

**CITY OF TAMPA  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FY2004-2005  
December 28, 2004**

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**Block Club:** Area III

**Neighborhoods:** Old Seminole Heights, Southeast Seminole Heights, Ybor Heights, V.M. Ybor, Tampa Heights, Davis Islands, Historic Ybor, South Nebraska, and Harbor Island.

**Boundaries:** Sligh Avenue (north); Hillsborough Bay (south); 15th Street (east); Florida Avenue (west).

**Contact Person:** Ms. Carol Marshall, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 76764  
Tampa, FL 33605  
Phone: 994-9664 (h)  
Email: ckjm11@aol.com

**Submitted by:** Mr. Frank Roder  
Vice President for Public Relations  
Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association  
908 E. Louisiana Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33603  
Phone: 238-1772 (h)  
Phone: 794-1876 (w)  
Email: ROMERXVI@aol.com

**Need and Recommendation 1. Nebraska Avenue Project.**

Nebraska Avenue serves as a gateway into downtown Tampa and is a principle thoroughfare connecting the neighborhoods of Ybor City, Ybor Heights, Southeast Seminole Heights, Old Seminole Heights, Sulphur Springs, and North Tampa. With the continued construction of Interstate 275, more and more people will be using this vital corridor. All of the above-mentioned neighborhoods have active neighborhood associations and feel the makeover of Nebraska Avenue will provide a needed boost to the continued redevelopment of these neighborhoods, as well as sparking commercial development along Nebraska Avenue.

Two years ago, the Old Seminole Heights Civic Association, Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association and Ybor Heights Civic Association, in conjunction with a request from Block Club Area VII requested the formation of a Nebraska Avenue Task Force, which would include the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT), the Metropolitan Planning

**Organization (MPO), the City of Tampa Traffic and Transportation Departments, and the Livable Roadways Committee. This task force was to be charged with planning and implementing the refurbishing of Nebraska Avenue. This included a long overdue and much needed upgrading of lighting, repaving, and landscaping. Meetings have been held, planning has been implemented, and a number of economic redevelopment initiatives for the Nebraska Avenue corridor have been initiated. However, one essential group was left off this committee: the neighborhood residents! Last year, we again asked to be included, but over the last year, not a single meeting has been held with any neighborhood residents or civic associations. We request that the Nebraska Avenue Task Force give the residents an opportunity to provide input into the makeover of Nebraska Avenue, and to be included in all aspects of the Nebraska Avenue Initiative.**

**Response:** From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. The Mayor's Neighborhood and Community Relations Office along with members of the Transportation Department and the Parks and Recreation Department will set up a Citizens Advisory Committee for the Nebraska Avenue enhancement project. The Nebraska Advisory Committee will consist of neighborhood leaders as well as interested citizens who have expressed an interest in providing input to the City of Tampa regarding Nebraska Avenue enhancement project. The Neighborhood and Community relations Office will serve as the conduit of information between city staff and the Citizen's Advisory Committee as well as coordinate meetings at Historic Union Station. It is important that the Citizen's Advisory Committee designates a chair as a point of contact for the city staff and knows that their role is that of advisory

It is important to note that Nebraska Avenue falls under the jurisdiction of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) so any recommendations will eventually have to be accepted by FDOT.

**Update:** From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. The Mayor's Neighborhood and Community Relations Office along with members of the Transportation Department and the Parks and Recreation Department set up a Citizens Advisory Committee for the Nebraska Avenue enhancement project that has already had four meetings.

**Response:** From Mahdi Mansour, Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 274-8333. The Parks and Recreation Department has currently proposed a Landscape/Irrigation project, between Hillsborough and Sligh Avenues, this is scheduled to be constructed late in 2005, following a FDOT resurfacing project. The FDOT has committed State Beautification funds towards the landscaping and the Parks and Recreation Department will propose the irrigation costs as part of their FY05 budget request. Notifications were mailed to all tenants and property owners immediately adjacent to the project on January 27, 2004. A public meeting was held on February 10, 2004 for interested adjacent tenants and property owners. For review of the City's Landscape/Irrigation Plans (Hillsborough to Sligh), contact Brad Suder, Landscape Architect II, Project Manager, 231-1337. Nebraska Avenue, State Road 45, Federal Highway U.S. 41, is a functionally classified arterial roadway under the jurisdiction

of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The FDOT has commissioned Post, Buckley, Schuh and Jernigan to conduct a feasibility study, currently in progress, on the possible restriping of Nebraska Avenue.

**Update:** From Mahdi Mansour, Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 274-8333. The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) consultant completed their feasibility study and recommended re-stripping of Nebraska Avenue between Kennedy Boulevard and Hillsborough Avenue. Citizen Advisory meetings were held on 6/14/04 and 7/19/04 with neighborhood representative and on 8/9/04 with business owners to discuss the FDOT resurfacing project on this segment of Nebraska Avenue. After receiving input from the community surrounding the project, Mayor Pam Iorio asked the FDOT to proceed with the re-stripping of this segment of Nebraska Avenue as a 3-lane facility including a bi-directional turn lane. The City has also recommended to the FDOT that thermoplastic decorative crosswalks be added at many locations. Meetings are on-going to determine if raised medians for landscaping will be feasible. The City has budgeted \$300,000 towards Nebraska Avenue, south of Hillsborough Avenue in the current Fiscal Year.

## **Need and Recommendation 2. Expansion at Giddens Playground, Located at 5209 N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street.**

*Giddens Playground has served the needs of area residents for over 50 years. Our neighborhood is very appreciative of the many improvements over the last year and is very excited about the proposed improvements by Tampa's Greenprinting Initiative in selecting Giddens Playground as the first recipient. However, we do continue to request that an addition is made to the existing building (the Kathryn Malone Center), or an additional building constructed to serve the needs of the neighborhood and civic association.*

*In last year's (May 27, 2003), CDBG response from Pete Burgue, Deputy Director of the Recreation Department, he stated: "Construction of a playground activities center and renovations to the existing building will be included in the Department's FY04 Capital Improvement Project request. We will continue to request this addition until construction begins. **We also request a sign at the southern entrance to the park, at the intersection of E. Frierson and N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street. In addition, we are requesting sidewalks and landscaping in the immediate areas adjoining the park. As the park is upgraded, it will continue to enhance neighborhood patronage. New facilities will accommodate the large number of people who use the park.***

**Response:** From Wayne Papy, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7726. The request for a sign is included in the FY05 Capital Improvement Program Budget request.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The sign is included in the FY05 CIP sign budget and landscaping will be installed in appropriate areas if funding is available.

**Response to sidewalk:** From Ernie Seal, Construction Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 635-3400. In the area of E. Frierson and N. 12<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk does not appear to be feasible due to limited right-of-way and tree conflicts.

**Update to sidewalk:** From Ernie Seal, Construction Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 635-3400. It was determined that sufficient right of way for new sidewalk existed along the east side of Giddens Park. New sidewalk was constructed along 12<sup>th</sup> Street from Frierson to Giddens (adjacent to the east side of the park) in early September under the current contract.

### **Need and Recommendation 3. Upgrade Lighting Throughout the Community.**

**The lighting in Southeast Seminole Heights is not adequate for the safety of our residents. We strongly urge an upgrade in the lighting throughout the neighborhood. Last year, an overview was attached to our CDBG request for lighting in Southeast Seminole Heights, composed by Sherry Simons, one of our civic association board members and chair of the Southeast Seminole Heights Vehicle Patrol for neighborhood watch. The response we received from Calvin Thornton of the Transportation Planning Department, concerning our lighting request, was for us to contact TECO. This was a totally inappropriate response and is not the neighborhood's responsibility. We are resubmitting Ms. Simon's overview, since no lighting upgrades have occurred in Southeast Seminole Heights over the last year. (See Attachment B).**

**Response:** From Calvin Thornton, Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 274-8333. As of 4/08/04, Tampa Electric Company (TECO) has installed 2,111 streetlights in Phases I and II. Phase I is complete with Phase II anticipated to be complete by July of 2004. The basis of phasing is by grouping Tampa Police Department patrol grids (Attachment C). This makes it difficult to depict completions by neighborhoods as patrol grids only approximate neighborhood boundaries. A map depicting phasing and neighborhood boundaries will be provided to all Block Club Captions. The phasing map will also be posted on our Web Site in the very near future ([www.tampagov.net/dept\\_Public\\_Works/transportation](http://www.tampagov.net/dept_Public_Works/transportation)). The specific locations (referred to in attachment B) are being revisited by Frank Roder and Ms. Simon (as discussed by phone with Mr. Roder 4/12/04). Due to the almost 90% completion of the improved lighting installations in the Southeast Seminole Heights neighborhood, the citizen list that was forwarded may no longer be valid. The Transportation Division will continue to work with the neighborhood on specific needs. Please contact Terry Wermuth at 274-8007 with your street lighting concerns, and notify TECO at 228-0800 with your street lighting maintenance needs.

**Update:** From Ann Andrews, Tampa Police Department, 276-3755. TECO has installed 3,005 streetlights as of October 2004. Phase I is complete and Phase II is expected to be completed by December 2004. Phase II is behind schedule due to the hurricanes this summer.

#### **Need and Recommendation 4. Install Curbing Throughout the Community.**

**Many of the streets in Southeast Seminole Heights are without curbs and many of the streets with curbs are in need of repair. We would like a timetable developed on when the streets in Southeast Seminole Heights without curbs, will get curbs installed, and on when those streets with curbs in need of repair will get repaired.**

**Response:** From Alexander P. Awad, Manager, Development and Consumer Affairs, Stormwater Department, 274-8771. The Stormwater Maintenance Division reviewed the area for the installation of curbing, and found that this area does not meet the following standards for curbing.

- 1) Curbing will stop water from entering and flooding private property.
- 2) Curbing will solve a severe erosion problem adjacent to the pavement.
- 3) Curbing will enhance the drainage system by channeling the stormwater to an inlet or grate.

**Response:** From Scott Shaw, Traffic Operations Chief, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 622-1955. Stormwater will review streets that are presently without curbs for approval. The existing asphalt curbs in this area may not enhance aesthetics. There are no severe erosion problems adjacent to the edge of pavement. These curbs still function well. As problems arise with channeling water, please call the Transportation Section at 622-1955 for repairs.

**Update:** From Scott Shaw, Traffic Operations Chief, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 622-1955. The telephone number to call for problems that arise with channeling of water has changed to 622-1940.

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