

Remarks for Mayor Marks
Old Waterworks Renovation Groundbreaking Media Event
Friday, March 16, 2007 – 10:00 a.m.

- Good morning, and welcome. I'm delighted to be here this morning with Secretary Browning, as we celebrate the groundbreaking for the renovation of one of our city's most historic structures.

- The WaterWorks building has a long history; this year marks the 100th anniversary of when the City purchased the facility from a private company. The City still owns the building and the land it sits on and we're proud to be a partner in this exciting renewal process.

- Historic preservation, and related programs such as renovating older buildings to accommodate new uses, is critically important – namely,

because it's good business – and thus, good for Tallahassee!

- Two of my primary goals while I've been Mayor have been economic development, which includes diversification of our economic base – and downtown development and redevelopment. Clearly, renovation of the WaterWorks is a tremendous plus, on both fronts.
- We know historic preservation is good business. We've continued to market our community as one with a much different vision of Florida – one where history is very important. Preserving facilities such as the WaterWorks helps draw even more visitors to our city, particularly those interested in history as well as the burgeoning “eco-tourism” market.

- And here, in this area, the future is unlimited. The City's project to clean up Cascades Park was a huge success; the eventual development of the park site is now in the good hands of Blueprint 2000 – and soon we'll have a park the entire community, and all of Florida can be proud of.
- We've also worked with state government to secure strategic buildings and parcels downtown. These include the old Caroline Brevard School building just one block to our west, and a potential site for a performing arts center further west on Gaines Street.
- Downtown is clearly "happening," and I'm genuinely excited about the potential for downtown's southern fringe being a true activity center for residents and visitors alike.

- Tallahassee residents put great value on historic preservation, which is why a group of our citizens have stepped forward to form a non-profit organization to help this property transition back into productive use. Once the WaterWorks renovation is completed, this non-profit group will help with transition efforts so the entire community can benefit from the improved and renovated facility. One possibility is to develop the facility as a restaurant, complete with outdoor dining. Given its proximity to Cascades Park, I can easily see the day where many visitors to the park take a leisurely one-block stroll to unwind over a meal here. We've been calling for downtown to become a 'destination' unto itself – surely the renovated WaterWorks building will play a major role in that process.
- I'm pleased that Secretary Browning is here with us this morning, since the Department of State

and the City partnered in providing &700,000 in historic preservation funds. We simply could not undertake a project of this scope without state assistance, and I want the Secretary to know how grateful I, and the entire City Commission is of your support of this, and other local historic preservation efforts.

- Tallahassee's unique role as the state capital means we'll always have a steady stream of visitors, certainly during this time of the year when the Florida Legislature calls Tallahassee home, but also year-round. I look forward to the day when I can tell acquaintances that a 'must-see' in Tallahassee ... is the Old WaterWorks building that stands as the gateway to Cascades Park!
- Thank you.