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**COMMISSIONERS APPROVE 2011 BUDGET**

*A balanced and fiscally responsible appropriation measure*

Today, Franklin County Commissioners approved a \$308.1 million General Revenue Fund budget for 2011. The county's 2011 All Funds budget, which includes federal and other funding sources, is \$1.64 billion.

The 2011 Budget is a balanced and fiscally responsible budget which carefully supports the County's top priorities of spurring job and economic growth, protecting community safety and security, maintaining core human services, including access to affordable health care, affordable housing and emergency shelter and maintaining a commitment to environmental quality and sustainable practices.

"This budget controls expenditures and maintains prudent reserves to protect the County's double-Triple A bond rating; placing Franklin County in the top 1% of all counties in the nation," said Commission President John O'Grady. "This strong financial position allows the County to minimize the expenses paid to finance community projects like the new Common Pleas Courthouse and animal shelter which add jobs to our economy and improve the quality of life for county residents."

The forecast for General Revenue in 2011, which sets the framework for appropriations in the 2011 budget, is that revenue will decline 1.4%. Therefore, the 2011 General Fund Budget will decrease by \$8.5 million compared to the 2010 Approved Budget.

While the economy has begun to recover, the recovery has been slow and many families still do not enjoy economic stability. The 2011 Budget maintains essential services that provide a safety net for residents and makes significant economic investments to encourage the development of good jobs and private business growth.

"Fiscally prudent decisions since 2005, including the adoption of a fiscal sustainability policy, have ensured that Franklin County weathered the economic storm to date. By cutting spending and maintaining prudent reserves, Franklin County is a national leader among counties around the nation, holding the only double AAA bond rating in Ohio," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "I am proud of our fiscal watchdog approach to reigning in spending while continuing to deliver quality services, including a strong focus on job creation."

During the 2011 budget review process, \$27.6 million was cut from funding requests made by agencies and offices. Additionally, work to control costs in the employee health insurance plan produced a balanced blend of benefit plan changes.

The 2011 budget numbers are as follows:

- The 2011 Total All-Funds Budget is \$1.64 billion.
- The 2011 General Fund Budget totals \$308.1 million.
- The 2011 General Fund available resources total \$332.4 million, including \$50.8 million in the county's beginning cash balance.

“Throughout 2010 Franklin County families were faced with a climbing unemployment rate as well as high rates of home foreclosures and as a result access to food assistance programs steadily increased,” said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “Responding to these continuing difficulties, Franklin County worked diligently to rein in spending and expects to end the year \$6.9 million below the total spending authorized in the 2010 budget. We will continue this financial planning and prudence throughout 2011 so that Franklin County families have access to the critical, life saving resources many will rely upon in the coming months.”

Franklin County residents can access a user-friendly electronic Citizens Guide to the Franklin County Budget by logging onto the Commissioners' website at <http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners/budget/index.cfm>