

Hillsborough County

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Hillsborough County Property Appraiser Bob "Coach" Henriquez Proposes Budget Cut Amid National Inflation and Population Boom.

TAMPA, FL -- Hillsborough County Property Appraiser Bob "Coach" Henriquez announced today his office has submitted a proposed budget cut for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, a notable move amidst national inflation trends and the county's rapid population growth.

Despite a challenging economic landscape, Henriquez and his team have managed to tighten their financial belt. Over the past three years, national inflation has surged by an average of more than 5 percent, peaking at 8 percent in 2022. Meanwhile, Hillsborough *C*ounty's population has swelled by nearly 25 percent from 2010 to 2024, now boasting an estimated 1.5 million residents.

"We understand the financial challenges facing our ever-growing and diverse community," Henriquez said. "My commitment to responsible stewardship extends to the financial operation of my office. We've achieved a tremendous level of efficiency, allowing us to propose a budget cut for the coming fiscal year by continuously focusing on innovation and best business practices while still enhancing customer service and transparency."

For the 2024-25 fiscal year, Mr. Henriquez has proposed a budget decrease of 1.01 percent from the previous year. Thanks to these and previous efficiencies during his tenure, Henriquez's office has returned nearly \$3.2 million to the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.

A recent financial report from the Florida Department of Revenue highlighted that Henriquez's office operates with the lowest budget per capita among the state's 67 county property appraiser offices. This achievement is attributed to several key innovations that have dramatically streamlined operations, reducing Henriquez's staff from 133 full-time employees in 2013 to 114 in 2024.

In addition to financial prudence, Henriquez has prioritized upgrades in customer service. These enhancements include modernizing the office's telephone system, revamping the public website, and significantly bolstering the office's network resiliency and cybersecurity measures to protect citizen data.

"We take pride in providing exceptional customer service while remaining fiscally responsible," Henriquez said. "This budget reflects our commitment to serving the citizens of Hillsborough County efficiently and effectively, fulfilling our statutory responsibilities to both state and local government authorities."

To view a brief video message from Mr. Henriquez regarding this announcement, please visit <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiL04XdihbA</u>

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