on the horizon.

Is this the fate of government in our time? Does bankruptcy, privatization of infrastructure, borrowing against future revenues, or a federal fiscal bailout represent the only treatment options? Economic conditions have caused governments to spike a fever, making the need for fiscal stabilization paramount. Although it is increasingly difficult for most cities, counties, school districts, and other governmental entities, the first step in the treatment regimen is spending within your means.

### Objectives

- Establish alignment between ongoing sources and ongoing uses.
- Establish alignment between one-time sources and one-time uses.

### Sample diagnostic questions:

#### What symptoms are we looking for?

1. *Does your organization differentiate between one-time and ongoing revenues and expenditures? If yes, how are they tracked? Does your forecast demonstrate this differentiation?*
  - > Check to see if your organization is relying on fund balance or other one-time sources, or even volatile

and unpredictable ongoing sources to support ongoing costs.

- > Check to see if ongoing revenues are greater than ongoing expenses, and if your multiyear forecast matches ongoing revenues with ongoing expenses and one-time sources with one-time uses.

2. *Are resource allocation decisions for budgetary purposes influenced by the program revenues generated by your organization's functional units (departments, divisions, elected offices, bureaus, etc)? If yes, how does your organization differentiate program revenues from enterprise revenues such as taxes, earnings on investments, franchise fees, etc.?*

- > Check to see if program revenues are allocated specifically to the operation responsible for generating them and if increases or decreases in these revenues directly affect that functional unit's budget.
- > Check to see if resource allocations made in the budget process are based on the prior year's expenditure budget for each functional unit or if they are based on available ongoing revenues and one-time sources.

3. *Does your organization prepare a formal revenue manual? If yes, what type of information is included?*

- > Check to see if all revenues are included in this document and if forecasts are based on the most appropriate trend data (e.g., historical, economic, demographic, etc.).

> Check to see if fees are updated on a timely basis and if they are based on a written policy supporting the level of cost recovery desired.

### Potential treatment options

- Use ongoing revenues only for ongoing expenses (and one-time sources only for one-time uses).
- Establish a distinction between general government (enterprise) revenues and program revenues, and create incentives for self-sustaining programs by allowing functional operating units to keep 100 percent of the program revenue generated.
- Require reductions in program revenues to be offset by reductions in the operating budgets associated functional units.
- Base resource allocations strictly on available revenues and one-time sources (as opposed to historical or forecasted expenditures).

Exhibit 2 illustrates one organization's approach to distinguishing between ongoing fiscal health and one-time fiscal health. Note the pattern of persistent inability to spend within its means that emerged between 2001 and 2002. This fiscal health problem had been masked as the organization continued to use one-time sources to plug the ongoing gap.

## ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN RESERVES

According to an October 2008 Associated Press article, "the U.S. personal savings rate dropped to well below 1 percent in late 2007 and early this year, according to figures from the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis. The figure has edged up in the last few months, but the actual savings rate may still be near zero, given that many people are covering living costs by using credit cards or money saved earlier, according to the BEA."<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, the reality facing citizens is the reality facing most local governments. According to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommended practice, *Appropriate Level of Unreserved Fund Balance in the General Fund*, "general purpose governments, regardless of size, maintain unreserved fund balance in their general fund of no less than 5 to 15 percent of regular general fund operating revenues." Similarly, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) recommends that "the most

The most straight-forward and yet the most overlooked objective for achieving fiscal health is establishing an appropriate level of reserves and then monitoring those reserves to ensure they are maintained.

influential guidance comes from the bond rating firms, which use a 'rule of thumb' figure of at least 5 percent of annual operating expenditures as an acceptable level of (accessible) reserves (on top of restricted reserves)." But a brief scan of news reports reveals that so many cities and counties are experiencing diminished bond ratings because they failed to meet even these minimum requirements.

The most straight-forward and yet the most overlooked objective for achieving fiscal health is establishing an appropriate level of reserves and then monitoring

those reserves to ensure they are maintained. As diagnosticians, government finance officers must ensure that setting aside funding to adequately maintain reserves is a top priority, and that there are appropriate monitoring mechanisms in place ensure that this objective is upheld.

### Objectives

- Establish reserve policy, and monitor to ensure that the policy is upheld.
- Inventory reserves maintained across the entire organization to ensure that all reserves are appropriate — not too much, and not too little.

### Sample diagnostic questions:

#### What symptoms are we looking for?

1. *Does your organization have a written fund balance reservation policy? If yes, how are you monitoring to ensure that reserves are maintained?*
  - > Check to see if established working capital reserves are sufficient to meet emergency needs or short-term revenue shortfalls.
  - > Check to see if there is an inventory of all other restricted or designated fund balance reserves, stating their purpose, the authority establishing them, and how they are to be calculated.
  - > Check to see if there are adequate controls and monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure compliance.

### Potential treatment options

- Establish a formal, written reserve policy to guide the amount across the entire organization that should be set aside in reserve.

- Inventory all reserves maintained across the organization and eliminate any that are unnecessary or duplicated.

## UNDERSTAND VARIANCES (BUDGET VERSUS ACTUAL)

In “Reinventing Government,” David Osborne and Ted Gaebler illustrate how organizations traditionally handle budget variances: “Normal government budgets encourage managers to waste money. If they don’t spend their entire budget by the end of the fiscal year, three things happen: They lose the money they saved; they get less next year; and the budget director scolds them for requesting too much last year. Hence the time-honored government rush to spend all funds by the end of the fiscal year.”<sup>4</sup>

The annual budgeting process fosters this dilemma: Use it or lose it versus spending only what is needed in the spirit of upholding the citizen’s best interest. How, then, does the diagnostician deduce the true cause of any variance? Once again, without testing, it would be hard to draw the appropriate conclusions about how much is needed to fund the programs and services being offered. A doctor first encountering a patient with a fever must determine whether that fever is a direct symptom of the illness itself or a side-effect resulting from a previously prescribed treatment. Without this analysis, the fever might be treated incorrectly. Similarly, it is only by virtue of rigorous program evaluation, trend analysis, and budget versus actual evaluation that the diagnostician can truly understand what caused a variance.

Diagnosticians must look at significant revenue and expenditure variances, both from a budget-to-actual perspective and from a historical year-to-year perspective. From this analysis, the variances can be isolated, identified, and evaluated, so permanent efficiencies can be rewarded and captured for future years through appropriate adjustments to resource allocations. Diagnosticians can also see where resources that are being budgeted for unforeseen contingencies might be better used in support of other operational needs. Finally, an understanding of the nature of significant variances can also highlight revenue or expenditure trends that need to be incorporated into long-term forecasts.

### Objectives

- Identify areas where too many resources have been allocated to accomplish the objectives, and make adjustments that allocate fewer resources to that objective in the future.

- Determine where variances occur as a result of efficiencies, establish rewards to encourage behavior that does not model a use it or lose it philosophy and make adjustments to recognize where fewer resources could be allocated in the future.
- Eliminate the fluff being held in the budgets of functional unit for contingencies, cyclical needs, or worst-case scenarios.
- Improve the accuracy of revenue and expenditure forecasts by eliminating the impact of recurring historical variances.

### Sample diagnostic questions:

#### What symptoms are we looking for?

1. *At year’s end, are variances between budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures analyzed and explained? If yes, how do those variances affect future budget cycles? How significant are the reported variances related to capital projects?*
  - > Check for consistent variances that seem to occur year after year.
  - > Check revenue variances to identify significant trends that will help forecast future receipts or affect the level of funds available for future resource allocation.
  - > Check to see if there is a pattern of carrying forward significant dollar amounts appropriated for multiyear projects from one year to the next, and gain an understanding of why project dollars are not expended in the year they are appropriated.
  - > Check to see if there are resources allocated on an ongoing basis as a place-holder for one-time costs or costs that are projected to occur cyclically.
2. *Does your organization use a formal compensation plan to establish employee salary or wage ranges? If yes, how is this plan developed (e.g., market comparisons, union negotiations, step/grade system, etc.), and how often is the plan updated?*
  - > Check to see if there are variances due to consistent vacancy savings.
3. *When assessing the adequacy of employee compensation, are employee benefit packages included in this assessment? Additionally, does the organization believe that its total compensation package is attractive enough to recruit competent individuals and retain them?*

> Check to see if variances occur because an overall percentage increase is applied to total compensation instead of basing it on an individual calculation of each factor (e.g., some benefits are based on percentage of wages while others are calculated as a flat dollar amount).

### Potential treatment options

- Identify where resources have been allocated on a regular basis for one-time or cyclical (every other year) costs, and eliminate ongoing resource allocations where possible.
- Identify possible causes of revenue variances, monitor trends, and maintain analysis in the revenue manual.
- Ensure that expenditures related to multiyear projects are budgeted in the years in which the costs will be incurred in order to prevent large unplanned appropriations (“carry-forwards”).
- Eliminate unnecessary contingencies maintained in the budgets of functional units.
- Develop a salary/benefit projection tool that helps budget employee compensation costs more accurately and also helps analyze the impact of vacancies.

## BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT THE TRUE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

In “The Future of Staff Groups,” Joel Henning notes the most pressing challenge that faces providers of internal or indirect services — traditional overhead functions such as human resources, information technology, finance, fleet, and property management. Henning observes that these service providers “live in an uneasy and difficult world. There is increased demand that they demonstrate relevance and contribution to business results. And there is a persistent and gnawing doubt about the content of their contribution.”<sup>5</sup>

Whether they are perceptions or reality, the gnawing doubts pervade many organizations in both public and private sector. Government finance officers and their departments are part of this group that is associated with overhead costs and are responsible for demonstrating their own relevance and contribution to business results. As diagnosticians, finance officers must also facilitate an understanding

Finance officers must assemble all the facts and data at their disposal and do the analytical work to identify, quantify, and verify their suspicions about the factors that have led the organization to its current fiscal situation.

about the relevance and contribution of all functions of government — and be able to test that relevance.

Analyzing the impact of methods such as open reporting financial tools, which facilitate transparency about the nature of and rationale behind operating costs, Robert Kaplan and David Norton wrote: “...initially these systems were designed for the needs of the executive team. But several of the organizations went a step further. They created open reporting, making the data available to everyone in the organization. Building on the principle that ‘strategy is everyone’s job,’ they empowered everyone by giving each employee knowledge.”<sup>6</sup>

Transparency is trust. And accomplishing transparency about the true cost of doing business is essential to achieving fiscal health. Those whose major objective is to defend their turf argue against transparency, citing increased administrative costs to keep track of the necessary data. While there are certainly costs associated with maintaining an appropriate level of transparency, the benefits of extending access to information and knowledge far outweigh these costs. And being transparent about the true cost of doing business will lead not only to better-informed discussions about relevance and contribution, but also to potential opportunities for enhancing revenues, for increasing operational efficiencies, and for laying to rest the persistent and gnawing doubt among those who count on the services government provides — our citizens.

### Objectives

- Clearly articulate the programs offered and the associated costs — first and foremost by internal services, and then for all government programs.
- Ensure that appropriate internal service costs are shouldered by the programs that demand and use those services.
- Ensure that fees for services where some level of cost recovery is expected are capturing both direct and indirect costs associated with the service.

### Sample diagnostic questions:

#### What symptoms are we looking for?

1. *Does your organization use internal service funds? If yes, what are the services provided by each fund, and how are the internal charges established and distributed?*

- > Check to see if appropriate demand metrics are evaluated when determining costs.
- > Check to see if customers perceive that costs are transparent, and that they have the ability to influence those costs by altering their own demands.

2. *Does your organization prepare a full cost allocation plan in addition to an OMB A-87 cost allocation plan? If yes, how is this plan incorporated into the budget process?*

- > Check to see if fees charged to offset the cost of providing services are calculated using both direct and indirect costs.
- > Check to see if indirect or overhead costs accounted for in the general fund could more appropriately be charged to another fund, thus relieving the burden on the general fund.

### Potential Treatment Options

- Implement internal service funds, where appropriate, to align supply and cost of service with customer demand.
- Use a full-cost plan to appropriately align supply and cost with demand for all overhead and administrative programs.
- Inventory all programs offered across the organization and determine the direct and indirect costs for each program.
- Ensure that fees charged to offset the cost of providing a service recapture an appropriate level of both direct and indirect costs.
- Relieve the burden of indirect costs charged to the general fund by more appropriately charging them against the fund that benefits from the internal services being provided.

## INCORPORATE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND LONG-TERM PLANNING

In his article, “Excelling in Times of Fiscal Distress,” ICMA Executive Director Bob O’Neill observes, “Most of us can articulate the early-warning signs that preceded the current economic downturn: Global forces that dramatically changed the local, state, and federal playing fields. Skyrocketing fuel costs. A failing housing market...property tax limitations. Yet, many of us failed to correctly interpret these early-warning signs in relation to their impact on our government organizations.”<sup>7</sup>

The influences of the economy on costs and revenue sources are not the only assumptions many local governments fail to interpret or incorporate into their planning. Many

operations devise elaborate, precise, and strategic long-term plans that are meant to guide the achievement of objectives. These plans include key capital projects like infrastructure improvements, or essential operational assumptions like compensation targets built on market conditions to retain high-performing staff. Unfortunately, these plans can sometimes remain isolated within the departments that devised them, never being appropriately synchronized with the big-picture scenarios decision makers depend on.

Diagnosticians need to identify the existence of these plans, understand the assumptions driving them, and identify the objectives they are based on. This will allow better scenarios to be built, from which organization-wide decisions about the future can be made. According to an article based on GFOA research about the role of scenario planning in achieving long-term financial sustainability, decision makers “in the planning process consider a range of possible futures confronting the organization, examine the financial consequences of those possibilities, and determine the most appropriate policy and strategy responses.”<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, it is only by incorporating every planning tool available that decision makers can objectively understand the long-term effects their decisions have on the organization and, more important, what impact those decisions have on the entity’s overall fiscal health. Championing the merits of scenario planning, in the context of upholding an organization’s stated objectives, Peter Schwartz postulates in “The Art of Long View” that “you can tell you have good scenarios when they are both plausible and surprising; when they have the power to break old stereotypes; and when the makers assume ownership of them and put them to work. Scenario making is intensely participatory, or it fails.”<sup>9</sup> Incorporating all of the long-term plans that are relevant to the objectives the organization is trying to achieve will only ensure that these decisions are made in a more informed and strategic context.

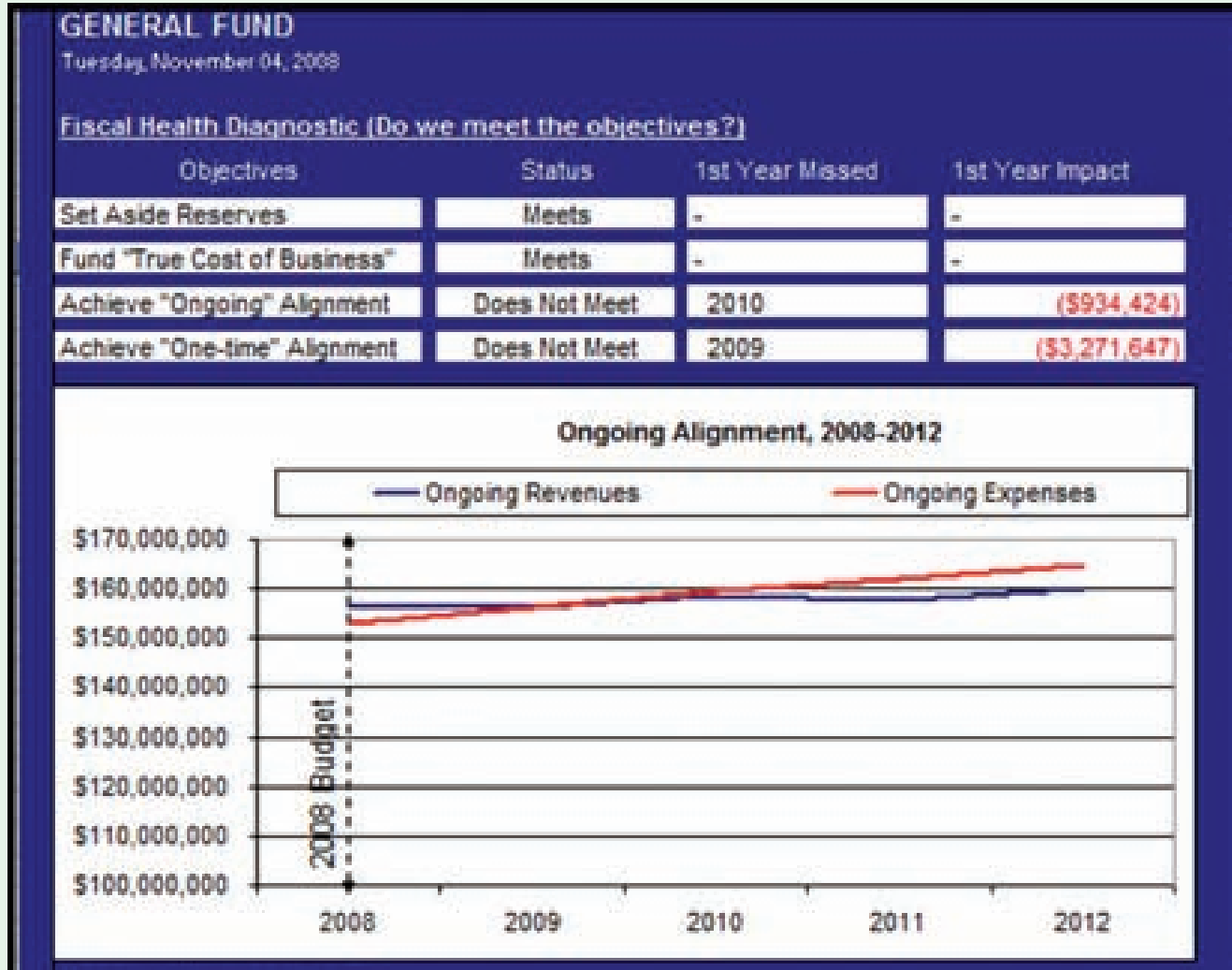
### Objectives

- Account for the impact of external economic influences.
- Incorporate and consolidate long-term plans into long-term forecasts.
- Assimilate all elements of fiscal health into scenario planning to ensure that decisions are made while upholding the objectives of fiscal health.

### Sample diagnostic questions:

#### What symptoms are we looking for?

### Exhibit 3: Scenario-Planning Model



1. Does your five-year forecast incorporate other long-term plans your organization has developed? If yes, what plans are included, and how are they incorporated into your forecasts?

> Check to see if all capital improvement plans, comprehensive plans, or other long-range plans have been incorporated in the budget process and in your long-term forecasts.

2. Does your organization prepare a capital improvement plan? If yes, what information is included, and how is it used in your budget process and your financial forecasts? Is the plan complete, with no "monsters under the bed" (i.e., capital needs or initiatives that are not complete in their planning but could have a serious impact on your available resources)?

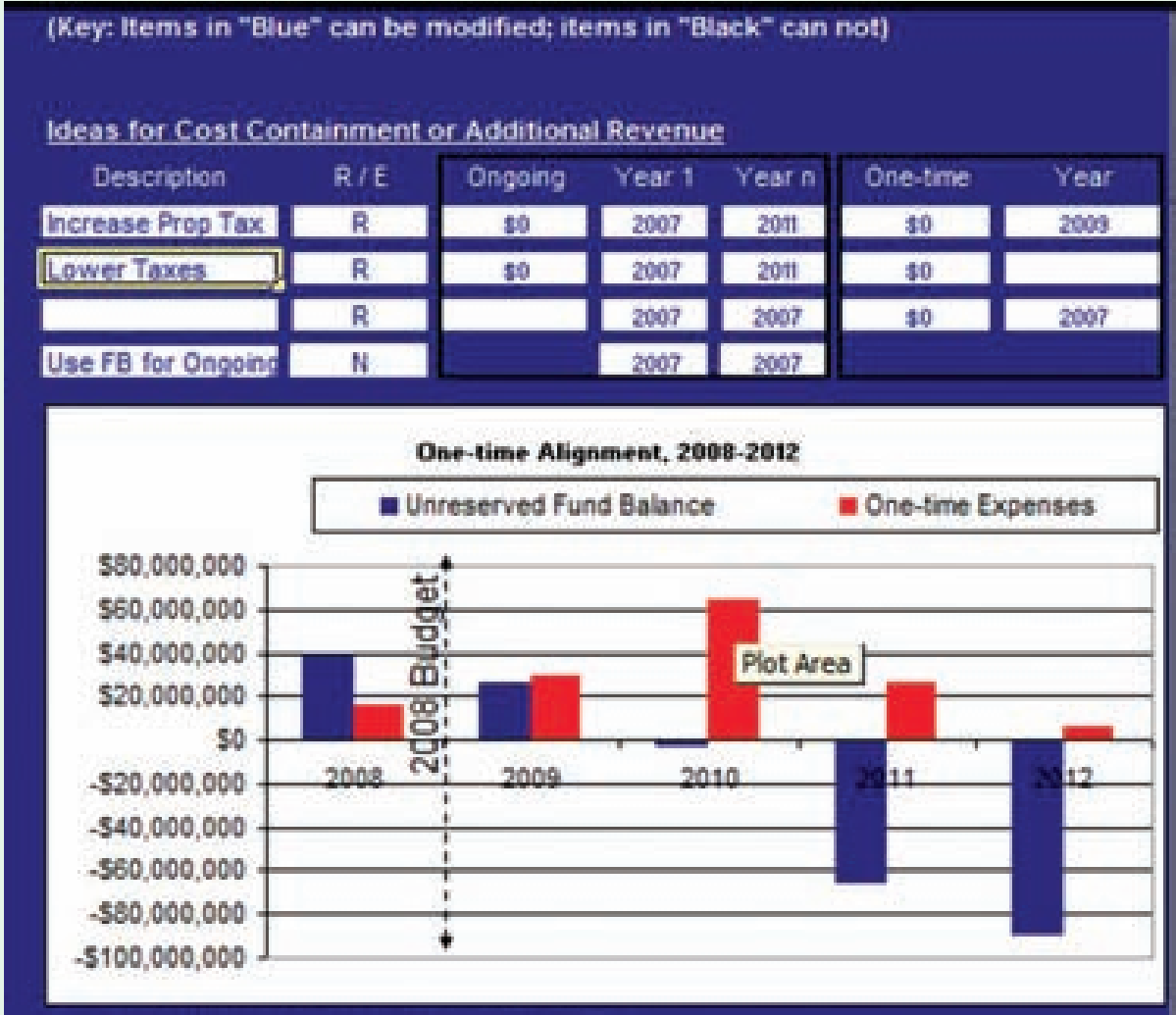
> Check to see if ongoing operating costs associated with the completion of a project have been identified and that ongoing resources are available to fund these costs.

3. What tools does your organization use to communicate financial information to its elected decision makers?

> Check to ensure the tools used to communicate critical financial information are easily interpreted by those who may not be intimately familiar with government budgets, and that they are more graphic than statistical in nature, conveying information at a high level without volumes of numbers.

#### Potential treatment options

- Identify all long-term plans maintained by every functional unit within the organization and ensure that they are incorporated in the organization's decision making.



- Prepare a comprehensive capital improvement plan that spans a period of at least five years and includes all potentially significant one-time expenditures as well as any associated ongoing operating costs.
- Develop a simple, graphic communication tool that is used consistently to provide decision makers with financial information at a summarized level.

Exhibit 3 demonstrates a scenario-planning model one organization implemented to help the board of elected officials in decision making. Note the separation of ongoing fiscal health in the graph on the left and one-time fiscal health in the graph on the right. Also note that the model demonstrates the organization's ability to uphold the objectives of fiscal health by tracking the effects of every decision made in context (see fiscal health objectives at the top left of the screen).

## CONCLUSIONS

Local governments across the country are more aware than ever that they must achieve a level of fiscal health and wellness to be sustainable over the long term. Government finance officers must willingly assume the new and critical role of becoming leaders who use their analytical skills to apply basic diagnostic tests to perform high-level assessment of the organization's fiscal health. With the information gained from this kind of assessment, the organization can determine what symptoms might be contributing to its fiscal distress and what additional testing and analysis needs to be done in order to get a more accurate picture of the organization's fiscal problems. Then, the problems can be treated in the most effective way, to achieve the level of fiscal health that every government needs in order to serve its citizens. There is no

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magic pill or simple elixir that will cure governments of what ails them — each one must identify the symptoms, diagnose the causes, and prescribe the treatments. ■

## Notes

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**JON JOHNSON** is director of budget and management analysis for Jefferson County, Colorado. Prior to moving to Colorado in 2002, Jon was director of finance for several municipalities in Missouri including Blue Springs, Joplin, and the City of Kansas City Aviation Department. Johnson holds a bachelor’s degree in political science and a Bachelor of Science in business administration in accounting from Missouri Southern State University as well as a master’s degree in college administration from Pittsburg State University. He can be contacted at [jjohnso@jeffco.us](mailto:jjohnso@jeffco.us) or 303-271-8596. **CHRIS FABIAN** is the internal business consultant for Jefferson County. His work has centered on the budget process as a lever to produce results, accountability, and change; performance- and outcome-based management; purpose, productivity, and efficiency in operations; and rigorous financial analysis and strategy. Fabian was a partner to the consultant team that implemented budgeting for outcomes in the City of Ft. Collins, Colorado, arguably one of the leading organizations using this approach. He can be contacted at [cfabian@jeffco.us](mailto:cfabian@jeffco.us) or 303-271-8566.

*Jon Johnson and Chris Fabian will present a GFOA training seminar on Long-Term Financial Planning, to be held January 14-15, 2009, in Newport Beach, California. More information is available at [www.gfoa.org](http://www.gfoa.org).*