

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



December 11, 2015

Dear Fellow Residents,

When I submitted my FY 2015-16 Proposed Budget to you, I told you that I was confident that Miami-Dade County had turned the corner and that better days were ahead. Now that the budget has been adopted, those days are here! We made the sacrifices necessary in prior years, and, now that our County has a much better financial outlook, we can invest in enhancing services, new equipment, and reserves.

It has always been my focus to ensure that we live in a world-class community that our children and grandchildren can be very proud of and continue to call home. Throughout my administration, and, in fact, my nearly 40-year public service career, I have sought ways to encourage economic and social development, invest in our infrastructure, ensure financial stability, maintain public safety, and improve transportation and mobility options throughout our community. I have been responsible for the development and implementation of innovations in the delivery of public safety services. I have pushed for policies to ensure financial transparency and stability both at the City of Miami as the City Manager and at Miami-Dade County as a Commissioner. I have fought for and supported capital development for our Airport and Seaport, for our roads and transportation systems, and for our cultural facilities. And I have initiated and supported programs for job creation to attract new business, to develop affordable housing, to upgrade public housing, and to provide services for the most vulnerable residents of our community. All of these actions contribute to the resilience of Miami-Dade County.

This budget includes funding to put more officers on the streets and equip those officers with body cameras. More correctional officers will be in our jails to address federal mandates intended to ensure officer safety. Marine services will be enhanced in the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department. We will replace vehicles for the Police Department, Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Animal Services. Programming for children and capital funding for parks facilities will be enhanced, and libraries will be open more days with additional funding available for materials. We have allocated more funding for our tree canopy, and have restored funding for community-based organizations and cultural programs that had been reduced in prior years. More money for meals and home care services for the elderly is included in the budget. My administration has also identified more than \$2 billion in funding available over the next 30 years to support future transit corridor development.

The FY 2015-16 Adopted Budget includes more than half-a-billion dollars in operating and capital expenditures for activities directly related to what Resilient Communities for America identifies as the four paths to building a resilient community: preparing for climate change and extreme weather, expanding renewables and energy efficiency, renewing and strengthening infrastructure, and strengthening the local economy. Our efforts towards resilience include all of our environmental programming and enforcement, land acquisition and natural areas and beach maintenance, infrastructure improvements, emergency management and planning, energy programs, job programs, development of affordable housing, vehicle replacements, and business initiatives.

All of this has been funded while keeping the overall tax rate flat. In fact, the average taxpayer has saved nearly \$1,000 over the past four years. Since I was elected Mayor, the number of budgeted positions in the County has gone down by nearly 1,500, and all taxpayers, in total, have saved \$982 million.

I appreciate the Board of County Commissioners' support in these efforts. Together, through our budget development process, we have made strides toward our collective goal of economic prosperity throughout Miami-Dade County. We must continue to bring the leadership of our community together to build a solid foundation from which we will prepare our residents for future challenges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos A. Gimenez', written in a cursive style.

Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor