

CITY SERVICE INVESTMENTS IN EARLY CONSOLIDATION BUDGETS

The following excerpts are taken from the Mayor's Budget Message in the annual budget documents published from 1968/69 through 1972/72 in which Mayor Hans Tanzler described the progress being made on extending city services into the former unincorporated county area.

1968/69

- This year, public emergency ambulance service will be provided throughout the county by professional trained personnel.
- We will set in motion plans for extension of branch library facilities, and realignment of fire fighting and ambulance stations.
- Careful advanced planning for extension of the urban services district will take place. Many densely populated neighborhoods outside and inside the old City Limits are in need of upgraded public services, especially in the areas of sewer, drainage and water. Eventual extension of urban services will help alleviate these problems.
- We are budgeting over a million dollars for immediate capital improvements to sewers.
- We are increasing our efforts in enforcement of the minimum standards housing code. We are going to concentrate on better meeting the needs of low income neighborhoods in public health, recreation, jobs and other public services.
- We are setting aside \$300,000 for additional park and recreation improvements.
- I want to focus special attention on the first Urban Services District (the old City of Jacksonville). The sharp loss of revenue from property taxes previously noted (due to a lower millage cap contained in the consolidation charter and a change in state law regarding school funding) presents a serious revenue problem in the Urban Services District. You will note from the chart that the budgeted cost of providing refuse collection and disposal, street cleaning, street lights, and sewers and meeting the bond debt payments is over \$9,600,000, while total revenues including the receipts from the maximum allowable tax levy of 6 mills only totals just over \$6,900,000. As you can see, that leaves a deficit of \$2,642,174. That deficit must be made up with the Urban Services District. It would be totally unfair to expect people outside the old city limits, not receiving these public services, to help make up this deficit, and it is accordingly prohibited in the consolidation charter.

1969/70

- \$90 million water/sewer program financed by revenue from increased water rates and a new sewer service charge.
- The second major goal of my administration was and is to see through to its fruition a program of community redevelopment ... Our only hope was and is the right to participate in federal urban renewal funds ... Jacksonville is the last major city in the State of Florida to obtain the right to participate in this matching fund redevelopment program.
- This next year's police budget provides for increased personnel and improved and expanded equipment, totaling almost \$1.3 million over last year's adopted budget. This will, in effect, put 100 new men in uniform on the streets.
- This budget calls for over one-half million dollars to be used for the expansion of street lighting into the old county areas for the first time.
- We must continue our efforts to bring complete fire protection to all areas outside the old city limits.

- The budget provides for in excess of one and one-half million dollars ... that will make possible additional full-time firemen at every fire station in the old county area previously manned entirely by volunteers.
- We are doubling the recommended expenditure for mosquito control from \$400,000 to \$800,000, making possible for the first time mosquito control to the majority of the residents of this community.

1970/71

Progress report after 2 years of consolidation:

- The budget for law enforcement has been raised about 50% at a total cost increase of \$4 million since Consolidation. 134 New patrolmen have been added; pay has been equalized between city and county policemen.
- The fire protection budget has been increased over 60%. This has enabled us to add 200 new full-time professionals; professional firemen are now supplementing the work of our volunteer fire companies in the old county; a significant number of new fire hydrants have been installed; new equipment has been purchased; a model emergency ambulance service which services 18,000 persons a year with an average response time of 4.2 minutes has been added.
- In the area of Streets and Highways – millions of dollars have been spent on paving and resurfacing of badly needed new streets. In the current year we have paved over 150 miles of streets encompassing some 550 different streets. Next year's budget calls for paving of 602 streets or 197 miles of street paving at a cost in excess of \$2,000,000.
- Perhaps the most impressive area of work concerning streets and which also has a great effect on law enforcement is our massive street lighting program. During this year we are installing over 7,500 new street lights ... In next year's budget we are providing funding for an additional 9,000 street lights.
- Recreation – a quarter of a million dollars has been set aside in next year's budget for development of Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park. The Gator Bowl has been completely rehabilitated with new lights, new seats, new paint, repaired restrooms, new sound system, etc. Five new swimming pools have been opened.
- The Urban Renewal Program has come to full fruition in the past year. We have received \$5.5 million in federal grants and are nearing completion of the planning for two very large areas in our deteriorated core city. Under our new demolition ordinance we have already demolished some 474 abandoned structures and will continue at about 100 per month until we have rid the city of all these dangerous infested eyesores that all of us have deplored for so many years. Some 5,000 homes have been materially improved by enforcement of our Minimum Housing Code alone.
- I have repeatedly stated that a constructive water-sewer program is the No. 1 priority of this Administration. The first phase of our bond program will involve the sale of \$52 million in bonds out of the projected \$133 million to be sold in the next five years ... We have already diverted over 4 million gallons of daily raw sewage dumping from the river into proper sewage treatment facilities. We have acquired 20 privately owned utility companies with over 6,400 water-sewer connections...
- I am pleased to announce tonight that because of these efficiencies brought about by reduction in personnel and equipment in our Sanitation Division, I am able to recommend to Council a half mill tax reduction in the First Urban Services District (this is the old City of Jacksonville) ... The half mill tax reduction that I am able to recommend this year is hopefully the first step in additional tax reductions to come in future years. Ultimately, there should be no tax differential throughout the county and everyone should pay a uniform tax bill.