



DICK A. GRECO
MAYOR

August 17, 2000

Honorable Chairman and
Members of the City Council

I am pleased to present to you the Recommended Annual Budget for the City of Tampa fiscal year beginning October 1, 2000 and ending September 30, 2001. The budget for FY2001 totals \$610 million and the ad valorem property tax millage rate remains at 6.539 mills for the 12th consecutive year. Also, for the third consecutive year, we are not recommending any changes in the rates of the Water, Sanitary Sewers, or Solid Waste departments.

I am very proud of the way Tampa's citizens, businesses and City government are working together to make Tampa a great place to live and work.

Each year, working through the budget process gives us an opportunity to take stock of how far we have come and how far we have to go in accomplishing our goals for Tampa. Here is a summary of major accomplishments completed in FY2000 and our FY2001 funded priorities. More detail on each of these projects or programs can be found in the Highlights section of this Budget.

Public Safety-

The highest priority during my administration has been given to strengthening the public safety departments with staffing and equipment so they can perform their missions safely and successfully. These efforts are paying off. For example, violent crime has dropped for five consecutive years, with a 12% reduction from 1998 to 1999, the latest year for which figures are available.

FY2000 saw the completion of the Police Department decentralization of patrol districts and communications at a cost of over \$15 million for acquisition and rehabilitation of the new police headquarters, two new district offices and the police and fire communications center. The Department's new helicopter, acquired in FY2000, is equipped with a video system to allow live broadcast of day or night surveillance images to district offices. We plan to purchase another helicopter in FY2001 with grant funds.

The FY2001 budget includes funding for the initiation of a pilot Police Service Officer program whereby civilian service officers will be hired and trained to respond to non-emergency requests for police service, such as minor traffic accidents and burglaries. This program, starting with 8 service officers, will free up sworn police officers to concentrate on patrol duties. The vehicle take home program of 741 marked and 226 unmarked cars and a multi-million dollar information systems upgrade including records, mobile digital, imaging and teleconferencing systems, will be completed in FY2001.

Cumulative replacement of Fire Rescue vehicles has reduced the average age of front-line fire engines and ladder trucks from 13 to 5 years and the reserves from 22 to 15 years. This year's purchase of 160

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus sets and 200 reserve air tanks improved the safety and effectiveness of Fire Rescue personnel.

In FY2001, a new fire station in the Hunter's Green area of New Tampa will be completed and opened, staffed by 17 firefighters. A replacement station will also be built next to the Police district offices near Busch Gardens. The ongoing equipment replacement program will provide state-of-the-art fire helmets to improve firefighter safety; and automatic external defibrillators and monitor/defibrillators to improve capability to handle cardiac emergencies.

Quality Of Life-

Now that basic City services, such as public safety and health and environment, are up to standard, we must give attention to recreational, parks and cultural facilities and programs to enhance our citizens' quality of life. The City is in the midst of a major overhaul of these facilities and programs, which had not received the attention they needed in the past. Funding sources include taxes, revenue bonds and grants.

The FY2000 opening of the Copeland Park Community Center/Gymnasium and the Sulphur Springs Swimming Pool afford residents of the University North and Sulphur Springs areas greatly expanded recreational opportunities. The Parks Department has secured the following substantial State of Florida grants, active in both FY2000 and FY2001, to further its expansion of park facilities: A Greenways grant for connection of the Friendship Trail Bridge, Picnic Island and the MacDill Air Force Base Trail; Environmental Protection grants for Cypress Point and DeSoto parks improvements; and a Florida Communities Trust grant for Fort Brooke Park and the Ribbon of Green acquisitions which will all tie in to the downtown Riverwalk.

In FY2001, Recreation will concentrate on completing \$17 million of bond funded projects to construct, upgrade and rehabilitate recreational facilities throughout the City. The major projects underway are: a joint project with Hillsborough County schools to build a recreation facility at Benito Middle School; a new David Barksdale senior/special population center at MacFarlane Park; renovation of the Oak Park Community Center; and showers and equipment for the Ballast Point Fitness and Wellness Center. Many of the remaining bond funded facilities will be designed in FY2001, with construction following. Parks will continue implementation of the State grants obtained in FY2000.

A Frank E. Duckwall Foundation funded study to determine the scope and content of a future cultural arts district will be completed in FY2001. The results of this study will direct the development of the riverfront between the current Museum of Art and the Performing Arts Center. The project will include construction of a new museum.

Economic Development-

Through a combination of City efforts and funding; various public/private partnerships; loans; bonds; grants; and investment by private enterprise, economic development is flourishing throughout Tampa. The major successes in FY2000 have been the accelerated revival of the historic Ybor City district, the opening of the Marriott Waterside Hotel near the Convention Center, and progress on the Tampa Heights and East Tampa redevelopment initiatives.

- The \$44.5 million Centro Ybor project is the centerpiece of the Ybor City revival. This two level complex consisting of cinemas, restaurants, sidewalk cafes, retail shopping and historic displays will open in October, 2000.

For FY2001, a key project which will connect Ybor City, the Channel district and downtown is the Tampa-Ybor Historic Streetcar. Operation of the first phase, expected to begin in December, 2001, will cover 2.3 miles; running between Ybor City and the Convention Center, with ten stops between. Tampa Historic Streetcar, Inc. (a non-profit corporation) will operate up to eight air conditioned

streetcars modeled after those used in Tampa in the early 1900s.

- The FY2000 opening of the luxurious Marriott Waterside Hotel across the street from the Convention Center is the culmination of a long struggle to obtain a convention hotel with sufficient capacity to attract large conventions. The hotel will enable fuller utilization of the Convention Center, putting it on a paying basis, and will contribute greatly to the economic development of downtown. The Marriott will be the NFL headquarters for Superbowl XXXV to be held in Tampa in January, 2001.

To accommodate the increased convention business, an expansion project is planned for FY2001 to double the number of meeting rooms in the Convention Center to 36.

- Nearly \$100 million will be invested within the boundaries of the Mayor's Heights project over a five-year period. FY2000 is the second year of the project aimed at revitalizing the Tampa Heights neighborhood, just north of downtown.

The 232 unit Mobley Park Apartments, with affordable apartments for low and moderate income families and senior citizens will open in late 2000. Redevelopment of the old Police Headquarters site on North Tampa Street will be the focus of FY2001 endeavors. Various proposals are being considered for a mixed-use development with residential, business and educational uses.

- FY2000 is also the second year of the Mayor's Enterprise Development Team (MEDT); a comprehensive housing, economic development and neighborhood revitalization project for East Tampa. This year, over 100 vacant lots were acquired for construction of new single family houses for low and moderate income families.

FY2001 plans include rehabilitation and construction of housing, relocating housing, and intensive neighborhood clean-ups.

Health And Environment-

This year, the City of Tampa experienced the effects of the worst drought in 100 years. The Water Department was very resourceful in dealing with the crisis by quickly imposing strict water usage limits; by increasing use of water from springs and the Tampa ByPass Canal; and by purchasing water from Tampa Bay Water.

In FY2001, the Department will complete its Aquifer Storage and Recovery project to store one billion gallons of water during the rainy season for use in the dry season. It will continue work on the \$45 million Hillsborough River Water Treatment Plant expansion and initiate the South Tampa Area Reuse (STAR) project to provide reclaimed water for lawn irrigation to residents of South Tampa.

The Sanitary Sewers Department will begin Phase I of a pilot Optimization Program in FY2001 to improve operations and maintenance through use of such techniques as program-driven maintenance, skill-based pay and working in teams.

It is anticipated that the \$88 million retrofit of Solid Waste's McKay Bay Refuse-to-Energy Complex to meet new air quality standards will be completed by October, 2001.

Housing-

Along with the housing components of the Tampa Heights and East Tampa projects discussed under Economic Development, substantial progress in housing upgrades has been made utilizing the \$32.5 million Hope VI grant awarded to Tampa Housing Authority for revitalization and renewal of public housing. This program involves demolition of rundown subsidized housing; construction of new, affordable single and multi-family housing; development of commercial and entrepreneurial enterprises; and job placement training.

The plan includes replacement of the public housing communities of College Hill Homes and Ponce de Leon Courts with a new community named Belmont Heights Estates. The new mixed income community will offer apartments, townhouses and condominiums, as well as home-ownership opportunities. A 74 unit village will also be provided for elderly public housing residents.

In the current fiscal year, Housing by St. Laurence began a 104 unit development of affordable homes near Busch Gardens. As construction and marketing of the homes proceeds in FY2001, the City will use the Challenge Fund to assist income eligible families with financing.

City Infrastructure and Equipment-

As we approached the new millennium, we saw a need to review how we provide services to our citizens. This review indicated that many of our vehicles, equipment, and facilities were not only old, but in dire need of maintenance or replacement. In addition to the police facilities new construction and replacement, the recreation bond projects, and the police and fire equipment replacement projects, the City implemented a City-wide sedan and light truck replacement program two years ago. Vehicles for our inspection and work crews are noticeably more dependable.

Now, we will begin addressing the last major segment of the vehicle replacement program- the heavy equipment. For FY2001 and the next several years, we will be increasing the heavy equipment replacement budget from \$800,000 per year to \$1.8 million per year. This effort, along with the pooling of very large, specialized equipment, will begin to improve the reliability and reduce maintenance costs of our heavy equipment fleet.

In conclusion, I am looking forward to working with each of you to pursue our common interests of providing the highest level of services to our citizens while keeping taxes and fees as low as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dick A. Greco".

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