

**CITY OF TAMPA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FY2007-2008
December 12, 2007**

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).

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Need and Recommendation 1. Build a new center to replace existing building (The Kathryn Malone Center)

Giddens Park, located at the corner of 12th Street and Giddens Avenue, has served the needs of area residents for over 60 years. Our neighborhood is very appreciative of the many improvements, which have occurred in Giddens Park over the last couple of years, and is very excited about the improvements being implemented by Tampa's Greenprinting Initiative, who selected Giddens Park as the first recipient for park improvements and upgrades.

We are requesting that an additional building be built to replace the existing building (the Kathryn Malone Center) to serve the needs of the neighborhood and civic association. This can be accomplished by using Tax Increment Funds and other grant money in addition to CDBG funds. At the present time, there is not enough room in the existing building to accommodate the

neighborhood needs, the needs of the civic association, nor is the building large enough to accommodate the needs of our neighborhood children who are utilizing the center as a part of the City of Tampa's Parks Department. Currently, the present occupancy does not allow for more than 20-25 people to occupy the building comfortably. When the overhaul of Giddens Park was being designed, the Tampa Greenprinting Initiative, the Mayor's Beautification Committee, and the Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association, reserved space for the construction of a new community center. We are requesting that the new center be constructed.

We feel that as the park is upgraded and that with a new modernized neighborhood center, it will continue to enhance neighborhood patronage, as well as provide necessary facilities to accommodate the large number of people and the Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association who use the park.

Response: From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The department will continue to work with the community, the Mayor's Beautification Program and the East Tampa Development on developing a plan to fund a new community center.

Need and Recommendation 2. Installation of traffic calming devices

We are requesting the installation of traffic calming devices along 12th Street between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Hillsborough Avenue. Presently, 12th Street is a busy street for both cars and pedestrians without sidewalks. In addition, it runs along the side of Giddens Park (Giddens Avenue on the north side of Giddens Park already has speed tables and sidewalks). We have concerns about the number of cars speeding down 12th Street and feel that traffic calming devices would address this concern, as well as address the safety concerns for pedestrians.

Currently, 12th Street between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Osborne Avenue is ranked 22nd, while 12th Street between Osborne Avenue and Hillsborough Avenue is ranked 35th out of 160 local residential streets and Neighborhood-Collector roadways with a documented speeding problem. On Wednesday, April 19, 2006, a 24-hour speed and volume study on 12th Street between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Chelsea Street indicated 1,628 vehicles (819 vehicles northbound and 809 vehicles southbound) used this street. On March 21, 2006, another 24-hour speed and volume study between Osborne Avenue and Hillsborough Avenue indicated 917 vehicles (398 vehicles northbound and 519 vehicles southbound) used that section. These high vehicle numbers truly indicate the need for traffic calming on this residential street. In addition, 12th Street is the only way for our children to access Giddens Park, our only neighborhood park.

Response: From William Porth, Traffic Studies Technician, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8333. Before consideration is given to the installation of speed tables or any other traffic calming measures on local residential streets or Neighborhood-Collector roadways, a documented speeding problem must exist. This documentation takes place once the Transportation Division staff conducts a speed study and substantiates the existence of a speeding problem. In rare circumstances, such as an intersection with a documented history of pedestrian accidents, other site

specific traffic calming measures may be implemented.

Speed studies determine the 85th percentile speed. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at, or below which 85% percent of the observed free-flowing vehicles travel. The Transportation Division, in cooperation with the Tampa Police Department, considers speeding to be a problem at a point in which 85% of the motorists are traveling 10 mph or more above the designated speed limit.

The City of Tampa currently has documented 154 locations city-wide with speeding problems on local residential streets, Neighborhood-Collector roadways, and the higher volume Collectors and Arterials. Of the 154 locations, 83 of them qualify for traffic calming measures because they are classified as local residential streets or Neighborhood-Collector roadways. The remaining locations do not qualify for traffic calming because they are classified as Collectors and Arterials.

As each new speeding location is documented, they are added to the Speeding Location List (SLL). This list contains all of the locations in the City of Tampa that have documented speeding problems. The SLL is a prioritization tool and a prerequisite prior to considering a location for traffic calming measures. The SLL ranks speeding locations by the greatest differential between the 85th percentile speed and the designated speed limit. This sorting ranks the worst speeding locations first. Additionally, rankings will change when each new speeding location is documented.

North 12th Street between East Martin Luther King Boulevard and East Osborne Avenue is ranked 75 out of 83 local residential and Neighborhood Collector streets with a documented speeding problem on the SLL. Currently, we are working to resolve the documented speeding problems in the order of severity (worst-case first). When we reach a requested location on the SLL that qualifies for traffic calming measures, we will work with the affected property owners and their neighbors to find the best solution to address the speeding problem.

North 12th Street between East Osborne Avenue and East Hillsborough Avenue was last studied a year ago and the findings indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 33 mph which is below the minimum qualifying requirement as outlined above. The location was dropped from the SLL at that time. Because the study is a year or older, we will request a new speed study on your behalf and the estimated time of completion is approximately 12 weeks. After the speed study is completed, our findings will be shared with you. If you have not received an update on the speed study after this 12 week period, please contact us.

Update: From William Porth, Traffic Studies Technician, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8333. A speed study was re-ordered and the field data has not yet been returned for analysis. After the speed study is completed, our findings will be shared with citizens.

Need and Recommendation 3. Installation of traffic calming devices

The request is for installation of traffic calming devices along Chelsea Street. Presently, Chelsea Street is a busy street for both cars and pedestrians without sidewalks. We have concerns about the number of cars speeding down Chelsea Street and feel that traffic calming devices would

address this concern, as well as address the safety concerns for pedestrians.

On March 21, 2006, a 24-hour speed and volume study was conducted on Chelsea Street between Nebraska Avenue and 12th Street. The study indicated 1,270 vehicles (696 vehicles westbound and 574 vehicles eastbound) used this street. These high vehicle numbers truly indicate the need for traffic calming on this residential street.

Response: From William Porth, Traffic Studies Technician, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8333. Before consideration is given to the installation of speed tables or any other traffic calming measures on local residential streets or Neighborhood-Collector roadways, a documented speeding problem must exist. This documentation takes place once the Transportation Division staff conducts a speed study and substantiates the existence of a speeding problem. In rare circumstances, such as an intersection with a documented history of pedestrian accidents, other site specific traffic calming measures may be implemented.

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East Chelsea Street between North Nebraska Avenue and North 12th Street was last studied approximately eight months ago and the findings indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 34 mph which is below the minimum qualifying requirement as outlined above. The location was dropped from the SLL at that time. Speed studies are considered current for a one year period, so additional speed studies have not been requested at this time.

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Need and Recommendation 5. Lighting Improvements

Request improvements for the north, east and west quadrants of Tampa Heights: North Boulevard west, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard north, Interstate 275 east, and Scott Street south.

- a. **Historic lighting is needed to line both sides of Tampa Street from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to Floribraska Avenue (residential), and from Floribraska Avenue to Scott Street (commercial); and**
- b. **Street lighting for the alley bordered by East Gladys Avenue and East Floribraska Avenue - alley runs from north to south and sits parallel between North Jefferson Street and North Morgan Street. The alley is dark and invites illegal activities and is unsafe for residents.**

The historical importance that Tampa Street holds as the original main entrance to the city from the north is unarguable. Historic lighting would improve the neighborhood through which this road traverses - a road that has long been neglected. This would improve the entrance to downtown for many travelers. With FDOT making improvements to this road, this would be the ideal time to make other improvements, such as lighting to highlight the efforts being made by all parties to improve Tampa's roads. The City of Tampa, FDOT, and Tampa Heights need to make this road a priority in the revitalization and growth of the City of Tampa as a vibrant urban center.

Response to a: From Jan Washington, Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8303. The City of Tampa does not maintain or install street lights. The city leases the street lights from Tampa Electric Company, who is responsible for maintenance. If roadway conditions dictate the need for additional lights, the city will request TECO install them and the city will pay for them.

Tampa Street is under the jurisdiction of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and they are responsible for paying TECO for the associated street lighting through an interlocal agreement with the City. The City could attempt to negotiate with FDOT to increase their funding to replace the existing lights with Signature Lighting. But FDOT may decline to participate as they did on Nebraska Avenue. There is an option to consider where the residents and business owners agree to payment of a special assessment fee for the revised system. They may select decorative lighting

fixtures from Tampa Electric Company's product list. TECO's product list is restrictive and does not include the historic luminaries as found in Ybor City, but traditional designs are available. The standard fixture used by TECO is cobraheads which are currently on Tampa Street. This policy was established to avoid the general body of taxpayers paying the significant cost differential of 4 to 1 between decorative and cobrahead systems.

Therefore, the community can receive a change-out from cobraheads to decorative fixtures by agreeing to payment of the special assessment fee. Payment would be required annually and would be equal to the prorated expense for a certain number of lights plus an additional 6% for administration costs. The special assessment would require fifty-one (51%) percent of the impacted community to agree to the fee. Details about the assessment program can be found in the Tampa Municipal Code Sec. 23-151 - Streetlights.

Update to a: From Jan Washington, Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8303. In response to continued interest in signature lighting, the city is currently reviewing the entire streetlight program. Discussions with TECO are in the early stages, and the public will be contacted for their input. TECO does not offer specialty lighting through agreement with the city, and there is a limited number of options available for decorative lighting. As mentioned in my earlier response, the residents may get decorative lighting by participating in a special assessment program. The community will be charged the costs for the service on a perpetual basis. Be advised that TECO may also require a prorated payment of installation costs to be included in the perpetual assessment fee paid by the community. Additional options for decorative lighting may become available next year. Inquiries as to the progress of the discussions should be made directly to the new DPW Transportation Manager, Mr. Tony Rodriguez, 274-8333.

Lighting upgrades are being made only for the purpose of improving the safety of roadway travel. Additional lighting for aesthetic reasons or security is not part of the Transportation Division's responsibility. Recent budget constraints have resulted in the suspension of additional lighting in neighborhoods and consideration for approval of decorative lighting for "entertainment venues".

Response to b: From Jan Washington, Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8303. The City of Tampa's street lighting program serves the purposes of improving the safety of roadway travel. Consequently, alleyways and security concerns are not in the scope of the program. Residents interested in getting lighting in the alleys may contact Tampa Electric Company at 223-0800 and make arrangements to pay for security lighting.

Response to b: From Major Robert J. Guidara, Police Department, 242-3899. The police department response will be limited to the patrol function. Traffic Engineering will have to handle the speed tables and studies. The Police Department will gladly assign patrol officers and traffic squad units to monitor this area and enforce the traffic laws. Officers assigned to the area will complete activity forms for accountability purposes.

Update to b: From Major Robert J. Guidara, Police Department, 242-3899. Addition patrol officers have been assigned to monitor this area.

Need and Recommendation 6. Sidewalks

Sidewalks are requested for:

- a. **West Adalee Street, north side of road, from Ola Avenue east to alley (to complete entire street)**
- b. **West Plymouth Street, north and south sides of road, from Highland Avenue west to Ola Avenue**
- c. **West Emily Street, south side of street from Highland Avenue west to Ola Avenue**
- d. **West Woodlawn Avenue, south side of street from Ola Avenue east to where sidewalk exists**
- e. **North Dartmouth Avenue from Woodlawn Avenue north to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (both sides)**
- f. **North Highland Avenue from Woodlawn Avenue north to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (both sides)**
- g. **West Ohio Avenue, south side of street, from Florida Avenue to Ola Avenue**
- h. **West Indiana Avenue, south side of street, from Florida Avenue to Ola Avenue**
- i. **West Kentucky Avenue, north side of street, from Florida Avenue to Ola Avenue**
- j. **West Virginia Avenue, south side of street, from Florida Avenue to Ola Avenue**
- k. **West Virginia Avenue, north and south sides of street, from Ola Avenue to North Boulevard**
- l. **North Darwin Avenue, east side of street, from Indiana Avenue to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (finish missing portions)**
- m. **North Clearfield Avenue, west side of street, from Indiana Avenue to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard**
- n. **West Alfred Street, north side of street, from Highland Avenue to Ola Avenue**

The Tampa Heights Neighborhood Plan calls for a walkable community. Sidewalks help to achieve this and help to create a neighbor-to-neighbor friendly environment.

Response: From Jan Washington, Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8303. Last year, the Neighborhood submitted priorities for the New Sidewalk Program, and the location on West Plymouth Street from Highland Avenue to West Ola Avenue location was considered for the FY07 season, but was not selected due to funding limitations. So it will be reconsidered for the FY08 season. However, this CDBG request for all other locations in the Tampa Heights Neighborhood is too lengthy to be properly evaluated in a timely manner. Therefore, we suggest that the CDBG Requestor coordinate with the Neighborhood group and select two locations for submittal next year as priorities for the New Sidewalk program. They will be evaluated and added to the database for consideration in the FY09 season.

Update: From Jan Washington, Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8303. The above requested location on West Plymouth Street will soon be re-evaluated for consideration in the FY08 season.

Need and Recommendation 7. Repair of drainage system at southeast corner of Columbus Drive and Morgan Street, and at southeast corner of Highland Avenue and Keys Avenue.

The southeast corner of Columbus Drive and Morgan Street does not drain and water settles there, even when it is not raining. It is right next to Lee Elementary School and many of the children in the area walk to and from school and have to walk out into the streets to avoid the standing water. Also, avoiding getting wet is challenging because this is where parents drop off and pick up students for school.

The southeast corner of Highland Avenue and Keys Avenue holds water for a long time after it rains. It is difficult for residents to get into their properties and another route must be used when driving or walking.

Response: From Michael J. Burwell, Planning and Environment Division, Stormwater Department, 274-7864. There are no repairs possible since there is no system to serve this area and we have no plans to extend the Stormwater system to this area. We agree that the standing water can be unsightly and can sometimes cause people to be inconvenienced but there are no systems nearby where this runoff can be directed and the extension to the nearest system (about 1400' feet away) would cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars and cause major disruptions on this busy roadway. Since the severity of the flooding is low, it does not compete well with other flood control projects for funding.

Response: From Michael J. Burwell, Planning and Environment Division, Stormwater Department, 274-7864. We are unaware of any flooding problems in the Highland and Keyes area, but will make an inspection during the next heavy rain to determine the extent of the problem.

Update: From Michael J. Burwell, Planning and Environment Division, Stormwater Department, 274-7864. There is a high curb, some ponding due to pavement irregularities and grass growing in the curb line. The vegetation could promote some ponding but the department has no mechanism for removing it. If the residents were to remove it, periodic city street sweeping might limit its regrowth.

Need and Recommendation 8. Pave alleys

We request pavement of three (3) alleys bordered by North Massachusetts Avenue and North Ola Avenue. The alleys run from east to west.

- a. Alley 1 sits parallel between Amelia Avenue and West Frances Avenue
- b. Alley 2 sits parallel between West Frances Avenue and West Park Avenue
- c. Alley 3 sits parallel between West Park Avenue and West Ross Avenue

Tampa Heights encourages and is committed to as many alleys remaining open as possible. Paving of these public access areas will improve the appearance of the neighborhood.

Response: From Scott Shaw, Traffic Operations Chief, Transportation Division, Department of Public Works, 622-1955. Re-grading and other maintenance will be performed on the unimproved alley 2 between Frances and Park Avenues. However, paving of these pervious surfaces will not be performed due to issues of design, utilities, drainage, and permits. The city is committed to maintaining the surface of alleys 1 and 3 and keep them free of depressions and potholes, but will not be paving them.

Need and Recommendation 11. Larger Community Center in Tampa Heights

A larger community center is needed in the Tampa Heights area with individual rooms for recreational and sports activities, performing arts, meeting rooms, and an auditorium for larger events, etc.

We already have the Robles Park Community Center. However, this center is limited in space and is an open area, which limits the use of the building. When the community holds meetings at the center, we must compete with the sounds and activities of the kids or with other events. Also, we need additional space to accommodate the large number of young people who live in the neighborhood. With the 2000 Census reporting that there are around four thousand young people between the ages of zero to twenty-one, the need for larger space for youth activities is very pressing.

Response: From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The addition of a center at Robles would be difficult with the Greenprinting plan and Greenspace needs. This is difficult because of the greenprinting design, the Stormwater issues and the historical nature of the existing building.

Update: From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The community will need to contact the Parks and Recreation Department for other possible sites to have their community meetings.

Need and Recommendation 12. Trees and Landscaping

We would like to have more trees planted and landscaping installed throughout Tampa Heights.

We realize the properties right at the intersection of Columbus Drive, Florida Avenue and Tampa Street have no curbs, but we would like the city to add trees along those needed properties to enhance the commercial viability of the properties, while not reducing their accessibility to any great degree. Also, we are requesting that landscaping be done along entryways into the neighborhood off major roads such as Palm Avenue, Columbus Drive, Florida Avenue, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and North Boulevard. Landscaping will help attract new businesses and continued revitalization of our historic district.

Response: From Jim Pinkney, Manager, Clean City Division, 931-2143. Clean City Division staff has conducted an on-site assessment, it was determined that the site locations had no opportunity for landscape improvements. The areas are either right-of-ways and/or concrete sidewalk curbing with no medians.