



Transforming East Tampa into a vibrant residential and business community with recreational, social, and cultural life.

## H.O.P.E. Learning Center Celebrates

On January 26 a crowd of more than 50 people gathered to celebrate the second anniversary of the Hope Learning Center.

Pastor Daniel Dean, also a contractor, built and opened the Hope Learning Center at 2902 E. Lake Ave. The learning center has become a focal point for the community, offering a safe place for children to learn and play. GED classes, poetry jams, sewing and cooking classes and chess lessons are among activities offered.

Soon the learning center will be added to the Hillsborough County School District's list of GED satellite locations for the adult and community education division.

District resource teacher Susan MacGill recently completed assessments of the learning center's students. It helps them to set goals, she said.

"The cool thing about this is people in the community are coming here," MacGill said. "It's flourishing. It's helping the community."



Mayor Buckhorn is greeted by youngsters at the second anniversary celebration of the H.O.P.E. Learning Center

## Street Flooding Alleviated

When summer rolls around, East Tampa residents are familiar with the heavy rains occurring most afternoons and where it's easy or difficult to get around by car. During a deluge, one of the most difficult intersections is at Hillsborough Avenue and 30th Street. The road becomes impassible for standard size cars and has been a concern for East Tampa residents, businesses, and others trying to navigate a flooded intersection.

Long identified as a problem, the area has been on Tampa's roadway "fix-it" list but wasn't moving very quickly as a priority. The good news is that the East Tampa CRA partnered with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to fund a reworking of this area. Updated storm drains, repaving and intersection improvements will alleviate the flooding at a cost of approximately \$1.6 million. There will be one more rainy season during construction, but we look forward to a safer intersection with its anticipated completion in October 2012.

## CDC of Tampa Awarded \$750,000 Grant

In October 2011, the Corporation to Develop Communities of Tampa, Inc. (CDC of Tampa) was awarded a \$759,374 Community Economic Development grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to help boost neighborhood revitalization and jobs.

Congratulations to the CDC for their hard work in procuring the grant which will create new business and employment opportunities for East Tampa residents.

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## Tree Lighting Celebration Delights 300 Participants

Growing larger every year, young voices filled the air with holiday cheer at the Fourth Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration held December 9, 2011 at Lockhart Elementary School.

Organized by Denese Meteye-James, Chair of the Aesthetics and Beautification Sub-Committee of the East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership (ETCRP), this year's event featured



Mayor Bob Buckhorn; City Councilman Frank Reddick; ETCRP Chairperson Rev. E. Sims; CH2M HILL representative, Wendy Nero; Hillsborough County School Board Member, Doretha Edgecomb; and the singing, dancing, acrobatic, and musical talents of Lockhart, Middleton, and other Hillsborough County School students, Potter Show Choir, and the Orange Grove Thespians.

Mayor and long-time East Tampa supporter, Bob Buckhorn commented, "This is my first time to celebrate this holiday occasion. It makes me so proud to be part of a city that cares so much." During his remarks, the mayor told the audience of his two daughters, ages six and ten, writing their letters to Santa Claus, and how, through this activity, he reminded them that during the season and all year long, to listen to parents, grandparents, and teachers; and to help others.

Another highlight of the evening was when Santa Claus arrived to hand out goodie-filled backpacks and bicycles to students from East Tampa schools, selected for their good grades and attendance at school. "The bicycles are made possible by our primary sponsor, CH2MHILL, a contracting company that works in the area," said Meteye-James. "The generosity of CH2MHILL and 30 other sponsors make a real difference in our children's lives each holiday season. I also appreciate the hard work our planning committee members - Amanda Deivert, Bobby Jones, Brooke Brunner, Darlene Green, Deborah Thompson, James Vann, Jarem McNair, Jennifer Moody, Julina Dolce Gurganious, Krisina Duran, Lalita Lovett, Larry Dreiling, Sharon Phillips, Stephanie Barchus Susan Horan, and Yvonne Willoughby - did to make this event a wonderful success."

Visit the City of Tampa's YouTube channel and look for the "East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership Holiday Celebration," to view the event.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/CityofTampa/videos>

## Roadway Getting Better All The Time

It's a little messy out there right now but it will be well worth it. Improvements to 22nd Street are underway between 23rd and 26th Avenues. Phase II-A will result in significant street enhancements such as improved signals, cross walks, a sidewalk on the east side of the road and a trail on the west side, drainage, water and stormwater line upgrades, and road repaving.

"We wanted to get all of the easements for the properties along the route secured for Phase II, and with that resolved, we were ready to start segment A," said Michelle Van Loan, Economic Development Specialist with the City of Tampa. "Construction on Phase II-B beginning Spring 2012, will continue the work from 26th Street to Lake Avenue, and we expect work on both segments to be complete in early 2013."

"As we continue the 22nd Street improvements, the wider trail on the West side of the street will offer safer passage to the bicyclists and pedestrians using the roadway," observed Van Loan.

Phase I of the project between Lake Avenue and M.L. King Boulevard was completed in March 2011. In January 2012, HART installed two slimline shelters at the bus bays at 22nd Street and Lake Avenue (Bus Stop No. 744) and 22nd Street and M.L. King Boulevard (Bus Stop No. 7753). Each slimline shelter includes a bench and provides shade and protection from inclement weather, making public transit easier and more convenient to use. Additionally, these new shelters are lit by solar power, saving taxpayer money on electrical costs and making the shelters environmentally friendly. The HART funded shelters (approximately \$8,700 each) and the City of Tampa construction of the bus bays (approximately \$80,000 each) is just another example of excellent collaboration between two government agencies, all for the good of East Tampa.



## Foreclosure Help

The CDC of Tampa is partnering with the Florida Hardest Hit Fund to help East Tampa residents facing home foreclosure. Funding from the federal government will pay the mortgages of qualified homeowners who are unemployed or underemployed through no fault of their own.

Log onto the official HHF website: [www.FLHardestHitHelp.org](http://www.FLHardestHitHelp.org) (use referral code 10032-36), or you may meet with an Hardest Hit Fund Advisor at the CDC of Tampa:

CDC of Tampa, Inc.

Noemi Smith - 813-231-4362, ext 305 or 321

[noemi.smith@cdcoftampa.org](mailto:noemi.smith@cdcoftampa.org)

# Challenges and Opportunities Await 2012 CAC

Pastor Essie Sims, Jr., Senior Pastor of Telling the Truth Ministries, and an eight-year employee with the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department, is the new Chair for both the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership (ETCRP).

Elected by unanimous vote in October 2011, Sims has been involved with the CAC and ETCRP since October 2010. "I thank my peers for having faith and belief in me to guide this partnership, and by no means do I take this appointment lightly. I am humbled and honored, to have been chosen to lead and work with the citizens of the East Tampa community, other community leaders, and the City of Tampa," said Sims.

There are a number of challenges and opportunities identified by Sims and committee members to address as they get busy in 2012. These include:

**Housing Foreclosures and Rehabilitations** – we will work with partners to solve the housing problems that have hit the East Tampa community hard, with the goal of getting those properties back on the tax rolls;

**Violence and Crime** – we will work with the police to identify and stamp out murder, drugs, theft, prostitution and other crimes;

**Job Creation and Empowerment** – continuing economic development efforts will promote job creation for adults and youth; we will partner with companies to hire East Tampa residents; we will work with Mayor Buckhorn and city staff regarding RFP's and the contractors awarded work, to require that they hire East Tampa residents;

**Mentoring Youth** – through programs that foster developing trusting relationships with peers and adults, parental involvement, and youth-led events;

**Education** – we will strive to help people understand that education is key to solving many day-to-day problems, we will promote the importance of, and need for, education in every aspect of daily life;

**Small Business Development** – we will work with the East Tampa Small Business Information Center to cultivate business planning for new start-ups or existing businesses;

**Vacant Properties** – we will work with the CRA manager, to market vacant and unused properties as potential sites for new businesses;

**Healthy Eating and Exercise** – we will promote healthier lifestyles and individuals taking care of themselves, via forums and seminars developed through the efforts of the Health, Education, Social Services Committee (HESS); and,

**Eliminating Blight** – we will encourage the Aesthetics and Beautification Committee (A&B) to be more aggressive in eliminating dirty streets and neighborhoods by using TIF funding to help eliminate blight on roadways, sidewalks, and through better lighting; by requesting the Police take a strong and aggressive stance on illegal dumping, including stiffer penalties for violators; and working with neighborhood associations to take pride in keeping neighborhoods clean by scheduling regular "clean-up" days through the year.

"We have a full plate and the tasks before us are huge, but we have many who are genuinely concerned about the problems we face," said Sims. "I am excited about the future and know, by working together towards these goals, we can continue to conquer our challenges and create a vibrant, safe, and great quality of life for the East Tampa community."

## Job Opportunity

The CDC of Tampa is recruiting for full time/permanent positions with the recycling company, Envirofocus. The general labor positions include operating machinery, loading and unload items, with an hourly starting pay of \$11.40.

To qualify, applicants must have a high school diploma or GED, solid work history, and be able to pass a criminal background search and drug screen. The CDC of Tampa will be pre-screening candidates on Monday, April 2 to Friday, April 6 at 10am each day. Appointments are not needed, simply arrive before 10am. Please be prepared to stay up to 2 hours. The location and contact for the pre-screening is:

CDC of Tampa, Inc.  
David Jones  
1907 E. Hillsborough Ave., Tampa, FL 33610

EnviroFocus, located at 1901 N. 66th Street, provides safe recycling and processing of lead from batteries and other lead-bearing materials. Their reclaimed lead is used in new automotive and industrial batteries, along with other everyday items.

## Façades Renew Community

East Tampa's renewal continues with the completion of the facade improvements to the Oriental Fish Market located at the southwest corner of Lake Avenue and North 15th Street.

Funded by the East Tampa CRA TIF funds, the Façade Improvement Grant Program provides retail and commercial property owners with financial assistance to improve their property appearance. The money can be used for exterior renovation as well as landscaping. The program has funding limits of 50% of the project costs, capping at \$50,000.

Oriental Fish Market owner Marvin Knight received a matching grant of \$27,800. Funds were used to stucco and paint the exterior, reshingle the roof, add new doors and windows, a new roof, and repave and stripe the parking area - totaling \$64,500.

If you are a business owner interested in this program, visit [www.tampagov.net/dept\\_economic\\_and\\_urban\\_development](http://www.tampagov.net/dept_economic_and_urban_development)





# EAST TAMPA Redevelopment News

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## Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

### Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board

Frank Reddick	District 5	Chairperson
Mary Mulhern	District 2 At-Large	Vice-Chairperson
Mike Suarez	District 1	
Yvonne Yolie Capin	District 3 At-Large	
Harry Cohen	District 4	
Charlie Miranda	District 6	
Lisa J. Montelione	District 7	

**Meeting Location:** 315 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa

**Time:** 9 a.m.

**Dates:** March 15, April 19, May 17

### Community Advisory Committee

Essie Sims, Jr.	Chairperson
Richedean Hills-Ackbar	Vice Chairperson
Curtis Brown	
David Denson, Sr.	
Kim Headland	
Deborah Lawson	
Carrol Josephs-Marshall	
Elizabeth Nelson	
Jeraldine Williams-Shaw	
Thad Smith	

**Meeting Location:** Economic Development Office  
TPD III, 3808 N. 22nd Street, Tampa

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Dates:** March 6, April 3, May 1

## Your Neighborhood Connection

Twelve neighborhood associations in East Tampa are actively working to ensure a safe and vibrant community. Contact your neighborhood leader and get involved today. For more information, contact the neighborhood president directly by email.

College Hill Civic Association

*Cynthia Few* [fbckbeauty3@yahoo.com](mailto:fbckbeauty3@yahoo.com)

East Tampa Business & Civic Association

*Janee Murphy* [janee12371@aol.com](mailto:janee12371@aol.com)

Eastern Heights Neighborhood Association

*Sam Mobley* [slmsam1@verizon.net](mailto:slmsam1@verizon.net)

Florence Villa/Beasley/Oak Park Civic Association

*Barbara McGill* [bmcgill1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bmcgill1@tampabay.rr.com)

Grant Park Civic Association and Watch Group

*Ralph Johnson* [Ralphj0103@yahoo.com](mailto:Ralphj0103@yahoo.com)

Highland Pines Community Task Force

*Betty Bell* [Bellsystem5@verizon.net](mailto:Bellsystem5@verizon.net)

Northeast Community Crimewatch & Civic Assoc.

*Joel Barnum* [jbar1952@verizon.net](mailto:jbar1952@verizon.net)

Northview Hills Civic Association

*Gloria Taylor, Interim President* [glotay23@verizon.net](mailto:glotay23@verizon.net)

Old Seminole Heights Neighborhood Association

*Evan St. Ives* [astives1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:astives1@tampabay.rr.com)

Rainbow Heights Neighborhood Association & Crimewatch

*Frankie Jones* [Frankie.Jones@SDHC.K12.FL.US](mailto:Frankie.Jones@SDHC.K12.FL.US)

Southeast Seminole Heights Civic Association

*Sherry Genovar-Simmons* [genovar.simmons@sesha.com](mailto:genovar.simmons@sesha.com)

V.M. Ybor Neighborhood Association

*Kimberly Headland* [rkheadland@verizon.net](mailto:rkheadland@verizon.net)

Woodland Terrace Neighborhood Association

*Ruth Fleming* [1flemingjr@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:1flemingjr@tampabay.rr.com)