



DICK A. GRECO
MAYOR

August 15, 2002

Honorable Chairman and
Members of the City Council

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to present to you the Recommended Annual Budget for the City of Tampa fiscal year beginning October 1, 2002 and ending September 30, 2003. The budget for FY03 totals \$660 million, which is only a 2% increase over the current year, due primarily to a reduction in capital improvement projects. This budget supports City services provided by a staff of 4,794, for a population of 308,005. The ad valorem property tax millage rate will remain at 6.539 for the 14th consecutive year. No residential rate increases are planned for Water, Sanitary Sewers or Solid Waste.

Some of the important programs in the FY03 budget and some programs being completed in FY02 and FY03 are:

Parks and Recreation Expansion

The \$17 million recreation bond program, begun in 1999, provides for construction or renovation of 16 recreation facilities, such as community centers, gymnasiums and swimming pools. The eight projects which have been completed are:

- Construction of the new Jackson Heights YET Community Center, a 12,000 square foot community center and gymnasium with a computer lab, kitchen, classrooms and multi-purpose room. Contributions from the National Football League and the Glazer Family Foundation supplemented bond funds for construction of the center and a football field.
- Renovation and expansion of the Oak Park Community Center.
- Relocation and construction of a new Barksdale Senior Citizens Center in Macfarlane Park featuring a computer lab, ballroom and an arts and crafts room.
- A new swimming pool at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Complex.
- Soccer field improvements at Cuscaden.
- Soccer field improvements at South Tampa Athletic Center.
- Construction of a new Playground Activity Center next to Benito Middle School in New Tampa.
- Renovations to the Joe Abrahams Wellness Center at Ballast Point.

Three projects, namely the Port Tampa, Forest Hills and Kate Jackson Community Center projects are underway. Improvements at Seminole Heights Gymnastics and Dance Center; Loretta Ingraham and College Hill Community Centers; and Perry Harvey and Desoto Parks will begin this fall.

A total of 46 additional full and part-time positions are funded in the Park and Recreation departments. Included in this number are 36 positions related to the planned openings of various new bond and non-bond funded facilities, of which eight are the completed bond projects.

More than 1,100 acres of park land have been acquired by the Parks Department since 1995. Significant new additions to the Parks System are a 40 acre park being developed in New Tampa, as a cooperative project with the Hillsborough County School Board; and the Sulphur Springs water tower site, obtained through a joint purchase with the Environmental Land Acquisition and Protection program. The program to acquire downtown waterfront continues. Acquisitions for Fort Brooke Park and expansion, the Cultural Arts District and purchase of numerous waterfront parcels will ultimately result in a Parks "Ribbon of Green" from Harbour Island all the way north to Palm Avenue.

Tampa-Ybor Historic Streetcar

On October 19, 2002, the TECO Line Streetcar System, Tampa's new electric streetcar line will begin service between the Convention Center and Ybor City, via the Channel District. This project, shared among the City of Tampa, Tampa Historic Streetcar, Inc., HARTline, and the Florida and United States Departments of Transportation, has been several years in the making. The streetcars, replicas of those running in Tampa until 1946, will run seven days a week and take 22 minutes to complete a one-way trip.

Anticipated benefits of the streetcar line are support of continued growth in downtown Tampa, Channelside and Ybor City; additional transportation capacity; support of tourism and the cruise industry out of Channelside; and transport of workers. It is also expected to generate extensive commercial development along the streetcar route, with many projects already planned or underway. In Phase Two, future extension to the downtown central business district is planned.

The ratio of funding for the \$53 million project has been four to one Federal to City share. An endowment fund has been established and set aside for the purpose of funding future operations.

Cultural Arts District

At present, the Performing Arts Center and the Tampa Museum of Art, located downtown along the east bank of the Hillsborough River, are the beginnings of a cultural arts district. However, they are separated by an underutilized park, railroad tracks, a parking garage, and the County Library. In addition, the 22 year old Museum's limited space restricts the size of exhibitions and number of arts programs that can be offered.

Bonding of a portion of future revenues from the Community Investment Tax will fund development of the new Cultural Arts District, extending from Kennedy Boulevard on the south to the Performing Arts Center at Tyler Street on the north. The centerpiece will be a new Art Museum designed by Rafael Vinoly. The district will include reconfigured park land, restaurants, shops, pedestrian walkways and an apartment complex.

Public Safety

Planned for FY03 are:

- Ten police officers are being added, primarily funded by a Universal Hiring Grant. They will be assigned to a Community Oriented Police Squad (COPS) for the Belmont Heights Estate District.
- Three school resource officers are being added for assignment to three new schools opened in FY02.
- Over \$8 million is included in the budget to cover overhire and leave buyouts for the Police and Fire Rescue Departments. By the end of FY03, 59 police officers and 43 firefighters will retire, in conjunction with a State authorized Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP). Positions will need to be filled in advance, in order to maintain normal service levels.
- Seven firefighter positions are being added to augment staffing levels as needed.
- A Fire Rescue Health and Wellness Program, begun in FY02 and being fully implemented in FY03, has already resulted in a reduced number of on-the-job injuries.

Enterprise Programs

The City is now benefiting from major enterprise department projects completed in FY02:

- The \$88 million retrofit of the McKay Bay Refuse-to-Energy Plant, brings the facility into compliance with Clean Air Act quality standards.
- The \$15 million Fernando Noriega, Jr. Palm Avenue Garage doubles Ybor City garage capacity by adding 1,230 parking spaces for the use of Hillsborough Community College students, along with Ybor City workers and visitors.
- The Solid Waste curb-side recycling program was expanded during FY02 to include all single family homes in the City of Tampa. Twelve positions and 11 recycling trucks were added to implement the expansion.

- The \$65 million “Water Quality 2000” improvement program modernized and automated water treatment processes and facilities, while pumping of water from the new Aquifer Storage and Recovery system saved the City nearly \$1 million in water supply costs.

For more detail on the various program areas I have discussed, please refer to the Highlights section of this book, the CIP Budget Book and the Budget Supplement, all of which can be found on the City Web Site: www.tampagov.net.

It has been my great privilege to serve as Mayor at two different periods in my life and the life of Tampa (1967-1973 and 1995-2003). In the period 1967 to 1973, Tampa was making a transition from being a large “town” to becoming a middle-sized “city”. Key area projects, completed in the 1960’s and early 1970’s, such as the University of South Florida, Tampa International Airport, Tampa Stadium and Tampa’s Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant were building blocks for Tampa/Hillsborough County’s flourishing economy over the next two decades, notwithstanding the effects of a national recession in the early 1990’s.

Over the years, Tampa has grown dramatically in importance as a regional economic center. Today, Tampa enjoys a widely diversified economic base, including tourism, construction, finance, technology, health care, the Port of Tampa and MacDill Air Force Base. This diversification has helped shield Tampa from severe fluctuations in the economy.

Following is a listing, along with primary examples, of my top priorities during this administration, beginning in FY95:

- Encouragement of quality development, both commercial and residential, to bolster the economic health of the community and make the City a more desirable place to live. Examples are streamlining of plans/permit processes and timely provision of infrastructure.
- Encouraging redevelopment and revitalization of areas of the City which were in decline. The Centro Ybor project helped revitalize Ybor City and the East Tampa Initiative helped rehabilitate the area north and east of Ybor City.
- Working with neighborhood associations to best direct City services to all areas of the City. The Neighborhood Liaison Office is dedicated to promoting good City-neighborhood working relationships.
- Promoting the preservation of our rich cultural heritage. Increasing the number of historic districts and restoring such historic buildings as Union Station, the Free Library and the German-American Club for use as City offices have furthered this goal. The historic Cuscaden Pool in Ybor City will soon be restored and considered for local landmark status.
- Providing City employees with the facilities and equipment they need to perform their jobs. Completion of the Police Headquarters/District Offices and City-wide vehicle replacement programs have improved working conditions for many employees.
- Provision of recreational, cultural and entertainment facilities for the benefit of our citizens and to help attract high technology companies to locate in Tampa. A major achievement was helping to secure Community Investment Tax funding for Raymond James Stadium, numerous City-wide improvements, and the new Tampa Cultural Arts District. The recreation bond program and influencing location of the Ice Palace downtown are other examples of advancements in this area.
- Improving the environmental quality, attractiveness and cleanliness of the City. Such projects as the McKay Bay Refuse-to-Energy Retrofit, Water Plant expansion, South Tampa Area Reuse of water program, and tree planting and cleanup programs all contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment for our citizens.

In conclusion- as documented in my status report dated, May 17, 2002, “A Report of the 1995-2002 Accomplishments and Achievements”, it is evident that we have made substantial progress in all of these areas due to the efforts of City staff, support of City Council, co-operative efforts with other governments and agencies, and the use of resourceful funding measures. It is my hope that many of the projects we have accomplished will, in turn, serve as building blocks for the future success and prosperity of Tampa.

Sincerely,



Dick A. Greco

