

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of the State Auditor



Patricia Anderson
State Auditor

MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE REPORT
PREPARED AS A RESULT OF THE AUDIT OF

BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005

Description of the Office of the State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor serves as a watchdog for Minnesota taxpayers by helping to ensure financial integrity, accountability, and cost-effectiveness in local governments throughout the state.

Through financial, compliance, and special audits, the State Auditor oversees and ensures that local government funds are used for the purposes intended by law and that local governments hold themselves to the highest standards of financial accountability.

The State Auditor performs approximately 250 financial and compliance audits per year and has oversight responsibilities for over 4,300 local units of government throughout the state. The office currently maintains five divisions:

Audit Practice - conducts financial and legal compliance audits for local governments;

Government Information - collects and analyzes financial information for cities, towns, counties, and special districts;

Legal/Special Investigations - provides legal analysis and counsel to the Office and responds to outside inquiries about Minnesota local government law; as well as investigates allegations of misfeasance, malfeasance, and nonfeasance in local government;

Pension - monitors investment, financial, and actuarial reporting for over 700 public pension funds; and

Tax Increment Financing, Investment and Finance - promotes compliance and accountability in local governments' use of tax increment financing through financial and compliance audits.

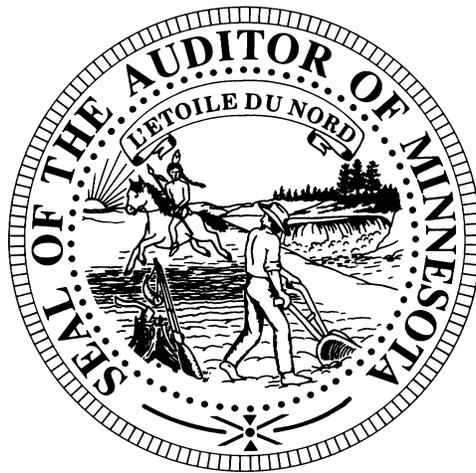
The State Auditor serves on the State Executive Council, State Board of Investment, Land Exchange Board, Public Employee's Retirement Association Board, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and the Rural Finance Authority Board.

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**BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA**

For the Year Ended December 31, 2005



Management and Compliance Report

**Audit Practice Division
Office of the State Auditor
State of Minnesota**

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**BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA**

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**BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA**

Schedule 1

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005

I. SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS

- A. Our report expresses an unqualified opinion on the basic financial statements of Benton County.
- B. A reportable condition in internal control was disclosed by the audit of financial statements of Benton County and is reported in the "Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*." It was not a material weakness.
- C. No instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements of Benton County were disclosed during the audit.
- D. No matters involving internal control over compliance relating to the audit of the major federal award program were reported in the "Report on Compliance with Requirements Applicable to Each Major Program and Internal Control Over Compliance in Accordance with OMB Circular A-133."
- E. The Auditor's Report on Compliance for the major federal award program for Benton County expresses an unqualified opinion.
- F. No findings were disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with Section 510(a) of OMB Circular A-133.
- G. The major program is:
 - Child Care Mandatory and Matching Funds of the
Child Care and Development Fund
 - CFDA #93.596
- H. The threshold for distinguishing between Types A and B programs was \$300,000.
- I. Benton County was determined to be a low-risk auditee.

II. FINDINGS RELATED TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

INTERNAL CONTROL

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ITEM NOT RESOLVED

96-4 Departmental Internal Accounting Control

Due to the limited number of office personnel within the various Benton County offices, segregation of the accounting functions necessary to ensure adequate internal accounting control is not possible. Offices which do not have sufficient segregation of duties include Recorder, Department of Development, Sheriff, Public Health, Highway, Social Services, and Extension. In these offices, there may be only one employee to receive and account for departmental collections. This is not unusual in small departmental situations; however, the County's management should constantly be aware of this condition and realize that the concentration of duties and responsibilities in a limited number of individuals is not desirable from an accounting point of view.

Examples of incompatible duties which should be performed by separate individuals are:

- receipting collections, posting collections to registers, and making bank deposits;
- signing checks and reconciling the bank accounts;
- receipting collections and posting collections to the accounts receivable records;
- approving receivable write-offs/write-downs and posting adjustments to the accounts receivable records; and
- data entry, adjusting accounting codes, and reviewing the monthly detailed report of receipts and disbursements for accuracy.

Some procedures the County's management may wish to consider to strengthen controls in these offices include:

- Departmental collections should be remitted to the County Auditor/Treasurer more frequently than once each month, perhaps weekly or even daily, to reduce the amount of funds on hand.
- Department heads should monitor operations within their office to determine that reports are submitted properly and are in agreement with cash balances and grant expenditures.
- When an office has only a department head and one other employee, the department head should perform some of the accounting functions.

We recommend that County management be aware of the lack of segregation of the accounting functions and implement oversight procedures to ensure that adequate controls are in place over cash, receivables, and other items.

Client's Response:

The County Administrator and the Accounting Supervisor in the Finance Division of the County Administrator's Office will review the cash handling procedures in each of the County Departments indicated in this finding (Recorder, Department of Development, Sheriff, Public Health, Highway, Social Services, and County Extension). We will focus on the frequency of deposits and recommend daily deposits if less frequent deposits are being made. Depending on our findings, we may pursue a formal County Board policy regarding cash handling and deposits. We will also determine if greater segregation of duties is possible, providing written recommendations to Departments as needed.

III. FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS FOR FEDERAL AWARD PROGRAMS

None.

IV. OTHER ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION

Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) recently issued Statement No. 43, *Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefit Plans Other Than Pension Plans*, which establishes financial reporting for OPEB plans, and Statement No. 45, *Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions*, which governs employer accounting and financial reporting for OPEB. These standards, similar to what GASB Statements 25 and 27 did for government employee pension benefits and plans, provide the accounting and reporting standards for the various other postemployment benefits many local governments offer to their employees. OPEB can include many different benefits offered to retirees such as health, dental, life, and long-term care insurance coverage.

If retirees are included in an insurance plan and pay a rate similar to that paid for younger active employees, this implicit subsidy is considered OPEB. In fact, local governments may be required to continue medical insurance coverage pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 471.61, subd. 2b. This benefit is common when accumulated sick leave is used to pay for retiree medical insurance. Under the new GASB statements, accounting for OPEB is now similar to the accounting used by governments for pension plans.

Some of the issues that the County Board will need to address in order to comply with the statements are:

- determine if employees are provided OPEB;
- if OPEB are being provided, the County Board will have to determine whether it will advance fund the benefits or pay for them on a pay-as-you-go basis;
- if OPEB are being provided, and the County Board determines that the establishment of a trust is desirable in order to fund the OPEB, the County Board will have to wait until legislation is enacted authorizing the creation of an OPEB trust and establishing an applicable investment standard; and
- in order to determine annual costs and liabilities that need to be recognized, the County Board will have to decide whether to hire an actuary.

If applicable for Benton County, GASB Statements 43 and 45 would be implemented for the years ending December 31, 2007 and 2008, respectively.



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REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

Board of County Commissioners
Benton County

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Benton County as of and for the year ended December 31, 2005, and have issued our report thereon dated August 23, 2006. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Benton County's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting. However, we noted a matter involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be a reportable condition. Reportable conditions involve matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control over financial reporting that, in our judgment, could adversely affect the County's ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements. The reportable condition is described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs as item 96-4.

A material weakness is a reportable condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that would be material in relation to the

financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be reportable conditions and, accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all reportable conditions that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we believe the reportable condition indicated above is not a material weakness.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Benton County's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Minnesota Legal Compliance

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the provisions of the *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Local Government*, promulgated by the State Auditor pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 6.65. Accordingly, the audit included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

The *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Local Government* contains six categories of compliance to be tested: contracting and bidding, deposits and investments, conflicts of interest, public indebtedness, claims and disbursements, and miscellaneous provisions. Our study included all of the listed categories.

The results of our tests indicate that, for the items tested, Benton County complied with the material terms and conditions of applicable legal provisions.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of County Commissioners, management, and federal awarding agencies and pass-through entities and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

/s/Pat Anderson

PATRICIA ANDERSON
STATE AUDITOR

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

End of Fieldwork: August 23, 2006



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**REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO
EACH MAJOR PROGRAM AND INTERNAL CONTROL OVER
COMPLIANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH OMB CIRCULAR A-133**

Board of County Commissioners
Benton County

Compliance

We have audited the compliance of Benton County with the types of compliance requirements described in the *U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement* that are applicable to its major federal program for the year ended December 31, 2005. Benton County's major federal program is identified in the Summary of Auditor's Results section of the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs. Compliance with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants applicable to its major federal program is the responsibility of the County's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the County's compliance based on our audit.

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and OMB Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*. Those standards and OMB Circular A-133 require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether noncompliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on a major federal program occurred. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence about Benton County's compliance with those requirements and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion. Our audit does not provide a legal determination on the County's compliance with those requirements.

In our opinion, Benton County complied, in all material respects, with the requirements referred to above that are applicable to its major federal program for the year ended December 31, 2005.

Internal Control Over Compliance

The management of Benton County is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over compliance with requirements of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants applicable to federal programs. In planning and performing our audit, we considered the County's internal control over compliance with requirements that could have a direct and material effect on a major federal program in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on compliance and to test and report on the internal control over compliance in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

Our consideration of the internal control over compliance would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that noncompliance with applicable requirements of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants that would be material in relation to a major federal program being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over compliance and its operation that we consider to be material weaknesses.

Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Benton County as of and for the year ended December 31, 2005, and have issued our report thereon dated August 23, 2006. Our audit was performed for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the County's basic financial statements. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by OMB Circular A-133 and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of County Commissioners, management, and federal awarding agencies and pass-through entities and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

/s/Pat Anderson

PATRICIA ANDERSON
STATE AUDITOR

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

End of Fieldwork: August 23, 2006

**BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA**

Schedule 2

**SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005**

Federal Grantor Pass-Through Agency Grant Program Title	Federal CFDA Number	Expenditures
U.S. Department of Agriculture		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Health Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children	10.557	\$ 135,864
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Human Services Administrative Matching Grant for Food Stamp Program	10.561	10,976
Total U.S. Department of Agriculture		\$ 146,840
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Community Development Block Grant	14.218	\$ 125,000
U.S. Department of Justice		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Public Safety Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant	16.523	\$ 11,801
Crime Victim Assistance	16.575	28,495
Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Program	16.727	240
Total U.S. Department of Justice		\$ 40,536
U.S. Department of Transportation		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Transportation Highway Planning and Construction	20.205	\$ 67,000
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Public Safety State and Community Highway Safety	20.600	1,847
Interagency Hazardous Materials Public Sector Training and Planning Grants	20.703	3,578
Total U.S. Department of Transportation		\$ 72,425
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Human Services Promoting Safe and Stable Families	93.556	\$ 11,211
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	93.558	267,038
Child Care Mandatory and Matching Funds of the Child Care and Development Fund	93.596	649,488
Child Welfare Services - State Grants	93.645	10,427
Foster Care Title IV-E	93.658	109,259
Social Services Block Grant	93.667	208,607
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program	93.674	6,145
State Children's Insurance Program	93.767	218

**BENTON COUNTY
FOLEY, MINNESOTA**

Schedule 2
(Continued)

**SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005**

Federal Grantor Pass-Through Agency Grant Program Title	Federal CFDA Number	Expenditures
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Continued)		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Health		
Immunization Grants	93.268	910
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Investigations and Technical Assistance	93.283	40,316
Community Mental Health Services Block Grant	93.958	14,240
Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant	93.994	41,207
Total U.S. Department of Health and Human Services		\$ 1,359,066
U.S. Department of Homeland Security		
Passed Through Minnesota Department of Public Safety		
State Domestic Preparedness Equipment Support Program	97.004	\$ 10,935
Emergency Management Performance Grants	97.042	14,518
Homeland Security Grant Program	97.067	30,694
Total U.S. Department of Homeland Security		\$ 56,147
Total Federal Awards		\$ 1,800,014

Notes to Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards

1. The Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards presents the activity of federal award programs expended by Benton County. The County's reporting entity is defined in Note 1 to the basic financial statements.
2. The expenditures on this schedule are on the modified accrual basis of accounting.
3. During 2005, the County did not pass any federal money to subrecipients.
4. Pass-through grant numbers were not assigned by the pass-through agencies.