



PAM IORIO
MAYOR

August 14, 2003

Honorable Chairman
and Members of 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, 2003 and ending September 30, 2004. For the 15th consecutive year the property tax rate will remain at 6.539 mills. The budget for FY04 totals \$646 million, which is a 2% decrease from the current year, due primarily to a reduction in bond funded capital improvement projects. This budget supports city services provided by a staff of 4,873 for a population of 311,880. Rate increases for parking, wastewater and solid waste are required due to serious operating shortfalls. Implementation of a moderate stormwater charge is also planned in order to lay the foundation for meaningful improvements to our drainage system.

Tampa is a great city because of the strength of our neighborhoods - neighborhoods that are diverse and unique. My first budget as mayor reflects an emphasis on neighborhood improvements. As such, the theme of this year's budget is "Investing in Neighborhoods." It recognizes the importance of constantly investing our tax dollars in those quality of life initiatives that make a difference on a day-to-day basis. With safe, clean and attractive neighborhoods our city will continue to prosper.

What does Investing in Neighborhoods mean to our citizens?

- Additional personnel for Police and Fire bringing staffing levels to 1,002 uniformed police officers and 552 uniformed firefighters and rescue personnel. A recommitment to community policing and a commitment to our residents that every neighborhood can be safe.
- A more aggressive, proactive, systematic and comprehensive approach to code enforcement with the addition of five new inspectors, and laptop computers in cars for greater efficiency.
- A 55% increase in the amount of money devoted to the replacement of street signs, sidewalks, traffic calming devices and resurfacing.
- The addition of 36 positions to the Parks and Recreation Department to provide staffing for new and renovated community centers and ballfields. Construction and improvement to more than 30 parks and recreation facilities city-wide.

These improvements reflect the philosophy of my administration. Government should focus on providing the quality basic services taxpayers expect. Citizens should be able to expect their government to run efficiently with an emphasis on customer service. To meet these expectations, I reorganized City government shortly after taking office in April. City administration is now organized into four key functional areas where departments are grouped together to facilitate coordination and communication. In addition to the Police Chief and the Fire Chief who report directly to me, each functional area is headed by a senior level administrator who is accountable for achieving the goals of my administration.

Public Safety

- Improving public safety is a key objective of my administration. “Operation Commitment” which began in May and targeted East Tampa, will become a model for how we will focus on high crime areas where drug dealing and prostitution impact the lives of residents and prevent neighborhoods from reaching their economic potential. A new Police Chief will be selected soon. This new leadership will build upon an already strong police department and help take it to an even higher level of excellence. Five new positions are being added for youth and crime prevention programs.
- Our new Fire Chief, selected in June, has already reorganized the management structure of Tampa Fire Rescue saving taxpayers nearly \$300,000 in the process. These monies are now being reinvested in seven additional firefighters to further enhance public safety.

Neighborhood Services

- Neighborhood Services will focus on a more responsive City government for our neighborhoods.
- The Parks and Recreation departments have been combined to provide greater efficiency.
- Code Enforcement is now a separate department, established as a proactive arm of city government. Once reactive and complaint driven, Code Enforcement will now initiate actions to clean up our city.
- The Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations and Community Affairs Department will work together to assess neighborhood needs and help develop solutions to neighborhood problems. Our goal is to have citizens’ concerns both heard and addressed.

Chief of Staff

- The Chief of Staff is responsible for administration of my office and overall coordination of staff actions. An online Citizen Action Center will enable us to track citizen actions or information requests from receipt of requests through resolution. The Chief of Staff will also be the focal point for coordinating the development of “best practices” initiatives throughout city departments. City processes will be evaluated, compared to other jurisdictions and reworked to create an efficient, cost-effective organization capable of delivering high quality public services. Examples of this type of activity include:
 - Optimization Programs - The Water, Wastewater and Stormwater departments are in various stages of completely upgrading their operations toward a goal of becoming “High Performance Organizations.”
 - Police Department Best Practices Grants - The Department has just received its third U.S. Department of Justice grant from the Community Oriented Policing Office related to the Office’s “Integrity Initiative.” The Tampa Police Department’s early warning/intervention program is being used as a seminar model for other jurisdictions to establish performance criteria for officers concerning such issues as citizen complaints and racial profiling.

Economic Development

- Economic Development will focus on the growth of Tampa as a quality city. This multi-dimensional area covers a wide range of activities that will need to come together to generate City-wide economic betterment. This budget supports several specific economic development goals of our administration.
 - Creating a residential neighborhood for Downtown - In addition to the residential growth in Channelside, we envision a residential neighborhood in the North Franklin area of downtown. Plans are underway to open Franklin Street to the north, connecting downtown to Tampa Heights. The City has assumed ownership of the historic Federal Courthouse and its potential for redevelopment uses could serve as a catalyst for further residential development.
 - Establishing Tampa as a city known as a creative center where the arts flourish and add to our quality of life - Investing in the arts and the cultural life of our community is not only a positive from a quality of life perspective, but also from an economic one. Construction planning and design continues for the new Tampa Museum of Art, a private/public partnership that will be the centerpiece of a new cultural district. While construction for the new museum will get underway once the private fundraising is completed, the rest of the cultural arts district is still an unfinished canvas. This allows us to properly plan an important public space that can complement the museum; open the riverfront to the public; provide our city with a focal point for

community events; and provide for residential living. It is important we open up our riverfront for the public to enjoy. A goal of this administration is completion of a continuous riverwalk, allowing the public to walk or jog along the river from Tampa Heights to Cotanchobee Fort Brooke Park next to Channelside. Plans continue for development of the Ribbon of Green Park system. Ashley Street should be recognized as a gateway into our city.

- Encouraging redevelopment in economically challenged neighborhoods - The new Manager for the East Tampa Development and Community Lending Program will focus on economic opportunities for East Tampa. Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) are being developed for Channelside and Drew Park and a study has commenced which is intended to result in the creation of a CRA for East Tampa. We want to improve housing and encourage businesses in West Tampa and East Tampa - the core of our center city.

Public Works

- Public Works encompasses the delivery of key municipal services and infrastructure.
- A new Stormwater Department has been created to concentrate resources toward solving long-standing drainage problems. The Stormwater special assessment charge is planned to take effect October 1st.
- The 40th Street Widening project, a \$70 million transportation initiative, is our administration's top road priority. The first of five segments will go to construction this fiscal year and we are working aggressively to move forward on the other four segments. Funding is from federal, state, county and city sources.
- City-wide provision of sidewalks, street resurfacing, street signage and traffic calming devices in response to citizen and neighborhood group requests are quality of life issues for which substantial additional funding is included in this budget.
- The Water Department has an ongoing program of replacing aging water pipes. The Wastewater Department is in the planning phase of developing a similar replacement program for the aging sewer pipes.
- The South Tampa Reclaimed Project (STAR) Phase I (including Davis Islands, Hyde Park, Palma Ceia and the Westshore District) will be completed in early FY04. Phase II boundaries are under review.
- Also planned for FY04 is the design of a recreation/gymnastics center/multi-use facility for New Tampa.

This budget aims to be fiscally responsible, continuing the current level of services and providing improved services where possible. These are described in the Highlights section following this letter, along with ongoing budget and management goals. However, money is not the only resource that must be managed wisely in order to improve our city. It is the people who ultimately get the job done. I believe in the capacity of people to perform at high levels of excellence. This is an administration for those who believe in the importance of public service and want Tampa to serve as an example to the rest of the nation as a city of quality and excellence.

I value the contribution of our employees and know that we will attain our goals and produce positive results for the citizens of Tampa. Improving our community also means working in partnership with neighborhoods, businesses, outside agencies and county, state, and federal governments.

It is an honor to serve the people of Tampa; to help shape the future of our great city in a positive and progressive way. I am looking forward to working with City Council to accomplish our vision of Tampa as a thriving, more livable city.

Sincerely,



Pam Iorio
Mayor