

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

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**Block Club:** Area IV

**Neighborhoods:** South Seminole Heights, Wellswood, Plaza Terrace, Riverside Heights, and Riverbend.

**Boundaries:** Hillsborough, Henry, Sligh Avenue (north); Columbus Drive (south); Florida Avenue (east); City limits (west).

**Contact Person:** Ms. Sandra L. Drake, Chairperson  
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**Need and Recommendation 1.** Replace or Repair Brick Pavers at the Intersection of W. Hillsborough Avenue and N. Highland Avenue.

When W. Hillsborough Avenue was widened, brick pavers, rather than street pavers, were placed in the roadbed at this intersection. These pavers are not strong enough to withstand the traffic volume at this intersection. The pavers keep breaking and flying up onto vehicles using this intersection. Either the pavers need to be replaced, using actual street pavers, or the intersection needs to have the remaining pavers removed and then resurfaced with macadam.

**Response:** From Scott Shaw, Traffic Operations Chief, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 622-1955. The Transportation Section will be working along with the Water Department. The Water Department has a Capital Improvement Project along Highland from Hillsborough to Louisiana around August 2004. We will at that time coordinate with the Water Department to install a new stamped concrete walkway.

**Update:** From Scott Shaw, Traffic Operations Chief, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 622-1955. We were not able to coordinate the necessary repairs to the walkway on Highland during the Water Department's Capital Improvement Project. We are presently engaged in discussions to facilitate the completion of the necessary repairs.

**Need and Recommendation 2. Handicapped parking needs to be designated at Rivercrest Park, Located at 398 W. Giddens Avenue.**

**The City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department will be installing a walkway from the street to the newly installed gazebo. We are requesting two (2) designated handicapped parking spaces, where the walkway will meet the street.**

**Although there is on-street parking along W. Osborne and River Boulevard, we feel that adequate provisions should be made for persons requiring handicapped accessibility. This activity needs to be coordinated with the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department.**

**Response:** From Wayne Papy, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7726. The Parks and Recreation Department are in the planning stage to install a sidewalk that leads to the gazebo to assist handicapped people. The department will work with the Transportation Division to see if it is possible to establish handicapped parking spaces along the street.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The Parks and Recreation Department is awarding a contract to install a sidewalk that leads to the gazebo and other areas of the park to assist individuals with disabilities. The department is working with the Transportation Division and has decided to install two handicapped parking spaces on the north side of Louisiana Street.

**Response:** From William Porth, Engineer, Department of Public Works, Transportation Division, 274-8333. The Transportation Division does not recommend designating ADA accessible parallel parking space(s) along the north side of W. Osborne Avenue between N. River Boulevard and North Boulevard. The proposed site does not have the appropriate accessible facilities available to accommodate or support ambulating individuals at, along the roadside, or next to the shortest safely accessible route to the gazebo.

Florida State Statute 553.5041 states on-street parallel parking spaces must be located at the beginning or end of a block or adjacent to alley entrances. This is contrary to the request. Curbs adjacent to such spaces must be of a height that will not interfere with the opening and closing of motor vehicle doors. Because of curb issue, consideration should be given to the Architectural Review Commission's input on or review of any changes made to historic nature of the street grid including the removal of granite curbing prior to the installation of pedestrian ramps or ADA accessible ramps.

I recommend relocating the sidewalk from the gazebo to the road and to have an ADA compliant drop curb, landing pad and ramp built at the beginning or the end of the block as outlined in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG), Florida State Statutes and Tampa's City Code. If these facilities existed, Transportation Division would consider installing a handicapped parking space. The best possible location is adjacent to the gazebo (the end of the block).

**Need and Recommendation 3. Additional Grills, Picnic Tables, Trash Receptacles, and Park Benches are Requested Throughout Rivercrest Park.**

Since the City of Tampa has installed the gazebo, more residents are utilizing Rivercrest Park for neighborhood gatherings and family functions. More grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and park benches are needed throughout the park, specifically near the gazebo and playground. We also are requesting the aforementioned items to be installed in the portion of Rivercrest Park, which runs along River Boulevard to the bridge that crosses the Hillsborough River. The new pathways will reinforce the need for more benches as well.

**Response:** From Wayne Papy, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7726. The department will install additional grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and benches where needed throughout the park.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The department has ordered grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and benches for the park at the end of FY04.

**Need and Recommendation 4. Planting of New Trees.**

West Chelsea Avenue (between N. Florida Avenue and N. Highland Avenue), W. Osborne Avenue (between N. Florida Avenue and N. Central Avenue) and W. Osborne Avenue (between N. Florida Avenue and Rivercrest Park). All locations need new trees.

Trees do not have an infinite life span. Many of our oak trees have reached the end of their life span. There is a need to have new trees planted to replace those that will need to be removed shortly, due to death and disease.

**Response:** From Wayne Papy, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7726. The Parks and Recreation Department will have the coordinator of the departments' community tree program (Mayor's 1000 Trees) contact the neighborhood to discuss the planting of some additional trees.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The coordinator of the Mayor's 1000 Trees is no longer with the program. Until a replacement is hired, please direct all questions to Steve Graham at 913-2639.

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## **Need and Recommendation 5. Replace and Repair Asphalt Curbing.**

Years of wear and abuse have caused the curbs to be destroyed, unsightly and hazardous to drivers. Normal traffic, truck traffic, and street paving equipment have caused the old curbing to crumble or become cracked and misplaced in and around the neighborhood. The damaged curves are not only an eye sore, but have the potential for a driving hazard, as the curves fall apart into the roadway and into city-owned right-of-ways. The specific locations to be replaced is as follows:

- a. 3200 Block. Osborne Avenue – north and south sides of the street, between N. Lincoln Avenue and N. MacDill Avenue.
- b. 4700 Block N. MacDill Avenue – east side.

**Response to a. and b.:** From Alexander P. Awad, Manager, Development and Consumer Affairs, Stormwater Department, 274-8771. I am requesting that the Maintenance Yard look into the two locations. If repairing an asphalt curb is warranted, we will complete request.

**Update to a. and b.:** From Alexander P. Awad, Manager, Development and Consumer Affairs, Stormwater Department, 274-8771. A work order has been submitted to the Transportation Division for the requested repairs to the asphalt curbs.

## **Need and Recommendation 6. Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan for Plaza Terrace.**

Plaza Terrace boundaries are from N. Himes Avenue (behind Jesuit High School) east to N. MacDill Avenue, north at St. Lawrence Catholic School and south on the cul-de-sac dead-end that butts up against Tampa Bay Park.

To make our neighborhood an attractive place for family living in this central Tampa location, a careful planned proactive blueprint is needed. If a proactive approach is taken, the neighborhood can better itself now, instead of waiting until the decline is so extensive that the cost and requirements will far exceed the current cost requirements. Included in this plan should be an economic study and a planning body to implement the plan and facilitate the community's involvement with the proper departments.

Plaza Terrace is a unique neighborhood of 334 homes with long-time, single family-owned stability that is rapidly changing to multi-family and rental investment properties. The mix of long-time residents, rentals and multi-family properties has added to a decline in the property value and quality of life issues for the stable families who want to remain in this central location. The 40+ year-old homes have a mix of improved homes with major change, and properties that have not had any improvements. The unchanged 40- year-old properties now have the appeal to investors who can buy for less than half what the homes, with improvements, can be sold for-thus creating an undesirable mix that depreciates the neighborhood as a whole. The one-time stable, crime-free neighborhood is unstable and

**crime seems to be on the rise. There is evidence of gang type elements surrounding Plaza Terrace, and if properties do not become more desirable for stable middle-income families, our area will become the next East Tampa area needing the city to invest mega-bucks into revitalization. Tampa has a neighborhood here that is ready and able to expend energies for the whole of the city.**

**Response:** From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner, Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD), 274-8228. The city works closely with the Hillsborough County City Planning Commission staff to develop neighborhood studies of targeted areas within the city. The Planning Commission has worked with the city to prepare several Neighborhood Plans and Economic Development Studies, including East Tampa.

Both the City of Tampa and the Planning Commission have limited planning staff available to accommodate special projects request, such as area wide zoning studies, economic development studies and neighborhood plans. Unfortunately, the city must appropriate the limited planning resources available to neighborhoods with the most severe condition, requiring immediate attention. The city's administration has committed the limited planning staff time to studying the target areas with blighted conditions and economic distress. Without clear direction from the city's administration, the city does not have adequate planning resources available at this time to undertake the development of the Comprehensive blueprint of the Plaza Terrace Neighborhood. To initiate a comprehensive neighborhood study, please contact the planning commission at 272-5940.

The City's Land Development Coordination staff is available on a daily basis to answer and research general questions concerning the existing zoning and future land use categories of the properties within the area. Specifically, staff can answer questions and provide information concerning potential zoning changes relating to street reconfiguration, street widening, change in traffic patterns, and new cul-de-sac locations.

**Update:** From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner, Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD), 274-8228. The City's Land Development Coordination contact is Eric Cotton who can be reached at 274-8273.

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