



## City Hires 1st Transit Manager

By RICH SHOPES The Tampa Tribune

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TAMPA - The city has hired its first transit czar to guide the mayor's mass-transit initiatives, including a beefed-up bus system and the creation of a light-rail network.

Elaine R. McCloud, 50, will be transit manager and be paid \$95,000 a year. She starts April 23.

"We need someone on our staff looking out for the city's interests," said Steve Daignault, public works administrator.

McCloud was one of four interviewed and among 25 applicants who made the first cut after ads were posted in national transportation magazines late last year.

"She was completely substantive," said Mayor Pam Iorio, who interviewed McCloud about a week ago. "We are beyond the point of just talking about transit. The next couple years have to be about the substance of making transit a reality."

Accomplishing that means developing a city transit plan that works in conjunction with county and regional plans, which could include a commuter rail line and a substantially larger bus system.

The mayor also wants help updating the city's Comprehensive Plan - the blueprint for development in Tampa - so future land-use is tied to mass transit.

"Her focus will be helping to bring this region together with one transit plan," the mayor said.

McCloud worked for five years as general manager for paratransit operations at the Chicago Transit Authority and had previously worked at Detroit's Department of Transportation, enforcing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. She has logged more than 25 years in mass transit.

Eighteen months ago, McCloud and her husband, William, moved to Keystone Reserve in northern Hillsborough County.

McCloud has stayed busy since then by serving as president of her homeowners association and volunteering at Hillsborough Community College and the Florida Prostate Cancer Network.

But she missed public transit.

"I wanted to take sabbatical, and now I'm ready to get back to my passion," she said.

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