

FOCUS ON...

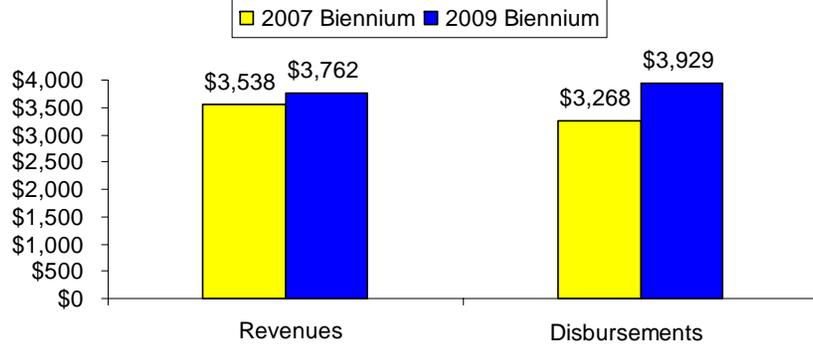
General Fund Fiscal 2009



September 2009 **Fiscal Pocket Guide**



**Figure 4
General Fund Comparison
2007 & 2009 Biennia (millions)**



Total general fund disbursements represent approximately 38 percent of all state disbursements in the general, state special, federal special, selected proprietary and other fund types.

As shown in Figure 4, total revenues to the general fund account in the 2009 biennium were nearly \$3.8 billion, an increase of \$223 million or 6.3 percent from the 2007 biennium. For the 2009 biennium, disbursements were \$3.9 billion, an increase of \$662 million or 20.2 percent from the 2007 biennium. Revenue and disbursement amounts are as reported on the Statewide Accounting Budgeting and Human Resources System.



**Figure 5
Historical General Fund Revenue and Disbursements**

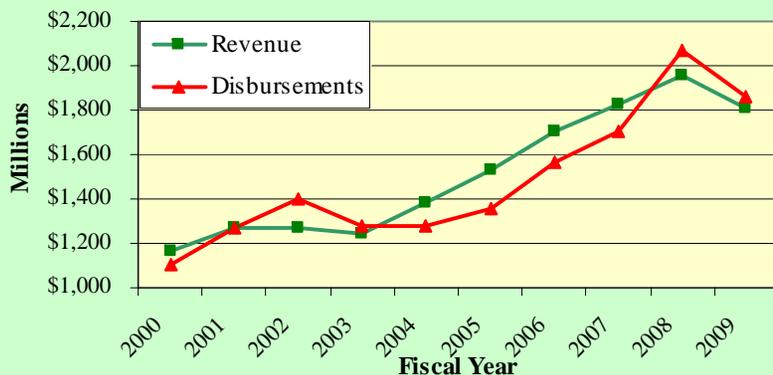


Figure 5 shows historical general fund revenues and disbursements beginning in FY 2000. As shown in Figure 5, revenues exceeded disbursements during the FY 2004 through 2007 period. This was a period of strong economic growth in Montana.

“The state general fund is the primary account that funds a significant portion of the general operations of state government...”



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LFD Mission Statement

We are committed to enhancing the legislative process through understandable and objective fiscal policy analysis and information.

Fiscal 2009



The state general fund is the primary account that funds a significant portion of the general operations of state government and is often referred to as the state's checking account. Expenditures from the account have grown from slightly less than \$700 million in FY 1990 to nearly \$1.9 billion in FY 2009, or approximately 5.4 percent annually.¹

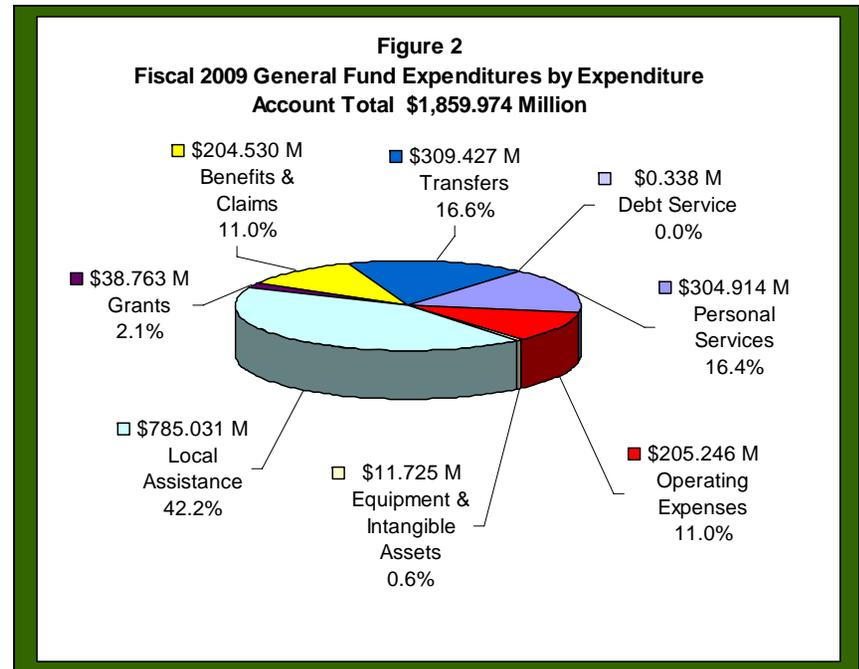
Figure 1 shows the sources of money for the general fund by major revenue category.

In FY 2009 over 66 percent of total general fund revenues came from income and property taxes.

Figure 2 shows how the money was expended by major expenditure account, and Figure 3 shows how the money was expended by functional area.

About 27 percent of the general fund revenue was expended for personal services and operating costs, with most of the remainder disbursed for local assistance (including education), human service benefits, and transfers.

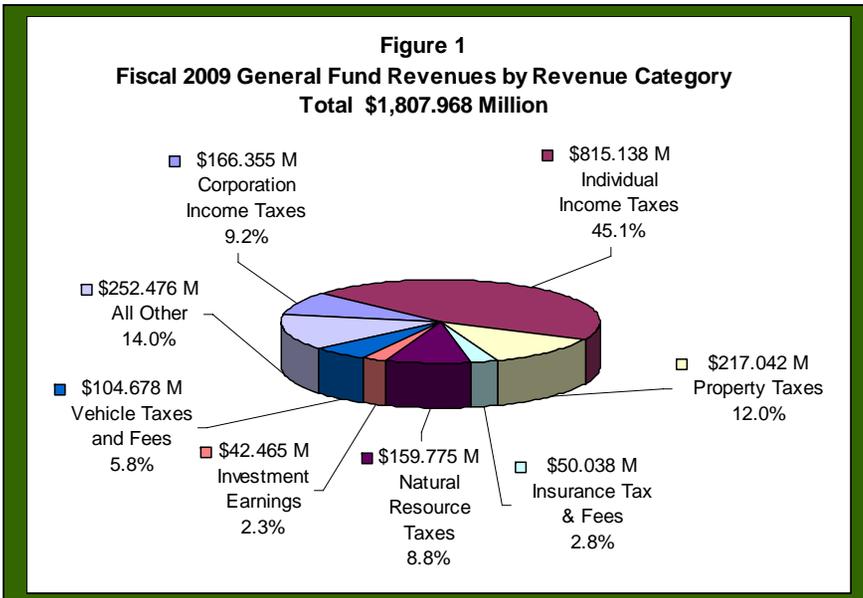
This indicates that the cost of government is weighted heavily towards local assistance (local government entities) and direct human service benefits.



Transfers are the movement of general fund money to another fund.

Most of the transfers were to the university system's current, unrestricted fund (\$166 million), capital projects funds (\$98 million), state special revenue funds (\$28 million), and debt service funds (\$17 million).

Figure 3 shows that of all general fund disbursements, \$848 million or 46 percent was spent on education and \$340 million or 18 percent was spent on human services.



¹ In addition to program and spending growth, this growth rate includes increases in the fund due to fund switches (from de-earmarking and other transfers) that do not reflect a growth in total state spending. For example, HB 124 in the 2001 session included a pass-through of significant new revenue/disbursements through the general fund to local and state governments that doesn't represent an increase in total state spending.

