Old City Hall

Information

For more information, contact

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Hours of Operation:
Weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Based on its architectural significance and contribution to the early development of the city, Tampa’s City Hall was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, and the building was designated as a local historic landmark by Tampa City Council in 1994. It stands today as it did in 1915, as a source of inspiration that links Tampa’s vibrant past to the bright prospects of its future. Old City Hall is currently home to City Council, Council Chambers, City Clerk’s Office, Legal Department, Audit Department and some Human Resources Offices. It also houses the Mascotte Room and the Sister Cities Room.

Text supplied by Dennis Fernandez, Architectural Review & Historic Preservation, City of Tampa

Mayor Bob Buckhorn

Old City Hall is a municipal building located at the corner of Florida Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard at 315 East Kennedy Boulevard in Tampa, Florida.
the U.S. Army in the Spanish American War. Bonfoey and Elliott’s partnership was dissolved in 1917. Elliott went on to design Tampa’s Italian Club, Cuban Club, Masonic Temple, and several other buildings in downtown Tampa and surrounding areas.

Bonfoey and Elliott designed a ten-story City Hall and a three-story police department directly to the south connected by a second-story skywalk with 35,000 square feet of office space. At the time, City Hall was the tallest building south of Jacksonville. With its symmetrical design, classical motifs, and elaborate terra cotta detailing, the architects’ design for City Hall incorporated Beaux Arts architectural references into its traditional tripartite construction.

City Council, however, did not find the funds for the clockworks. Hortense Oppenheimer, the daughter of prominent Tampa physician Louis Sims Oppenheimer, led the campaign that raised $1,200 to help pay for the clock. W.H. Beckwith Jewelry Company donated the remainder necessary to provide the 2,840 pound, four-faced clock. Prior to the completion of City Hall, the clock was nicknamed “Hortense the Beautiful” in honor of its benefactor, and it retains this name today.

Ground was broken on July 18, 1914, by Mrs. Maria Moore Post, widow of the fifth Mayor of Tampa, Madison Post. City Hall was constructed by McGucken and Hyer, Contractors, in a timely manner in only 14 months. It was completed on August 30, 1915. In a special ceremony led by Mayor D.B. McKay on the following Saturday evening, the entire building was illuminated from base to dome, including the Roman-numeral face of Hortense the Beautiful. Professor Walter E. Cobb, leader of Heidt’s Municipal Band, composed a special “City Hall March” to commemorate the occasion. The Tampa Tribune described the new building as “Tampa’s City Hall Layer Cake.”

M. Leo Elliott (1886-1967) was born in Woodstock, New York. He attended Cooper’s Institute in New York City and trained at the New York City firm of Welch, Smith & Provost. In 1907, he moved to Tampa and formed a partnership with B.C. Bonfoey. Bonfoey (1872-1953) was born in Connecticut and served in