



Major Las Olas isles projects move forward

City seeks county aid for 13th Street improvement, looks to beautify Flagler Village

As we enter the summer, I hope everyone is able to take a moment and enjoy the beauty of our city and to appreciate what others pay good money to experience in our own backyard. In the meantime, here is an update on what's been happening in our District

The city made some significant progress on a pair of projects important to the island neighborhoods off Las Olas Boulevard.

A notice to proceed will be issued this month for construction crews to improve the guard rails along Las Olas. The project should be completed by mid-September.

The current rails were installed three years ago as part of a road-repaving project and were compared to bike racks and crowd-control barriers.

The new design removes more than half the railings and replaces them with landscaping or retaining walls topped with horizontal rails.

The City Commission on July 2 also took a major step forward on a neighborhood effort to bury the overhead utility lines.

After listening to the thoughts of residents, the commission instructed engineers to draw the detailed construction plans needed to calculate the cost of undergrounding in the Riviera Isles, Idlewyld and Seven Isles communities. Discussion will continue about doing the same in Las Olas Isles.

Residents will make the final decision. Once the designs and costs are finalized, the neighborhoods will

vote if they want to proceed and pay a special assessment for the work.

Homelessness has been a concern throughout the district, and the City Commission took action to increase the occupancy at the Broward County Homeless Assistance Center. Thirty beds will be added to 200-bed facility on Sunrise Boulevard.

The city and the Metropolitan Planning Organization are looking at creating quiet zones around railroad crossings throughout the area.

Not having the constant sound of train horns would be a benefit to neighborhoods like City View, particularly as plans for commuter service move ahead.

We're working with County Commissioner Tim Ryan to breathe new life into an expansion of the Middle River Terrace Park. Commissioner Ryan has asked the county to obtain a needed appraisal on the lot to the south of the park.

The county's parks bond program would pay for the addition.

The City Commission recently decided not to put the Dixie Highway improvement plans out for a vote in Middle River Terrace. Instead, we're working on a way to accommodate both sides in the debate by having the city guarantee upfront that traffic-calming measures will be implemented at the same time the road is improved.

The City Commission also recently agreed to apply for redevelopment aid from Broward County to beautify the streetscape along NE 13th Street. We should know

by mid-September if we receive the grant.

The city is working with Flagler Village to beautify and better promote the area.

The city's redevelopment

agency has recommended financial to help pay for a police substation,

improved street lighting and signage, better landscaping as well as some community events and marketing.

We also recently accompanied some Victoria

Park residents on

a tour of the Suncoast Gun and Knife Show at War Memorial Auditorium.

The group was interested to see the operations in light of questions raised last year whether the city should continue to allow a gun show to be held in the middle of a park.

What we found is that the Police Department has begun strictly enforcing state firearm statutes.

Individuals were required to unload and encase all guns and no one was allowed to sell firearms or other merchandise in Holiday Park or adjacent roadways. Suncoast has been working with the city on ensuring only licensed gun dealers are vendors and providing background checks on all gun purchases.

The city also is moving to improve the appearance of the beach. By the end of August, the entire lighting system in the wave wall along State Road A1A should be replaced.

The wall lighting was prone to failure because of the harsh salt water environment. More than 8,000 feet of fiber optic line will be replaced from the entrance of the south beach parking lot to Sunrise Boulevard.

Sincerely,

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City diversity efforts win national praise

Fort Lauderdale recently won the National Civic League's 2013 All-America City Diversity and Inclusiveness Award.

The All-America City Diversity and Inclusiveness Award is presented to one city, county, town, neighborhood or metropolitan area in the United States for extraordinary and innovative success in advancing diversity and inclusiveness. Fort Lauderdale was selected over 20 other communities that were competing for the award.

The National Civic League established the award last year to recognize cities that are demonstrating outstanding diversity and inclusiveness in community problem-solving and decision-making by seeking input and involvement from a variety of viewpoints and perspectives.

The National Civic League commended Fort Lauderdale for numerous projects that demonstrated



outstanding civic engagement, cross sector collaboration, diversity, inclusiveness and innovation.

Among these included:

- Undertaking a massive community outreach effort during Fort Lauderdale's citywide Visioning initiative. By placing a special emphasis on targeting hard-to-reach, culturally diverse residents, the community outreach effort resulted in 5,548 connections with neighbors and generated 1,562 ideas.

- Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of the city beaches with a reenactment of the historic wade-in.

- Developing a "Learn to Sail" program for underprivileged children in Fort Lauderdale.

- Establishing a public/private partnership with the Orange Bowl Committee to build a state-of-the-art synthetic turf football field and track at Joseph C. Carter Park.

- Celebrating Black History Month with "A Walk Through History," an event which chronicled the history of education in Northwest Fort Lauderdale.

- Participating in the Broward League of Cities Million-Hour Volunteer Challenge, which generated more than 3.6 million hours of volunteer community service throughout Broward County.

Additional initiatives included promoting urban gardening; offering free Business Education Seminars for small businesses, and investing \$15 million in the Sistrunk Boulevard streetscape project.



Commissioner Trantalis joins residents to fix up the historic Shippey House, which was moved last year to the Himmarshee neighborhood. Photo courtesy of Cal Deal.



Commissioner Trantalis speaks at a celebration outside the federal courthouse after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decisions on gay marriage.

Telephone Town Hall

Commissioner Trantalis will host a telephone town hall meeting from 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. July 10. Feel free to call in if you have an idea to improve the city or a question about an ongoing project or city service. We encourage you to dial in and be part of the conversation. Call toll free (855) 269-4484 to join in.