

Questions and Answer from Virtual Tampa Town Hall Council District 6

Q: How does this year's budget for NEW sidewalks compare to last year's? This question is not about maintenance. Mr. Maniscalco, Mayor Castor and Ms. Duncan: do you support changes to the sidewalk code?

A: Ms. Bennett, thank you for the question. Typically we have only enough funding to build around 1 mile of sidewalk each year. The Mayor has prioritized transportation, particularly sidewalks and in FY22 we will build 2 miles (double) with our regular budget. Additionally, we continue to look for federal and state funds to increase that deployment. We anticipate additional funding and will be able to confirm upon approval of the FY22 budget.

Q: Before COVID there was going to be a class on using and understanding Acela for Neighborhood advocates. Are you going to start holding those again?

A: Yes, we launched 'Acela 101' in fall of 2019 and conducted several sessions into 2020 to assist community group leaders on how to access information. That program is scheduled to re-start in the fall. We welcome input on key topics to cover. We encourage all community group leaders to participate.

Q: Is the city going to make sidewalks near parks and playgrounds a true priority?

A: Ms. Bennett, Yes, our ongoing MOVES mobility planning effort and adoption of Vision Zero our sidewalk program will be more pro-active with a focus on schools, ADA, transit access and parks. Feel free to contact me at vik.bhide@tampagov.net

Q: Goes the City pay for the paint in the Crosswalk to Classroom?

A: Ms. Sanchez, we use both City transportation funds and private donations (when possible) to support Mayor Castor's Crosswalks to Classrooms program. The projects enhance pedestrian safety by increasing awareness and conspicuity of crosswalks near schools to improve safety.

Q: West Seminole Heights and South Tampa in District 6, some of the most affluent neighborhoods in Tampa, have some of the least dense land uses in the city. With our city's growth, high income earners are moving into lower income communities at a quick pace, raising housing costs, displacing people in those communities.

What plans does the city have to improve density in these low density neighborhoods to reduce displacement in communities with existing affordable housing stock?

A: Responding to your question about displacement, we are committing many programs to ensure long-term affordability for our housing programs including deed restrictions on new affordable housing units. We are happy to work further with the West Tampa CDC to increase resident awareness of ways to protect their interests and advance generational wealth. Please feel free to reach me directly at carole.post@tampagov.net

Q: What's next for a completing a safer bike route from downtown to the Causeway through west Tampa?

A: Mr. Hagan, thank you for the question. Gray Street will be designed to serve as a bike boulevard from West Shore District to downtown (with connection between Gray St and Cass St/Green Spine cycle track). The project will include traffic calming and measures to minimize cut-through traffic making it safer for bike/ped/micromobility.

Q: Is there a central place to stay up to date on meetings and discussion related to updates to the comprehensive plan?

A: Updates on the Comprehensive Plan, can be found at <http://www.planhillsborough.org/city-of-tampa-2040-comprehensive-plan/>. In addition, our City Planning Dept will be launching a new monthly 'Planning Today' program to provide regular updates on land use, planning, and development projects. The first program will launch in the fall and will be virtual to be easily accessible to all.

Q: What additional traffic management and pedestrian safety measures (bike lanes) are planned for Beach Park along S. Westshore Blvd.?

A: M Johnson, West Shore Blvd through the Beach Park area is a County Road. The County Public Works Department can be contacted at (813) 635-5400 for additional information. <tel:813.635.5400>

Q: For Sherisha -- The "new" New Tampa Recreation Center is being expanded, East Tampa is getting a long-overdue makeover of Fair Oaks Rec Center, and the Vila Brothers Park is being finished in West Tampa. When can we see a community center in Seminole Heights, the urban core? Many years ago our center was turned into the Wayne C Papy Center for Gymnastics & Dance. A center can be placed at Henry & Ola Park and replace the tiny 740 sq ft temporary portable we have.

A: Thank you for the feedback. As we mentioned earlier, we will take a look at the Master Plan to see what improvements are needed at Henry and Ola. This plan will take a close look at the parks/community centers that are in close proximity to Henry and Ola (i.e. Wellswood and P.A.L.) and see what services are best needed in this park. We definitely want to hear what you would love to see at this park. If you haven't already, please take a minute and complete our survey at www.yourtampaparksplan.com

Q: I currently live in north Ybor. I missed last week's Town Hall.

A: You can view the District 5 Town Hall by going to going to the City of Tampa's YouTube Channel.

Q: Representing Culbreath Heights, we would love an update on the City's intention for The Park on Clark (by the tennis courts).

A: Good evening. Parks and Recreation has plans to add a play area to the west side of the park. We will add sidewalks that will individuals safely across the park in addition to adding some play equipment to this same area.

Q: Mabry has a painted crosswalk on Hubert and Estrella, but it is faded. How often is it scheduled to be re-painted?

A: Ms. Moreland, thank you for reporting the concern. We will report the same to our Operations team and follow up with a schedule.

Q: Please address the rezoning plans for the proposed development in Beach Park/Westshore area.

A: Regarding protection of zoning guidelines, any changes to zoning is done through a public process that requires city council approval. It cannot be done unilaterally. In addition, our new City Planning Dept is now assessing a wide range of zoning requirements to propose adapting zoning and land use as needed to control and/or promote growth depending on the location.

Q: We use technology and economic development as a strategy to increase public safety, affordable housing and building community capacity to determine ti future in partnership with the private and public sector

A: Responding to your question about displacement, we are committing many programs to ensure long-term affordability for our housing programs including deed restrictions on new affordable housing units. We are happy to work further with the West Tampa CDC to increase resident awareness of ways to protect their interests and advance generational wealth. Please feel free to reach me directly at carole.post@tampagov.net

Q: Will there be sidewalks installed in Oakford Park so we can safely walk around the neighborhood, school, Kennedy Blvd businesses, and Midtown?

A: Ms. Rosario, thank you for the question. We prioritize sidewalks based on safety criteria like proximity to schools, ADA needs, connection to transit, etc. We have a significant funding shortfall for all our needs (about 1270 miles citywide). We look forward to leveraging any state and federal funds through an infrastructure bill to advance these needs. We're also working with the County to promote a sales tax referendum to improve pedestrian infrastructure.

Q: My purpose for attending this meeting is to ask the plans for repaving Armenia and Havana they are in dire need and for the past only to get worse with the rain and the football game

A: Ms. Baraty, thank you for your question. Your concern is understandable. Armenia Ave is a County Road. They have a resurfacing project for Howard and Armenia, to which the City also contributed some funds. The project is on hold by the County. In the meantime, we are working with the County and our Operations teams to repair potholes on Armenia and Habana. You may have already seen our maintenance team in the area conducting repairs.

Q: Please address traffic enforcement as there are massive red-light runners (multiple per day) at Azele & S Westshore Blvd.
Northbound speeding on 200 block of S Westshore is excessive - typically 65mph in 30 mph.
Also, still lots of cut thru trucking (illegal) in the no truck zone from Kennedy to Gandy on S. Westshore Blvd.

A: District 1 is well aware of this complaint and we have taken the following steps to address it:

Our area patrol units have been made aware of the traffic concerns and have been advised to increase patrol efforts as time permits. Units have been addressing the trucks driving along Westshore. They are educating drivers as well as writing tickets when appropriate. What we have found is that some of the tanker travel is associated with the two gas stations on Westshore.

In addition, as construction increases in the area, we may see an influx of trucks serving the construction site. The concern has also been passed along to our motor unit squad. Their primary function is traffic law enforcement. They too will be in the area as time permits. Captain Ruth Cate is the captain over the area and reached out to several of the citizens who have voiced concerns. She has been working closely with Brian Canipe, as well as Vik Bhide to address these issues through a team approach.