

2020 RECOMMENDED BUDGET MESSAGE FROM THE FRANKLIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

I am Kenneth Wilson, County Administrator, and I am pleased to present to the Board of Commissioners the 2020 Recommended Budget for Franklin County. Under the Commissioners' leadership, we present a budget that is fiscally responsible and prepares us to address our opportunities and challenges head on as we begin a new decade.

As you will see this afternoon, the initiatives supported by this Budget reflect our commitment to every resident, every day, whether it is creating pathways out of poverty, improving access to quality childcare and early childhood education, implementing innovative programming in justice and re-entry, or addressing the County's infrastructure needs. The 2020 Budget before you today supports our dedication to constant innovation, sustainability, and progress, for the sake of providing the best possible quality of life for all residents.

The 2020 Recommended Budget presents a fiscally strong and sustainable Franklin County. It is structurally balanced, preserves service levels in critical health and human services agencies, and protects the County's stellar bond rating.

While the General Fund ending cash balance dips slightly in 2020, this is the result of utilizing \$7.0 million from the 27th Pay Reserve Fund for the extra pay period that will occur in 2020. The Commissioners established the 27th Pay Reserve Fund as authorized by the Ohio Revised Code to accumulate resources for payment of salaries during any fiscal year in which the number of pay periods exceeds the usual and customary number of pay periods. The previous 27th pay period occurred in 2009 and the Commissioners have been accumulating resources for this event since 2014. After 2020, it is projected that the General Fund ending cash balance will continue to grow.

As an indication of the County's fiscal strength, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes a projected General Fund ending cash balance of 42.2% of the total 2020 Expenditures. This keeps the cash balance among the highest levels of other counties rated triple-A by Moody's and Standard & Poor's.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

General Fund revenue in the 2020 Recommended Budget is expected to be \$485.1 million, which reflects a 2.3% increase when compared to the 2019 projections.

In addition to the one-time \$7.0 million transfer from the 27th Pay Reserve Fund, Public Defender Reimbursements are expected to increase by \$6.4 million. In recent years, the State Public Defender's reimbursement rate has fluctuated based on statewide demand and the amount of funding available in the Indigent Defense Fund. In 2017, the reimbursement rate decreased from 48.0% to 40.0%. The previous state biennial budget bill increased the State Public Defender's reimbursement rate from 40.0% to 45.0% effective July 2017. However, the rate was reduced to 42.0% for all cases in state fiscal year 2019. The state biennial budget for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, House Bill 166, includes a provision effective October 16, 2019 to increase the reimbursement rate for county indigent defense expenditures up to 75.0% in state fiscal year 2020 and up to 100.0% in state fiscal year 2021. Based on historical fluctuations, County agencies and courts have agreed upon an anticipated increase in the reimbursement rate to 70.0% for 2020.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes an anticipated 1.0% growth in the overall County sales tax collections in 2020 when compared to the 2019 projections.

Finally, Investment Earnings are estimated at \$24.0 million, which is \$1.4 million, or 5.5%, less than the projected actuals for 2019 as a result of the current Federal Reserve policies.

The 2020 Recommended Budget contains \$481.7 million in General Fund appropriations, which is \$16.8 million, or 3.6%, more than the 2019 projected expenditures.

During the 2020 budget process that began in May, the Franklin County Office of Management & Budget, or OMB, assessed the budget request of every agency, office, and court within the context of the County's mandatory requirements, statutory duties, and the demand for services. OMB's reviews and suggestions were then used by County Administration to develop the Recommended Budget. As a result of this analysis, the 2020 Recommended General Fund Budget is \$6.9 million, or 1.4%, less than the total amount requested.

The increases in General Fund appropriations are primarily attributed to the 3.7% increase in Salaries & Wages and the Fringe Benefits associated with the 27th pay period occurring in 2020 and fully funding the contingency in the budget as authorized by the

Ohio Revised Code, which is equal to 3.0% of General Fund expenditures, or \$14.0 million, in 2020.

The 2020 General Fund appropriations also includes a \$2.0 million increase from the 2019 projections for the costs associated with the 2020 Presidential Election. However, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes appropriations for the first half of the year within the Board of Elections' Budget so they may conduct the primary election in March and finalize a communications plan before the general election in November. The remaining appropriations for the Board of Elections will be held in the Commissioners' Reserves Program. OMB will work with the Board of Elections during the 2nd quarter of 2020 to determine the necessary amount needed for the remainder of the year.

The increases in General Fund appropriations are partially offset by the transfer of \$6.8 million for contracts with the Affordable Housing Trust and Community Shelter Board from Community Partnerships to Economic Development & Planning within the new Affordable & Emergency Housing Fund. This decrease in Community Partnerships is partially offset by an increase in the General Fund of \$1.0 million for the Arts & Cultural Fund and \$800,000 for Catalyst Grants.

As shown in the chart, \$279.6 million, or 58.0%, of the General Fund Budget is allocated to the provision of Justice & Public Safety. Of that amount, \$152.5 million supports the Franklin County Sheriff's Office.

The 2020 Recommended Budget for Justice & Public Safety also includes \$85.3 million in the General Fund to support the operations of the courts and \$35.5 million for criminal and civil prosecution and legal defense services.

In addition to the amounts in the chart, the Recommended Budget includes \$340,000 in support of the Municipal Court Specialty Dockets and \$250,000 for the Guardianship Services Board in 2020.

ALL FUNDS BUDGET

While a majority of the General Fund supports Justice & Public Safety, the largest portion of the all funds budget is dedicated to Social & Human Services.

The total amount of budget appropriations recommended for all County funds in 2020 is \$1.8 billion, which represents an \$83.3 million, or 4.9%, increase from 2019 projected actuals. The increases in the all funds budget are primarily attributed to the 27th pay period occurring in 2020 and the timing of capital expenditures related to the construction of the new Franklin County Corrections Center.

As the largest category in the all funds budget, Social & Human Services represents 42.6% of the total 2020 Recommended Budget.

Franklin County delivers a variety of Social & Human Services in order to meet the needs of its residents, which are mostly supported by property tax levies, as well as state and federal funds. As seen in the chart, one-third, or \$246.6 million, of these expenditures are for the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The Board serves over 20,000 individuals with developmental disabilities so they can live, work, learn, and participate in the community.

Another \$212.6 million, or 28.2% of these expenditures support the work of Franklin County Children Services. The agency is projecting that over 13,000 referrals from the community will be screened in for the assessment and investigation of child abuse and neglect in 2020. The successful passage of the 10-year, 3.1 mill renewal levy on the November 5, 2019 ballot enables Children Services to maintain quality services for the children and families of Franklin County who need them.

The 2020 Recommended Budget for the Franklin County Office on Aging, which provides centralized access to programs and individualized services for older adults and their caregivers so they can preserve their independence and quality of life, is \$46.8 million. The Office on Aging anticipates serving 9,250 seniors enrolled in the Senior Options program in 2020.

Also within the 2020 Recommended Social & Human Services Budget are General Fund dollars for a “mandated share” of \$4.5 million for programs administered by the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, a \$3.4 million subsidy to the Child Support Enforcement Agency, and \$13.0 million for various grants funded through Community Partnerships.

SERVING, SUPPORTING, AND UPLIFTING ALL RESIDENTS

In order to review the 2020 Recommended Budget in more detail, we will now highlight major 2019 achievements and planned 2020 initiatives of Franklin County agencies. Our first priority is to focus our efforts on serving, supporting, and uplifting all residents.

As Ohio's most populous County, our residents represented 11.2% of the state's population in 2018. Over the past 10 years, Franklin County's population has grown by more than 160,000 individuals, or 13.9%, to over 1.3 million residents. In 2018 alone, we added over 18,000. There is little indication that this trend will slow over the next decade.

While Franklin County has seen population growth and increasing opportunities, not everyone in the community has benefited. In September 2019, the unemployment rate for Franklin County was 3.7%. However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty rate for all people in Franklin County was 15.5% in 2018. Even more distressing are the racial and other disparities—the poverty rate for African Americans is twice the County average, and 22.3% of all children in Franklin County are living in poverty.

As the leading provider of safety net services, Franklin County agencies serve many of the nearly 200,000 residents who struggle to make ends meet every day. Disrupting poverty in Franklin County requires a response from the entire Central Ohio community to bring residents out of poverty to share in the progress.

In the fall of 2018, the Commissioners began an initiative to analyze the causes of poverty that are unique to Central Ohio, identify the resources that are available in our community, and create a plan to more effectively bring those resources to bear on the problem with a community-wide, systematic approach. They assembled a steering committee of subject matter experts and community members from all walks of life, hosted conversations with hundreds of Franklin County residents who are living in poverty, and studied nationwide best practices.

In 2019, the steering committee produced the Rise Together Blueprint for Reducing Poverty in Franklin County, including a list of more than 120 goals, action steps, and recommendations to be worked on, to which the Commissioners have added some actions that they can take right away.

Informed by stakeholder input, the steering committee agreed on the four main goal areas:

- Increase access to high paying jobs;
- Stabilize housing for families near or below poverty;

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- Improve physical, mental, and behavioral health, and overall well-being through increased access to care, utilization of services, and social connectedness; and
- Ensure all young people are on track for long-term success.

The steering committee also believes structural and systemic racism are underlying conditions within the challenges of addressing poverty which require proactive measures and priorities to remedy.

With Phase 1 complete, Franklin County, under the leadership of the Commissioners, took the lead in the Activation Phase of Rise Together Franklin County by taking immediate actions in 2019, such as:

- The Commissioners set a living wage for county employees by raising the minimum pay rate to \$15 per hour, and adjusting the pay scale accordingly.
- The Commissioners, County Administration, select county agency staff, the Leadership Council, and other community partners participated in Racial Equity Training conducted by a nationally-recognized training firm. The Commissioners have also begun conversations with local nonprofits and community organizations to establish a countywide partnership for ongoing training, community conversations, and programming in the area of racial equity.
- The terms of the 2020 combined charitable campaign, in which county employees donate over \$300,000 to charity, were changed to keep these important donations with charities right here in our community.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$2.5 million to seed the beginning work of the Franklin County Innovation Center Leadership Council. Based on the recommendation in the Rise Together Blueprint, the Commissioners selected a 21 member council of community partners and residents to convene and coordinate all efforts to mitigate poverty and increase economic mobility. The Leadership Council will continue meeting over the course of the next year. The Council is currently determining the most appropriate nonprofit governance structure or strategic affiliation for its long term work. In 2020, the Council plans to appoint an Executive Director and two Innovation Center Fellows, with one dedicated to policy research and the other on administrative functions of the council. The Leadership Council will continue to complete projects such as the Youth Portal and Clearinghouse, establishment of new workforce development anti-poverty initiatives, early childhood initiatives, and expanding racial equity training throughout the county.

Other Rise Together immediate actions taken by the Commissioners in 2019 and additional initiatives that will be supported in the 2020 Recommended Budget will be highlighted throughout the remainder of this presentation.

The continuation of Building Futures, the Commissioners' premiere workforce training program, and expansion of similar models in other fields is an immediate County action related to the Rise Together goal to increase access to high paying jobs.

Building Futures, which has been in place for more than a year, connects low-income residents from traditionally underrepresented populations with pre-apprenticeship training in the skilled building trades and provides them with a path to the middle class. Participants receive both "soft skills" training, including interpersonal skills and financial literacy, followed by "hard skills," including safety certification and trade-specific instruction, all while receiving a weekly \$250 stipend. They are also connected with other supportive services offered by Franklin County to help address barriers like transportation, housing, and child care. In the last year, the program placed 89.0% of graduates in jobs with an average hourly wage of \$18.08 at placement.

In late 2018, this workforce training model was expanded to the field of community health, which has in-demand jobs that pay a living wage and serve as a pathway to a health care career. The Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services partnered with the Ohio State College of Nursing and Columbus Public Health in piloting the Building Health Care Futures program to support 72 individuals in obtaining community health worker training and certification. The 12-week certificate program provides residents from low-income communities with the skills and training needed to become licensed community health workers. After completing the program, the health workers begin paid internships with different nonprofits within high-priority neighborhoods. These CelebrateOne "Community Connectors" help build individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.

Earlier this year, the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services partnered with IMPACT Community Action and the Capital Transportation Academy to pilot the Roads2Work training program for 20 participants. Roads2Work provides commercial drivers license training and transportation industry employment to individuals who are low to moderate income, underemployed, or restored citizens returning to the community from incarceration. This in demand career is projected to grow 6.0% in the next several years and enables an individual to earn wages of \$45,000 to \$50,000 per year plus benefits. It is anticipated that 75 additional participants will be served in the program in 2020.

As a part of Rise Together, the Commissioners are committed to funding these pilot programs for at least another year.

The work initiated in 2018 by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners' Advisory Council on Economic Inclusion continues in our partnership with Forward Cities, the nationally recognized inclusive entrepreneurship organization. Forward Cities is a national nonprofit equipping communities and regions to grow and sustain more equitable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Franklin County Forward Cities is an innovation accelerator at work in the King-Lincoln neighborhood and the City of Whitehall.

From June 10-12, 2020, the Commissioners along with our partners, the Columbus Foundation, Columbus Partnership, and Rev 1, will host the 2020 Forward Cities national conference. We will welcome practitioners from across the country who are engaged in creating a framework that advances entrepreneurs of color. Our agenda includes racial equity training, a staple of the Forward Cities platform, and robust discussions on promising practices, best practices, and proven success strategies in inclusive small business development.

Another immediate County action in support of Rise Together is Step Up To Quality Childcare Provider Training. Franklin County is committed to expanding access to high-quality, star-rated early learning programs for low-income families and offering free training to help state licensed childcare providers meet the state's 2020 Step Up To Quality early learning standards. Franklin County Job and Family Services first began offering training in earnest in July 2018. Since then, more than 380 center and home childcare providers have completed the training and 205 of those have attained a star rating.

This effort will help ensure that children in our community are receiving the highest-quality childcare and their parents are able to continue working. As of October, 68.0% of children are in star-rated care and it is anticipated that three-quarters of children will be in star-rated programs heading into 2020. Tens of thousands of Franklin County residents rely on Publicly Funded Child Care, and would have to make other arrangements if their providers are not "star-rated" in time, causing disruptions throughout the community and economy.

To date, the Commissioners have provided \$1.6 million in support for this unfunded state mandate. This includes having a dedicated employee who has been going door-to-door to the largest unrated centers to share resources about Step Up To Quality and register providers for Job and Family Services' training on the spot. They will also continue to advocate for Franklin County families at the state level, urging strong collaboration and partnerships among our state partners, advocacy groups, and providers to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the program.

In addition, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$400,000 for Future Ready Columbus. No child's future should be determined by his or her zip code. The goal of the Future Ready Columbus' Early Childhood Initiative is that 100% of children in Franklin County will demonstrate kindergarten readiness when entering school. Future Ready Columbus will organize, align, and mobilize stakeholders in this effort to assist children from birth to age 5 and their families.

Families in Franklin County continue to be impacted by the opiate epidemic. According to the Franklin County Coroner's Office, there were 522 drug overdose deaths in 2018. While the number of lives lost to drug addiction remains unchanged from 2017, it is 77.9% higher from 2014. Preliminary reports from the Coroner's Office indicate that 254 people died of drug overdoses in the first six months of 2019, up 4.0% from the same period in 2018.

As a result, Franklin County agencies continue their efforts to address this crisis. The Ohio Opioid Education Alliance is a coalition of business, education, nonprofit, civic, and government organizations formed by the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health (ADAMH) Board of Franklin County to educate and prevent young Ohioans from misusing and abusing opioids. In June 2018, Denial, Ohio campaign ads launched in Central Ohio, and in April 2019 expanded statewide with an additional paid social media campaign.

In October, the Ohio Opioid Education Alliance announced survey results demonstrating its Denial, Ohio advertising campaign is successfully reaching parents and caregivers as well as making a significant impact. The new research shows that a majority of those who have seen the ads are answering the call to action by talking to their kids about opioids as a result, as well as properly disposing of their leftover pills.

The Nationwide Foundation played a primary role in establishing the Alliance with a \$2.0 million donation. In addition to the Commissioners' support of \$250,000 in 2019, other Franklin County agencies, such as Franklin County Children Services and Board of Developmental Disabilities, have become Alliance partners. The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$250,000 in the Commissioners' Budget for continued support of the Alliance.

The 2020 Recommended Budget for the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board includes a total of \$24.8 million in all funds for the provision of addiction treatment and prevention services to Franklin County's residents. This is a 9.2% increase over the previous year.

Franklin County is also maintaining its commitment to the goals of Rise Together through Community Partnerships and the new Catalyst Grant initiative. Community

Partnerships has undergone a number of changes this past year in order to create funding opportunities for both current and new grantees throughout the County.

In 2019, the Commissioners allocated \$1.5 million to a new initiative called the Catalyst Grant Program, which is intended to spark meaningful change in the priority areas of Economic Security, Personal and Family Empowerment, Emerging and Basic Needs, and Community Enrichment. Thirteen three-year grants were awarded through an open grant review process, including the following:

- The Heart of Ohio Family Health Center received \$250,000 for the Whitehall School Based Health Center. Goals of the grant include developing a school based primary care clinic at Whitehall High School, increasing the number of children ages 5-17 who have access to primary healthcare, and increasing the number of patients age 12 and older who are screened for depression. Children with a positive depression screening will provided a documented follow up plan.
- Goodwill Columbus received \$189,757 for the Goodwill Dropout Recovery Expansion project. Goodwill Columbus will use the grant funding to provide individualized career skills training to students at four dropout prevention high schools: Focus Learning Academy North, Southwest, and Southeast, and the Flex High School. The program will provide work-readiness training, occupational skills training, and credential attainment as well as job placement services with a Career Consultant to the targeted students.
- The Charitable Pharmacy received \$99,864 for the Medication Access Program Expansion that will expand services to at least 250 unduplicated, underserved patients at a new location in Franklin County. The goal of the program is to provide one-on-one consultations to patients to stabilize health care insecurity and prevent hospitalizations.

In 2019, a total of \$3.0 million was set aside in Community Partnerships for support of the arts and cultural facilities. With an additional \$1.0 million support from the General Fund, a total of \$4.0 million is included in the 2020 Recommended Budget, which will be managed in partnership with the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

Community Partnerships is currently convening a review process for an open Community Partnerships grant opportunity. The proposed grants have to address one of the Commissioners' five core principles. Eligible applicants for the one year grants included all nonprofit entities with a 501(c)(3) designation or governmental entities operating in Franklin County for at least three years. Selected grantees will be announced before the end of the year for funding in 2020.

The 2020 Recommended Budget also includes \$750,000 for a new, open Catalyst Grant process for an award period beginning July 2020. Look for details regarding this new funding opportunity in the first quarter of 2020.

Finally, several previously funded Community Partnerships will continue to receive funding in 2020, such as the Nationwide Children's Hospital Behavioral Health Partnership. The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$450,000 to maintain and improve clinical mental health services at local schools, provide Signs of Suicide prevention services at schools, integrate mental health services at primary care clinics, and expand outpatient visits, including crisis team interventions, for children and families in Franklin County.

COLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In coordination with the development of the Rise Together Blueprint, the Franklin County Department of Economic Development and Planning underwent a strategic planning process to provide a roadmap for the next generation of economic development work in the County for the next five years.

Through this process, five strategic priorities were identified to guide Franklin County's economic development work:

- Assist Franklin County's communities in preparing for anticipated job and population change;
- Promote quality work opportunities in Franklin County;
- Include resident perspectives more intentionally in economic development efforts;
- Reduce disparities and expand economic inclusion among Franklin County residents; and
- Create an environment that encourages commercial activities and in which entrepreneurs and small businesses from all backgrounds are able to start up and grow.

The strategic plan organized the programs and policy initiatives that are consistent with Economic Development and Planning's mission, goals, and strategic priorities into six categories representing recommended areas of focus.

- Partnership, Leadership, and Collaboration to engage internal and external partners more intentionally in pursuit of the County's economic development.
- Reconfiguration of the SmartWorks program, including the expansion of InfrastructureWorks, transitioning EnergyWorks to other financing options, reallocating PeopleWorks resources, and establishing PartnerWorks to report on progress toward County priorities from funds provided to partners.
- Financing Tools and Incentives that build on the current approach to maximize the potential for incentive programs to accomplish the County's intended objectives.
- Playing a meaningful role in the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem to fill gaps and provide regional leadership by actively engaging with other City of Columbus and County initiatives around inclusion and diversity among small businesses and rethinking the County approach to small business.
- Leveraging Rickenbacker Area Opportunities through policy innovation with a comprehensive economic and community development approach that

thoughtfully addresses workforce mobility, transportation, and housing issues that would allow the area to reach its potential.

- Leading Franklin County's response to the region's affordable housing challenge, including Housing Policy and advocacy.

In the spring of 2019, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning issued recommendations for an affordable housing implementation framework that aligns with the Rise Together Blueprint's housing goals and action steps. The recommendations include three core considerations:

- Preserving the established County funding for affordable housing;
- New housing incentives and zoning updates; and
- New County funded initiatives.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes a \$15.6 million increase in Economic Development and Planning's budget related to the creation of the new Affordable & Emergency Housing Fund. Of this amount, \$6.8 million is from the permissive conveyance fee that was previously expended under Community Partnerships for the support of the Affordable Housing Trust and Community Shelter Board. Another \$6.8 million is supported by the revenue from the additional permissive conveyance fee approved by the Commissioners in 2019. Finally, the Recommended Budget includes a \$2.0 million transfer from the General Fund for additional support to the Community Shelter Board, which reflects a \$500,000 increase that will be solely dedicated to homelessness prevention. The Community Shelter Board projects that the additional investment will prevent nearly 200 Franklin County families from becoming homeless.

Recommendations related to housing incentives and zoning updates include considerations of Ohio's Reinvestment Area Tax Abatements, Ohio's Tax Increment Financing for affordable housing projects, and updates to zoning regulations to limit barriers to affordable housing.

As part of the Economic Development and Planning Strategic Plan, Franklin County's commitment to regional objectives and sustainable economic development remains unchanged.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$2.0 million for Experience Columbus. The Greater Columbus Region welcomes 41.1 million visitors every year, who directly spend \$7.0 billion at area businesses. The tourism sector supports nearly 78,000 jobs in Columbus and Franklin County.

In addition, Franklin County will provide \$1.0 million to One Columbus, formerly Columbus 2020. One Columbus, the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region, has set forth a vision for the Columbus Region to be the most

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prosperous region in the United States. Working in partnership with state and local partners, One Columbus will be focused on helping existing businesses grow and compete, diversifying the economy through the attraction of new businesses, and supporting newly formed high-growth enterprises.

The 2020 Recommended Budget also includes \$2.5 million for the development agreement with the City of Columbus and Crew SC Stadium Company for the support of Confluence Village and a Community Sports Park. Under the terms of the agreement, the County will provide an annual economic development payment in the amount of \$2.5 million to the Confluence Community Authority to support this project beginning in 2019 for a period of 30 years. It is estimated that the project and associated mixed-use development will support approximately 775 full-time equivalent jobs, which includes approximately 580 permanent full-time equivalent jobs relating to the Stadium, 70 full-time equivalent jobs relating to the Community Sports Park, and 125 permanent full-time equivalent jobs relating to the mixed-use development. It is estimated that an additional 605 direct full-time equivalent construction jobs will be supported during construction of the project.

PUBLIC SAFETY ORIENTED

Representing 58.0% of the General Fund appropriations, the 2020 Recommended Budget is Public Safety oriented.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$4.6 million for the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs, or JPP, in support of programs under the Commissioners' courageous and leading-edge philosophy toward smarter and more equitable justice. In addition to expanding the award-winning Pathways program to even more women with substance use and mental health disorders who are incarcerated, there are plans to expand that program to men in 2020. JPP will focus on target populations who are impacted by incarceration in the County, such as engaging families with minor children who face the trauma and stigma associated with incarceration as well as the aging population who are incarcerated and reenter the community. In 2020, there are plans for expanded support for LGBTQ residents who are incarcerated, returning from incarceration, and who have mental health or substance use disorders.

For residents in active addiction or involved in survival sex work, JPP plans to increase access to naloxone, enhanced peer network support, vulnerability-reduction technology, and stand up street outreach. JPP will work to improve access to long-term supportive housing for the most frequent consumers of jail resources.

JPP will support the Rise Together Blueprint by aggressively pursuing reforms in the use of cash bail and the imposition of fines and fees upon already poor residents. Under the Commissioners' leadership, JPP staff will increase the focus on racial disparities across the justice system and formulate intentional anti-racist policies and solutions. Finally, JPP will continue support for alternatives to jail incarceration including enhanced prosecutorial diversion, specialized docket enrollment, pre-trial supervision, GPS electronic monitoring, and alternative sentencing centers.

In 2019, the Commissioners approved the agreements and contract for the new case management system project. This multi-year project will consolidate eighteen County systems and provide upgraded public access to court documents for the Clerk of Courts' Office, Court of Common Pleas General Division, Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations and Juvenile Division, Probate Court, and the 10th District Court of Appeals.

The purpose of the project is to create an integrated, secure case management system that provides reliable, efficient, and accurate results to the public and increases the residents' access to justice. The new system, which will replace the Franklin County Justice System that is over 30 years old, will provide enhanced reporting capabilities, real-time data exchange with other County systems, and a more robust security model to

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combat cyber threats, as well as introduce cloud hosting to reduce the disaster recovery process.

To assist in the implementation of the new case management system, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes approximately \$300,000 for a position in the General, Domestic and Juvenile, and Probate divisions of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas.

In 2019, the Commissioners authorized the transfer of operations and duties of the Franklin County Office of Homeland Security and Regional Communications to the Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency in order to coordinate activities, avoid a duplication of duties, and more efficiently use available resources.

The agency now administers Franklin County's homeland security hazards, threats, planning, preparedness, and recovery as part of their approach to creating resilient communities. They administer the County's homeland security training and grant projects as well as provide oversight of the Alert Franklin County emergency notification system, radio communications, and the regional E911 system.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$5.5 million in support of the Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

The new Franklin County Forensic Science Center is expected to open in Spring 2020. The new facility will replace the current morgue for the Franklin County Coroner, which has been in use since 1975.

The new Forensic Science Center will be almost 57,000 square feet, making it three times larger than the current building, and will include eight autopsy stations. In order to ensure proper facilities maintenance and support at the new location, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes approximately \$150,000 for two new positions and the upgrade of a vacant part-time position to a full-time position in the Department of Public Facilities Management.

SUSTAINABLE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

In a review of the highlights of the 2020 Recommended Budget, it is important to discuss some of efforts that maintain responsive and sustainable government operations for the County's residents.

In 2020, the Franklin County Engineer's Office is establishing a new program to provide assistance to smaller local governments that may not have the capacity to undertake some projects. These projects could include infrastructure, maintenance, or small capital improvements. The Engineer's Office would provide grants or in-kind donations to these governments to assist them in completing projects. The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$500,000 in support of this new initiative.

The Recommended Budget also includes an additional \$500,000 from the General Fund for an increase in drainage infrastructure maintenance to \$1.2 million. The Engineer's Office intends to utilize both staff and contract vendors for projects, such as the Joseph Carr Ditch, Alder Ditch, and Foley Ditch.

The 2020 Recommended Budget includes \$150,000 in the Commissioners' Budget in support of the Northwest Corridor Study being led by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, or MORPC. A mobility study of the Olentangy Parkway between Bethel Road and West Broad Street is being supported through a public private partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority, MORPC, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, The Ohio State University, Nationwide Insurance, Ohio Health, White Castle, Cover My Meds, and the City of Columbus. A team of professional engineering and planning firms will provide a multi-model vision and cost estimate of infrastructure improvements for this major growth corridor in Central Ohio. The study will facilitate sustainable development patterns, access to jobs and opportunities, and equitable housing options for the community by 2050.

Without our employees, the Commissioners would be unable to sustain their commitment to serving, supporting, and uplifting all residents of Franklin County through a lens of respect and human-centered care. As County Administrator, I truly value and appreciate the many contributions of the County's employees. Understanding that Franklin County's success depends on our ability to attract and retain qualified and committed individuals, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes a number of initiatives that are intended to improve employee engagement.

In recognition of their hard work and dedication to the residents of Franklin County, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes a reserve for a 2.0% cost of living and 1.5% merit adjustment for qualifying non-bargaining employees. This is the third year of the program that rewards high performing staff.

In 2020, the Commissioners will continue their participation in the COTA Downtown C-Pass program which provides a COTA transit pass for each employee as a general benefit at the County.

The Commissioners remain committed to pay equity through “The Columbus Commitment,” an initiative of the Columbus Women’s Commission that calls on employers to take action to promote gender- and race- based pay equity.

Employees are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities, such as training programs through the Human Resources Department’s Office of Learning & Staff Development, tuition reimbursement for continuing undergraduate and graduate education, emerging leaders programs, John Glenn College of Public Affairs’ Management Advancement for the Public Services seminars at The Ohio State University, and the National Association of Counties’ High Performance Leadership Academy.

In June 2018, the Commissioners approved a one-year pilot program of the Volunteer Initiative Plan to support volunteer activities that enhance and serve the communities in which we live and work. The intention of this program is to create community engagement opportunities for non-bargaining employees that are meaningful, purposeful, and helps those in need. At the same time, the Commissioners recognized that participating in these activities will also enrich and inspire the lives of our employees. During the pilot phase, 223 volunteer opportunities were offered with 52 employees from half of the Board of Commissioners’ agencies participating. Based on this success, the Volunteer Initiative Plan was made a permanent employee benefit in 2019.

In January 2018, the Commissioners approved a two-year pilot program of Paid Family Leave to allow employees time to provide parental care immediately following the birth or adoption of a minor child, and to care for a covered family member who has a serious medical condition. A total of 88 employees used the Paid Family Leave Program in 2018 and 2019. Based on the results of the pilot, the Human Resources Department views the Paid Family Leave program an overwhelming success and recommended making this program permanent in November 2019.

The Franklin County Cooperative Health Improvement Program is currently in a very favorable position and is doing much better than the national healthcare trends. As a result of Franklin County’s Wellness Program, the 2020 Recommended Budget includes no increase for the cost of employee healthcare while the national average is 7.0%.

We will not rest on our current success because better health improves the quality of life for our employees and their families. For example, the inaugural Franklin County 5k & ThriveOn Challenge took place on October 13th at Wolfe Park. There were approximately 300 employees and family members who participated in the race. Another 5k & ThriveOn Challenge is being planned for 2020.

SUMMARY

The budget we present today places Franklin County on the path to ensuring that every resident's needs are met on the fundamental social, wellness, economic, and environmental levels. As a result of the Board of Commissioners' vision and actions, the 2020 Recommended Budget maintains the County's strong financial position while providing for innovative programming to enable all residents to share in the progress and growth of our community.

As highlighted in today's discussion of Rise Together Franklin County, Forward Cities, and the Northwest Corridor Study, we cannot achieve success without collaboration with other governments, nonprofits, the faith community, and businesses to address poverty, increase access to quality child care, ensure an inclusive economy, implement smart justice initiatives, and sustain our infrastructure. We appreciate the many partners who offer their time and talents to collectively address our challenges and identify the opportunities to make our community even better. You are part of the reason thousands of new residents choose to call Franklin County their home each year.

Budget hearings have been scheduled so that an open, public discussion may take place concerning the 2020 Recommended Budget. County Administration looks forward to working with the Board of Commissioners as it deliberates and takes action to finalize the budget for 2020.

I would like to thank all of the elected County officials and agency directors for their cooperation and commitment to the residents of Franklin County. Special acknowledgement goes to Zak Talarek, Heidi Hallas, and their team in the Office of Management & Budget for their assistance in developing the 2020 Budget Recommendations.

I can't conclude this address without sharing my appreciation for the work and dedication of Deputy Administrators Erik Janas, Kris Long, and Keena Smith.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Commissioners for your continued support and leadership in serving every resident, every day.

Kenneth N. Wilson, M.P.A.

County Administrator

Franklin County Board of Commissioners

"Great leaders are not the best at everything. They find people who are the best at different things and get them all on the same team." –Eileen Bistrisky