

Municipal Fiscal Survey

By Kate Dufour,
Legislative Advocate, MMA

The 2007 Municipal Fiscal Survey Report and Analysis is now available on MMA's website at www.memun.org (click on "General Resources" and then "Data & Statistics").

The Municipal Fiscal Survey Report is an organized collection of both the revenue and expenditure data for fiscal year 2007 provided by 200 municipalities across the state. For analytical purposes, these data are used to provide comparative information about the differences in revenues and expenditures among the towns and cities in Maine as well as aggregated and projected analysis of revenues and expenditures by municipalities in various population categories and statewide. The information collected in the survey not only provides municipal officials with the data necessary to compare revenue and expenditure trends in similarly situated communities, but is also used in the Association's advocacy efforts. The data compiled in the report enables MMA's State and Federal Relations staff to illustrate to lawmakers, lobbyists and citizens how municipalities collect and appropriate revenue.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

This year, 200 communities participated in the voluntary survey for a response rate of 41%. Rates of participation were highest in communities with populations between 3,500 and 9,999. Participation was lower in the "10,000 and over" population category and in the "under 1,000" category.

According to the data provided

in the survey, in 2007 municipalities statewide raised and received an estimated \$3.4 billion and appropriated nearly \$3.4 billion to provide municipal services. Revenue generated at the municipal level accounted for the largest source of revenue, with \$2.2 billion being generated by property taxes, excise taxes, fees and interest. Of the \$2.2 billion in municipally-generated revenue, property taxes accounted for the largest source. In 2007, municipalities statewide collected \$1.8 billion in property taxes, which accounted for 81% of all municipally-generated revenues.

As would be expected, the cost of state and local spending on K-12 education was the largest expenditure, accounting for nearly \$2 billion or 58% of total expenditures. In 2007, it is estimated that municipalities spent \$1.1 billion on K-12 educa-

tion, while the state spent \$1.06 billion, a figure that includes the state's \$204 million contribution to teachers' retirement.

The accompanying charts provide a general breakdown of revenue and expenditure categories. For more detailed information on the statewide results as well as data on each participating municipality, please see the 2007 Municipal Fiscal Survey Report posted on MMA's website.

NEXT YEAR - A NEW APPROACH

It is expected that this will be the last year MMA conducts the Fiscal Survey. In the future, the MMA fiscal survey will be replaced with a joint Federal/State annual survey of local government finances conducted by the U.S. Census. The Maine Municipal Association, in conjunction with the State Planning Office and the U.S.

Chart 1
Sources of Revenue – Statewide Estimates

Source of Revenue	Revenues	% of Total
Municipal	\$ 2,202,339,011	65%
State	\$ 1,111,625,998	32%
Surplus	\$ 54,221,105	2%
Federal	\$ 27,077,275	1%
Reserve or Trust fund	\$ 25,553,705	1%
Total	\$3,420,817,048	100%

Chart 2
Sources of Expenditures - Statewide Estimates

Source of Expenditure	Expenditure	% of Total
K-12 Education (state and local)	\$ 1,967,694,564	58%
Public Works	\$ 429,884,267	13%
Public Safety	\$ 282,732,323	8%
General Administration	\$ 237,692,548	7%
Other	\$ 171,135,124	5%
County Tax Assessment	\$ 112,019,873	3%
Debt Service	\$ 95,393,951	3%
Parks and Library	\$ 61,640,174	2%
Code & Human Services	\$ 35,552,137	1%
Total	\$3,393,744,960	100%

Census, is working on creating a single survey instrument. This way, municipalities will be asked to annually com-

plete one survey that combines both the fiscal and LD 1 elements of the several surveys currently issued by the

three organizations. We hope that this consolidation of surveying efforts will make the process less time consuming for municipalities, simpler and generate more participation.

The joint Federal/State survey tool will be unveiled at MMA's October Convention. Representatives from the U.S. Census Bureau will be on hand in the exhibitors' area to talk to municipal officials about the new format. In addition, Census Bureau statistician, Danielle Jones, will be co-facilitating one of the roundtable discussions scheduled for the afternoon of Wednesday, October 8. Municipal officials interested in learning about the new process are invited to participate in the roundtable discussion and to meet Danielle.

If you have any questions about the 2007 report or the Federal/State surveying effort, please contact MMA's Kate Dufour at kdufour@memun.org or 1-800-452-8786. 