



Agenda Item No. 6

To: Finance-Auditing Committee/Committee of the Whole
Meeting of March 27, 2009

From: Joseph M. Wire, Auditor-Controller
Celia G. Kupersmith, General Manager

Subject: **RECEIVE THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2009, AS SUBMITTED BY VAVRINEK, TRINE, DAY & CO., LLP**

Recommendation

The Finance-Auditing Committee recommends that the Board of Directors receive the independent auditor's engagement letter for the annual financial audit for the year ending June 30, 2009, as submitted by Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP.

Summary

Attached is the Engagement Letter for the FY 08/09 Financial Audit from the District's external auditors, Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP (VTD). As stated in the contract between VTD and the District, the auditors are reconfirming their understanding of services with the District to ensure compliance in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*. VTD is in the process of completing their second year of a three-year contract with the District. The Engagement Letter describes the scope of their audit, audit objectives, responsibilities of management and audit procedures pertaining to the audit. In addition, the auditors have included their most recent peer review report. The audit will be completed later this fall.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this informational report.

Attachment



February 4, 2009
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District
Box 9000
Presidio Station
San Francisco, California 94129

We are pleased to confirm our understanding of the services we are to provide the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District (the District) for the year ended June 30, 2009. We will audit the financial statements of the business-type activities which collectively comprise the basic financial statements, of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District as of and for the year ended June 30, 2009. Accounting standards generally accepted in the United States provide for certain required supplementary information (RSI), such as management's discussion and analysis (MD&A), to accompany the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District's basic financial statements. As part of our engagement, we will apply certain limited procedures to the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District's RSI. These limited procedures will consist principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation, which management is responsible for affirming to us in its representation letter. Unless we encounter problems with the presentation of the RSI or with procedures relating to it, we will disclaim an opinion on it. The following RSI is required by generally accepted accounting principles and will be subjected to certain limited procedures, but will not be audited:

- 1) Management's Discussion and Analysis.
- 2) Schedule of Funding Progress

Supplementary information other than RSI, such as combining and individual fund financial statements, also accompanies the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District's basic financial statements. We will subject the following supplementary information to the auditing procedures applied in our audit of the basic financial statements and will provide an opinion on it in relation to the basic financial statements:

- 1) Schedule of expenditures of federal awards.
- 2) Supplemental Schedule of Revenues, Expenses by Division

The following additional information accompanying the basic financial statements will not be subjected to the auditing procedures applied in our audit of the financial statements, and for which our auditor's report will disclaim an opinion.

- 1) Introductory Section
- 2) Statistical Section

We will also apply agreed upon procedures which you have specified in the contract as follows:

- 1) The National Transportation Database as specified by guidelines issued by the Federal Transportation Agency which requires issuance of the Independent Auditor Statement for Federal Funding Allocation Data
- 2) A separate financial statement audit of the District's Supplemental Retirement plan.
- 3) A separate financial statement audit of the District's Other Post Employment Benefit Trust fund.

Audit Objectives

The objective of our audit is the expression of opinions as to whether your basic financial statements are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles and to report on the fairness of the additional information referred to in the first paragraph when considered in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The objective also includes reporting on—

- Internal control related to the financial statements and compliance with the provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, agreements, and grants, noncompliance with which could have a material effect on the financial statements in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.
- Internal control related to major programs and an opinion (or disclaimer of opinion) on compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on each major program in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*.

The reports on internal control and compliance will each include a statement that the report is intended for the information and use of the management, specific legislative or regulatory bodies, federal awarding agencies, and if applicable, pass-through entities and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Our audit will be conducted in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards; the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996; and the provisions of OMB Circular A-133, and will include tests of accounting records, a determination of major program(s) in accordance with Circular A-133, and other procedures we consider necessary to enable us to express such opinions and to render the required reports. If our opinions on the financial statements or the Single Audit compliance opinions are other than unqualified, we will fully discuss the reasons with you in advance. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the audit or are unable to form or have not formed opinions, we may decline to express opinions or to issue a report as a result of this engagement.

Management Responsibilities

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal controls, including monitoring ongoing activities; for the selection and application of accounting principles; for the fair presentation in the financial statements of the respective financial position of the business-type activities of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles; and for federal award program compliance with applicable laws and regulations and the provisions of contracts

and grant agreements. Management is responsible for the basic financial statements and all accompanying information as well as all representations contained therein.

You are responsible for management decisions and functions. As part of the audit, we will prepare a draft of your financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards, and related notes. In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, you will be required to review and approve those financial statements prior to their issuance and have a responsibility to be in a position in fact and appearance to make an informed judgment on those financial statements. Further, you are required to designate a qualified management-level individual to be responsible and accountable for overseeing our services.

Management is responsible for making all financial records and related information available to us, including identifying significant vendor relationships in which the vendor has the responsibility for program compliance and for the accuracy and completeness of that information. Management's responsibilities include adjusting the financial statements to correct material misstatements and for confirming to us in the representation letter that the effects of any uncorrected misstatements aggregated by us during the current engagement and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

You are responsible for the design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud, and for informing us about all known or suspected fraud or illegal acts affecting the government involving (1) management, (2) employees who have significant roles in internal control, and (3) others where the fraud or illegal acts could have a material effect on the financial statements. Your responsibilities include informing us of your knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the government received in communications from employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or others. In addition, you are responsible for identifying and ensuring that the entity complies with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, agreements, and grants. Additionally, as required by OMB Circular A-133, it is management's responsibility to follow up and take corrective action on reported audit findings and to prepare a summary schedule of prior audit findings and a corrective action plan. The summary schedule of prior audit findings should be available for our review before August 1, 2009.

Management is responsible for establishment and maintenance of a process for tracking the status of audit findings and recommendations. Management is also responsible for identifying for us previous audits or other engagements or studies related to the objectives discussed in the Audit Objectives section of this letter. This responsibility includes relaying to us corrective actions taken to address significant findings and recommendations resulting from those audits or other engagements or studies. You are also responsible for providing management's views on our current findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as your planned corrective actions, and the timing and format related thereto.

Audit Procedures—General

An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements; therefore, our audit will involve judgment about the number of transactions to be examined and the areas to be tested. We will plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable rather than absolute assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether from (1) errors, (2) fraudulent financial reporting, (3) misappropriation of assets, or (4) violations of laws or governmental regulations that are attributable to the entity or to acts by management or

employees acting on behalf of the entity. Because the determination of abuse is subjective, *Government Auditing Standards* do not expect auditors to provide reasonable assurance of detecting abuse. Because an audit is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute assurance and because we will not perform a detailed examination of all transactions, there is a risk that material misstatements or noncompliance may exist and not be detected by us. In addition, an audit is not designed to detect immaterial misstatements or violations of laws or governmental regulations that do not have a direct and material effect on the financial statements or major programs. However, we will inform you of any material errors and any fraudulent financial reporting or misappropriation of assets that come to our attention. We will also inform you of any violations of laws or governmental regulations that come to our attention, unless clearly inconsequential. We will include such matters in the reports required for a Single Audit. Our responsibility as auditors is limited to the period covered by our audit and does not extend to any later periods for which we are not engaged as auditors.

Our procedures will include tests of documentary evidence supporting the transactions recorded in the accounts, and may include tests of the physical existence of inventories, and direct confirmation of receivables and certain other assets and liabilities by correspondence with selected individuals, creditors, and financial institutions. We will request written representations from your attorneys as part of the engagement, and they may bill you for responding to this inquiry. At the conclusion of our audit, we will also require certain written representations from you about the financial statements and related matters.

Audit Procedures—Internal Controls

Our audit will include obtaining an understanding of the entity and its environment, including internal control, sufficient to assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements and to design the nature, timing, and extent of further audit procedures. Tests of controls may be performed to test the effectiveness of certain controls that we consider relevant to preventing and detecting errors and fraud that are material to the financial statements and to preventing and detecting misstatements resulting from illegal acts and other noncompliance matters that have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. Our tests, if performed, will be less in scope than would be necessary to render an opinion on internal control and, accordingly, no opinion will be expressed in our report on internal control issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

As required by OMB Circular A-133, we will perform tests of controls over compliance to evaluate the effectiveness of the design and operation of controls that we consider relevant to preventing or detecting material noncompliance with compliance requirements applicable to each major federal award program. However, our tests will be less in scope than would be necessary to render an opinion on those controls and, accordingly, no opinion will be expressed in our report on internal control issued pursuant to OMB Circular A-133.

An audit is not designed to provide assurance on internal control or to identify significant deficiencies. However, during the audit, we will communicate to management and those charged with governance internal control related matters that are required to be communicated under professional standards, *Government Auditing Standards*, and OMB Circular A-133.

Audit Procedures—Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, we will perform tests of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District's

compliance with applicable laws and regulations and the provisions of contracts and agreements, including grant agreements. However, the objective of those procedures will not be to provide an opinion on overall compliance and we will not express such an opinion in our report on compliance issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

OMB Circular A-133 requires that we also plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the auditee has complied with applicable laws and regulations and the provisions of contracts and grant agreements applicable to major programs. Our procedures will consist of test of transactions and other applicable procedures described in the *OMB Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement* for the types of compliance requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District's major programs. The purpose of those procedures will be to express an opinion on the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District's compliance with requirements applicable to each of its major programs in our report on compliance issued pursuant to OMB Circular A-133.

Audit Administration, Fees, and Other

We understand that your employees will prepare all cash, accounts receivable, or other confirmations we request and will locate any documents selected by us for testing.

At the conclusion of the engagement, we will complete the appropriate sections of and sign the Data Collection Form that summarizes our audit findings. We will provide an original and print-ready master of our reports to the District; however, it is management's responsibility to submit the reporting package (including financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards, summary schedule of prior audit findings, auditors' reports, and a corrective action plan) along with the Data Collection Form to the designated federal clearinghouse and, if appropriate, to pass-through entities. The Data Collection Form and the reporting package must be submitted within the earlier of 30 days after receipt of the auditors' reports or nine months after the end of the audit period, unless a longer period is agreed to in advance by the cognizant or oversight agency for audits. At the conclusion of the engagement, we will provide information to management as to where the reporting packages should be submitted and the number to submit.


The audit documentation for this engagement is the property of Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP and constitutes confidential information. However, pursuant to authority given by law or regulation, we may be requested to make certain audit documentation available to Department of Transportation or its designee, a federal agency providing direct or indirect funding, or the U.S. Government Accountability Office for purposes of a quality review of the audit, to resolve audit findings, or to carry out oversight responsibilities. We will notify you of any such request. If requested, access to such audit documentation will be provided under the supervision of Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP personnel. Furthermore, upon request, we may provide copies of selected audit documentation to the aforementioned parties. These parties may intend, or decide, to distribute the copies or information contained therein to others, including other governmental agencies.

We expect to begin our audit on approximately February 23, 2009 and to issue our reports no later than September 29, 2009. Our fee for these services will not exceed \$93,000, as stated in the Professional Service Agreement dated April 11, 2008 between the District and our firm. The above fee is based on anticipated cooperation from your personnel and the assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered during the audit. If significant additional time is necessary, we will discuss it with you and arrive at a new fee estimate before we incur the additional costs.

Government Auditing Standards require that we provide you with a copy of our most recent external peer review report and any letter of comment, and any subsequent peer review reports and letters of comment received during the period of the contract. Our 2005 peer review report accompanies this letter.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District and believe this letter accurately summarizes the significant terms of our engagement. If you have any questions, please let us know. If you agree with the terms of our engagement as described in this letter, please sign the enclosed copy and return it to us.

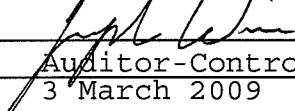
Very truly yours,



Ahmad Gharaibeh of Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co., LLP

RESPONSE:

This letter correctly sets forth the understanding of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District.

By:  Joseph M. Wire
Title: Auditor-Controller/CFO
Date: 3 March 2009