

**State of the City Address**  
**Delivered by John J. Mazziotti, Mayor**  
**January 21, 2010**

Councilmembers, City Staff, and Palm Bay Citizens:

Tonight it is my honor and privilege to deliver, in accordance with the Charter of the City of Palm Bay, the State of the City address. It is also a distinct honor to be Mayor this evening and deliver this address on our 50th birthday.

Today we are facing the aftermath of the worst economic times since the Great Depression. Our citizens are in the midst of a tough job market with unemployment in Brevard County over 11 percent. Our citizens are losing their homes as their mortgage payments become harder and harder to make. Yet as I walk our streets, shop in our stores and play in our parks, I am witnessing an unbridled optimism that tomorrow will bring a better day. Our citizens have seen adversity before – the General Development Corporation bankruptcy, the 2004 hurricanes – Frances and Jeanne, the Mother’s Day Fires – and each time we emerge stronger than before. This crisis will be no different.

And in crisis we will find opportunity.

The year 2009 was a year in which the City concentrated on our physical and community infrastructure. Today, the Palm Bay Parkway is closer to reality than it ever has been before. During the last year, we have made significant progress in the citing, design and funding of the Parkway’s southern interchange. We, the City of Palm Bay, have secured close to \$5 million of federal funding for the Parkway thanks to efforts of Senator Nelson, Congressman Bill Posey and former Congressman Dave Weldon. The Florida Department of Transportation has begun its PD&E work on the interchange and that study will be completed within 18 months. The City has successfully negotiated the acquisition of Parkway Right of Way through the Palm Vista project, which will serve to connect Malabar Road to our northern city limit and provide Parkway connections at Pace and at Emerson. We commend the County for its efforts in securing the Parkway Right of Way through the Platt property thus bringing the link of Malabar Road to US 192 even closer. The City Council has also made a priority for 2010 the acquisition on Parkway Right of Way in the Compound area. Work on the Parkway is clearly an essential task for our community, and we will continue to move forward on this project for the betterment of our citizens.

We are also committed to funding the continued maintenance of our existing roads and drainage system. This year the City Council has funded, for the first time in our history, a ten-year road maintenance program at the level of \$2 million per year. The Council is committed to the continued funding of this program. Additionally, we are moving forward with the funding of a stormwater utility that will provide a dedicated source of revenue for the maintenance and operation of our drainage system.

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The City was also the recipient of Federal Stimulus funds, and with those funds we are repaving Troutman Boulevard and Cogan Drive as well as several miles of roads in our Community Development Block Grant target areas in the northeast.

When you drive around the City, you will notice that the Palm Bay Road project is almost completed. I would like to thank the Florida Department of Transportation for the diligent work on that project and we are excited to see it come to conclusion. We also thank them for their hard work on accelerating the widening of I-95 from Palm Bay Road to Malabar Road and we look forward to the Department to re-establish the widening project from Malabar Road south to the new interchange to its original 2015 scheduled date.

Also, as you drive around the City you will notice that our Jupiter Bridge project is also days away from being finished. When done, that project will be an excellent demonstration of the capabilities of our Public Works Department.

We have also paid a lot of attention to our water infrastructure. We completed work in three subdivisions – Units 10, 11 and 31 and have begun work, using dollars made available through the Federal Stimulus, in two more subdivisions – Units 12 and 16. These projects have brought or will bring potable water to over 2,500 homes in our City. The City Council has made a priority the finalization of design for the remaining subdivisions for the coming year.

The City is embarking on two major brick and mortar projects – the construction of a new Fire Station Number 1 on the corner of Market Circle and Port Malabar Boulevard and a new City Hall Annex that will serve to house our operations that are currently in rented space in the Indian River Bank Building. Bringing these services to City Hall will allow us the ability to provide more comprehensive services to our citizens at a lower cost.

The City Council has also asked staff to assess our strengths and weaknesses with our business community. In this effort we will be reaching out to the business community inside the City as well as the businesses that serve our community to determine how we can better help them in this challenging environment. I look forward to working closely with a revitalized Greater Palm Bay Chamber of Commerce in this analysis. We have also asked our staff to develop options for the establishment of a Business Improvement District for the commercial entities along Palm Bay Road and are working with Representative Ritch Workman and Senator Thad Altman to establish an Enterprise Zone in the northeast section of the City.

We are also making changes to our land use in order to promote opportunities for job creation in the future. The most notable of these efforts include the conversion of approximately 400 acres of land from residential to industrial in the southwest section of the City and the establishment of a Regional Activity Center at the proposed southern

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interchange of the Palm Bay Parkway. This project, Emerald City, will become the cornerstone of the development in south Palm Bay and will feature the downtown the City never had by providing civic space and features in a leading edge sustainable community. I am very proud of the vision of the developers, the John Copanos family, and their commitment for a quality project that will be essential for our future.

Our efforts to go “green” have been recognized by the Florida Green Building Coalition as the City was awarded the Florida Green Local Government Designation, a designation that only a handful of Florida cities have achieved. However, our efforts do not stop there. Utilizing the funds awarded to the City under the US Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants, we will create loan and grant pools for our residents and businesses to improve their energy efficiency as well as conduct audits of our own facilities to determine how we can make improvements that will contribute to the overall reduction of green house gases in our City. We will look at revising our housing rehabilitation standards to leverage our use of CDBG and SHIP funds to create a better, greener product for our clients. And we will examine how we can incentivize our land use regulations to promote green construction practices in our City.

Up to this point, I have discussed all work – now it is time to talk play. I need to recognize the efforts of our volunteer committee, led by Ted Whitlock, who are heading up our 50th birthday celebration. We had a great event last Saturday and have a series of events throughout the year that will conclude with the Mayors’ Ball this October.

The men and women of the Parks and Recreation Department understand that the mission of play is vital to our community’s emotional well being. That is why we will be celebrating Palm Bay Play Day on March 20th. On that day we will promote play by having events in all our parks; events for the young of age and the young at heart; events for those of us who are active and those a little less active; and, events that will promote our existing programs as well as let our citizens explore activities that will expand their horizons. Please join us at one of our many events on that day.

And if you would like to volunteer to assist the City on that day, or on any other day, please contact our Human Resources Department to learn how you can become a member of our Palm Bay Volunteer Service Corps. You might even be eligible to earn a free ticket for admission to Disney World.

We have done a lot in 2009, some of which I have mentioned in the last few minutes. But I would be remiss if I didn’t recognize the opening of the Police Department’s East District Office, the opening of Madden Park and the numerous projects of the Bayfront Community Redevelopment Agency. We have also had significant activity in the non-governmental arena as evidenced by the expansion of Palm Bay Hospital and Globe Wireless. With partners like Judy Gizinski at the Hospital and Frank Coles at Globe

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Wireless, I am confident that that the City's presence as an economic force is emerging stronger than ever.

I also need to mention the work of David Calvo, our new Principal at Palm Bay Community Charter School, who has worked diligently to re-energize our charter school and to position it as the leading academic institution we envisioned. During this last year, we have made considerable progress, working with the bondholders, to ensure that Palm Bay Community Charter will remain a sustainable school providing benefit to our citizens.

To achieve excellence, we will all need to make sacrifices in the coming months. As I did last year, I call upon everyone: citizen, businessman, investor and city employee to recognize that in these the common good must outweigh individual wants. I want to emphasize that we are not individual teams in Palm Bay, but we are one team to serve all. If any community can marshal the strength to overcome adversity, we can and more importantly - we will.

In closing, I would like to thank and recognize the members of the City Council, the City Administration and the City Employees for their dedication to the City of Palm Bay. In reviewing our accomplishments for the year, I realize just how much we all care about our community and how hard we all work to make Palm Bay such an amazing place. I would also like to thank the many citizens who have also contributed to our success – whether you serve on an advisory board, attend public meetings or just call occasionally with an idea – you are what makes our community strong.

Goodnight, and may God bless you, the United States of America, and the City of Palm Bay.