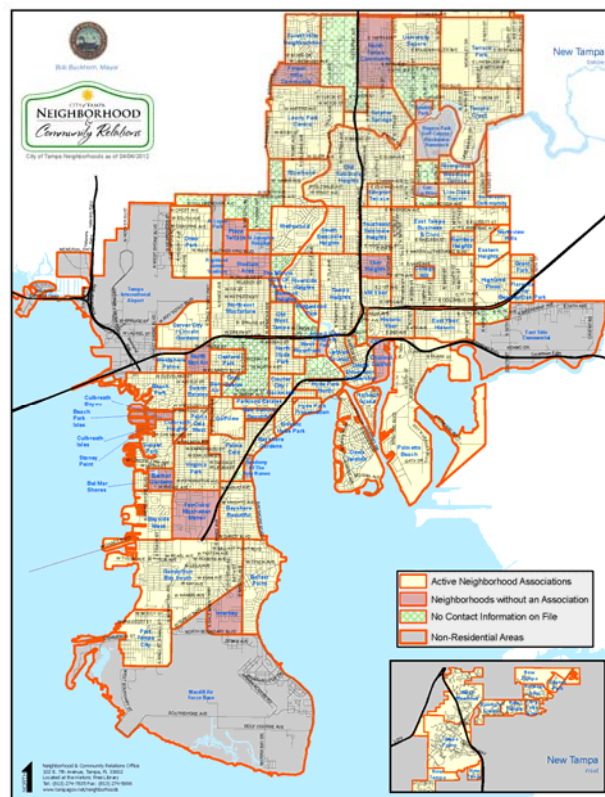


# Strong Neighborhoods

## Introduction:

Tampa's strength lies in the strength of its neighborhoods. From West Tampa to New Tampa, from Carver City to Ybor City, from Old Seminole Heights to Old Hyde Park, Tampa's neighborhoods represent a varied quilt of styles and cultures, one that will be preserved and enhanced with Bob Buckhorn as Mayor. Mayor Buckhorn knows neighborhoods that are engaged are neighborhoods that thrive. For 16 years, Mayor Buckhorn worked hard to make sure that neighborhoods had a seat at the table. He will assure that quality of life crimes are taken seriously and prosecuted, that every neighborhood receives timely and effective code enforcement and nuisance abatement, and that neighborhood leaders get the training and support they need to continue to make Tampa great.



## The Buckhorn Plan

- ✓ Neighborhoods are one of Mayor Bob Buckhorn's top priorities. Under the Buckhorn Administration, City government will be reorganized to reflect that priority. Mayor Bob

Buckhorn plans to appoint a **Deputy Mayor of Neighborhoods and Community Empowerment** whose primary mission will be to advocate for and address the needs of each of the City's neighborhoods. This Deputy will increase the City's responsiveness and accountability to its neighborhoods by providing a single point of access to all City programs and services related to Neighborhoods. Departments under the authority of the **Deputy Mayor of Neighborhoods and Community Empowerment** will include (among others): Community Affairs, Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, The Office of Women/Minority Business Enterprises, The Office of the Neighborhoods, Clean City and the Office of Community Technology, to name a few. This new position will come as a result of the elimination of existing redundant positions and will remove a layer of bureaucracy.

- ✓ The strength of our City's neighborhoods is enhanced by the effectiveness of their leaders. Mayor Bob Buckhorn wants to further empower existing neighborhood leaders and support the development of new leaders through the establishment of a **Neighborhood University**. The **Neighborhood University** will provide a formal leadership-training program for neighborhood leaders modeled on the Tampa Chamber's successful Leadership Tampa program. In addition, the **Neighborhood University** will house and build upon the existing City's Neighborhood Empowerment program offering enhanced technical support services for the City's neighborhoods.
- ✓ Tampa's Nuisance Abatement Board can be a vital tool in the fight for cleaner, safer neighborhoods. Mayor Bob Buckhorn plans to strengthen the role of the Nuisance Abatement Board and will use the nuisance abatement process aggressively against slum landlords and chronic neighborhood problems. Mayor Buckhorn will instruct city attorneys to make referrals to the Board on chronic nuisance complaints and will give the Board additional enforcement authority to effectively enforce against violators. In addition, the Code Enforcement and the Tampa Police Department will work more closely together to target quality of life code violations.
- ✓ Creating a city that is bicycle and pedestrian friendly is important to enhancing quality of life. The Buckhorn administration has been working to foster and codify bike and walkable urban policies in both land development codes and in internal infrastructure planning. In addition, the Buckhorn administration is in the process of launching a public service campaign to educate and alert motorists to bicycle safety rules.
- ✓ Making neighborhoods the City's top priority means meeting our neighborhoods' most basic needs: sidewalks, flooding, streets, potholes, waterlines, and parks. Mayor Bob Buckhorn plans to establish **Accountability Standards** for each of the City's departments and their functions, from filling potholes to clearing storm water ditches. The City will know what the City's pressing problems are and how long it should take to fix them. The Mayor and City employees will stand accountable to City residents if the timetables established for resolving these issues are not complied with. As a first step in this process, Mayor Buckhorn will complete a full **City-wide Infrastructure Assessment** to identify our neighborhoods' needs and begin to address them.

- ✓ Tampa's condemned properties are blights on our neighborhoods and a threat to public safety. Currently, the City has a backlog of condemned buildings. The Buckhorn Administration will not only classify properties as condemned, but will actually have them destroyed. Mayor Buckhorn will make the necessary resources available to take possession of and demolish abandoned and dilapidated buildings before they become fire hazards, producers of illegal drugs, or neighborhood eyesores. Given the City's limited resources, Mayor Buckhorn is seeking out partners on the federal, state and local level, including the county Sheriff and state Department of Corrections, to assist Tampa in this effort.
  
- ✓ In order to assist landlords in preventing code violations from occurring, Mayor Buckhorn will establish a **Landlord Training Program**, which will train the City's landlords on code requirements, code enforcement procedures, and techniques for maintaining their properties in a manner that will help prevent code violations in our rental communities. Public housing and publicly-supported housing is a privilege, not a right.
  
- ✓ To build strong neighborhoods, we must continue to encourage people to purchase homes under the first-time homebuyer incentive programs of the Tampa Housing Authority. We must recognize that owning a home can be challenging for anyone, particularly a first time homebuyer. Through the Office of Neighborhood Empowerment, the Buckhorn Administration will provide technical support for first time homebuyers to help them learn about the rights and responsibilities of home ownership and neighborhood participation.



***Seminole Heights***

- ✓ Mayor Buckhorn believes that parks and open spaces add immeasurably to the quality of life in Tampa. In order to facilitate the development of safe, enjoyable public parks, Mayor Buckhorn will create a series of **Parks Initiatives**. These will include:
- The development of a **Parks Advisory Board** made up of residents and businesses in neighborhoods surrounding City parks to advocate for and help support those venues.
  - A commitment to identify corridors for the development of a **City-wide Greenway/Trail** from MacDill Air Force Base to New Tampa using existing rail lines and new development partnerships.
  - Developing **Parks Partnerships** with existing parks advocacy groups such as Parks Forever and the Mayor's Beautification Committee.
  - Encouraging the effective use of the City's undeveloped open lots for the development of **Community Open Spaces** such as playgrounds, pocket parks and community gardens.
- ✓ Mayor Buckhorn believes strongly in Tampa's reclaimed water program, the "STAR program." He fought for it in the City Council and will fight for it as Mayor. In order to assure that the program can meet its potential and effectively use of the City's limited water resources, Mayor Buckhorn will fight in Washington and Tallahassee to obtain funding for the expansion of the STAR program to each of the City's neighborhoods.



***Ybor City***



- ✓ Each neighborhood in Tampa has a distinct look, feel and culture. Mayor Buckhorn will encourage neighborhoods to work together in their efforts to maintain and enhance their uniqueness by encouraging them to complete the development of Neighborhood Plans and Overlay Districts.
- ✓ Tampa's inner city neighborhoods are enhanced by our old-growth canopy trees but, while they add to the look and feel of our neighborhoods, they challenge public safety and security efforts by blocking street and natural light. Mayor Buckhorn will work with TECO to conduct a City-wide lighting assessment to determine where City lights need to be updated, repaired or replaced.



***West Tampa***