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2016 RECOMMENDED BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE FRANKLIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

I am pleased to present the 2016 recommended budget for Franklin County. Under the Commissioners' direction, we present a budget that is fiscally responsible and addresses the needs of our growing community.

After years of dealing with the aftermath of the 2008-2009 recession and subsequent slow recovery, we are focusing on the future of the County and laying the foundation for the provision of effective and efficient government services to meet the anticipated demands for service.

Part of the efficient response involves increasing collaboration among the County's courts, agencies, and boards in order to maintain fiscally sustainable government operations in the years to come. In addition, the County continues to partner with other local governments, non-profit agencies, and private businesses to support the strong regional economy and remain a top community for good jobs and affordable housing. We will highlight just a few of these collaborative efforts throughout today's presentation.

The Commissioners' govern in an environment of continual growth and must be mindful of the impact this will have in the coming years when developing the annual budget. Since 2005, Franklin County's population has grown 15.3%. In 2014, the County added over 19,000 individuals. This is the largest annual population increase since 2009.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission projects in the Insight 2050 Report that the population in Central Ohio will grow 25% between 2010 and 2040. In contrast, the rest of Ohio will see a 3% decrease during the same time period.

With that growth comes increased responsibilities. These include addressing job creation in multiple sectors and at all wage levels through economic development efforts; ensuring the physical safety of the County's residents; and planning for future infrastructure needs.

In addition to the growing population, Franklin County like other similarly situated counties nationally continues to see a large number of individuals and families living in

poverty. The poverty rate for all people is 17.2%, which is 2.7 percentage points more than 2005.

While certain segments of the community have seen improvements in their finances, almost one in four children in the County continue to live in poverty. The 2014 rate for those under the age of 18 is almost five percentage points more than the pre-recession rates.

As we will see in the 2016 Recommended Budget, the Commissioners maintain a commitment to addressing this unacceptable poverty rate and the attendant health and human services needs.

Facing the reality of declining revenue and trying to meet the needs of a growing community, a permanent increase in the County's sales tax rate by one quarter of one percent was approved in September 2013 along with a one quarter of one percent temporary increase which will expire on December 31, 2018. The new combined rate applied to all retail sales in Franklin County beginning January 1, 2014.

As a result of the increased sales tax collections beginning in 2014, the County has restored the balance between operating revenues and expenses without reliance on General Fund cash reserves.

In 2014, the County added \$15.7 million to its General Fund cash reserves. The 2015 Projection indicates the County will add \$9.7 million to its reserves, while the 2016 Recommended Budget shows an additional \$10.7 million contribution. This aligns with the County's long-term financial forecast, and will allow for the County to continue to make contributions to its Economic Stabilization Reserve or "Rainy Day Fund," allocate funds for the County's next 27th pay which will occur in 2020, as well as meet the commitments to set aside dollars to provide the back stop for the Convention Center Hotel.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

General Fund revenue in the 2016 Recommended Budget is expected to be \$431.5 million, which is approximately \$16.1 million more than the 2015 projected actuals. The largest portion of the increase is related to the growth in County sales tax collections. In 2016, sales tax revenue is estimated to increase by \$11.4 million or 4.0% more than the 2015 projections.

While estimates for 2016 reflect economic recovery, as indicated by year-over-year revenue growth from multiple sources, the County must remain fiscally prudent as multiple funding streams remain below pre-recession levels.

- Local Government Fund revenue is projected at \$12.8 million, or \$0.2 million (1.6%) more than expected to be received in 2015. However, the 2016 Recommended Budget amount is 51.3% less than the amount received by the County in 2008 as a result of changes approved in H.B. 153 in 2011.
- Investment Earnings are estimated at \$9.7 million, or \$1 million (11.6%) more than the projected actuals for 2015. However, this amount is 77.1% or \$32.7 million less than the actual pre-recession earnings received in 2007.
- Real estate taxes (including State reimbursements) are projected at \$39.5 million for 2016 based on the estimates provided by the County Budget Commission. Prior to the Sexennial Reappraisal in 2011, which resulted in a 6.0% decrease in Franklin County property values, the County collected \$40.3 million in real estate taxes.
- Revenue from operation of the Casinos is anticipated to be \$6.5 million based on State estimates, which is \$0.6 million less than the 2015 projection and far below the original estimate of \$16.8 million annually from the State.

The 2016 Recommended Budget contains \$420.3 million in General Fund appropriations. When the investments made possible by the temporary sales tax are excluded, this amount falls to \$364.1 million including \$5 million in contingency to cover unexpected expenditures.

During the 2016 budget process, the Franklin County Office of Management and Budget (OMB) fully assessed the budget request of every agency, office, and court within the context of the County's mandatory needs, statutory duties, and the demand for services. OMB's reviews and suggestions were then used to develop the Recommended Budget. As a result of this analysis, the 2016 Recommended General Fund Budget is \$17.7 million or 4.0% less than the total amount requested.

Fully understanding that the County must balance the cost of mandated services, demand from County residents, and other spending priorities with the directive to utilize public dollars in the most efficient and effective manner, the 2016 Recommended General Fund Budget for comparable year-to-year continuous operations and capital investments

only increases 1.0% when compared to 2015 projected actual expenditures. If the strategic investments associated with the temporary sales tax are included for both years, the increase is 2.9%.

When reviewing the General Fund Expenditures by Function, excluding the temporary sales tax investments, the percent of expenditures related to the Commissioners' Core Principle of Public Safety, Justice and Security is 3.2 percentage points higher than 2012. This Core Principle will comprise 60.7% of the Recommended General Fund Budget in 2016.

As part of the 2016 Recommended Budget, the temporary sales tax is expected to yield \$59.1 million to support various investments in the Commissioners' Core Principles:

- Under Community Safety – a transfer of \$44.0 million will be made to the Public Safety Center Fund to support construction of the new jail and morgue
- Under Job Creation – \$4.8 million in Economic Development to support grants for the Smart Works Programs
- Under Supportive Health and Human Services – \$4.9 million in Community Partnerships
- Under Good Stewardship – \$2.5 million to support Sanitary Engineering projects to provide clean water and sanitary sewer systems
- In addition to this \$56.2 million investment, the balance of annual revenue received from the temporary sales tax will be added to cash reserves to meet any unanticipated needs in furtherance of the County's Fiscal Sustainability principles.

The temporary sales tax will expire on December 31, 2018. Since the County receives the revenue from the sales tax three months after the sale, the final collections from the temporary sales tax will be received during the first quarter of 2019.

ALL FUNDS BUDGET

While a majority of the General Fund addresses the Core Principle of Public Safety, Justice and Security, the primary driver of the all funds budget are Social and Human Services. The total amount of budget appropriations recommended for all County funds in 2016 is \$1.47 billion, which represents a \$35.9 million or 2.5% increase from 2015 projected actuals. However, the 2016 Recommended All Funds Budget is \$41.7 million or 2.8% less than requested.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND EFFECTIVE JUSTICE

In order to review the 2016 Recommended Budget in more detail, we will now highlight major initiatives and achievements associated with each of the Commissioners' Core Principles. The greatest and most basic priority in this budget is the commitment to Community Safety and Effective Justice.

The 2016 Recommended All Funds Budget includes a total of \$261.7 million in support of the Courts, Prosecutor, Public Defender, Sheriff's Office, and other County justice and safety agencies.

Including the transfer of \$44.0 million to the Public Safety Center Fund for the construction of the new jail and morgue, over 63.5% of the County's General Fund budget will be spent on Public Safety, Justice, and Security for Franklin County residents.

Additional investments related to the Sheriff's Office demonstrate the Commissioners commitment to community safety and security. In 2015, the Board of Commissioners approved 9 additional positions within the Sheriff's Office in an effort to improve the efficiency of the office.

The 2016 Recommended Budget includes four new positions for the Special Investigations Unit. Three of these positions will be a part of the Heroin and Opiate Prevention and Education (HOPE) Task Force to help combat the alarming overdose rate in Central Ohio, provide education, and increase public awareness of the Heroin use epidemic in Franklin County. The other new position will be a part of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force. The investments recommended today are a continuation of Franklin County's partnership with local, state, and federal authorities in efforts to support community safety and security. Also, a civilian Court Liaison position is recommended to help manage when deputies are needed for court cases. This should help reduce overtime in the Sheriff's Office by notifying deputies before they arrive at the Courthouse if they are no longer required to attend a hearing.

The 2016 Recommended Budget contains \$68.4 million from the General Fund for operations of the courts and \$30.0 million for criminal and civil prosecution and legal defense services.

Through a collaboration between the various courts and county justice and social services agencies, the eGovernance Board is working to replace the current Franklin County Justice System (FCJS). Included in the 2016 Recommended Budget is \$800,000 for developing a Request for Proposal for the new case management system and project management services in support of this effort. With this funding, a consultant will be engaged to gather the functional requirements and workflows from the primary stakeholders (Franklin County Court of Common Pleas General Division, and Domestic and Juvenile Division, the Franklin County Probate Court, and the 10th District Court of Appeals) as well as peripheral users of the system (Prosecutor's Office, Public Defender's

Office, Sheriff's Office, Child Support Enforcement Agency, and Children Services). The new case management system will streamline justice operations and is expected to be completed in 2019.

The 2016 Recommended Budget also includes \$200,000 in General Fund support for the Reception Center. The Reception Center is a detention center diversion program that is a partnership between the Franklin County Domestic Court, Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County, and Columbus Police Department. The program has served nearly 2,050 youth since opening in September 2013 by connecting them and their families with resources to increase compliance with court requirements and prevent recidivism. Based on last year's data, over 80% of youth originally slated at the Reception Center have had no new legal charges and none of the high-risk youth who have participated in the Evening Supervision Program have reoffended.

Pursuant to section 2101.026 of the Revised Code, the Franklin County Guardianship Service Board officially commenced service as Ohio's first and only public guardian on October 1, 2015. The Board was created to ensure the care and treatment of incompetent, mentally ill, and other vulnerable residents of Franklin County. The Board consists of three citizens appointed by the Probate Court Judge, Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Board of Franklin County, and Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The Board's Director serves as the Guardian of last resort for eligible Franklin County residents. The Probate Court Judge allocates funding from the Mental Health Fund, which includes funding from ADAMH and the Board of Developmental Disabilities, for the operation of the Board. The Commissioners have offered their support of this important service through payment of the Board employees' fringe benefits.

The National Association of Counties (NACo), the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APAF) have come together to lead a national initiative to help advance counties' efforts to reduce the number of adults with mental and co-occurring substance use disorders in jails.

In May 2015, the Commissioners adopted a resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative, accepting the report of the Council of State Governments Justice Center on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Systems in Franklin County, and resolving to implement an improvement project, track results, and report on progress.

The Council of State Government report indicated 22% of the Franklin County jail population has a serious mental illness compared to 5% of the general population. Also, 68.0% of the jail population with a serious mental illness has a co-occurring alcohol and/or drug addiction.

The report indicated that the average length of jail stay for persons with mental illness in Franklin County is 32 days compared to 20 days for those without mental illness.

The County has initiated the process to address these issues identified in the report. The Commissioners recently approved a Re-Entry Social Services Specialist

position in the Office of Homeland Security and Justice Programs. The Specialist will be responsible for performing assessments, orientation, treatment planning, counseling, documentation, re-entry planning, and referral of participants to ongoing treatment services in the community. The 2016 Recommended Budget includes authorization for a second Re-Entry Social Services Specialist position.

Six of the positions added in the Sheriff's Office in 2015 will help support the Stepping Up Initiative by increasing the staff's capacity to manage a multiple number of projects within the Corrections Division. These projects include the Lifetime Number Project, Objective Classification Project, Jail Management System, Medical RFP, Legal Based Standards review, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Coordination, Reentry Programming, and New Jail Project Coordination.

On October 1, 2015, Franklin County was awarded a three year Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program Grant in the amount of \$248,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Franklin County Sheriff's Office and Office of Homeland Security and Justice Programs, in collaboration with the ADAMH Board, Columbus Police Department, and Franklin University, received funding to target services for females incarcerated within the Franklin County Jail who are diagnosed with a mental health disorder. The proposed assessments, case management, and treatment services, including an individualized continuum of care plan for transition into the community, align with the County's commitment to the Stepping Up Initiative.

Just this month, the Commissioners approved a contract for the development of the Objective Classification System for Franklin County Sheriff's Office. The system will allow the Sheriff's Office to effectively classify inmates housed at Franklin County Correctional Facilities to ensure they are placed and housed in a safe manner.

Finally, the 2016 Recommended Budget for the ADAMH Board includes approximately \$750,000 for allocations to Southeast, CompDrug, and the Legal Aid Society to support the Stepping Up Initiative.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

As evidenced by the efforts of the Guardianship Service Board and the Stepping Up Initiative, a collaborative effort of both the Justice and the Health and Human Services systems is necessary to successfully address the challenges in our community.

This leads us to the next Franklin County Core Principle, which is to Provide Supportive Health and Human Services.

The social and human services category is the largest in the all funds budget, comprising 46.7% of the total 2016 Recommended Budget. Franklin County delivers a variety of health and human services which are for the most part supported by property tax levies, in addition to state and federal funds.

Almost two thirds of these expenditures are for the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Franklin County Children Services.

- In 2014, the Board of Developmental Disabilities served 19,774 individuals with developmental disabilities so they can live, work, learn, and participate in the community. This is a 20.9% increase since 2010. The Board projects serving an additional 339 individuals in 2015.
- Children Services is projecting 12,549 completed investigations into reported child abuse and neglect through December 31st of this year. This reflects a 3.3% increase in investigations since 2010.

The 2016 Recommended Budget of \$5.7 million in General Fund appropriations for the Veterans Service Commission reflects the County's commitment to the men and women of Franklin County who have served in the armed forces. This is a 6.4% increase from the 2015 Approved Budget and will provide immediate financial assistance for food and rent, transportation services, and consultations for benefits claim submissions for active duty personnel, veterans, and their dependents so they can obtain eligible entitlements and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In addition to the support of the Veterans Service Commission, the 2016 Recommended General Fund Budget includes a "mandated share" of \$4.4 million for programs administered by the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, a \$1.9 million subsidy to the Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency, and funding for various Community Partnerships.

The Franklin County Office on Aging continues to provide centralized access to diverse programs and individualized services for older adults and their families so they can preserve their independence and quality of life. The agency is projecting the number of seniors enrolled in Senior Options through the end of 2015 to be 9,050, a 4.2% increase from the previous year and a 28.5% increase from 2010. The 2016 Recommended Budget of almost \$38.0 million is a 2.2% increase from the 2015 projected actuals.

The number of seniors requesting services from the Office on Aging is expected to grow as the number of Franklin County residents age 60 and older continues to increase. In 2010, the number of individuals 60 and over represented 14.7% of the population in Franklin County. The Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University projects that this number will increase to 18.1% in 2020.

The Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services continues to exceed the Federal Work Participation Rate Target. This metric measures the number of families receiving temporary public assistance where one or more adults are employed or actively participating in a work preparation program. After significant investment of resources, Franklin County Job and Family Services reached the Federal Target of 50% in 2013 and has improved upon this rate in subsequent years. The agency projects a rate of 68.0% for 2015, exceeding the County Target for the first time. The Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services expects to meet or exceed the County Target in 2016 as well.

The 2016 Recommended Budget also includes continued support for the Catalyst and Compass Programs, which is a partnership between Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency and Franklin County Job and Family Services. These programs assist non-custodial parents with workforce development services, barrier removal services, and job placement assistance in an effort to improve their ability to meet their child support responsibilities.

Over the past year, special emphasis has been placed on the relationship between the Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency and Franklin County Children Services in order to create an efficient process for handling foster care (IV-E) case referrals. Under the Ohio child support program, a caregiver with physical custody of a child may obtain support from the child's parents in order to ensure children receive the financial and medical support they deserve.

In addition to financial support and access to health care, children in our community should be given the chance to develop the skills they need for lifelong learning. In August, the Commissioners approved an agreement between the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services and Action for Children to address early childhood education readiness. The County is providing almost \$200,000 for the development of a comprehensive campaign to promote and increase access to quality early learning programs and to link families and children to high quality early learning opportunities.

Due to recent changes, eligibility for Medicaid has expanded in Ohio. The Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services is tasked with assisting newly eligible residents with gaining access to these services. Because of their efforts, 81,000 more residents of Franklin County have health insurance today than they did in 2013, with more than 65,500 individuals receiving Medicaid coverage in 2014 alone. Processing the large

influx of applications for these services has been managed with no expansion of full time staffing due to a sizable effort by JFS staff and management.

The ability of Franklin County residents to receive care and treatment for their health needs remains a high priority of the Board of Commissioners.

- As a result of the Greater Columbus Infant Mortality Task Force report, CelebrateOne was developed as Columbus and Franklin County's collective impact initiative to reduce the area's alarmingly high infant mortality rate by 40% and cut the racial disparity by half. In 2015, the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services issued a subaward of over \$700,000 to the Columbus Health Department for the implementation of the CelebrateOne marketing and promotion strategy to combat infant mortality.
- In total, the 2016 Recommended Budget for Community Partnerships includes \$2.8 million from the General Fund for Access to Health Care initiatives.

The 2016 Recommended Budget includes \$16.0 million in grants to Community Partners who support the County's Core Principles through their work with Franklin County residents.

In addition to the funds in support of Access to Health Care Initiatives, a continuing priority in 2016 is emergency shelter and supportive housing. According to the Community Shelter Board, a record 10,500 people slept in homeless shelters last year. Over the last three years, the number of homeless families increased 79%, while the number of single men and women increased 16%.

- The 2016 Recommended Budget includes nearly \$5.2 million for the Community Shelter Board. This includes continued support of approximately \$1.8 million for the Navigator program which is a centralized case management approach to end homelessness in Franklin County. The Navigator program helps single adults residing in emergency shelter to access community resources such as employment and job training, support services, medical care, and housing resources.
- The Recommended Budget includes \$2.6 million for the Columbus/Franklin County Affordable Housing Trust. The Affordable Housing Trust is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the production of affordable homes and apartments, investment in affordable residential development, and construction in older and overlooked areas throughout Franklin County.

In December 2014, the Commissioners entered a five-year \$8.0 million agreement with the Greater Columbus Art Council in support of Art Matters, a capital and program expansion at the Columbus Museum of Art. In addition to impacting the quality of life for Franklin County residents, the Museum is a key driver in the Central Ohio cultural community that generates \$226 million in economic activity and supports 8,500 jobs. The

2016 Recommended Budget Message

direct and indirect impact of Art Matters is projected to be more than \$100 million and the creation of approximately 400 jobs. The 2016 Recommended Budget includes \$2.5 million for Art Matters.

JOBS CREATION AND STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As discussed, strategic investments in community partnerships also relate to the next Core Principle: Promote Job Creation, Strategic Economic Development, and Fiscal Security.

The 2016 Recommended Budget for Economic Development and Planning contains \$16.4 million in grants, including \$7.1 million in grants funded by the State and Federal Governments and administered by Franklin County. Approximately three-fourths of these monies are devoted to providing affordable and safe housing for low and moderate income Franklin County residents and special needs populations as well as assisting existing homeowners with rehabilitation, assisting first time homeowners, and encouraging developers to make investments in emerging communities.

In 2016, \$9.2 million in Economic Development grants will be supported by the General Fund. These grants are primarily focused on economic development throughout the County. This includes \$2 million for Experience Columbus to support their efforts to attract tourism to our community. Visitors to Franklin County are estimated to generate over \$1 billion in tax revenue, which saves the average Franklin County household \$2,271 annually in taxes. It also includes \$1 million for Columbus 2020 for the purposes of business attraction and retention, developing entrepreneurship, and regional economic development collaboration efforts, among others.

The largest investment of General Fund dollars in 2016 is Smart Works, which includes the Infrastructure Works, People Works, and Energy Works programs. Last month, the Commissioners approved the first round of Infrastructure Works projects to spur economic growth in the city of Whitehall for road improvements, the city of Upper Arlington for the construction of a fiber optic network, and the village of Marble Cliff for the expansion of water service. The three projects are expected to support up to 511 new full time jobs in Franklin County. Infrastructure Works is a revolving loan program, so the same dollars can be used for additional projects as the loans are paid back.

Another program of the County's Smart Works program is People Works. The Commissioners have committed to investing up to \$500,000 a year over the next five years in training and workforce development opportunities for residents and area businesses based on their individualized needs. Franklin County People Works is focused on helping solve the persistent employment challenges facing both area employers and the unemployed and underemployed clients of Franklin County's social service agencies by facilitating private sector employment and training of low-income County residents.

In September 2015, the Commissioners approved committing \$1.5 million each year to the Energy Works program for at least the next five years in order to offer a low-interest revolving loan fund to businesses, local governments, schools, and non-profits in Franklin County for energy efficient upgrades. These upgrades could include renewable power generation, fuel cells, waste energy recovery, high efficiency HVAC, smart lighting,

or anything else that benefits the environment and community, and is feasible. As a revolving loan fund, the funding available will grow and continue in perpetuity.

NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY, & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In addition to being an Economic Development program, Energy Works is a green energy initiative and is therefore linked to the fourth Core Principle to Promote Good Stewardship of Natural Resources, Environmental Resiliency, and Civic Engagement.

The 2016 Recommended Budget includes a \$2.5 million General Fund subsidy to upgrade water and sewer systems to ensure compliance with Ohio Environmental Protection Agency regulations. These projects will support the Timberlake Water Treatment Plant, Cherrydale Pump Station, and Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES) that integrates the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) software as mandated by the EPA. The Budget also includes \$13.0 million in expenditures supported by Ohio Water Development Authority loans and other sources for critical infrastructure needs.

Public Facilities Management is in the process of adding at least eight charging stations for electric plug-in hybrid vehicles at various County locations. These charging stations will be utilized by Fleet Management for the newly purchased electric hybrid vehicles. Fleet Management currently has two electric plug-in hybrid vehicles and the Recommended Budget includes funds to purchase six in 2016. Fleet Management will continue to work with PFM to add additional charging stations as they add more of these efficient vehicles to the County's fleet. This will contribute to the County's efforts to make its vehicle fleet more fuel efficient. Since 2013, the average miles per gallon of the County's fleet has increase 27%, from 13.2 miles per gallon to 16.8.

As evidenced by the recently completed Judicial Services Building renovation and the new Sheriff's Training Facility, Franklin County is committed to investing in buildings with enhanced environmental resiliency features, such as LEED certification and interior designs to maximize the use of daylight to reduce the need for artificial lighting. The County will give substantial consideration to green building techniques and intends to aim for the highest LEED certification feasible for the Public Safety Center project.

The 2016 Recommended Budget includes increased funding to support the Franklin County Board of Elections. The increased funding for the Board of Elections is dedicated for essential operations expenditures that will ensure the successful administration of the 2016 Primary and General Elections. The increased funding includes items such as \$500,000 updated Vote Tabulating Machines and \$2,250,000 for the purchase of electronic pollbooks. Funding for electronic pollbooks was approved in the 2016-2017 State Biennial Budget. Franklin County could receive up to \$1.3 million in state funds to help defray a portion of the cost to purchase these devices. Electronic pollbooks will help make the voting process more efficient for voters and the Franklin County Board of Elections staff. Electronic pollbooks will reduce the Board of Election's

need for additional seasonal workers to handle the very labor intensive process of scanning every page of the current paper pollbooks.

EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

The Commissioners' final Core Principle is to Provide Efficient, Responsive and Fiscally Sustainable Government Operations.

As previously mentioned, the 2016 Recommended Budget includes \$44.0 million to transfer to the County's Public Safety Center Fund. This honors the Commissioners' commitment to utilize a pay-as-you-go approach for the construction of the new County jail facility and relocation of the Coroner's Office. Utilizing the proceeds from the temporary sales tax rate increase for the project rather than issuing \$200 million in debt is expected to save approximately \$100 million in avoided interest costs over the life of the debt service.

Just this month, the Commissioners approved a contract for the provision of professional design services associated with the planning, design, and construction of the new Correctional Facility to be located at 2551 Fisher Road in Columbus. The new facility will be designed as a national model for a direct supervision county jail which will include specialty housing for inmates with behavioral and mental health issues, a medical clinic, and a 300 person orientation or intake center in addition to maximum security housing.

As good stewards of public dollars, Franklin County strives to keep staffing expenditures in control. Despite increases in demand for services driven by population growth, the 2016 Recommended Budget includes 270 fewer full-time equivalent positions than the 2008 Approved Budget. This decline is the impact of strategic decisions throughout the County since 2008 to eliminate positions through retirement and attrition.

The County continues to ensure efficient operations and an appropriately sized staff. By limiting the growth in full time equivalent positions, the County has reduced the overall rate of staff per capita. In 2008, there were almost 6.0 full-time employees for every 1,000 residents. In the 2016 Recommended Budget, this ratio will be 5.3, a decrease of 11.7%.

Another way in which the County strives to provide efficient, responsive, and fiscally sustainable government operations is by using technology in innovative and collaborative ways.

Previously recognized for the transparency of Franklin County's website, the Commissioners in partnership with the County Auditor enhanced the public's access to information through a recent electronic record project dubbed Citizen Transparency, which makes millions of financial records available on-line in a safe, secure, and easily searchable system. The new system, available at www.FranklinCountyOhio.gov, provides residents and any member of the public with immediate access to current information and historical data on the County's revenues and expenditures, including payroll.

In the fourth quarter of 2013, the Data Center, Court of Common Pleas, Public Facilities Management, and Board of Commissioners came together to address a countywide outage. This initiative, known as the Network Reliability and Redundancy Initiative, upgraded the network infrastructure for both Data Center and the Courts, installed cabling throughout 373 S. High St, and replaced obsolete power supplies and power distribution units, while providing redundancy throughout the entire network. In 2015, connectivity was established to the WeConnect disaster recovery site and redundant internet connectivity was provided as well. A second phase is underway in which a redundant server and storage environment will be created to provide immediate access to websites and applications if a failure were to occur, and is scheduled for completion within the first quarter of 2016. This project helps to ensure that the business of government will not be interrupted in the event of technology issues.

In 2014 and 2015, the Data Center implemented the recommendations from the 2013 security assessment. Investments in security appliances, network scanning software, patch management software, and the separation of public facing internet applications behind a firewall are in place. The 2016 Recommended Budget includes appropriations for a countywide security assessment, so the County can continue to be proactive in addressing the myriad number of cyber threats facing public entities.

These technology investments are critical to improving the way the County conducts day-to-day operations in serving its residents. Ongoing collaboration is necessary to ensure the County leverages its human and financial capital in the best ways possible.

SUMMARY

Due to the Commissioners' proactive assessment of the County's finances in 2013, the County has restored the balance between operating revenues and expenses since 2014 without reliance on General Fund cash reserves. The 2016 Recommended Budget will allow the County to sustain economic development and invest in other programs that growing communities like ours require and deserve. With these strategic investments, Franklin County will continue to be a welcoming and safe community for individuals and families who choose to relocate here.

While Franklin County celebrates its successes, there are a number of challenges that require our attention, such as reducing the number of mentally ill in the County jail, improving early childhood education readiness, and addressing the unacceptably high infant mortality rate. Under the Commissioners' leadership, County agencies will be proactively and collaboratively addressing these over the next year.

Budget hearings have been scheduled so that an open public discussion may take place concerning these 2016 Budget Recommendations. County Administration looks forward to working with the Board of Commissioners as it deliberates and takes action to finalize the 2016 budget.

I would like to thank all of the other elected county officials and agency directors for their continued cooperation and service to Franklin County. Special acknowledgement goes to Zak Talarek and his team of dedicated professional in the Office of Management and Budget for their support in developing these budget recommendations.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Commissioners for your continued support and leadership.

Kenneth N. Wilson, M.P.A.

County Administrator

Franklin County Board of Commissioners