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## Jacksonville's Consolidation Mayor: Hans G. Tanzler Jr.

by James B. Crooks

Jacksonville's consolidation with Duval County on October 1, 1968, marked a major turning point in the history of this north-eastern Florida coastal city. Prior to this event, Jacksonville and the surrounding Duval County struggled with a variety of problems. Despite rapid growth in the metro area, the city lost population, endured racial conflict, and suffered substantial environmental pollution. While other southern cities faced many of the same problems, the glamour that soon shone upon the Sunbelt seemed to elude this city on the St. Johns River. Partly it was comparative. Other Florida cities—Miami, Tampa-St. Petersburg and Orlando—had begun to achieve regional, if not national prominence, with more rapid population growth, greater economic development, effective leadership and better public relations. So too had Atlanta and other cities of the south and southwest as they became part of the Sunbelt metaphor that Kevin Phillips coined in his 1969 book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*.<sup>1</sup>

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James B. Crooks is emeritus professor of history at the University of North Florida. He thanks Dr. Joan Carver and Hans G. Tanzler Jr. for their careful readings of the manuscript, and particularly Duane Atkinson who directed him to the mezzanine of the old city hall parking lot to find more than one hundred file drawers of records from the Tanzler administration.

1. Bradley R. Rice, "If Dixie Were Atlanta," 31-57; Raymond A. Mohl, "Miami: The Ethnic Cauldron," 58-99; Gary R. Mormino, "Tampa: From Hell Hole to the Good Life," 138-61; and Barry J. Kaplan, "Houston: The Golden Buckle of the Sunbelt," 196-212, all in *Sunbelt Cities: Politics and Growth Since World War II*, ed. Richard M. Bernard and Bradley R. Rice (Austin, Tex., 1983); Robert Fisher, "The Urban Sunbelt in Comparative Perspective: Houston as Context,"

This Sunbelt growth came in part from federal dollars after World War II for defense, highways, urban renewal, and social security. Strong, unified pro-business governmental policies also fostered economic growth. Air conditioning and other technological amenities made hot summers bearable while temperate weather most of the year provided opportunities for golf, gardening, boating, and other outdoor recreations to enhance the region's quality of life.<sup>2</sup>

In many respects Jacksonville reflected the Sunbelt glamour. Its metropolitan population doubled during the 1950s and 1960s. Mayor Haydon Burns (1949-1964) re-built the water front with a new city hall, court house, civic auditorium, home office for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and regional home office for Prudential Life Insurance Company. An expressway system opened the south side to suburban development and federal dollars supported three naval bases and the building of two interstate highways. The region was laced with waterways for boating and fishing, tennis and golf were popular, and the Atlantic Ocean was but a short drive to the east.<sup>3</sup>

But there were clouds over Jacksonville that obscured these assets. Despite waterfront development, downtown Jacksonville was losing its competitive edge to the suburbs. Pollution of the St. Johns River and other tributaries due to the lack of a comprehensive sewage system restricted water sports. Paper mills and chemical plants spewed pollutants into the air, creating odors that permeated entire neighborhoods. The Duval County School Board resisted desegregation and worse, the public high schools were discredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. County government lacked the authority (and the will) to provide decent police, fire, sanitation, and transportation services to suburban residents while a cumbersome city government, comprising both a city council and a city commission, was expen-

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in *Essays on Sunbelt Cities and Recent Urban America*, ed. Raymond A. Mohl, et. al. (College Station, Tex., 1990), 33-58; and H. Bailey Thomson, "Orlando's Martin Anderson: Power Behind the Boom," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79 (spring 2001): 491-516.

2. Randall M. Miller, "The Development of the Modern Urban South: An Historical Overview," in *Shades of the Sunbelt: Essays on Ethnicity, Race and Urban South*, ed. Randall M. Miller and George E. Pozetta (New York, 1988), 6-15.
3. James B. Crooks, "Jacksonville Before Consolidation," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 77 (fall 1998): 141-45.

sive and corrupt. In 1966, a local grand jury handed down criminal indictments against three of five city commissioners and four of nine city council members.<sup>4</sup>

Jacksonville slowly responded to the worsening conditions. During the decade preceding consolidation, a coalition of professional men and women, whites and minorities, had attempted to respond to crises in race relations, public education, the environment, and the consequences of rapid urban growth, but with limited results. Finally in January 1965, Claude J. Yates, former vice president and general manager of Florida operations for Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company and president of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, convened twenty-three leading Jacksonville professional men for lunch, and proposed a dramatic solution: consolidation of the city with Duval County. The participants signed a petition to the Florida Legislature seeking authorization for a referendum to combine city and county into one government. Legislative passage led to the formation of a fifty-member study commission under the leadership of James Jacqueline "Jack" Daniel, one of the city's most influential business and civic leaders. He enlisted the support of a broad range of professionals, trade unionists, women, and African Americans, and appointed the brilliant Lewis Alexander "Lex" Hester as executive director of the study commission. Over the next two years, Daniel and Hester led the effort that drafted and passed the consolidation charter combining city and county governments. Two-thirds of Jacksonville and Duval County voters endorsed it, including three-fifths of the African American community. Based on the Nashville-Davidson County consolidation charter passed in 1962, it went beyond the Miami-Dade County federation efforts of the 1950s to provide essentially one government for the more than one-half million residents in the 840-square mile city-county area.<sup>5</sup>

4. Richard Martin, *Consolidation: Jacksonville-Duval County: The Dynamics of Urban Political Reform* (Jacksonville, 1968), 77-78, 84-87; Damon C. Miller, "Jacksonville Before Consolidation: The Process of Metropolitan Reform," (senior thesis, Princeton University, 1968), 18, 22-29; and Local Government Study Commission, *Blueprint for Improvement, 1966* (Jacksonville, 1967), 9-10.
5. Crooks, "Jacksonville Before Consolidation," 141-62; Martin, *Consolidation*, 53-72, 96-114, 224-30; Miller, "Jacksonville Consolidation," 53-69, 92-98, 114-15. Three beach communities and the town of Baldwin voted to remain independent, yet supported consolidation of their county government with that of Jacksonville.



Changing the city's charter, however, did not automatically make consolidation work. Success required electing a mayor, city council, and other officials committed to and capable of achieving that goal. The mayoral election of May 1967, preceding the charter referendum in August (which led to consolidation's implementation in October 1968), set the stage. It pitted two candidates committed to consolidation against one another: Louis H. Ritter and Hans G. Tanzler, Jr.

The forty-one-year-old Ritter was the incumbent mayor, having succeeded to office in January, 1965, when Burns resigned to become governor. Ritter graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in public administration. He began his political career in 1951 when at the age of 26, he became a city councilman. Four years later, he became city commissioner. Clearly a political insider after fifteen years in city government, Ritter was also progressive. He introduced the federal anti poverty program to Jacksonville, appointed the first African Americans to policy-making and advisory boards, secured passage of a minimum housing standards code (Jacksonville was the last large city in Florida to do so), supported environmental clean up, began urban renewal in the dilapidated slum of Hanson Town, and advocated consolidation. His only major flaw in the mayoral race was his association with fellow commissioners and council members. Opponents portrayed him as part of the old corrupt regime.<sup>6</sup>

Challenging Ritter was Tanzler, a forty-year-old criminal court judge entering his first political race. A Southeastern Conference basketball star, the handsome six-foot-four-inch judge had a commanding physical presence. He also had a law degree from the University of Florida and worked five years as an assistant county solicitor before his appointment in 1963. He watched the corruption proceedings unfold, and urged on by supporters, entered the race to run what he called "a real high-level, clean and ethical campaign".<sup>7</sup> Ritter won a plurality in the three-person first Democratic primary, but in the run-off required by Florida law, Tanzler edged him, 52 to 48 percent. In a third race against a

6. Crooks, "Jacksonville Before Consolidation," 156-58.

7. Marcia Rasmussen, "Got To Try Thin Ice, Hans Tanzler Says," *Florida Times-Union and Journal* (Jacksonville), 23 April 1967.

Republican opponent, Tanzler won handily with 76 percent of the votes.<sup>8</sup>

Tanzler's narrow victory over Ritter was an upset. Under normal circumstances, Ritter would have won re-election handily. He was popular and had a substantial record of achievement. He also had the support of a block of city employees and much of the large African American community. But 1967 was different. A well-publicized campaign for consolidation, while separate from the mayoral election, had aroused voter interest. More importantly, the grand jury investigations over the preceding year had led to indictments of one-half the city's elected officials. The two major newspapers and local television played a major role in highlighting this sensational news. Jacksonville suburban residents, normally passive about local politics, responded to the media reports and voted the officials out of office. They elected eight new city council members (out of nine) including two highly regarded African Americans—Mary Singleton and Sallye Mathis—who became the first blacks elected since the turn of the century. And they elected Tanzler, whom journalist Richard Martin called “a white knight” and “Mr. Clean of politics.”<sup>9</sup>

Following the consolidation referendum in August, new primary and general elections took place to choose the men and women who would implement the new governmental form. Tanzler ran unopposed and became the consolidated city's first chief executive. The nineteen-member city council held contested races in which an unusually high number of qualified contestants ran and were elected to office, including Earl Johnson (another African American), Homer Humphries, W. E. “Ted” Grissett, I. M. Sulzbacher, John Lanahan, Mathis and Singleton. All but Singleton supported consolidation. The newly-elected officials took office on March 1, 1968, in anticipation of full consolidation six months later. This interval provided time for the mayor, his newly appointed Chief Administrative Officer Lex Hester, department heads, and citizen advisors to combine the approximately five

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8. Joe Sigler and Marcia Rasmussen, “Tanzler Is Elected Mayor,” *Florida Times-Union* (Jacksonville), 21 June 1967. City voter registration at that time was 61,885 Democrats and 3,413 Republicans.

9. Martin, *Consolidation*, 180-81; Crooks, “Jacksonville Before Consolidation,” 158-62.

thousand county employees with five thousand city employees into a totally new organization.<sup>10</sup>

First among the challenges confronting the new government was race relations, the foremost domestic issue nationally in the 1960s. Jacksonville had not experienced the violent confrontations of Los Angeles (Watts), Cleveland, Newark or Detroit, but it had its problems. Prior to the 1960s, Jim Crow ruled supreme. Segregation was the norm in the schools, parks, court house and other publicly-owned facilities, theaters, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, bar association, medical society, and Chamber of Commerce. Jacksonville had the third largest proportion of African American residents for any city (after Washington, D. C. and Richmond, Virginia). An estimated 42 percent of the old city was black, squeezed into neighborhoods that included the awful Hanson-town slum as well as a handful of handsome homes owned by the executives of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company and other professional men.<sup>11</sup>

Efforts to change the system met with both violent and passive opposition. In 1960, demonstrators began to desegregate lunch counters through non-violent sit-ins and were attacked by axe-handle-wielding Klansmen as city police stood by. Additional civil disorders occurred in 1964, but not on the scale of Newark or Detroit. Meanwhile, the Duval County School Board dragged its feet on school desegregation for ten years before fully complying with repeated court orders. Its plan placed the burden upon African American children to ride buses to school. On a more positive note, restaurants, hotels, and other public accommodations complied peacefully with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Mayor Ritter appointed the first African Americans to public boards during his

10. Richard Martin, *A Quiet Revolution* (Jacksonville, 1993), 234-272. In addition to serving as executive director of the Study Commission that examined local government and making the recommendations that led to consolidation, Hester orchestrated the campaign that secured the referendum victory. He subsequently became an outstanding chief administrative officer under three mayors in Jacksonville, one in Orlando and for the county commission in Broward County; "Lex Hester, Public Servant," *The Consolidator: City of Jacksonville Newsletter*, November/December 2000.

11. Barbara Hunter Walsh, *New Black Voices: The Growth and Contribution of Salye Mathis and Mary Singleton in Florida Government* (Jacksonville, 1990), 9-25; Russ Rymer, *American Beach: A Saga of Race, Wealth and Memory* (New York, 1998), ch. 3. Statistics on the relative proportion of African Americans in Jacksonville is located in *Blueprint for Improvement, 1966*, 16.



short term as mayor. Newly-appointed Mayor Tanzler knew that Jacksonville could explode like Tampa had in 1967. Shortly after taking office, but before consolidation went into effect, he acted to ease tensions.<sup>12</sup>

On June 23, 1967, Tanzler met with black community leaders and asked for their advice. They suggested more jobs, better police-community relations, good schools, more recreational facilities, and decent housing. The mayor also listened to African American youth, leaving city hall to engage in sometimes raucous discussions in pool halls, restaurants and local hangouts. They too wanted jobs, housing and more recreational facilities for the black community. Tanzler's public response aired on television at the end of July. He announced the opening of city government to minority employment, urged the Chamber of Commerce to help him find jobs, promised to increase housing inspection to upgrade existing stock, proposed busing inner city youth to city swimming pools and noted the opening of a new youth center on West Ashley Street in the heart of the black community.<sup>13</sup>

On August 9, 1967, Mayor Tanzler met with eight city business leaders in the board room of the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce. Chamber president W. Ashley Verlander, also president of American Heritage Life Insurance Company, set the agenda "to discuss racial relations as they exist here in Jacksonville

12. Crooks, "Jacksonville Before Consolidation," 147-53, 156; Abel A. Bartley, "The 1960 and 1964 Riots: How Struggle Led to Progress," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 78 (summer 1999), 46-73. The Local Government Study Commission of Duval County listed racial unrest as only one of twenty specific problems in their report, focusing most if its attention on the general problem of governmental structures; *Blueprint for Improvement, 1966*, 6.

13. Leander Shaw, Wendell Holmes, Rev. Charles Dailey, John D. Montgomery, and Nathan H. Wilson to Mayor Hans Tanzler, "Tone of the Community," 12 July 1967, Mayor's Papers, City Hall, Jacksonville; George Harmon, "The Story Behind the Negro Effort Here," *Jacksonville Journal*, 20 August 1967; Syd Courson, "Tanzler Offers Program Aimed at Racial Harmony," *Florida Times-Union*, 30 July 1967.

Shaw, a black attorney, subsequently was appointed justice of the Florida Supreme Court. Holmes, a mortician, was elected to the Duval County School Board and served as its chair. Dailey, a pastor of Oakland Baptist Church, chaired the black Interdenominational Ministers Alliance. Montgomery was a white lawyer and Wilson a white attorney with Southern Bell.

Following the mayor's visit to Vernell's Diner at Florida Avenue and Pippin Street, GJEO neighborhood organizer Mack Freeman said, "We have to give this man credit for facing us big black Africans in the deepest part of our jungle. We should give him a standing ovation." And, added the reporter, they did; Harmon, "The Story Behind the Negro Effort Here."



today, and to talk about what we of the business community can do." The mayor spoke about the recent riots in Detroit and Newark, and the possibility of similar turmoil locally. The root problem in the black community, said Tanzler, was the need for jobs. He urged business leaders to support a program to train and provide jobs for African Americans.<sup>14</sup>

Following the meeting, the mayor formed a Mayor's Employment Committee comprising representatives from the Chamber, Urban League, NAACP, Greater Jacksonville Economic Opportunity, and the Florida State Employment Service to begin recruiting jobs and job applicants. In the first week at the Chambers offices, committee staff processed 910 applications (80 percent females), of whom 419 were referred to 80 employers. Ninety people were hired.<sup>15</sup>

In the fall of 1967, with funding from the Department of Labor, Tanzler named Edward G. Ballance plant manager of the local Maxwell House Division of General Foods Corporation, to chair what became the Jobs for Jacksonville program. Its purpose was "to create, through total community involvement and cooperation, more job opportunities for disadvantaged citizens of Jacksonville."<sup>16</sup>

Jobs for Jacksonville was a bold start for the new mayor. Yet the challenges were enormous. At a gathering of local businessmen in the spring of 1968, the mayor estimated that 37,000 families locally (26 percent of all Jacksonville families) were earning below the federal poverty level of \$3000 per year. Of these poor families, 21,000 were white (17 percent of all white families) and 16,000 were black (43 percent of all black families). To train and employ these people at decent wages, said Tanzler, was the number one solution for all of our ills.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, moving on another front, the mayor proposed establishing a human relations commission to hear grievances and make recommendations for redress. Black leaders, familiar with committees that served as excuses for inaction, were not impressed. Regardless, Tanzler forged ahead, securing passage of

14. "Cooling the 'Long Hot Era,'" *Jacksonville Magazine* (fall 1967).

15. *Ibid.*

16. "Minutes, Mayor's Advisory Panel on Employment," 6 November 1967, Jobs for Jacksonville File, Mayor's Papers; "Experiment Hard Core," *Jacksonville Magazine* (summer 1968): 33-37.

17. Untitled, mayor's speech, Jobs for Jacksonville File, Mayor's Papers.

legislation in August to establish a Community Relations Commission. Its purpose was "to promote and encourage fair treatment and equal opportunity for all persons . . . [and] eliminate discrimination against and antagonism between religious, racial and ethnic groups and their members."<sup>18</sup>

The mayor appointed Nathan H. Wilson as chair of the new commission. Wilson was Florida Counsel for Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company and supported better schools, consolidation, and reform issues. Wilson pledged to "act in the interests of all of our people, whatever their race, color, creed or politics." Together, Wilson and the mayor chose commission members who broadly reflected the community's diversity. When the commission met for the first time in January 1968, the mayor said he did not have to be told that racial inequities existed. He wanted concrete solutions. He charged the commissioners to investigate everything from unemployment to police brutality and to recommend steps to "overturn 100 years of prejudice and history."<sup>19</sup>

On April 4, 1968, the mayor's efforts to build a biracial community were confronted by the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Black anger exploded in 122 cities across the nation,

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18. Ordinance GG-16, passed unanimously by City Council, 8 August 1967 and signed by the mayor, 9 August 1967, Mayor's Papers. An earlier biracial community relations committee was formed privately after the 1964 civil disorders but failed to resolve issues of employment and access to public accommodations when the majority of its white members withdrew; William H. Maness, *Dear William: The Yeast Is There* (Jacksonville, 2000), 128-40.
19. The twenty commission members included representatives from the Urban League, anti-poverty program, Florida State Employment Service, and League of Women Voters, plus three clergy, a doctor, a dentist, an architect, two attorneys, a realtor, two union officials, an undertaker, a restaurant owner, a general contractor, and two corporate executives. At least six, perhaps seven members, were African American, including Clanzel Brown who was executive director of the Jacksonville Urban League, Rev. C.B. Dailey from Oakland Baptist Church, funeral director Wendell P. Holmes, restaurant owner Andrew Perkins, pastor of Second Baptist Church and President of the National Baptist Convention of America Rev. J.C. Sams, and Landon Williams, president of International Longshoremen's Association, Local #1408, AFL-CIO. Three members were women; "First Annual Report, Community Relations Commission, City of Jacksonville," 30 September 1968. See also Press Release, Mayor's Office, 30 October 1967; "Remarks of Nathan H. Wilson", 30 October 1967; Minutes of the Community Relations Commission Organizational Meeting, 26 January 1968, all in the Community Relations Commission File, Mayor's Papers. See also Paul McGinty, "Tanzler Hails Relations Unit," *Jacksonville Journal*, 26 January 1968; Frank Young, "Duties, Aims Outlined for Racial Body," *Florida Times-Union*, 27 January 1968.

resulting in the deaths of 38 people and extensive destruction of public and private property. In Jacksonville, there was relative calm. Police responded to scattered rock throwing, fire bombs, and smashed windows. The night following King's funeral, police arrested fifteen youths in twenty-five incidents and briefly imposed a curfew. The Community Relations Commission sponsored a King Memorial Service on Sunday, April 7 at the civic auditorium for three thousand mourners. Black and white community leaders, including the mayor, took part.<sup>20</sup>

By October 1, 1968, when consolidation officially began, Mayor Tanzler had spent a full fifteen months of actively promoting better race relations in Jacksonville and biracial support for the new government. African Americans had been hired at city hall in white collar and supervisory positions. New job training programs had begun under the auspices of GJEO and the Urban League. The city had increased enforcement of the Minimum Standard Housing Code. Further, the Community Relations Commission had investigated numerous discrimination complaints and secured the desegregation of the Fraternal Order of Police. More remained to be done, but the mayor had acted boldly in promoting better race relations for the consolidated city.<sup>21</sup>

A year later, however, the Tanzler administration met its first setback in the area of race relations as a result of the Halloween riot of 1969. According to the preliminary report of the Jacksonville Community Relations Commission:

A few minutes before 4 PM on Friday, October 31, a white cigarette salesman/delivery driver parked his truck on Florida Avenue between Phelps and First Street, and went into a store to make a delivery. Through the window of the store, he allegedly saw one or more black youths on the street attempting to steal from his truck. The white driver hastened into the street, pulled a gun and shot one youth in the leg. A crowd quickly gathered as a result of this

20. "King Memorial Service at Civic Auditorium," *Jacksonville Journal*, 6 April 1968; "Several Minor Blazes Blamed on Fire Bomb," and "City Pays Homage to Civil Rights Crusader," *Jacksonville Journal*, 8 April 1968; "Violence Minor in Florida," *Jacksonville Journal*, 9 April 1968.

21. *Progress*, 1 (fall 1968), in Community Relations Commission folder, Mayor's Papers.



shooting incident and the word spread in the community that a white man had shot a young black man.<sup>22</sup>

Police arrived on the scene and arrested the delivery driver. An ambulance was called to take the youth to Duval Medical Center. The crowd grew and small groups of youths began moving down Florida Avenue shouting threats and throwing bricks and rocks into store windows. At 5:00 P.M., Sheriff Dale Carson executed the city's new and heretofore unused Emergency Control Plan. Flaws in its design and execution resulted in an hour delay before its implementation. Meanwhile, rioters spread out over eight blocks along Florida Avenue throwing bricks at display windows and fire bombs at stores, most of which were owned by whites. At 6:00 P.M., a large police force finally arrived in riot gear with helmets and shot guns, and began marching down Florida Avenue. Within the hour, the streets were clear. On Saturday morning, fresh disturbances, including the looting of liquor and furniture stores brought the police back in force to restore order. Over the two days, one shopkeeper died of a heart attack, three individuals had physical injuries, four buildings were damaged by fire and thirteen arrests were made.<sup>23</sup>

Mayor Tanzler in response to a letter from Dr. Arnette E. Girardeau, chairman of the Community Urban Development Council, asked the Jacksonville Community Relations Commission to conduct a complete investigation of the events to determine causes, assess the city's response and propose remedial actions "to prevent the recurrence of future outbreaks." The council, representing lower income minority residents, saw the incident as one more piece of evidence in the "polarization of races." This included the recent presidential election where third party segregationist candidate George Wallace won a plurality of votes in Jacksonville.<sup>24</sup>

22. "A Preliminary Report of the Eastside Civil Disorder, prepared by the Community Relations Commission and Delivered to Mayor Tanzler, November 3, 1969," Mayor's Papers.

23. "The Florida Avenue Disorder," Community Relations Commission, "Report of the Task Force on Civil Disorder, October 31, 1969," March 1970, 1-11, Mayor's Papers, mimeograph copy.

24. Hans G. Tanzler Jr. to Nathan Wilson, Chairman, Community Relations Commission, 4 November 1969; Dr. A.E. Girardeau to Honorable Hans G. Tanzler, 3 November 1969; "Statement of the Community Urban Development Coun-



The Community Relations Commission formed a Civil Disorder Task Force of some one hundred citizens with representation from a wide range of community groups to examine law enforcement, environmental and business conditions in the inner city, community participation and community-wide understanding of the problems. Their report in March 1970 identified poor police-community relations, especially with minority youth; superficial and sometimes sensational media coverage of the riot; slum conditions with substandard housing, abandoned buildings, junked yards and inadequate municipal services; lack of jobs, medical services, movie theaters, supermarkets and other amenities of wealthier neighborhoods; and a sense of powerlessness to affect change.<sup>25</sup>

To address these problems, the task force recommended rent supplements and renovated housing; manpower training and job development; crosstown public transportation; parks and recreational programs; better city services to include police protection, street paving, drainage and trash collections; and the inclusion of community residents in decisions affecting them.<sup>26</sup>

In June 1971, another riot erupted in Jacksonville following the shooting of an unarmed, fifteen-year old African American male by a white police officer. Following a peaceful protest, small groups of black youths began looting and burning in downtown black neighborhoods. Police responded but disturbances continued for three days before subsiding after a Saturday night thunderstorm. Sheriff Carson praised the restraint of his officers, but African American leaders claimed the police physically mistreated innocent bystanders. Subsequent hearings before the Community Relations Commission provided evidence of the mistreatment.<sup>27</sup>

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cil," 4 November 1969, in "Report of the Task Force on the Civil Disorder." In a city that had an overwhelmingly Democratic voter registration, Wallace's 36.3 percent of the vote combined with Richard Nixon's 30.9 percent far exceeded the 33.8 percent received by Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey in 1968; Dr. Joan Carver to the author, 8 December 2000.

25. Community Relations Commission, "Report of the Task Force on Civil Disorder," 1-29, 41-45.

26. *Ibid.*, 49-54.

27. Jay Crawford, "Six Persons Are Arrested in Racial Disturbance Here," *Florida Times-Union*, 17 June 1971; Jay Crawford and Bill Waller, "100 Arrests Mark 2nd Night Here," *Florida Times-Union*, 18 June 1971; Jim Davis, "Anti-Riot Tank, Rain Help Restore Peace to Troubled City," *Jacksonville Journal*, 18 June 1971; "Blacks Protest Cop Killing Youth," *Florida Star*, 19 June 1971; Margo Cox,

In an attempt to listen and respond to the concerns of black youth, Mayor Tanzler met with more than one hundred African Americans at the Kennedy Center. Sheriff Carson did not attend, and his absence angered the audience. Tanzler listened to the demands of an increasingly hostile crowd, offered to meet further with representatives, and promised action. This response provoked one person to claim that Tanzler was simply "jiving" them, that he was not sufficiently concerned with police brutality. Shouts followed and, unwilling to put up with further disruption, the mayor left. Anger had replaced dialogue. Still, the mayor had made the effort, and he continued to work with the African American community during his remaining years in office for better housing, jobs and equal opportunity. His efforts resulted in substantial but incomplete progress toward improving race relations in Jacksonville.<sup>28</sup>

Another issue requiring Mayor Tanzler's attention before consolidation was environmental pollution. A December 5, 1967 letter from the Florida Air and Water Pollution Control Commission and State Board of Health had ordered the city within ninety days to furnish evidence of plans and an implementation schedule to end the disposal of fifteen millions gallons of raw sewage per day flowing into the St. Johns River and its tributaries. According to a Federal Water Pollution Control Administration report in 1967, approximately 90 percent of all raw sewage in the State of Florida flowed into streams leading to the St. Johns River in the Jacksonville area. Efforts begun under Mayor Haydon Burns had led to the construction of the Buckman Street Sewage Treatment Plant, which served residents on the north side of downtown, but they were only a fraction of the city's population. Most Jacksonville residents and businesses used septic tanks or pipes which carried wastes directly to a waterway. Efforts accelerated under Mayor Ritter, resulting in a three-phase plan to removal all raw sewage origi-

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"Sheriff Answers He Won't Fire Brown," *Florida Times-Union*, 20 June 1971; Richard Bowers, "Recent Report of Racial Disturbances, Jacksonville, Florida," in Jacksonville Community Relations Commission, "Chronological Review of Events During the Civil Disorder, June 16-20, 1971," Mayor's Papers, mimeograph copy.

28. Franklin Young, "Tanzler Leaves Noisy Meeting of Negroes, Vows Review," *Florida Times-Union*, 25 June 1971.

nating within the old city. Implementation of that plan, however, waited for the coming of consolidated government.<sup>29</sup>

In the spring of 1968, Tanzler appointed an Advisory Committee on Pollution to determine the most effective and economical ways to solve the city's water pollution problems. Committee members learned that in addition to the seventy-two (later revised to seventy-seven) outfalls directly without treatment from homes, hospitals, insurance companies, office buildings, city hall and county courthouse into the St. Johns River, many of the river's tributaries contributed substantial industrial and commercial wastes. Furthermore, 131 miles (later revised to 275 miles) of existing concrete sewer lines built prior to World War II were either collapsing or badly deteriorating. The Buckman Sewage Treatment Plant needed to be doubled in capacity in order to provide secondary as well as primary treatment of wastes. Committee members learned there were more than 125 privately owned sewage treatment plants scattered across Duval County. Most of them were small, unregulated, and of questionable effectiveness. Cost estimates varied, but the committee and the mayor saw the need for a sewage user fee to fund revenue bonds for massive construction. In his July budget message, Tanzler recommended a levy to cover the costs of financing the revenue bonds. In tax-conscious Jacksonville, these actions were a bold step.<sup>30</sup>

Following consolidation, the city engaged Flood and Associates, a consulting firm that had worked with the city before, to update past studies to include the newly combined city and county. Their 1990 plan, completed in July 1969, had an eight-phase water and sewage master improvement program designed to meet the needs of the consolidated city through 2002. The city next hired Sverdrop and Parcel and Associates to draw up engineering plans,

29. Ralph H. Baker Jr., Director, Division of Waste Water, Florida State Board of Health to the Honorable Mayor and City Commission, City of Jacksonville, 28 November 1967; E.E. Bentley, City Engineer to Florida Air & Water Pollution Control Commission, 20 February 1968; United States Environmental Protection Agency, "A Water Quality Success Story," December 1978, Office of Water Planning and Standards, Washington, D.C., accompanying Charles E. Bennett to Honorable Jake Godbold, 16 March 1979, Mayor's Papers.

30. Minutes of the Meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Pollution, 27 June, 17 July 1968; Hans G. Tanzler Jr. to the Members of the Consolidated City Council, 2 July 1968, Mayors Papers.



and Smith, Barney and Company to develop a financial plan leading to the sale of \$72 million of excise revenue bonds.<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately the best laid plans often go astray. Funding was a continual problem. The Environmental Protection Agency changed guidelines which caused further delays. At one point, President Nixon froze funding for all federal projects, again slowing Jacksonville's efforts. State policies penalized the city for its initiative to abate pollution, allocating funds instead to cities that had taken longer to begin pollution-control. Consequently, the city had to raise water and sewer taxes again in 1973, shift federal revenue sharing funds from other programs to sewer construction, and divert tax dollars from the general fund to complete the work.<sup>32</sup>

When workers started to replace the crumbling sewer lines, they found conditions worse than anticipated. Costs rose, and the re-building program extended to fifteen years. Only seventy-five of two hundred miles of sewer lines were re-built by September 1973. In the suburbs, the city purchased the first thirty-four private systems for \$11 million but discovered the cost of the remaining systems had skyrocketed from \$10 million to \$50 million. The city was forced to reassess their plan to own the entire metropolitan system. New sources of river pollution became apparent in run offs from 58 dairies and hog farms, 12 sanitary landfills, 450 small package sewage treatment plants (for motels, apartments, restaurants and other business which could not connect with existing sewer lines), and a substantial number of the city's 48,600 septic tanks.<sup>33</sup>

The city pushed forward despite these problems. In March 1973, a press release announced that the St. Johns River south of

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31. Water & Sewer Division, Public Works Department, "Management Improvement Team Report," 1972, accompanying Hans G. Tanzler Jr. to the Honorable Lynwood Roberts, President and Members of City Council, 20 March 1972, Mayor's Papers, mimeograph. The report is a comprehensive study of the issues prepared for the mayor to share with city council.

32. Task Force III, Public Protection, Justice, Safety, Environment, and Protection, Community Planning Council of the Jacksonville Area, Inc., "Environmental Protection and Environmental Enrichment Services," *A Report to the Commission on Goals and Priorities for Human Services*, Volume III B.2 (Jacksonville, 1973), 6-7, on deposit at the Jacksonville Public Library.

33. *Ibid.*, 4-5; and Bio-Environmental Services Division, Department of Health, Welfare and Bio-Environmental Services, *Jacksonville, Florida: Five Year Environmental Status Report, 1970-1975* (Jacksonville, 1975), 2-3.



the Naval Air Station to the Duval County line at Julington Creek had been deemed safe for water contact sports. Four years later, almost a decade after the state's original ultimatum, the city closed the last of the outfalls. Just after noon on June 18, 1977, Mayor Tanzler stood on the river front and announced the completion of the St. Johns River cleanup and the start of the St. Johns River Day Festival. The mayor then donned water skis and joined performers from Cypress Gardens on the river. More than twenty-five thousand citizens celebrated with a flotilla of yachts, navy jets overhead, stunt flyers and parachute jumpers, hot air balloons, free helicopter rides, whistle blowers, and bell ringers to mark the closing of the seventy-eight outfalls, finally making the river safe for recreational use. Within months, there were reports of speckled trout, mullet, bream, perch, cat fish, red bass, sea cows, and other aquatic life returning to the river. Phases One and Two of the water-sewage improvement program, connecting 66,000 homes and businesses to sanitary sewage service, was completed at a cost of \$153 million. For Hans Tanzler, the event marked the most visible achievement of his administration.<sup>34</sup>

While the consolidated city worked to clean its waterways, it also confronted its air pollution problems. Mayor Tanzler appointed attorney Morton A. Kessler to chair the newly-created Air Pollution Control Board. Beginning in 1969, it challenged open burning at construction sites across the county. The board also recommended shutting down the Wilson-Toomer fertilizer company, a manufacturer of sulfuric acid, unless it immediately ceased its dense smoke stack pollution. The company closed in 1971. The board also listened to citizen complaints and oversaw the work of the Bio-Environmental Division to establish local standards.<sup>35</sup>

Pollution came in two forms. First, there were the emissions targeted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Pollution Control Board for six major pollutants: sulfur dioxide,

34. "Official [press] Release, 13 March 1973," *Bold View, Annual Report, 1976-77*, vol.10, no. 1 (February 1978), 3, Mayor's Papers; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Water Quality Success Story: St. Johns River, Florida" (December 1978), 1-10, passim.

35. Air Pollution Control Board Public Hearing, 14 September 1970; Robert J. Stroh, Chief Bio-Environmental Services Division to Morton A. Kessler, 1 April 1971; Air Pollution Control Board Regular Meeting, 21 June, 16 August, 15 November 1971; Air Pollution Control Board Public Hearing, 19 November 1971, Mayor's Papers.

particulate matter, carbon monoxide, photochemical oxidants (ozone), hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides. Automobile emissions were the biggest problem, followed by the paper mills, chemical plants, and the Jacksonville Electric Authority's three municipal power plants. In 1970, both JEA and industries began using 1 percent sulfur content oil (a 50 percent reduction), resulting in a dramatic dip over the next three years in the sulfur dioxide content of the atmosphere. Federal regulations on auto emissions resulted in Jacksonville air generally meeting EPA standards from 1970 to 1974. Beginning in 1973, the energy crisis led to increased gasoline prices and electricity costs, resulting in reduced consumption and pollution. Meanwhile, local industries made substantial investments to reduce their pollutants. By 1977, all were either in compliance with city and state regulations or had presented satisfactory schedules for compliance.<sup>36</sup>

More upsetting to local residents, however, was the second form of air pollution: notably offensive odors that caused eye irritation and nausea. They came primarily from two large paper mills and two chemical plants. No governmental agency at the local, state, or federal level had the ability to measure their impact or propose solutions to reduce their effect.<sup>37</sup>

In November 1971, the Air Pollution Control Board held public hearings regarding odors from Glidden Chemical Company (later Glidden-Durkee division of SCM Corporation). One woman testified that there were some days when it was "almost impossible to breathe because of the odors" from the plant. A man described how he could not "open his windows and enjoy fresh air [or] yard." A neighbor of the plant said the odors gave her headaches and smelled like a "polecat boiled in sauerkraut." Another complained that the smell was "embedded in his furniture and clothes." Still another claimed the smell made her feel sick and that her friends would not visit her at home. The odors spread beyond the neigh-

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36. Community Planning Council, "Environmental Protection and Environmental Enrichments Services," 1, 5; "Air Pollution Problems," accompanying William A. Ingram, Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to Members of Mayor's Grants Review Committee, 31 May 1973; Bio-Environmental Services Division, *Jacksonville, Florida, Five Year Environmental Status Report, 1970-1975*, 55-71, passim; and Bio-Environmental Services Division, *Big Scope*, July/August/September 1977, 5, Mayor's Papers.

37. Hamilton S. Owen, Air Pollution Engineer, in testimony before the Air Pollution Control Board Regular Meeting, 16 November 1970, Mayor's Papers.

borhood. Motorists on nearby I-95 closed car windows to avoid the smell as they approached the Trout River bridge. Glidden-Durkee made efforts to eliminate the offensive odors, but corporate representatives acknowledged their lack of success. The effort would take another fifteen years.<sup>38</sup>

Solid waste disposal was the third major area of environmental concern. At the time of consolidation, the principal method of disposal was the use of open dumps, though one antiquated air polluting garbage incinerator also operated. The city and county mismanaged thirty-three dumps without adequate compacting or cover. Residents and businesses dumped additional debris in borrow pits, ravines, stream banks, wooded areas, and open fields. Aerial and ground inspections revealed enormous amounts of untreated raw garbage and trash. Scavengers roamed at will over the sites. Fires were purposely set to reduce volume. There was little evidence of concern for the resulting pollution or health hazards.<sup>39</sup>

The Tanzler administration began free garbage pickups to discourage residents from dumping their trash. It also hired Reynolds, Smith and Hills, engineering consultants, to develop plans for an efficient, economical and sanitary solid waste disposal system. Their report in 1971 led city officials to shut down the old incinerator, close illegal trash sites, and convert others for use by fifteen thousand homes and businesses not previously served. The process was slow. The city initially lacked adequate equipment to spread, compact, and cover wastes at its major Imeson landfill. New sites were needed but residents did not want them in their neighborhoods. Illegal dumping continued along with road side littering. Yet by 1973, the Community Planning Council could report that refuse collection was being done "as efficiently as possible" at three trash and two sanitary landfills collecting fifteen hundred tons per day. A subsequent League of Women Voters study agreed. The Jacksonville Area Planning Board was less sanguine, seeing landfills only as an adequate short-term solution. Its members believed future population growth combined with in-

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38. Air Pollution Control Board Public Hearing, 29 November 1972; and R.P.T. Young to the Honorable Hans G. Tanzler Jr., 2 February 1972, with attachment of the "Chronological Summary of Glidden's Odor Improvement Program," Mayor's Papers.

39. *Jacksonville, Florida Five Year Environmental Status Report*, 74-75.



creasing amounts of consumer throwaway goods eventually would result in a scarcity of land near urban areas available for waste disposal.<sup>40</sup>

The challenges of water, air and land pollution that confronted the Tanzler administration were monumental. The administration responded with sufficient resources (including increased taxes and user fees) and available technology to substantially improve the quality of life in the consolidated city. Aside from the continuing odor pollution, Jacksonville had cleaned up much of its environment.

Urban renewal was another issue high on the agenda of the newly consolidated government. Jacksonville had previously missed the boat in securing federal dollars available for this purpose. In the 1950s, the Florida Supreme Court struck down statewide legislation permitting cities to condemn contiguous blocks of private property for urban renewal. Then, when Tampa and Miami secured local legislation to that end, Jacksonville failed to do likewise. In 1967, Mayor Ritter lobbied in Tallahassee for authorization, but lacked support from his city council and the Duval delegation. Tanzler planned to change that.<sup>41</sup>

Early in 1969, the mayor met with the Duval County legislative delegation. He had only one major request to make of them: "reverse the stagnation and even deterioration of our central city" by securing passage of a statewide law enabling cities to engage in urban renewal. Jacksonville desperately needed it. Within or on the fringes of downtown, 63 percent of housing was substandard. In one inner city neighborhood sample, 53 percent of the families had incomes below the poverty line. Crime rates were disproportionately high. Inner city neighborhoods lacked water and sewer lines, street paving, sidewalks, and street lights. Urban renewal

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40. Reynolds, Smith and Hills, *City of Jacksonville Solid Waste Systems Study* (Jacksonville, 1971); Community Planning Council, "Environmental Protection and Environmental Services," III B.5.2; Jacksonville Area Planning Board, "Solid Waste Sub-element of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan" (Jacksonville, 1978), 15, 23-34.

41. In his budget report to city council in July 1969, Tanzler identified urban renewal as the number two goal of his administration after the elimination of water pollution; "The Report to the Council on the 1969-70 Budget of the Consolidated City of Jacksonville by Mayor Hans G. Tanzler, Jr., 22 July 1969," 5. See also Address of Mayor Tanzler to Duval County legislative delegation, 20 February 1969; "Community Redevelopment: Jacksonville," typescript report to the Duval delegation, 20 February 1969, Mayor's Papers.



funds could help build needed infrastructure, low income housing, hospitals, playgrounds, and schools.<sup>42</sup>

Jacksonville had funded on its own waterfront re-development during the Haydon Burns administrations, and currently had bonded for water and sewer construction. But local dollars were limited. Nashville had leveraged \$129 million from the federal government for urban renewal. Tampa had secured almost \$52 million. Federal dollars plus legal authorization would enable the consolidated city to greatly enhance its downtown. Jacksonville was the last major city in the United States to seek the legal authority necessary to participate in federally-assisted urban renewal.<sup>43</sup>

Along with the support of the Duval delegation, Tanzler also gained the backing of the new city council and business community. He lobbied in Tallahassee, and in June 1969, the Florida legislature passed legislation enabling urban renewal. Tanzler moved quickly to implement the new law. He met with federal officials in Atlanta, secured council support for creating a city Department of Housing and Urban Development, and hired Herbert Underwood to run the new department. Underwood had experience both on the federal level in Atlanta, and on the local level in Miami with Dade County's urban renewal program.<sup>44</sup>

In the fall of 1969, Jacksonville's program began to unfold. City officials targeted two areas: the first began west of Main Street, extended from downtown north and west along Hogan's Creek to Methodist and University hospitals (both subsequently part of Shands Jacksonville), and St. Luke's Hospital (which subsequently moved to the suburbs). The Hogan's Creek Urban Renewal Project included what remained of the Hansontown slum, old warehouses, city garages, unkept park land and creek, churches, and a handful of substantial homes on Jefferson, Louisiana and Davis Streets. Plans called for a general demolition and a multistage development to include low and moderate income housing for two thousand families, high rise apartments for elder residents, rebuilding and widening streets and bridges, flood control on Hogan's Creek, clean-up and expansion of Springfield park, an

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42. "Community Redevelopment: Jacksonville," 17-21.

43. *Ibid.*, 5-8; Hans G. Tanzler Jr. to Congressman Charles E. Bennett, 2 October 1969, Mayor's Papers.

44. "Mayor Hans G. Tanzler, Jr. Speaking Before the City Council," 7 July 1969, typescript, Mayor's Papers.



Hans G. Tanzler, Jacksonville's first consolidation mayor, 1968-1977. Courtesy of the Public Information Office, City of Jacksonville.

expanded campus for Darnell-Cookman Junior High School, and a downtown campus for the community college. Physically-sound homes and churches would remain in place. Important to local

HUD director Underwood was limiting forced displacement of individuals and families from the neighborhood. "Miami moved acres of people when it built expressways," he said. "The people had no place to go . . . I don't want Jacksonville to make the same mistakes other cities have made."<sup>45</sup>

A year later in the fall of 1970, the Hogan's Creek Project was underway with the demolition of six hundred unsafe structures. In February 1971, Florida's U.S. Senator Edward Gurney announced the first grant of \$7 million in urban renewal funds to renovate Hogan's Creek into "a park-like stream," acquire land for the community college, re-build wider streets and bridges, install water lines, sewers, curbs, gutters and sidewalks, and implement plans for a two hundred unit high rise apartment for lower income, elderly residents. In subsequent years, Florida Community College at Jacksonville became the southern anchor and the hospitals became the northern end of the Hogan's Creek Project. Garden apartments and the high rise facility along with the local HUD offices and the city-state public health center were built along the north-south axis of Broad Street. A swimming pool, basketball courts, and the park bordering the creek also became part of the area. What did not come to fruition was the neighborhood shopping center for residents, and new middle-income, or affordable housing. The private sector never developed its part of the plan.<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, the city HUD assumed responsibility for all public housing from the old Jacksonville Housing Authority and began building 970 new units, the first new housing in the core city since World War II. The city HUD also enforced the minimum housing

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45. Unlike an earlier renewal program in the 1960s resulting in the expansion of University Hospital at the expense of the substantial African American community of Sugar Hill, the new proposal included neighborhood residents like Vera Davis in its Project Area Committee to help shape the direction of both demolition and new construction; telephone interview with Vera Davis, 18 February 1999. See also "Urban Renewal," *Jacksonville Magazine* (winter 1970/71), 12-18; and for the Underwood quote, "How Does Urban Renewal Work?" *Jacksonville Magazine* (winter 1970/71), 43-44. A smaller renewal program east of Main Street, known as the Neighborhood Development Program, with less money and greater flexibility focused on specific projects including a new high school, housing, and a waterfront park; Franklin Young, "Exciting Eastside Renewal Outlined," *Florida Times-Union*, 6 December 1970.

46. Paul McGinty, "City Gets \$7 Million For Urban Renewal," *Jacksonville Journal*, 22 February 1971; John R. Barry, "Bonanza For City in Urban Renewal," *Jacksonville Journal*, 19 August 1971; "Official [Press] Release," 1 November 1971, 16 August 1972, Mayor's Papers.



codes and began refurbishing the three oldest housing projects in Jacksonville: Brentwood, Durkeeville and Blodgett Homes. Toward the end of his first term as mayor of consolidated Jacksonville, Tanzler reflected that personally, urban renewal was "the most gratifying operation which had been undertaken, and next to the Water and Sewer Bond Program, the closest thing to my heart."<sup>47</sup>

While the mayor focused on urban renewal on the fringes of the urban core, in the spring of 1968, a Chamber of Commerce committee began to develop an action program "for the improvement, growth and development of the Downtown Area." This Downtown Development Council included business executives, professionals, and governmental leaders, both black and white. Initial concerns for increased police patrols, better sanitation and garbage collection, lighting, sign controls and parking space gave way to a bolder scheme to develop a master plan proposed by the Jacksonville-Duval Area Planning Board. In the spring of 1969, the Downtown Development Council endorsed the proposal and secured city council funding.<sup>48</sup>

In 1971, the Baltimore firm of Rogers, Taliaferro, Kostritsky and Lamb (RTKL), known for its work on the Charles Center in that city developed the plan. It was impressive. It presented an economic profile of Jacksonville, examined space-use demand, proposed land and traffic use patterns, considered urban design, and drew up an implementation program and timetable to include the creation of a downtown development authority.<sup>49</sup>

The planners saw the need to rejuvenate retail sales in the department stores and specialty shops which had been losing ground to the newer suburban malls. To encourage retail shopping, they proposed pedestrian walkways extending from Hemming Park (now Hemming Plaza) south along Laura and Hogan Streets to the river. Downtown also needed recreational and cultural facilities other than the civic auditorium and two older, seedy

47. "Official [Press] Release," Consolidated City of Jacksonville, Florida, 3 December 1970, 31 May 1972; Minutes of the HUD Advisory Board Meeting, 19 January 1971, both in Mayor's Papers.

48. Downtown Development Council "Bulletin," 22 March 1968; Judge May, "Downtown Renewal Study Cost Given," *Florida Times-Union*, 23 February 1969; William K. Jackson to Downtown Development Council, 9 May 1969; Downtown Development Council "Report to Membership," June, July, and October 1969, Mayor's Papers.

49. RTKL, Inc. and Associates, *The Plan for Downtown Jacksonville* (Baltimore, 1971), v.

movie houses. There were few attractive restaurants or nightclubs. The plan recommended a river front site to provide them. Downtown had only one decent hotel for businessmen and travelers, and the plan envisioned building at least one. Housing was limited mostly to senior citizens at Cathedral Towers and the plan endorsed building affordable and upscale housing nearby and the construction of luxury condominiums on the river.<sup>50</sup>

As Tanzler began his second term as mayor following his reelection in May 1971, the consolidated city had a blueprint for the future of its downtown. Subsequently, city council passed legislation to create a Downtown Development Authority to implement these ambitious plans, but it met with mixed results. Independent Life, Atlantic National Bank, and Duval Federal Savings and Loan built new home offices. A later mayor oversaw the construction of the Omni Hotel and Jacksonville Landing, the latter a multipurpose restaurant, night club, shopping, and entertainment facility on the river. But no pedestrian mall materialized and the construction of new housing waited for thirty years and the coming of the twenty-first century. Perhaps most damaging of all was the continued erosion of retail trade as department stores closed or moved to suburban malls. The result was a spotty development of downtown that continued through subsequent administrations. Still, in 1971, the city's plans for revitalizing downtown looked bold.<sup>51</sup>

Another challenge confronting the Tanzler administration was transportation. As in other cities, automobiles choked local roads. A 1969 Chamber of Commerce seminar focused on the topic, and a year later the mayor spoke at a Florida State University conference on the problems of "metropolitan transportation." Whereas population had increased locally by 12.8 percent from 1960 to 1970, the number of automobiles had increased by 78.5 percent. The average number of daily trips within the city increased by 117.5 percent, and downtown trips by 127 percent—more than doubling the traffic level of a decade earlier. This resulting increased traffic congestion worked against opening

50. *Ibid.*, 10-14, 17-64, 68-72.

51. Jessie-Lynne Kerr, "Power-Packed Development Panel Seen as Best Way to Reshape Core City," *Florida Times-Union*, 17 September 1970; Mel F. Brdlik, "The New Downtown Means Business," *Jacksonville Magazine* (winter 1971), 7-8, 25; Woody Russell, "Agency's Job Will Be to Push 'Core Plan,'" *Jacksonville Journal*, 22 June 1971; "Downtown's new face starts to take shape," *Bold View* (n.d.), 15-20.

downtown to development and encouraged suburban sprawl. Meanwhile mass transit use declined from 15.4 million revenue passengers in 1961 to 13.6 million in 1969. The privately-owned Jacksonville Coach Company lost money in 1971. Rate increases would only reduce further their number of paying passengers.<sup>52</sup>

In 1971, Tanzler directed general counsel James C. Rinaman, Jr., and Jacksonville Expressway Authority attorney Earl Hadlow to find ways of expanding the Expressway Authority's role to include mass transit. The result was the formation of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. In January 1972, both the mayor and the new JTA asked city council for funds to purchase the Jacksonville Coach Company. Further assistance came from both state and federal dollars, and ownership of the city's mass transit system passed from private to public hands. The purchase of the bus company did not solve Jacksonville's transportation problems (though ridership initially increased), but it did reflect the consolidated city's bold decision to take over an ineffective private transit system as a first step toward a mass transportation policy.<sup>53</sup>

John Fischer, veteran reporter and acting editor-in-chief of *Harper's Magazine*, described the bold spirit of the consolidated Jacksonville following the spring elections of 1971. In an era of urban crises from coast to coast, Fischer saw Jacksonville as a city confronting its multiple problems with the belief it could solve them. The cleanup of the air and waterways was the most dramatic, but more subtle projects, like adding 16,500 street lights to improve visibility and safety in both new and older neighborhoods, also signaled a new approach. Urban renewal led Independent Life Insurance Company to announce plans for building a new

52. Jessie-Lynne Kerr, "City's Transportation Needs Discussed at Chamber Seminar," *Florida Times-Union*, 8 October 1969; Hans G. Tanzler, Jr., "Intergovernmental Cooperation in Metropolitan Transportation," paper delivered at Florida State University, 25 September 1970; Jacksonville Coach Company [author's name illegible] to Mr. Lynwood Roberts, President, City Council, 26 July 1971, Mayor's Papers.

53. J. C. Rinaman Jr. to Mayor Hans G. Tanzler Jr., 21 June 1971; Minutes of the Jacksonville Expressway Authority "Conference," 12 July 1971; Jessie-Lynne Kerr, "JEA Pondering New Transit Role," *Florida Times-Union*, 22 June 1971; Hans G. Tanzler, Jr., to Members of the Jacksonville Expressway Authority, 21 July 1971; Ken Goldman, "Mayor to Ask Bus Takeover," *Jacksonville Journal*, 13 January 1972; and Jessie-Lynne Kerr, "Transit Unit Urges City Purchase Bus Firm," *Florida Times-Union*, 14 January 1972. Bus ridership increased in the first six months following the takeover by 300,000 passengers; "The Harvest Year" [budget message], 10 July 1973, Mayor's Papers.



thirty-five-story headquarters downtown. Further, progress in paving streets and improving garbage collection, plus providing new job opportunities, low income housing, and neighborhood health clinics, wrote Fischer, had "led to a marked relaxation of racial bitterness." Earl Johnson, the city's most influential African American leader, agreed. He had recently been re-elected to an at-large seat on city council by a predominantly white electorate. "We still have a long way to go," he said, "but we have come a long way too."<sup>54</sup>

Unfortunately, the momentum of accomplishments by Jacksonville's first consolidation mayor did not last. The Arab oil embargo of 1973, followed by rising fuel prices for the Jacksonville Electric Authority, resulted in rapidly increasing rates and reduced payments in lieu of taxes to the city. The increased rates in turn raised city costs for heating and air conditioning. Rising fuel prices threatened motor pool, police, and fire fighting budgets. In Washington, federal efforts to combat inflation resulted in reduced revenue sharing for cities like Jacksonville. In addition, stagflation—a slowdown in the economy combined with continuing price inflation—further crippled city efforts to meet urban needs. The resulting budget crunches slowed the momentum of sewer construction, urban renewal, park expansion, and other Tanzler administration programs over the rest of the decade. Still, consoli-

54. John Fischer, "The Easy Chair, Jacksonville: so different you can hardly believe it," *Harper's Magazine*, vol. 243, no. 1454 (July 1971): 20-24. See also John Fischer, *Vital Signs, U.S.A.* (New York, 1975): ch. 7, "The Rescue of Jacksonville." Other significant steps taken by the Tanzler administration in the early years of consolidated government included the creation of Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park, a 450-acre multipurpose recreational area with a one and one-half mile beach front on the Atlantic Ocean; development of an emergency ambulance service with special cardiac units giving Jacksonville the reputation of being the safest city in America in which to have a heart attack; construction in lower income areas of ten neighborhood health centers, five swimming pools, two community centers, five new public housing projects (with three more in the planning stage), and two suburban libraries; consolidation and expansion of paid city and volunteer county fire fights into one department, resulting in reduced fire insurance rates; consolidation of city police and county deputies into one sheriff's department, contributing to a reduced crime rate in 1971; and reduced property tax rates resulting from a combination of increased property assessments, new construction, user fees, increased state gas and cigarette taxes, and increased Jacksonville Electric Authority revenues into the city budget; see "Official [Press] Release," 9 July 1970; Mayor Hans G. Tanzler Jr., "Budget Presentation," 28 July 1970; "Budget Message," 27 July 1971; "The Harvest Year," (budget message) 10 July 1973, Mayor's Papers.

dated government had gotten off to a good start, and would continue to serve Jacksonville residents well. Hans Tanzler was a key player, if not the key player, in using that government to make Jacksonville "the bold new city" of the Sunbelt.<sup>55</sup>

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55. Peter N. Carroll, *It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: American in the 1970s* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1990), ch. 8; David R. Goldfield and Blaine A. Brownell, *Urban America, A History*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1990), ch. 12; Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1990), ch. 6; "Statement of Hans G. Tanzler, Jr., Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, Public Hearing-Project Independence, September 23, 1974"; "Mayor's Budget Message," 16 July 1974, 22 July 1975. The Mayor also had personal concerns during the latter years of his administration that took his attention away from public affairs, including a "born again" conversion experience in October 1974 that led to becoming a spokesperson for the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship across the nation, a 1976 indictment for mixing wedding gifts and campaign funds that consumed exorbitant amounts of time with uncontested results, and a losing primary campaign for the Democratic nomination for governor in 1978; interview with Mike Tolbert, Jacksonville, 11 July 2000; Randolph Pendleton, "Hans Tanzler: 11 years a mayor," *Florida Times-Union*, 31 December 1978.