



MARCH 2014

## Reflections on a first year in office

March 19 will mark one year since my swearing-in as your city commissioner. I'm amazed at how many accomplishments there have been, but it's only because of the many people who have dedicated themselves to the success of these endeavors.

These improvements crisscross the community – from the upcoming groundbreaking to pave the last dirt roads in **South Middle River** to the engineering work now underway to bury utility lines in **Riviera Isles** and **Idlewyld**.

Fort Lauderdale has also stepped up to challenges involving crime, homelessness, traffic and infrastructure.

Consider homelessness. The city has approved the expansion of the Homeless Assistance Center to allow up to 24 families to find temporary housing and assistance, and we are participating in a new federal program called Housing First that offers housing and social services to the chronically homeless.

Most importantly, the City Commission will soon vote on ordinances prohibiting panhandling and regulating public behavior like sleeping on sidewalks and in parks.

The Police Department and residents came together in forums around the district to discuss law enforcement concerns, particularly juvenile crime and home burglaries.

As a result, city officials held an unprecedented meeting with the state judges who oversee juvenile delinquency. City staff will soon offer a new plan to better monitor teens in the court system.

The SmartWater theft-deterrent spray has proven effective in **South Middle River**, and we're looking to expand its use. Police responded to spikes in neighborhood crime by devoting extra units and conducting undercover operations. The city launched a first-of-its-kind partnership with IBM to develop crime prevention tactics using advanced data analysis.

On the **beach**, the police announced a zero-tolerance policy to

alcohol in the hopes of curbing public disturbances. The city Nuisance Abatement Board has undertaken enforcement action against the Beach Place complex, which has been the site of much illicit activity.

We expanded the Sun Trolley's **downtown** service, and the Wave streetcar is closer and closer to reality. Just this month, the city received good news that President Obama included \$50 million to cover the second phase of the Wave in his new budget proposal. Things are really rolling.

All Aboard Florida selected the site for its downtown station and is moving ahead with high-speed passenger rail service between Miami and Orlando. Meanwhile, the city is investigating the creation of quiet zones at rail crossings so the extra traffic doesn't disturb nearby residents.

The city has been working with the Florida Department of Transportation on six major road improvements in the district – the repairs to the section of State Road A1A damaged by Hurricane Sandy, the reconstruction of the Las Olas Boulevard and Sunrise Boulevard bridges, the replacement of five bridges on the Las Olas Isles and Sunrise Key, and the repaving of parts of Sunrise Boulevard and Powerline Road.

Residents of **Poinsettia Heights**, **Lake Ridge**, **Victoria Park** and **South Middle River** can expect to see large sections of their neighborhood streets resurfaced in the coming year.

Other infrastructure improvements are in the works. City staff is crafting long-term plans to dredge canals and address flooding caused by storm water and high tides. Also, the Intracoastal Waterway will soon be dredged to accommodate larger vessels.

Many specific neighborhood projects have advanced.

In the **Las Olas Isles** communities, the engineering work underway on burying utility lines will lead to a series of votes in which residents will decide if they want to

pay for construction. The city also replaced the old rails on the street that many deemed unsightly. And, the City Commission agreed to improve traffic flow between Las Olas and Broward boulevards.

In **Middle River Terrace**, the Dixie Highway Complete Street project is finally underway. If that wasn't enough, we won the commitment from the county of \$1.5 million in redevelopment funds to improve Northeast 13th Street to enhance that area's chances for business growth.

We also hosted a town hall forum to build consensus on how to create a vibrant **North Beach** community. More than 150 people attended, and we're on track to establishing a blueprint for that area's future. The county even reports that beach renourishment is on the way.

A year ago, **South Middle River** was told it would have to wait a decade before it would see the paving of its dirt roads. I'm pleased to report that paving will in fact begin this year! The city also successfully lobbied to lower the speed limit on Northeast 4th Avenue and is planning safety improvements to Andrews Avenue.

In **Flagler Village**, the city helped pay for a community garden and streetscape improvements around new apartment complexes. The next phase of the Flagler Greenway is also set to begin. And after months of discussion with **Victoria Park**, I think that we are on our way to securing a dog play area in Holiday Park.

Whew! It's been an exciting first year. I want to thank everyone who has pitched in to make all of these things possible. Let's work together in the months ahead and commit ourselves into making Fort Lauderdale the best place possible to live.

Sincerely,

Dean

## City Complete Streets wins national recognition

Fort Lauderdale has been recognized as a national leader in making streets safer and more accessible for everyone. The National Complete Streets Coalition, a program of national non-profit Smart Growth America, recently ranked more than 80 Complete Streets policies that were adopted nationwide in 2013.

Fort Lauderdale's policy, which was developed in collaboration with the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization with assistance from the Urban Health Partnership, ranked third in the country.

No other Florida community made the top 15 cities. Littleton, Mass., and Peru, Ind., received the highest recognition.

Fort Lauderdale's City Commission passed its Complete Streets policy in October. It encourages planners and engineers to design and build streets that are safe and convenient for everyone regardless of the method they use to travel.

The city has already initiated several projects developed as part of the Complete Streets initiative, including the Dixie Highway Improvement project, Northeast 13th Street redevelopment project, and State Road A1A projects.

Nationwide, a total of 610 jurisdictions in 48 states have Complete Streets policies in place.



Commissioner Trantalis greets James Krumme and Cindy Smith at the 13th Street Alliance's booth during the city's Neighbor Support Night at City Hall.



Commissioner Trantalis joins residents at GALLERYone Doubletree Suites for the Friends of Birch State Park annual meeting. Photo by Art Seitz.

## ModWeekend 2014

Mark your calendars for the Tropic Magazine's ModWeekend celebrating mid-century modern architecture March 13-16.

The event includes tours by boat and bus of the city's architecture from that period. There also will be a film festival and photo exhibit. For more information, go to [www.modweekend.com](http://www.modweekend.com).

In conjunction, the Broward Trust for Historic Preservation is hosting related events.

Please join the Trust from 5-7 p.m. March 14 for a happy hour kick-off to the weekend at their lounge at the AQUA hotel, 3016 Windamar St. The lounge also will be open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 15 and 16 with refreshments.

The lounge is free and open to all. It will include an exhibition of photography of local architecture by Robin Hill. The art will be for sale to benefit the Trust. Call 954-790-4199 for more information on the Trust's event.



Commissioner Trantalis joins other city and county officials to launch festivities at Holiday Park for the annual Pride Fort Lauderdale Days event.