



MAY 2014

Middle River Terrace to get SmartWater

City Commission begins to address homelessness issues, discusses historic preservation

Fort Lauderdale is expanding its offer of free high-tech crime-fighting kits to two more neighborhoods heavily affected by a rash of home burglaries.

We will distribute 500 units to **Middle River Terrace**, where break-ins jumped 76 percent last year. Another 500 units will go to **Lauderdale Manors**. That neighborhood also has experienced a high number of burglaries, and police see a link between criminal activity there and nearby parts of our commission district.

These kits are from SmartWater CSI and contain a forensic coding liquid that can be applied to valuable personal property. Visible only under ultraviolet light, the long-lasting marker helps police officers identify stolen property and arrest the thieves.

The city initially teamed up with SmartWater in early 2013 to fight break-ins in **South Middle River**. According to the Police Department, burglaries dropped 14 percent after SmartWater's introduction.

We hope to see similar results in these other two neighborhoods, but please be assured that we will also continue our dialogue with the judicial system and law enforcement agencies to find ways to better deal with the juvenile offenders who are at the heart of our crime problems.

The SmartWater kits are not the only good news for Middle River Terrace. The city recently entered into a formal agreement with Broward County over the \$1.5 million in redevelopment funds that it earmarked to improve **Northeast 13th Street**.

The agreement calls for the improvements to be made over the next three years. We will continue to work with area residents and businesses to draw up detailed plans for the facelift to 13th between Northeast 4th Avenue and Northeast 9th Avenue.

Over the last month, the City Commission also began discussing how to strike a better balance between historic preservation and the desires of many in the **Sailboat Bend** neighborhood to see more redevelopment.

Fort Lauderdale celebrated its 100th anniversary three years ago, and our history is an important piece of the fabric of our community. When I was first on the City Commission, I worked hard to preserve the façade of the Art Deco-style Lauderdale Beach Hotel. I've been pleased too to see developers agree to save the Escape Hotel, a prime example of mid-century modern architecture on the beach.

The historic homes of Sailboat Bend are part of what makes Fort Lauderdale special, and we want to preserve that.

Still, all of the commissioners agree the city code needs some degree of revision. It has become difficult for some in Sailboat Bend to make improvements to non-historic property given the bureaucratic red tape that's developed. We will work to fix this in the coming months.

Many of you have written or called about how the city should deal with problems surrounding **homelessness**. The City Commission took some action in this regard on May 6, but I truly believe we missed an opportunity to demonstrate that Fort Lauderdale wants to comprehensively address the issue.

One of the two new ordinances deals with public indecency by regulating the disposal of urine and feces. The other prohibits individuals from storing personal belongings on public property.

I supported the measures, but no one should think this represents our complete response to homelessness.

For those who need help, I'd like to think that the city is there to help. We're participating in a federal program to provide housing to the chronically homeless. We've supported addiction recovery programs. We've expanded the Homeless Assistance Center. And, our Police Department's homeless liaison program is considered one of the best in the state.

While we help those who need help, we also must deal with those who make a lifestyle choice to live on the street. We must maintain Fort Lauderdale's quality of life and strike a balance between the rights of those individuals and the rights of the rest of the city.

City staff continues to draft ordinances that would prohibit panhandling on streets, ban camping in public spaces and regulate outdoor homeless feeding programs. Those will come to the commission soon for consideration.

Sincerely,

Dean

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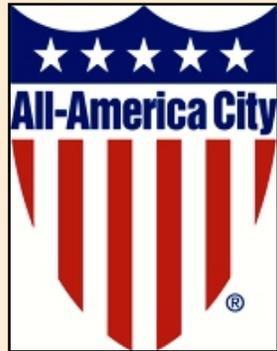
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City is finalist again for All-America City

For the second consecutive year, Fort Lauderdale has been named a finalist for the national All-America City Award.

This prestigious award from the National Civic League recognizes communities across the country for exemplary civic engagement and problem-solving efforts that bring together public, private and non-profit entities.



The National Civic League commended Fort Lauderdale for numerous parks and recreation, economic development and transportation projects that demonstrate outstanding civic engagement, inclusiveness and innovation. Fort Lauderdale will compete against 24 other finalists to earn the title of All-America City.

Meanwhile, Fort Lauderdale has continued to rack up other accolades nationally. The city was ranked among the top places to move to in 2014 and the most exciting mid-size communities.

A new study by the real estate blog Movoto listed Fort Lauderdale as the seventh most exciting city with a population between 120,000 and 210,000. Movoto looked at 117 cities and evaluated them based on nightlife, restaurants, active life options, music venues and the number of young adults in the community.

Providence, Rhode Island, and Charleston, South Carolina, took the top two spots. The editors at Movoto said Fort Lauderdale's high-ranking was "absolutely no surprise."

They rated Fort Lauderdale's nightlife as the best of all mid-sized cities and placed us second in terms of active life options such as parks and outdoor activities. They were also impressed by the wide range of dining options available.

A professional moving blog Simple Moving Labor ranked Fort Lauderdale as the third best place in the country to move to.

The editors looked at unemployment, median income, the projected growth in home values and home affordability to come up with their rankings. They drew on information from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and Forbes.com.

Fort Lauderdale placed behind Boise, Idaho, and Seattle, Washington. Tampa and Orlando didn't fare as well but still made the top 10.



Commissioner Trantalis joins Kelly Shanley, CEO of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, at the grand opening of the Huizenga Pavilion. Photo courtesy of Cindy Schutt PR.



Commissioner Trantalis joins members of the U.S. Navy and Marines at a Fleet Week event at the Jimmy Evert Tennis Center. Photo courtesy of Art Seitz.



Commissioner Trantalis helps Swim Fort Lauderdale, the U.S. Masters swimming program at the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center, proclaim April at "Adult Learn to Swim Month" in the city.