

# COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

June 8, 2005

## Members of the Board of County Commissioners:

I am pleased to present to you the County Administrator's Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Year 2006 (FY 06) – which will begin October 1, 2005 – and for Fiscal Year 2007 (FY 07) – which will begin October 1, 2006.

Under the biennial budget process that our County has now successfully used for five full cycles, I have developed Recommended Budgets for two fiscal years. Through a series of workshops and public hearings, the Board will have the opportunity to fine tune my recommendations, taking into consideration public comment and Board members' own expertise and understanding of pertinent issues. The process will culminate with the adoption of the budget at the conclusion of a fourth public budget hearing on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.



## Overview of the Budget

**Expenditures and Other Uses Reflected in the Biennial Budget** - Overall, the County budget totals \$3.4 billion for FY 06 and \$3.5 billion for FY 07. Those totals, in large part, reflect funding for day-to-day operations of County government, which amounts to \$1.5 billion in FY 06 and \$1.6 billion in FY 07. Also included in the budget is annual funding for capital projects -- \$0.3 billion in FY 06 and \$0.2 billion in FY 07. It is not unusual for capital spending to fluctuate widely from one year to the next based on the timing of specific projects. Debt requirements amount to \$0.2 billion in both FY 06 and FY 07. Total expenditures for operations, capital and debt amount to \$2.0 billion each year. Two other components of the budget are reserves and transfers.

Reserves address a wide range of needs – from backstopping County debt to insulating against unexpected catastrophe, to accumulating funds for future capital projects. Reserves amount to \$0.5 billion in FY 06 and \$0.6 billion in FY 07. Itemized detail on reserves is presented in the budget document.

Finally, governmental accounting standards require tracking funds as they are moved between accounts. The impact of these transfers adds \$0.9 billion to the FY 06 and FY 07 budgets.

**Revenues and Other Sources Reflected in the Biennial Budget** - On the revenue side, taxes account for \$1.0 billion each year, with \$0.7 billion of that accounted for by property taxes—the County's largest single source of revenue and a revenue growing faster this year than at any time in recent history. Other locally levied taxes account for another \$0.3 billion of tax revenue each year – primarily sales taxes, but also reflecting some gasoline taxes. Federal and State-shared grants and other revenues continue to account for \$0.2 billion each year – roughly the same as in recent years. User fees account for almost \$0.5 billion each year. The largest sources of fees are water and wastewater service fees, solid waste disposal fees and internal billings. Each of these areas represent services that are operated much like private businesses and the accounting for these "proprietary funds" follows more closely to that of the private sector than other governmental operations.

## Key Components of the Process

More than 50 Strategic Plan strategies are included in this budget – many of which can be accomplished with existing resources.

There are three key components of the process that led to today's recommendations:

First, you adopted a Strategic Plan earlier this year allowing a clear linkage of

strategic initiatives to the allocation of resources through the budget process. You established objectives and Board strategies to guide our process. Earlier attempts by the County at strategic planning failed, in my judgment, due to the lack of such linkage to the allocation of resources reflected in a budget. The value of strategic planning is to ensure we set a course that will continue beyond the two years reflected in this budget. The Strategic Plan does not preclude spending in areas of on-going needs, but it reflects an investment in our long-term priorities.

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

Specific objectives and performance measures related to the Strategic Plan may be found in the departmental section of the budget document – reflecting those departments assigned to lead in addressing Strategic Plan objectives. Overall the budget presented here addresses more than fifty specific strategies to implement the Strategic Plan – many of which can be accomplished with existing resources. The nature of the strategic planning process you adopted is one of quantification – and validation. That means it will be very apparent if our strategies are working to create the results reflected in the Plan. By monitoring our progress – just as someone driving on an Interstate can check the mileage markers – we will be able to assess whether to speed up our efforts or look for another vehicle (i.e., strategy) to achieve an objective. Naturally, some objectives cannot be addressed without additional resources. As I indicate later, we were able to match some of the transportation objectives in Goal Six (To improve transportation in Hillsborough County) with the Board's commitment to increase recurring funding for transportation by \$15 million per year. In another instance, the Water Department was able to free up more than sufficient funds through an identified efficiency, as noted below, to address a somewhat expensive strategy to reduce the downtime caused by electrical outages at County water and sewer treatment and pumping facilities (Goal Five, Objective C).

### Efficiencies identified in the biennial budget will save \$17 million between FY 06 and FY 07.

Second, before considering any proposed expansion of spending, we worked to identify opportunities for efficiencies in the existing budget. Departments and agencies were challenged to identify opportunities to cut spending without measurable impact on our ability to serve the citizens of Hillsborough County. The process is not unlike what we do every day in our personal lives to cut unnecessary spending in order to focus better on our priorities. Even when revenue growth is strong, we recognize the importance of cutting unnecessary costs. No efficiency was too small to consider. At the same time, some proposals have implications that, for now, I found not worth pursuing. Ultimately, we were able to shave more than \$17 million in costs over the next two years. More than one-half of those savings will help the County's HealthCare Program operate within available revenues. Other savings will cut the cost of operating libraries and cut unnecessary costs of serving wastewater clients. We will also reduce costs associated with inventory stockpiles through "just-in-time" inventory management. The Library Services Department did a particularly thorough job of "looking under rocks" to find opportunities to shave costs – from restructuring how to staff facilities to consolidating automated information systems and alarm system monitoring.

### Key policy issues including taxation and compensation were discussed before developing a recommended budget.

Third, key policy issues such as compensation were discussed prior to departments and agencies submitting their budget requests for the upcoming two years. Based on the comprehensive pay and classification study conducted by the County's consultant, MGT, we have slowed the growth in compensation to reflect the analysis of public and private sector employers. After increases that averaged as much as 7 percent annually in recent years, the recommended increases will cost 28 percent less.

Another policy discussion involved a commitment to continue reducing the Countywide property tax rate while addressing pressing needs for both municipal services provided in the unincorporated area and the need for additional libraries. We implement those policies through offsetting millage increases in FY 06 – a 15/100<sup>th</sup>-mill Countywide reduction, a 10/100<sup>th</sup> – mill unincorporated increase, and a 5/100<sup>th</sup> -mill library increase. The Countywide property tax rate will be further reduced in FY 07, under the planned budget, without offsetting increases in other tax rates. The reduced Countywide tax rate is consistent with the Strategic Plan objective to "reduce over-reliance on property taxes as general revenue by establishing a Countywide target of under 7 mills by FY 09." The objective is important, considering a May 13, 2005 report by FitchRatings, which found Hillsborough County's Countywide millage rate to still remain above average among the Florida counties rated by the firm, despite Hillsborough County's 10 years of consecutive millage reductions. Heavy reliance on any single revenue makes the County susceptible to any factor affecting that revenue. The Strategic Plan objective was specifically targeted to address this concern.

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

Access to detailed budget submissions makes the entire process more transparent to the public.

Finally, as we began the review process to develop a Recommended Budget, we considered the documentation that departments and agencies are asked to develop that lay out all existing services as well as the requests for supplemental funding. In some cases, as County Administration reviewed the material, we asked that organizations take another shot at sharpening the pencil when it came to requests. The results of that documentation, including revisions where necessary, have been assembled and posted on the County's web site. This access to both requests and resulting recommendations allows County citizens to be better informed on what has been justified and what was requested but not recommended. I think additional access to the underlying information used in considering a budget helps frame the budget discussion. This information has largely been made available previously only to the Board.

### Transportation - A Board Priority

Transportation funding is a Board priority, and spending has been increased \$15 million annually using existing resources.

Coming out of the December annual Board retreat was direction to increase the County's funding of transportation. The charge I received was to increase our use of available revenue to increase transportation spending by an added \$15 million per year. That expands on a previous commitment to increase funding of transportation by \$10 million per year. In preparing the recommended budget, I identified three areas of focus for those added transportation dollars: first, cover the increasing cost of existing operations such as sign and signal maintenance, road resurfacing, roadside mowing, bridge inspection and maintenance, sidewalk repairs, pot hole patching, and traffic control operations; second, provide funding to implement Strategic Plan objectives related to improving transportation; and third, fund transportation projects to add capacity to the County's road network.

As we approached how best to allocate transportation funds, we took a careful look at the County's past practice of subsidizing services provided by the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HARTline). The County has historically been asked to provide partial funding for several services. HARTline levies its own millage at the approved rate of 0.5 mills. In past years, HARTline would request funding for several programs. When HARTline revenues grew more than expected, the added revenue was not used to reduce requests for County funding but diverted to other uses.

This year, under new leadership, HARTline changed its approach to County funding. The historical funding subsidies for Saturday service, Sunday service, circulator service and weekly service were dropped. Instead, HARTline requested the County subsidize new express routes, provide assistance in funding for the signalization of the Northwest Transit Center and continue funding for special events. In assessing the HARTline request, I concluded that the most appropriate commitment by the County would be in providing one-time assistance in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for the signalization project. Signalization is a typical County activity. Further, it is a means of supporting HARTline without re-establishing a cycle of service subsidies and concerns that our operational funding support frees up HARTline funds for less pressing uses.

Goal Six of the County's Strategic Plan outlines five areas of focus for transportation initiatives. As I looked for investment opportunities, it was apparent that existing resources could be used to meet one objective: increasing the number of bicycle lanes by 5 percent by FY 10. Additional funds have been earmarked each year for initiatives aimed at reducing preventable pedestrian accidents and preventable intersection crashes. The Public Works Department will be finalizing its recommendations for how best to address these objectives with an infusion of \$5 million per year in dedicated funding.

The challenge to step up our commitment of recurring funding for transportation by \$15 million per year has been met. We paid off short term debt that had tied up gasoline tax revenues for the past several years and shifted that revenue from debt service to investing in new commitments to transportation. We supplemented that with unincorporated area tax revenues to implement Goal Six of the Strategic Plan, as noted previously, and to meet the increasing cost of existing transportation maintenance programs. Overall, transportation spending, as reflected in program reporting, fluctuates from year to year as funding from the Community Investment Tax (CIT) and impact

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

fees varies. Recent agreements with developers will result in dedications to construction of US 301 – a State of Florida project – in lieu of payment of County transportation impact fees. The leveraging of County and developer funds with future State funds for this project does not show up in the budget in its entirety due to the fact that it is a State project. As the US 301 project illustrates, the decline in transportation impact fee revenue will not necessarily reflect a lower commitment to transportation needs, but rather a shift in how the County facilitates transportation improvements through the use of some developer contributions.

CIT funding for transportation will wind down until the next allocation of CIT funds. While additional unallocated revenue from the CIT will not become available until February 2008, the County can use its short term commercial paper program to access those funds in FY 06 and FY 07 if the Board chooses to address that opportunity this year. A public hearing process is the mechanism for allocating CIT funds. If the Board were to consider a third phase of CIT projects, we have estimated that approximately \$280 million in commitments could be made if the CIT allocation covered the eight month's revenue in FY 08 (March through September 2008) and the next five full fiscal years (FY 09 through FY 13). The short term commercial paper program has proven beneficial to the County's capital program by allowing the County to make contractual commitments for projects, draw cash only as it is needed, and then take out the short term debt with long term debt as revenue from the CIT grows to the point that it can be pledged to meet long term debt coverage requirements.

Within the \$15 million additional Board commitment to transportation, we have set aside \$5 million per year for capital projects intended to provide increased capacity. Over the next six years covered by the updated Capital Improvement Plan, that annual commitment will allow the County to complete the widening of Bell Shoals Road (from Bloomingdale to Boyette), provide for interim improvements to Lutz Lake Fern Road, and set aside additional funds for the advance right-of-way program – a continuing commitment of the County to acquiring right-of-way for our future road needs before costs rise.

### Other Policy Considerations in the Budget

**Maintaining Grant-Funded Services to Children and the Elderly** – Within the Head Start Division of Children's Services, we are at a crossroads in deciding how to continue programs that have historically been largely funded with grants and a modest County match. Both the Head Start and Early Head Start grants have proven incapable of sustaining the cost of the programs if County funding is limited to match requirements and some in-kind support services. As you know, in the last biennial budget process, we cut administrative positions in an effort to constrain spending within the grant and grant match without cutting services. As our costs rise and federal cost of living adjustments continue to lag behind those costs, we will be required to infuse additional County funds to maintain existing levels of service delivery. In FY 06, the additional County support will amount to \$1.3 million. By FY 07, we estimate that additional County support to total \$1.9 million. The Recommended Budget provides those levels of support to maintain current service levels. However, the budget does not commit local funds to expand Head Start or Early Head Start, given that we know that the gap between grant funding and the total cost to provide services will continue to widen. This presents a notable policy consideration for the Board as you review the budget: can we afford to accept an estimated \$1.5 million in FY 06 and an additional \$1.6 million in grant funding in FY 07 given that the County will need to subsidize the existing program by a growing amount each year? I could not recommend that you accept further expansion funds, given this growing gap.

In our programs for the elderly, the Countywide General Fund will absorb costs for grant programs that cannot be covered by grant revenue and matching funds. In both FY 06 and FY 07, the added County support, coupled with the continuation of stop-gap funding provided in FY 05, will amount to \$1.0 million. Partly offsetting these costs, the Aging Services Department is working to place the County's working seniors program with a non-profit provider, at a cost savings to the County of \$200,000 per year.

**Fire and ALS Response** – As reflected in the Strategic Plan, the County is continuing a program of expanding our fire suppression and advanced life support (ALS) services, with a focus on improving the percentage of time the County meets specific response time standards. Growth in the Fire Rescue Department budget reflects the opening of new stations, expansion of the fire inspection program to meet growth demands and the requirement to inspect schools, and a correction to underbudgeted personnel costs in FY 04 and FY 05. Opening of the Country Place, Northdale, and Chapman Road Stations require adding 55 positions. Additional fire inspectors will add another 17 positions over the two years – of which four are needed for school inspections. As we indicated at our April budget workshop, we expect to bring an update to fire inspection fees to the Board to support the additional

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

inspection positions. Full recovery of costs, however, will require that the School Board pay for the cost of the school inspections and plan reviews required by law. Coupling these factors with normal cost increases, the Fire Rescue budget will increase \$15.6 million in FY 06 and an additional \$8.7 million in FY 07 – resulting in a total increase of 24 percent over the two years – or more than double the rate of growth in the overall County Operating Budget. Collective bargaining is under way for the next two years. This Recommended Budget reflects compensation increases for those employees covered under collective bargaining agreements that are consistent with those provided to other County employees.

Funding is in place to acquire land for additional stations beyond those due to be completed over the next two years. Money from the Communications Service Tax (CST) is being set aside for new stations – revenue from 1% of the 4% tax through FY 05 and rising to 1.5 percent of the 4 percent tax beginning in FY 06. It is my recommendation that the Board defer until the budget update process next year for FY 07, the decisions on which stations should be constructed next. That will allow sufficient time to assess how best to address response time objectives reflected in Strategic Plan Goal Five through the placement of new stations. CST revenue will continue to be set aside for those future stations.

**Parks, Recreation and Conservation** – Consistent with the operating cost requirements disclosed in the County's capital project initiation forms, the County will add staff to operate and/or maintain a variety of new facilities – from therapeutics facilities such as the gymnasium at the All People's Life Center, to athletics complexes in Fishhawk, Live Oak, Summerfield, and at William Owen Pass Park, to cabins at Flat Woods Park, to recreation facilities such as the Carrollwood Cultural Center and the Northdale Park addition and, finally, to the linear facilities such as the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, and the Northwest Recreation Corridor. Program enhancements have been targeted for therapeutics programs and to provide transportation to recreational programs. Some items within the recommended budget that might warrant special interest include funding feasibility studies for park enhancements at Ben Hill Jr. High and Logan Gate Park. Funding has been set aside for future renovation and or reconstruction of the Friendship Trail Bridge. One item still being assessed is a request to add restrooms at Heather Lakes Park. A funding source is available but an evaluation is being made to determine whether similar situations exist at any other parks.

As with transportation, the next round of CIT allocations will be necessary to address some of the outstanding need for more land and facilities.

**Stormwater** – The Board's decision to avoid stormwater assessment increases leads to a third area where our ability to keep up with demands for infrastructure improvements will require the next round of CIT allocations.

**Active Military Combat Duty Program** – The Board has steps to initiate this program intended to provide financial assistance to property owners who serve in combat. Because the specifics have not been finalized, no specific allocation of funds is included in this budget. There is more than a sufficient amount of funds available within the Reserve for Contingency to be allocated to establish this program prior to adoption of the budget in September.

### Reorganization of County Administration

Upon assuming the position of County Administrator, I initially worked to fill key senior administrative positions – the County Attorney, the Deputy County Administrator, and an Assistant County Administrator. I established an investigative group to address concerns about operation of the Water Department, which evolved into establishing a Professional Responsibility section to add to what was the Consumer Protection Agency. The next phase to reorganizing County Administration was to look at the reporting relationships of departments. In May, I notified the Board of my intent to change some reporting relationships in order to reflect those changes in this biennial budget. You directed me to hold off on a portion of the changes related to combining the Public Safety Department with the Fire Rescue Department and combining the three-member portion of the County's Water Team who report through the County Administrator. While the budget will not be adopted until September, upon hearing your concerns, I immediately directed budget staff to undo changes in the budgets for FY 06 and FY 07 associated with the Fire Rescue/Public Safety portion of the reorganization as well as the reorganization I had recommended for three staff of the Water Team that report through County Administration. Other elements of my reorganization, which have a budgetary impact, are reflected here, as follows:

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

I have merged four separate organizations: the County Administrator's Office, the Administrative Services Section, the Office of Quality Services, and the Office of Public Affairs. Further, a portion of the Communications Department – the Citizen's Action Center – has also been moved to the County Administrator's Office. The annual net savings, reflected within the budget efficiencies noted previously, amounts to about \$163,000. More importantly, the changes will improve responsiveness to the Board and citizens as we implement several of the strategies related to customer service objectives within the Strategic Plan.

The remaining components of the reorganization reflect changes in selected reporting relationships and balancing of responsibility between the Deputy County Administrator and the three Assistant County Administrators.

### Water Team Funding

In response to the selection of multiple water supply projects within Hillsborough County by Tampa Bay Water, the Board set aside \$12.6 million in one-time funding in FY 99 to facilitate protecting Hillsborough County residents from adverse effects of any of the projects. The County assembled specialists within three organizations – the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC), the County Attorney's Office, and County Administration – and provided substantial funding for the use of external experts, as necessary. That initial funding has been stretched to cover costs through FY 05. Moving forward, it is appropriate to recognize an ongoing need to address water supply issues and to establish how the program will be funded on a permanent basis. EPC has proposed retaining the equivalent of 8.7 positions associated with the Water Team. In this budget, all of those EPC positions are budgeted within EPC's Countywide General Fund budget. Based on discussions between EPC staff and Water Department staff, it is estimated that costs associated with the work of 5.7 of those positions can be charged back to the County's water enterprise operation. That means that the positions will continue to report to EPC, but that invoices for eligible work will be paid by the County's water enterprise and result in revenue to the Countywide General Fund. As part of the FY 07 budget update process, the chargeback process can be evaluated and either continued or revised as necessary. The two positions within the County Attorney's Office will remain there but funding has been shifted to the Countywide General Fund from the special revenue fund established with the original \$12.6 million in Countywide revenue. The three positions that have comprised the stand-alone Water Team within County Administration were proposed to report to the Water Department and be funded from the water enterprise (i.e., water system fees). As I indicated as part of the prior discussion of the proposed reorganization, I have placed them back into a stand-alone organization in this budget, with the Countywide General Fund picking up the cost for the three positions pending further Board discussion.

### Constitutional Officer Budgets

Florida law requires fully funding the requests of two Constitutional Officers – the Sheriff and the Supervisor of Elections – until the two statutory public budget hearings held each year in September. The Sheriff's budget request will total \$314.8 million in FY 06 – or about 15 percent of the Operating Budget or 9 percent of the total budget. Growth in the Sheriff's budget is, on average, only slightly higher than that of the County. Embedded within that budget are crossing guards to cover the opening of new schools and additional bailiffs to accommodate additional judges. Law enforcement officers are being added to maintain the existing law enforcement staffing ratio of 1.53 deputies per 1,000 residents. New detention positions will be added to meet staffing needs for an expanding number of inmates at the Falkenburg Road Jail. In addition to other salary and benefits costs reflected throughout the County budget, the Sheriff's budget reflects new certified salary stipends for law enforcement and detention personnel.

The Supervisor of Elections' requested budget will more than double in FY 06 before declining 16 percent in FY 07. The Supervisor's budget changes on a two-year cycle driven by the timing of elections. Budget impacts include the costs of staffing for additional early voting and for heavier absentee balloting. In FY 06, the budget is driven by the purchase of additional voting machines for the existing voting system to catch up with growth that has occurred in voter registrations.

The requested budgets for the Clerk of Circuit Court and for the Property Appraiser grew by less than the overall County budget. The Tax Collector receives commissions based on budgeted tax revenues and returns unspent funds.

# COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

## Capital Budget

The recommended capital budget continues implementation of existing policy related to capital projects. In accordance with Board policy, one percent of General Fund revenue (both the Countywide General Fund and the Unincorporated Area General Fund) is set aside to maintain, repair, and renovate existing assets. That program, supplemented in the past two years to catch up with a backlog of needs for parks and for recreational facilities, has been very successful in bringing County facilities up to a condition that can be effectively (and efficiently) maintained. The program relies primarily on small contracts rather than in-house staff.

In coordination with the biennial budget process, the County adopts a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) this year covering FY 06 through FY 11, of which the first two years reflects the capital budget for FY 06 and FY 07. The CIP is published as a stand-alone document and contains details about the scope, funding sources, timing and location of each project. The budget document highlights the capital budget for FY 06 and for FY 07. Significant funding is included in the FY 06 and/or the FY 07 budget for the following major non-recurring projects:

- Expand funding for land acquisition needed for new fire stations
- Complete funding for a Northdale Fire Station
- Construct a Children's Services Treatment Center
- Complete the Courts Facilities Expansion Project
- Complete the Falkenburg Road Jail – Phase VI
- Construct the Falkenburg Road Water Department Warehouse
- Build out additional Courts facilities
- Construct the Riverview Terrace Senior Center
- Construct the Tampa Bay History Center
- Construct a Westgate Complex Addition for the Children's Board
- Initiate library expansion and construction projects including:
  - Westgate New Regional Library
  - North Tampa Branch Library
  - Seffner-Mango Library replacement
  - Sulphur Springs Partnership Library
  - Riverview Branch Library land and parking
  - University Area Partnership Library
  - Robert W. Saunders Sr. Library, and
  - Turkey Creek Partnership Library
- Construct an all weather running track
- Complete the Carrollwood Village Community and Recreation Center
- Initiate the Progress Village Sports Complex
- Construct the Resource Recovery Facility Capacity Expansion
- Complete the South County Transfer Station Expansion
- Complete the Southeast Landfill Capacity Expansion
- Complete the County's portion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Community Main Street Project
- Continue construction of Bell Shoals Road
- Construct Boyette Road
- Widen Gunn Highway
- Construct an eastbound Turn Lane on Lumsden Avenue
- Initiate improvements on Lutz Lake Fern Road
- Complete Race Track Road (including use of funding available in FY 08)
- Fund future repairs to the Friendship Trail Bridge
- Complete funding for the Handley Road and Waters Avenue Intersection
- Add funding for the Advanced Right-of-Way Acquisition Program

Additional detail for FY 06 and FY 07 is provided in the Capital Budget section of the budget document. Additional information and a full six-year capital plan are published in the County Administrator's Recommended Capital Improvement Program, FY 06 - FY 11.

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

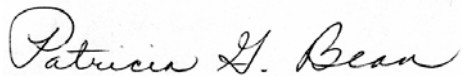
### Conclusion

Consistent with Goal One of your Strategic Plan, this budget continues our commitment to “ensure that Hillsborough County is financially strong enough to influence its destiny by applying efficient and/or effective policies and practices.” It reflects a material reduction in the Countywide operating millage – continuing a decade of past reductions – while also continuing to be responsive to the needs of our growing community.

All County taxpayers will benefit from millage reductions reflected in the biennial budget. At the same time, the budget focuses on some of the County's greatest demands – an expansion of our library system to serve a growing population, increased funding for transportation needs, enhanced service to the elderly, emphasis on reducing response time for Fire Rescue, and new and improved facilities for Parks and Recreation.

I have attempted to provide you a budget based on your Strategic Plan with emphasis on making Hillsborough County a more efficient and effective government. It is now your opportunity between today and September 22<sup>nd</sup> to make this budget yours.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia G. Bean". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Patricia G. Bean  
County Administrator