


Memorandum



Date: March 30, 2017

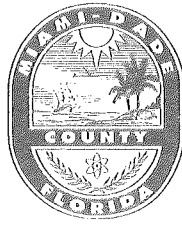
To: Honorable Chairman Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: FY 2017-18 Budget Address

Pursuant to Section 2.02(F) of the Miami-Dade County Charter, attached please find my Budget Address for FY 2017-18.

c: Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Courts
Pedro Garcia, Property Appraiser
Abigail Price-Williams, County Attorney
Geri Bonzon-Keenan, First Assistant County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Jennifer Moon, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Neil Singh, Commission Auditor
Department Directors



CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

MAYOR
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

March 30, 2017

FY 2017-18 Budget Address

Dear Fellow Residents:

At the start of the budget development process each year, it is my responsibility as Mayor, pursuant to the County Charter, to deliver a budget address to the residents of Miami-Dade County, outlining my budget priorities for the coming fiscal year. As your Mayor, one of my highest priorities is, and has always been, managing an efficient and effective government in a financially responsible and transparent manner. To be a truly resilient community, we must provide services that our community values in a way that our residents and taxpayers can afford.

Miami-Dade County should be a safe community with accessible and affordable housing, cost-effective modes of transportation, expanding job opportunities, enjoyable recreational and cultural opportunities, and a strong infrastructure to support these efforts. We should provide the services that our most vulnerable residents need – especially children and the elderly. Our airports and seaports should be ready to bring visitors and business to Miami-Dade County. Our libraries should bring the world to our residents. We must plan for the future and enforce rules that protect our environment, ensure the safety of our structures, and reduce our vulnerabilities to the effects of sea-level rise and climate change. But most importantly, we must do all of this in a way that does not overly burden our residents. We must be conservative in our financial forecasting, guard our reserves, and seek all opportunities to identify resources that we will need to meet our goals.

Last year, we became one of the 100 Resilient Cities identified by the Rockefeller Foundation. Based on the City Resilience Framework, we have organized our budget and efforts towards improving the livability of our community. If we are going to have a sustainable and vibrant community in the future, we need to make good decisions and investments now.

In the past year, we have graduated and deployed 256 police officers, increasing the total number of officers on the street by 110. We have recruited and trained 40 new firefighters with plans to hire an additional 50 this year. Funding is available in the current year and will be renewed to provide resources to address violence in our community, particularly youth violence.

Residents who volunteered are already being moved to temporary units inside Liberty Square to make room for the first phase of the new development, and the neighborhood will be invigorated with this new housing opportunity. I hope to duplicate the success of this initiative elsewhere in the community. Funding for community-based organizations will be continued, as well as local funding for services for the homeless.

Our new Pet Adoption and Protection Center has been incredibly successful and we are working to make sure we have funds available to properly resource our no-kill efforts. We have made great progress on our capital plans for our water and sewer infrastructure, and expanded the resources aimed at attacking the mosquito population and preventing the spread of Zika and other mosquito-borne illnesses.

My administration is working with the Parks Foundation, the Trust for Public Lands and the Miami Foundation to develop options for a dedicated source of funding for parks and green spaces throughout the County. The Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science will open in a few short months, completing the museum structures anchoring Museum Park in downtown Miami.

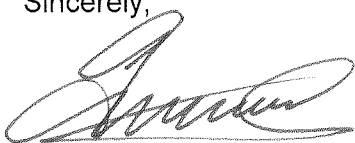
With Board approval of several contracts, we are actively pursuing the development of the six transit corridors that are included in the SMART plan, identifying the best technology to provide efficient transportation throughout the community. Other elements of the SMART plan are moving forward quickly, including the implementation of smart-signal technology to improve traffic flow on ten of our most congested thoroughfares.

I am especially proud of Miami-Dade County's 26,000-employee workforce that provides the very best service to our 2.7 million residents. While we remain at impasse with two of our bargaining units, my administration and I will continue our work to recognize and reward the performance of our hard-working employees, address any inequities, and improve working conditions.

We will have challenges to address as we put together the FY 2017-18 Proposed Budget. Based on legislative and policy actions at the federal and state levels, it is likely we will see reduced support for local communities. The impacts of the Zika virus, the strong dollar, and other economic impacts have led to lower collections of tourist taxes, sales taxes, gas taxes, and other revenues driven by spending in the community in the opening months of FY 2016-17. Higher medical and insurance costs will impact the budget. But because we have been so diligent in ensuring that our budget and financial forecasts have been conservative and eliminated the use of one-time revenue to support on-going operations, I am confident that we will be able to mitigate the impact of these challenges on our service delivery to a great extent.

I look forward to the coming months and developing a budget that will continue to provide the resources needed to support the things that make Miami-Dade County a great place to raise a family, a place where employment opportunities are wide-ranging, a fun place to play, an attractive place to visit, and a safe place to call home.

Sincerely,



Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor