



Letter from Commissioner Long

THE RAYS ARE HERE TO STAY IN PINELLAS COUNTY!

On behalf of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, I am excited to enthusiastically exclaim – the Rays are HERE TO STAY in Pinellas County!

It was an impressive team effort, and we are thrilled to be a part of this partnership with the City of St. Petersburg and the Rays. I applaud Mayor Welch, the St. Petersburg City Council, Stu Sternberg, Brian Auld, Matt Silverman, and all of the Rays, along with MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred for remaining engaged, and for the teamwork to achieve greater economic prosperity and quality of life for our Pinellas County residents and visitors. I especially want to thank the Pinellas County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council and the staff for the monumental effort to get us to this special announcement.

Pinellas County is now a true sports destination. In addition to the Rays and Major League Baseball we are proud of hosting other marquee events such as the Valspar Championship, the Firestone Grand Prix and Spring Training, which all generate millions of dollars for our local businesses through visitor spending.

Beyond Baseball, we have our beautiful Beaches. As a leader in tourism, we know visitors want a total experience. Baseball and beaches – we've got both! And we will make the investments to keep us world-class paid for from the hotel bed tax. Whether they come to soak up our sunshine and enjoy our natural landscape, take in a baseball game, stay in one of our many hotels, enjoy our beautiful arts scene, or savor in our growing culinary scene, we love sharing our paradise with our visitors.

Pinellas County is very much looking forward to investing tourism-generated funds to bring this new stadium to our community and create another new, exciting destination within our County – paid for by tourists. Partnering to invest in projects like this stadium has a far-reaching impact throughout the entire County by creating at least 4,500 construction jobs and more than 15,000 annual jobs throughout Pinellas County, new County sales tax, and additional hotel bed taxes.

This is an unprecedented opportunity with huge economic, workforce, and quality of life potential for Pinellas County residents.

This stadium will act as a catalyst for this Historic District and beyond – a space where our local families can live, work, and play in an entertainment destination. Our entire County benefits with this new jewel venue and events that can draw visitors to Pinellas County for the sports, arts, culture, culinary, and entertainment opportunities they seek. The positive ripple effect extends to all corners – and shores – of our beautiful peninsula.

This project is a home run and means so much more to us than sports. We're excited that the Rays are FINALLY here to stay. This is the largest economic development project in this County's history. It goes without saying how proud we are to be a part of creating a new venue for Pinellas County families to enjoy for generations to come.

Our hometown team will stay right where they belong – at home, in Pinellas County. Go Rays!