

**CITY OF TAMPA  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FY2008-2009  
December 17, 2008**

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).

Chairperson: Frank H. Roder  
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**1. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Constructing an additional building to replace the Kathryn Malone Center**

Giddens Park, located at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> 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 Green Printing Initiative, who selected Giddens Park as the first recipient for park improvements and upgrades. However, it has now been over 5 years and we are still waiting for the completion of many of the upgrades planned for this park, such as the completion of the interactive water fountain and gazebo.

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 TIF 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's 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.

At the present time we have no other place in our neighborhood to meet as a civic association. We are now trying to meet in the present Kathryn Malone Center; this is an almost impossible task due to the space limitations of this building. This building cannot provide the space needed for our association or the City of Tampa's Parks Department.

When the overhaul of Giddens Park was being designed by the Green Printing Initiative, the Mayor's Beautification Committee and the Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association, space was reserved for the construction of a new community center.

We are now requesting that the new center be constructed, it is badly needed!

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

**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.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The water feature has been installed and we are now waiting for the Health Department final inspection. The gazebo has been purchased and will be installed by the end of the fiscal year. The department is still developing a plan to determine possible funding for a new community center.

**2. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Installation of Traffic Calming Devices along 12<sup>th</sup> St. between MLK Blvd. and Hillsborough Ave. (Eligible)**

We are continuing to request the installation of traffic calming devices along 12<sup>th</sup> St. between MLK Blvd. and Hillsborough Ave. Presently; 12<sup>th</sup> St. is a busy street for both cars and pedestrians without sidewalks. In addition, it serves as the entrance to Giddens Park, our only neighborhood park. There are large numbers of pedestrians, especially children, in this area. In addition, our neighborhood dog park is also at Giddens Park and many of our neighbors are walking their dogs to the park. Every year our residents list the speed/traffic issues on 12<sup>th</sup> St. as their #1 concern. We have concerns about the number of cars speeding down 12<sup>th</sup> St. and feel that traffic calming devices would address this concern as well as address the safety concerns for pedestrians. One way to address this concern would be installation of a four-way stop sign at the intersection of McBerry and 12<sup>th</sup> St. Due to sight limitations and the speed of cars going down 12<sup>th</sup> St. there have been many accidents at this corner. In addition, this corner is the location of a bus stop and many students load and unload this location. With the installation of a four-way stop sign this would decrease traffic accidents as well slow down traffic on 12<sup>th</sup> St. The speeding on 12<sup>th</sup> St. between MLK and Osborne has decreased since the addition of the four-way stop sign at this corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Chelsea, however, we still have a problem with cars speeding to and from Chelsea to either Osborne or MLK.

**Response:** From Bernadette Corey, Traffic Studies Engineer, 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 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed. The 85<sup>th</sup> 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 158 locations City-wide with speeding problems on local residential streets, Neighborhood-Collector roadways, and the higher volume Collectors and Arterials. Of the 158 locations, 92 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. 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 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Caracas Street and East Wilder Avenue as well as East McBerry Street and East Shadow Avenue, were concurrently studied on November 28, 2007. The result of the speed studies showed the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 33 mph which is below the minimum qualifying requirement, as stated above. However, speed studies were not requested for the areas between East Caracas Street to East Osborne Avenue on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street and therefore will be requested on your behalf.

Additionally, new speed studies are being requested for North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Martin Luther King Boulevard Jr. and East Chelsea Street and for North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Chelsea Street and East Osborne Avenue.

The estimated time of completion is approximately 12 weeks. After the speed studies are completed, our findings will be shared with you. If you have not received an update on the speed studies after the study period has ended, please contact us.

Relative to your request for all-way stop controls at the intersection of North 12<sup>th</sup> Street and McBerry Avenue, this type of device is not used for slowing traffic but rather to assign appropriate right-of-way control. The decision to install all-way stop controls is based on an engineering study. The study evaluates existing conditions based on traffic volumes, as well as crash history. Specific criteria based on present volumes of traffic must be satisfied before such controls are installed. These criteria have been established and adopted by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

(MUTCD), a federal and nationally adopted standard. A four-way stop analysis was performed on January 17, 2008 which indicated that the requested location did not meet the criteria used to install this type of device. A four-way stop is installed when the approach volumes at all legs are approximately equal. The volume study indicated this condition was not present. The crash history showed one crash occurred during 2006 and from January to August in 2007, only two crashes occurred.

**Update:** From Bernadette Corey, Traffic Studies Engineer, Transportation Planning, Department of Public Works, 274-8333. On Thursday, May 22, 2008, twenty-four hour speed and volume studies were conducted on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Caracas Street to East Osborne Avenue; on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Martin Luther King Boulevard Jr. and East Chelsea Street; on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Chelsea Street and East Osborne Avenue. The designated speed limit for these sections of roadway is 25 mph.

The resulting 85% percentile speed was 29 mph on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Caracas Street to East Osborne Avenue; 33 mph on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Martin Luther King Boulevard Jr. and East Chelsea Street; 32 mph on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street between East Chelsea Street and East Osborne Avenue. Based on the results of these studies, these locations do not appear to be experiencing an excessive speeding situation.

Relative to the stop study, the Transportation Division received notification of a sight obstruction at the intersection of East McBerry Avenue and North 12<sup>th</sup> Street. A field review of the area confirmed vegetation and structures on private property contributed to sight obstruction for motorists on East McBerry Avenue. During the field visit, it was determined the geometrics of the intersection compromised visibility of the northbound and southbound traffic on North 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Motorists were entering slightly into the intersection to ensure clear passage. This maneuver was determined to be unsafe and stop signs were installed at the north and south approaches to enhance safety.

**3. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Traffic Calming Devices along Chelsea St.**  
*(Eligible)*

We are continuing to request the installation of traffic calming devices along Chelsea St. Presently, Chelsea St. is a busy street for both cars and pedestrians without sidewalks; it almost serves as the entrance to the Mega Supermarket. We have had concerns about the number of cars speeding down Chelsea and feel that traffic calming devices would address this concern as well as address the safety concerns for pedestrians. Every year our residents list the speed/traffic issues on Chelsea St. as their number 2 concern.

**Response:** From Bernadette Corey, Traffic Studies Engineer, 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 10<sup>th</sup> Street and North 12<sup>th</sup> Street was studied in January 2008. The speed study indicated the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 29 – 30 mph which is below the minimum qualifying requirement. It was also studied in March 2007 with an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 31 – 32 mph. Comparing the speed studies performed during 2007 to 2008 indicate vehicles are decreasing in their overall speed along this portion of East Chelsea Street. Because the most current study was performed in January 2008, no additional speed studies have been requested at this time. Speed studies are current for one year.

**4. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Increased Tampa Police Patrol throughout Southeast Seminole Heights. (Non-Eligible)**

Speeding throughout the Southeast Seminole Heights has become a major area of concern of our neighbors. Our neighborhood speed limit is 25 mph on our residential streets. On any of our streets we often have cars traveling in excess of 45 mph. This is a dangerous situation and we are requested increased TPD presence in our neighborhood to address this speeding problem.

**Response:** From Major Robert J. Guidara, Police Department, 242-3899. Mr. William Metler, of the SE Seminole Heights Neighborhood Watch Association has been on ride-alongs with the zone officers for this neighborhood. He has explained the problems to the officers and this has increased the patrols of the problem areas of this neighborhood.

**Update:** From Captain Craig Roberts, Police Department, 242-3899. Additionally, over the past two months the District III Street Anti-Crime squads with support units have conducted several prostitution initiatives in this area. The result of these initiatives has been 34 prostitution arrests to date.

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5. **NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Repair the drainage system at the corner of Columbus and Jefferson St. (Eligible)**

These locations do 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.

**Response:** From Michael J. Burwell, Planning and Environment Division, Stormwater Department, 274-7864. This has been a problem area for several years. It does pond during events and there are puddles which persist afterwards but it does meet the City's level of service for flood control. Due to its impact on the residents and students we have studied the problem several times to try and find a workable solution. Unfortunately, the nearest stormwater system is so far away that there is no affordable connection possible. If the streets were regraded to eliminate the dips the stormwater could flow away without any negative impacts. The streets, however, are brick and it would be extraordinarily expensive to take them up and set them properly.

6. **NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Address the foul smell that comes from the Sewage Station at the corner of Adalee and Avon Ave., on the southwestern corner of Robles Park (Non-Eligible)**

As the sewage station is being repaired, include whatever process is needed to address the foul smell that comes from the sewage station at the corner of Adalee and Avon Ave., on the southwestern corner of Robles Park. Explore relocating the sewage station. We commend the City for the work that has been done on the system up to now. It is much improved. However, the smell remains and is overwhelming in that area.

Thank you to the City for the complete replacement of the old system sewage station. We also commend the City for the on-going maintenance that has been done since the station was placed at this location. However, the foul smell still continues

despite the change of the entire system. This is very disgusting when walking through the park, using it for exercising, and when walking on the nearby streets. Additionally, the immediate neighbors complain about the smell. They cannot sit on their porches because of the odor.

**Response:** From Charlie Lynch, Professional engineer, Wastewater Department, 274-8916. The Wastewater Department has inspected the odor control system at the pumping station to determine the cause of the odors. Our initial findings show that the odor control system is operating properly. We will continue to monitor the system and will also investigate the wastewater system in the area to determine if there may be other causes for the odors. To assist in our investigation, we encourage the residents to report any odor problems to the Howard F. Curren Treatment Plant at 247-3451 or e-mail Mr. John Pecket, Odor Control Specialist at [John.Pecket@Tampagov.net](mailto:John.Pecket@Tampagov.net).

**Update:** From Charlie Lynch, Professional engineer, Wastewater Department, 274-8916. The Wastewater Department continues to monitor the odor control system at the pumping station and have not noted any problems with the operation of the system. We have also not received any odor complaints in this area. We encourage the residents to report any odor problems to the Howard F. Curren Treatment Plant at 247-3451 or e-mail Mr. John Pecket, Odor Control Specialist at [John.Pecket@Tampagov.net](mailto:John.Pecket@Tampagov.net).

**7. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Add a second dumpster at the northern end of Robles Park Community Center parking lot and place an attractive fence around the dumpsters located at 3305 N. Avon Ave. (Non-Eligible)**

The Parks Department already maintains a smaller size dumpster at this location that is for the use of the community center. However, many others dump trash in the dumpster and often times outside the dumpster, leaving this section of the park unattractive. Adding another dumpster would help with the dumping around the area and a fence will make the site more attractive.

**Response:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. Presently, there is a 4-yard dumpster that is picked up once a week. Staff will monitor the dumpster loads and evaluate the area for fencing in the dumpster.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. Staff has monitored the dumpster and determined that another dumpster is not needed for the park and center.

**8. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: A larger community center in the Tampa Heights area with individual rooms for recreational and sports activities, performing arts, meeting rooms, and an auditorium for larger events (Eligible)**

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 our 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 in Tampa Heights, the need for a larger space for youth activities is very pressing.

**Response:** From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The City of Tampa supports the construction of a community center and is considered a CDBG eligible activity, as long as the use of the building can meet the CDBG national objective of benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. Any proposed construction projects readiness-to-proceed will be considered in determining what CDBG program year funds would be used. Phasing the planning, design, development and construction over several years is recommended.

**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. The department will work with the community to discuss other possible sites.

**9. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: More tree planting throughout Tampa Heights (Eligible)**

We realize the properties at the intersection of Columbus, Florida and Tampa Streets have no curbs, but we would like the City to add trees along those 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 entry ways into the neighborhood off major roads such as Palm, Columbus, Florida, Dr. Martin Luther King, and North Boulevard. Landscaping will help to attract new businesses and continued revitalization of our historic district.

**Response:** From Jim Pinkney, Manager, Clean City Division, 307-5525. Funding would need to be approved for a feasibility study to determine if landscaping and beautification projects could be done. If the study determines that enhanced landscaping would be feasible, implementation plans with construction documents would be developed for approved landscaping on City maintained roads and FDOT roads. This need will be requested in FY09 Budget.

**Update:** From Jim Pinkney, Manager, Clean City Division, 307-5525. The feasibility study will be requested in the FY10 Budget for consideration.

**10. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Repair walking path in Robles Park and clean Robles Park Lake more regularly (Eligible)**

The walking path pavement in the park is broken and cracked at several spots and the lake holds a lot of trash, especially after the rain. There is a large hole on the southern section of the park in which a barrier has been stuck for many months. Location of park is 3305 N. Avon Avenue.

**Response:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. Repair of the sidewalks will be included with the greenprinting project. However, if there is a safety issue with any of the sidewalk areas they will be addressed immediately. The maintenance of the lake is a Stormwater issue.

**Update:** From Karen Palus, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, 274-7730. The Stormwater Department is exploring various trash containment methods to minimize the trash which finds its way to the lake.

**Update:** From Michael J. Burwell, Planning and Environment Division, Stormwater Department, 274-7864. The City Stormwater Department, in coordination with FDOT, is applying for a Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Cooperative Funding Project to provide habitat restoration and water quality improvement in the Lake Robles drainage area. The application for SWFWMD funding was recently submitted, and will be considered for approval by the district in the near future. A feasibility study will be the first step should the project be accepted by the district.

Structural improvements to the stormwater conveyance system and other Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be investigated to determine the needs of watershed and consideration of the preferences of the residents who live near and use Robles Park. The BMPs will likely consist of trash collection devices and/or sediment removal.

Currently, a portion of the stormwater system on the south end of Lake Robles is in poor repair that has led to erosion near the sidewalk. Replacement work has been scheduled for the stormwater pipe and sidewalk.

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