

**Remarks for Mayor Marks
Tram Road Reuse Facility Groundbreaking Ceremony
Monday, April 30, 2007 – 11:00 a.m.**

Thank you, Tom. Good morning, and welcome. I'm pleased to be here this morning as we celebrate the groundbreaking for this important facility to be operated by our award-winning Water Utility.

In Tallahassee, green is clearly the color of choice. This new water reuse facility represents our ongoing commitment to not only protection, but also enhancement of our vital natural resources.

You may have heard about the City's "Go Green Tallahassee" initiative – if you haven't, you certainly will soon. Of course, any time someone mentions 'green,' I immediately think putting green – and I can't wait for our putting competition that will be taking place today right after we turn shovels of dirt!

But in a serious vein, Tallahassee is embracing environmental stewardship like never before. Going green is, and will continue to be far more than a catchy slogan

here. And chief among our 'green' efforts is how projects like the Tram Road Reuse Facility define our Water Utility's mission to be a national leader in water reuse.

This facility, when completed next spring, will take 1.2 million gallons of treated wastewater from pipes leading to the Southeast Farm further down Tram Road – add even more treatment – and then ship the reclaimed water via pipes to nearby areas for irrigation.

The areas slated to use the reclaimed water for irrigation include the SouthWood Golf Club and athletic fields at both Florida High and John Paul II High School in SouthWood. Future plans include providing reclaimed water to the Capital Circle Office Complex, medians along Capital Circle Southeast and other areas throughout the city as feasible.

Why is this important? Water reuse means this 1.2 million gallons of water will not be going to the city's sprayfield. Instead, it will be used for irrigation where it will only be applied when needed, when the uptake will be the greatest and it means less water going into our

groundwater and potentially impacting our lakes and *other* resources like Wakulla Springs.

But it's more than just environmental protection. It is a testament to the city of Tallahassee's commitment. We proving to our customers, to our neighboring governments, and to our environmental and neighborhood groups that we are a government that lives up to its commitments. We said we'd use science to find out if our wastewater was impacting the environment and now we're making more than \$160 million in improvements in our processes to reduce nitrates.

This plant was one of our commitments, and today that commitment begins to become a reality. We not only talk about our commitment to the environment – we live it!

As you can see, a project of this magnitude simply could not happen without the incredible support of our partners – and I'm pleased that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Northwest Florida Water

Management District have been supportive of this project all along, since we first began planning it in 1999.

To Secretary Mike Sole and Assistant Secretary Mimi Jones, from the Department of Environmental Protection, we owe you our sincere thanks for your leadership and personal involvement in the city's projects and permits. To Doug Barr from the Water Management District, we very much appreciate the partnership you've provided by committing \$1.3 million to this project.

Further, the St. Joe Company signed on – both through donating the land we stand on this morning that will become the water reuse plant, and for agreeing to use the reclaimed water to irrigate their SouthWood Golf Club. Thank you to St. Joe for everything you do to support a high quality of life – and environmental stewardship – here in Tallahassee.

Finally, to two nearby schools – FSU's Florida High, and John Paul II High School, you are modeling environmentally sensitive behavior for your students – our

future leaders – as this water is used to keep your athletic fields vibrant.

Among our special guests this morning are officials from Wakulla County, including Commissioner Ed Brimner and their new Administrator, Ben Pingree. I deeply appreciate their attendance this morning, as it reflects the ability of our two governments to work together well – much as we have on the agreement to bring Advanced Wastewater Treatment to the Southeast Farm.

Again, being green is so much more than a catchy slogan – the City's commitments range from constructing a new Solid Waste Services administration building to green building standards making it among the first such municipal buildings in Florida, to engaging in innovative energy efficiency programs with our Electric Utility, to operating part of our fleet on bio diesel, to increasing our residential recycling program that begins tomorrow, and certainly, to the construction of this water reuse facility.

In addition to green, you see a light shade of purple here and there. My Water Utility friends tell me that's the color of water reuse piping, and today, green and purple form a natural match.

Helping to protect the environment that means so much to our citizens and visitors alike is one of the most important priorities of your City government. As we break ground today on this new water reuse facility, please join me in praising our community partners as we team up to ensure Tallahassee remains a beautiful, vibrant and environmentally aware community!

Thank you.