

# Hamilton County 2013 Budget Plan and Five Year Growth and Budget Stabilization Plan

*By: Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune*

## I. Introduction and Executive Summary

Hamilton County faces perhaps its most challenging year in terms of budget and operations in 2013 as a result of ongoing declining revenues coupled with increasing demands for services. We are in no position to cease operations in numerous areas without grave consequences to the public; to county employees; or to the services the county is obligated to provide.

Consequently we are faced with a call to be strategic and thoughtful; to be creative and conservative; and to find a way to balance the budget within existing available resources without raising taxes – all the while remaining open to investing in those areas that will grow the county and county revenues so that we can continue to provide help to those in need and continue to ensure the county is both protected and well served.

I am looking to a 2013 county budget that takes advantage of savings that we have generated through careful consideration by the Board of County Commissioners [“BOCC”] of various cost-savings initiatives and through new revenues that are the result of:

- a.) our past actions in support of economic development; and
- b.) ongoing work in the transportation and property redevelopment arena; and
- c.) new revenues deriving from utilizing existing bond revenue options available to Hamilton County through prudent and limited usage of a bond financing means made available under the Ohio Revised Code.

There are several key components of my proposed 2013 Budget and the Budget Document I have prepared they are:

- A. My Budget embraces a number of general concepts and basic fiscal principles. Among these are that the 2013 Budget must be:
  1. structurally balanced; and
  2. Rely on reductions in costs of operations; and
  3. Actively pursue Shared Services opportunities; and
  4. Utilize current and revised revenue figures; and
  5. Implement all available dollars including unencumbered casino revenues; and

6. Implement ORC 133.082 "Securities Issued in Anticipation of Taxes Collected"; and
7. Work toward reducing operations in areas where mandates are unfunded and the activities are not policy priorities of the county; and
8. Actively pursue state law changes in areas that work to enhance and stabilize county revenues; and
9. Utilizes future revenues from quantifiable economic development activity

B. As a Matter of Policy Priorities, My Budget Supports:

1. Maintaining and Expanding Public Safety Initiatives;
2. Improving the County's Public Health and Expanding Access to Health Care;
3. Continuing the Full Implementation of Inmate Rehabilitation and Re-Entry;
4. Invests in Transit Oriented Development; and
5. Invests in Expansion of Para-Transit Options; and
6. Promotes maintenance of existing county programs in, and expansion of, the county climate action control plan; and
7. Offers Specific Support for Cultural Asset Improvement and Retention;
8. Provides Support for Full Utilization of the County Land-Bank and Expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment.
9. Allows individual Department heads and Elected Officials to approve salary adjustments for employees within approved ranges provided they are able to maintain operations within approved budgeted amounts.

C. My Budget Requires Balancing 2013 to be a part of a Five Year County Budget Stabilization Plan

1. I am requiring a five-year plan based upon existing revenues; reductions in costs; shared services; new economic opportunities; and Quantifiable Results.
2. Year One is focused upon known and existing sources of revenue and costs.
3. Future Years Include One or More, in combination of:
  - a. Increased Property Tax Receipts resulting from property reclamation and property redevelopment for residential, commercial, retail, industrial and greenspace oriented properties;

- b. Increased Sales Tax receipts that are the consequence of job creation and movements toward full employment; and identifiable economic activity resulting in purchases of needed development materials and that arise out of increased expenditures from disposable income;
  - c. Moving to generate over \$10 Billion in new development activity over five years stemming from: Property redevelopment due to LandBank and Port Authority Actions; and Over \$1 Billion worth of I-75 Corridor Construction; and \$2.5 Billion in Brent Spence Bridge construction activity begun; and Over \$2 Billion of additional county wide property/housing construction and redevelopment; and Transit Oriented Development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; and MSD Phase I work.
  - d. Agreed-upon Actions that are the result of Three Summits focused upon Full Employment; Shared Services and Entrepreneurial Governance Opportunities in Energy Alternatives, Right of Way Licensing and P3Project Opportunities.
4. All Future Economic Activity will be evaluated scored and quantified based upon known and existing economic principles with quantifiable results calculated to reasonable economic certainty.

## II. 2013 Budget Revenue Adjustments

- A. Increase available receipts by \$500,000.00 based upon most recent calculations; and
- B. Increase available funds by reducing overall costs by \$3 Million due to MERP savings; and
- C. Utilize ORC 133.082 to generate funds available to County, County Subdivisions; County Taxing Authorities; County wide School Districts; Townships and Municipal Corporations at 100% of uncollected value for 2013. Amounts available for County Operations estimated to be:
  - General Fund: \$3.125 Million
  - Indigent Care: \$3.205 Million

- Mental Health: \$2.79 Million
- Children's Services: \$3.084 Million
- Senior Services: \$1.5 Million
- DD&RS: \$5.564 Million
- Museum Center: \$241,622.00
- Zoological Services: \$542,594.00
- Family Services: \$470,167.00
  
- Sources for Above – Hamilton County Auditor – Real Estate Settlement Distribution Report
  
- Uses for said funds and specific dollar amounts for each subject to further action and determination of eligibility [i.e. using excess Indigent Care Levy funds to offset costs for inmate care currently paid for from county General Fund.

D. Cause similar ORC 133.082 distributions to School Districts and to Municipal Corporations and Townships in Hamilton County; calling upon all to partner with Hamilton County in match programs for specific services that are mutually beneficial as hereinafter set forth.

### III. 2013 Budget Policy Additions

#### A. Maintaining and Expanding Public Safety Initiatives;

1. Support County Wide Patrols in favor of all 49 county political subdivisions at agreed-upon levels and matched by additions to Municipal and Township Budgets from ORC 133.082 funding.
2. Support Safe Pathways to Schools programming in County wide School Districts at agreed upon levels and matched by additions to School District Budgets from ORC 133.082 funding.
3. Initiate full support for Child Abuse and Child Predator Prevention under contracts administered by HCJFS with Darkness to Light as per prior adopted county policy via Childrens' Services Fund increases under ORC 133.082 funds to HCJFS.

#### B. Improving the County's Public Health and Expanding Access to Health Care;

1. Provide County match Funding to reduce infant mortality in connection with Drake initiated county Infant Mortality Rate Reduction Initiative
  2. Provide County match Funding to Increase Access to Dental and Oral care arising out of Drake Dental Care Initiative
  3. Expand availability of, and promote greater access to, Federally Qualified Health Care Centers
- C. Continuing the Full Implementation of Inmate Rehabilitation and Re-Entry;
- D. Invest in Transit Oriented Development by providing a Hamilton County TID Development Fund Grant to serve as seed money to leverage new transit oriented development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; Express Service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements;
- E. Invests in Expansion of Para-Transit Options in partnership with SORTA that expand availability of Access and related service throughout entire Metro Service area, specifically including area beyond I-275 outer-belt.; and
- F. Promotes maintenance of existing county programs in, and expansion of, the county climate action control plan; and
- G. Offers Specific Support for Cultural Asset Improvement and Retention, with specific use of ORC 133.082 funding increase to Cincinnati Museum Center for development of infrastructure display site for Hamilton County Cold War Veterans' and Citizens' Memorial and USS Cincinnati Sail display; and
- H. Provides Support for Full Utilization of the County LandBank and Expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment. Works to implement aggressive property redevelopment plan [attached] in partnership with local governments, community development corporations, community councils and civic organizations, faith based organizations, and Board of Realtors, Realtists, Homebuilders Association; GCEA, CAA, and Real Estate Investors Association.
- I. Works to maintain continuation levels of funding for county departments which, in turn, allows for individual Department

heads and Elected Officials to approve salary adjustments for employees [first time in five years – at discretion of department head as either COL or Merit based adjustments] within approved ranges provided they are able to maintain operations within approved budgeted amounts.

#### IV. 2013 -2017: **Five Year Growth and Stabilization Plan**

##### A. 2013 shall include:

- A Balanced Budget at continuation levels; and
- Policy Implemented as discussed;
- Convene Three Summits during the year on Full Employment, Shared Service Opportunities and Entrepreneurial Government
- Active pursuit of Shared Services for 911 operations; Prosecution of Misdemeanors; Fleet Management; HR Functions; and Public Relations operations; and
- Explore partnerships with Local Governments in the areas of Sheriff's Public Safety Patrols and Housing Development; and
- Explore Partnerships with Local School Districts around efforts aimed at Safe Pathways to School and Reduction of Childhood Abuse and against Child Sexual Predators; and
- Commence to get under contract the I-75 Corridor Improvements; Freight Corridor Improvements; Brent Spence Bridge and
- Conclude development with the City of Cincinnati of a Local Hiring Policy designed to improve local employment and enhance individual consumer spending power and discretionary income.
- Continue expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment. Works to implement aggressive property redevelopment plan [attached] in partnership with local governments, community development corporations, community councils and civic organizations, faith based organizations, and Board of Realtors, Realtists, Homebuilders Association; GCEA, CAA, and Real Estate Investors Association.

##### B. 2014

- Utilize ORC 133.082 at 50% levels of recovery
- Continue 2013 Actions and Policy Implementation, adding to the same, commencing to complete getting under contract with county TID transit oriented development

work through and Over \$1 Billion worth of I-75 Corridor Construction; Over \$2 Billion of additional county wide property/housing construction and redevelopment; and Transit Oriented Development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; and

- Identify and capture revenue stemming from commencement of Brent Spence Bridge construction activity and MSD Phase I sewer work

#### C. 2015

- Utilize ORC 133.082 at 10% levels of recovery
- Continue 2014 Actions and Policy Implementation, adding to the same, commencing to complete getting under contract with county TID transit oriented development work through and Over \$1 Billion worth of I-75 Corridor Construction; Over \$2 Billion of additional county wide property/housing construction and redevelopment; and Transit Oriented Development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; and
- Continue to identify and capture revenue stemming from commencement of Brent Spence Bridge construction activity and MSD Phase I sewer work
- Expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment. Works to implement aggressive property redevelopment plan [attached] in partnership with local governments, community development corporations, community councils and civic organizations, faith based organizations, and Board of Realtors, Realtists, Homebuilders Association; GCEA, CAA, and Real Estate Investors Association.
- Convene County Charter Commission to explore citizen support for Charter Reform of County Government designed to further consolidate operations; economize action and make more efficient county government.

#### D. 2016

- Continue 2014 Actions and Policy Implementation, adding to the same, commencing to complete getting under

contract with county TID transit oriented development work through and Over \$1 Billion worth of I-75 Corridor Construction; Over \$2 Billion of additional county wide property/housing construction and redevelopment; and Transit Oriented Development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; and

- Continue to identify and capture revenue stemming from commencement of Brent Spence Bridge construction activity and MSD Phase I sewer work
- Expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment. Works to implement aggressive property redevelopment plan [attached] in partnership with local governments, community development corporations, community councils and civic organizations, faith based organizations, and Board of Realtors, Realtists, Homebuilders Association; GCEA, CAA, and Real Estate Investors Association.
- Act upon recommendations of County Charter Commission and place on the ballot all citizen supported Charter Reform of County Government designed to further consolidate operations; economize action and make more efficient county government.

#### E. 2017

- Continue 2016 Actions and Policy Implementation, adding to the same, commencing to complete getting under contract with county TID transit oriented development work through and Over \$1 Billion worth of I-75 Corridor Construction; Over \$2 Billion of additional county wide property/housing construction and redevelopment; and Transit Oriented Development stemming from passenger oriented transportation infrastructure in the Eastern Corridor, Regional Rail Plan, Express service to CVG; and Freight Corridor Transportation Infrastructure Improvements; and
- Continue to identify and capture revenue stemming from commencement of Brent Spence Bridge construction activity and MSD Phase I sewer work
- Expanded Property Reclamation and Redevelopment. Works to implement aggressive property redevelopment plan [attached] in partnership with local governments, community development corporations, community councils and civic organizations, faith based organizations, and

Board of Realtors, Realtists, Homebuilders Association;  
GCEA, CAA, and Real Estate Investors Association.

- Implement results of any voter approved Charter Reform of County Government designed to further consolidate operations; economize action and make more efficient county government; and thereby further reduce costs of county government.