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Mark S. Woodard  
County Administrator

July 21, 2015

TO: The Honorable Chairman and  
Members of the Board of County Commissioners

In accordance with our statutory responsibilities and in the interest of transparency, we are pleased to present the **Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Operating and Capital Budget** for your consideration. As a result of the Board's engagement and input throughout the budget development process, this proposed budget reflects the strategic plan and associated priorities you have identified as we aspire to achieve our Vision to be the standard for public service in America. We are grateful for the support and guidance the Board has provided.

Within this balanced budget, funding is aligned to enable each of your strategic goals: Create a quality workforce in a positive, supportive organization; Ensure public health, safety, and welfare; Practice superior environmental stewardship; Foster continual economic growth and vitality; and Deliver first-class services to the public and our customers.

The overall budget presented to you today of \$2,029,414,630 continues the County's tradition of providing high quality services to the Public and our customers while prudently managing public funds. The total FY16 Budget increases \$67.5 million or 3.4% over the total FY15 Budget, which reflects a net increase in operating, capital, reserves, and enterprise functions. No increase in the countywide or MSTU millage rates is required to balance the budget and meet the important needs and priorities.

Pinellas County Budget FY16  
Total \$2,029,414,630

<u>Governmental</u>	<u>Enterprise</u>	<u>Constitutional</u>	<u>Other Agencies</u>
\$678,816,840	\$640,173,270	\$342,824,480	\$367,600,040

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY TO:  
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There is no proposed change to the General Fund countywide millage rate of 5.2755 mills, nor to the unincorporated area (MSTU) millage rate of 2.0857 mills. The General Fund is the primary operating fund of the County. This operating budget is \$625,799,440 for FY16, representing an increase of \$27.0 million or 4.3% compared to the current fiscal year. At this time, the reserve level of 14.4% falls short of the 15% target. However, opportunities including revenue from the pending settlement of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill litigation will be pursued to achieve the policy target before the budget is adopted in September.

This Proposed Budget was built upon the strategic goals noted above as well as the County's Mission, Vision, and Values. These include a commitment to "Doing Things" that serve the Public and our customers, building constructive relationships with our partners, and supporting the hard work of our dedicated employees.

Doing things that serve the Public - Our citizens and partners rely upon Pinellas County Government to deliver a diverse array of services that improve their daily lives. We prioritize our resources to deliver core services that will bring about a higher level of trust, appreciation and recognition from our stakeholders. This focus is embodied in the award-winning new "Doing Things for You!" mobile app that allows citizens to easily report problems and issues.

With partners we can do more - We are also committed to building constructive relationships with our partners in the community. By doing so, we will collectively improve service delivery for the benefit of all. In the past year, we have grown our partnerships with social service providers including the Health Department and 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares to help those most in need. The recently implemented South St. Petersburg Redevelopment Plan represents a partnership with the City of St. Petersburg to set aside future property tax revenue to tackle poverty and blight conditions, creating new economic vitality in this historically underserved area. The Proposed Budget includes funding for the Dream Center to establish a community service center at a vacant elementary school in Lealman. It also includes support for our arts community through our local arts agency, Creative Pinellas. Our partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation yields important new and improved transit options, including the 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue Expressway project that is scheduled to commence in FY16. Also, Pinellas County Economic Development is partnering with Tampa-Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation to create a strong regional approach for local businesses seeking to export their products and services.

Developing future leadership - We remain committed to our employees and will provide opportunities for career growth and learning. Recruiting, retaining, and developing quality leadership and talent is critical to the health of the organization. The Board has established a minimum wage for all County employees of \$12.50 per hour, exceeding federal minimum wage standards, to facilitate maintaining a fair and competitive compensation package and to attract and retain the most diverse and talented workforce. We will focus our efforts on relationships with local high schools, colleges, universities, and vocational technical schools to introduce

talented students into our organization and get them excited about a career in public service.

The Proposed Budget and its underlying assumptions are based on a positive, optimistic outlook for our future. As an example, our economy continues to demonstrate sustained improvement. Tourism continues to set historical records, airport passenger growth is surpassing all-time highs, new construction is nearly twice as high as last year, building permits, inspections, and development review activity reflect sustained increases, the real estate market continues to improve, and sales tax revenues are showing modest growth. Most importantly, relationships with our partners have never been better!

This optimistic outlook, along with careful analysis of revenue and expenditure trends, created capacity to address Board funding priorities. We once again engaged the Board early and sought input to the Proposed Budget, providing the Board additional flexibility and time for deliberation regarding the priorities that best serve the Public.

The Budget Message following this letter presents a comprehensive overview, with the detailed information contained in the budget document.

The FY16 Proposed Budget we have developed together is sustainable over the forecast period based on a realistic outlook of the economy and our careful management of funds. Our partnership in building this budget assures that it meets the needs identified by the Board as the community's elected representatives. By focusing on "Doing Things", building constructive relationships with our partners, and supporting our employees, Pinellas County Government will continue to demonstrate that it is meeting the needs and concerns of our citizens today and tomorrow.

A special note of appreciation to my fellow employees, the Constitutional Officers, and Independent Agency heads for their support in producing this Proposed Budget.

Sincerely,



Mark S. Woodard

County Administrator