

Questions and Answers from Virtual Tampa Town Hall Council District 7

Q: How do we plan on adopting the parks to be safe during the increasing threat of climate change such as having water stations and cooling stations to address increasing heat. Especially since the bathrooms in a lot of parks have been locked and there are barely water stations in a lot of our parks and trails.

A: Good evening Tatiana. I would love to discuss the particular park you are referencing in your message. Please give me a call ([813-274-7721](tel:813-274-7721)) or email me (Sherisha.Hills@tampagov.net) and we can talk about water stations and the City parks in your area.

Q: Hi, What are the housing programs doing to help residents that have already been evicted and need assistance finding new housing?

A: Ms. Morales - The city has many programs to assist families at nearly every stage of housing need. Our team at 'Housing & Community Development' can provide options depending on what the individual needs are. You can review information at the link below, or feel free to e-mail me with details and I will connect you with the appropriate staff to assist. carole.post@tampagov.net HCD website: <https://www.tampa.gov/housing-and-community-development>

Q: What is the city planning on doing to address the combination of a rapidly growing population and the skyrocketing rental rate increases that are trapping residents into moving into slum like apartments.

A: Ms. Morales - The City has a range of housing programs to provide more affordable 'income-qualifying' housing units and requires landlords to maintain the affordable housing rates over decades so they cannot be forced out. The new development at Nebraska and Busch for 128 units is one of these projects, also the one at Rome Yard which will have nearly 700 new affordable units. And more on the way.

Q: why don't we have a comprehensive system that tracks and registers landlords and management companies throughout the city so we see all the housing options in one place and resources if needed most. We have a rapidly increasing homeless population that has not been able to get the support they need and in lots of cases are being manipulated and targeted by negligent landlords in the area because they are undocumented, a sex worker, low income, disabled etc.

A: Certain landlords are tracked through a City registration system. Landlords that manage more than 8 housing units are overseen by the state and other entities.

Q: Why doesn't the city create safe spaces run by local residents and homeless folks that can be in a variety of empty spaces throughout the city that allow services such as lockers, showers, bathrooms, and survival resources. Lots of cities have used these spaces to bring in mental health resources and community resources while creating safe spaces for our homeless population.

A: There are dozens of homeless support organizations around the City that are supported by the City, the County, and the Tampa Homeless Housing Initiative.

Q: We need investments into expanding the housing authority and code enforcement to investigate every single building in Tampa to protect our residents from being forced out of their communities by rising rent costs and aggressive slumlords.

A: Great idea. Thanks for the input.

Q: Why not expand the r3 program with less requirements due to the extreme nature of the COVID crisis to not require landlord consent and expand into accepting undocumented and other communities that currently do not qualify for aid that could help.

A: Ms. Morales - The R3 program is governed by federal and state guidelines for eligibility. We wish it were less restrictive as well. During spring of 2020, the City did provide some additional less restrictive programs for homeowners and businesses at the height of the COVID and business shutdowns.

Q: where in this presentation do we address how the massive budgetary increases to tpd could have been used to invest in our EMT/FIRE/Paramedic services that are on the verge of collapse while tpd loves to buy new helicopters to fly all over the city.

A: We evaluated CAHOOTS along with several other initiatives to ensure we put a program in place that would adequately serve those in our community who are suffering from mental health disorders. In this budget, we have funding allocated for counselors who will be co-responders with our officers and who have the expertise and training needed to help those who are showing signs of mental illness. We will address mental health disorders, the same way we've addressed crime over the years and that's in a proactive manner to keep everyone in our community safe.

Q: So there were programs for homeowners and business who usually have some resources but not renters or anyone who is homeless or anyone who is undocumented.

A: Ms. Morales - There are many programs for renters. All the rental assistance programs, including the ongoing 'Emergency Rental Assistance Program' is for renters. In addition, the new affordable housing units are largely rentals. In addition, the City had an extensive homeless support program, including a rapid sheltering program during the height of COVID shutdown.