



From the desk of the Vice Mayor
DEAN TRANTALIS
Fort Lauderdale City Commission • District II

SEPTEMBER 2016

New budget funds District 2 initiatives

Beach traffic study, more drainage improvements included in 2017 spending earmarks

The City Commission recently finalized the budget for next fiscal year, and several major initiatives important to District 2 will be funded.

The budget included \$175,000 for a detailed study of traffic on the barrier island.

This will be similar to a review now being completed of how to improve safety and mobility on SE 17th Street.

The beach study is critically needed in light

of the amount of development that is either underway or being considered. In recent debates regarding Bahia Mar and other beach projects, I agreed with concerns raised by many residents that the city lacks a good understanding of how the ongoing growth will affect traffic congestion and what we can do to solve that.

In concert with this traffic study, the budget pays for the completion of an update to the Central Beach Master Plan.

City staff has been working over the last couple years with the community to document their preferences of how the central section of the barrier island should look. Now, they will take that input to set clear building and streetscape design standards for future development.

The effort will include updating the design standards in the Unified Land Development Regulations as well as identifying potential streetscape improvements for North Beach Village.

Another budget highlight is that the city will soon hire a historic preservation officer. We've witnessed too many historic structures demolished to make way for development. Unfortunately, many more are under threat. This new staff person will boost preservation efforts, cataloguing historic structures and

recommending those considered so important that they must be preserved.

The city made progress over the past year in District 2 to build the infrastructure needed to better handle flooding from high tides and heavy rainfall. The 2017 budget continues that effort. More than \$5 million is earmarked to design and build stormwater infrastructure improvements and install more gutters, swales, tidal valves and other drainage improvements.

The city also will hire more firefighters and police officers in the coming year. At Fire Station 2 in Progresso Village, a new rescue unit will be added with nine firefighters and paramedics. The Police Department's motorcycle unit will expand to better address neighborhood traffic complaints and make streets safer for pedestrians.

Even with these initiatives, I'm pleased to say the city's tax rate will remain at the same level it's been for the past decade.

Progress made in South Middle River neighborhood

There are two pieces of good news to report regarding the South Middle River neighborhood.

In late August, community leaders celebrated the completion of improvements to NW 15th Street west of Andrews Avenue. This was the area's last remaining dirt road. In addition to paving the street, the city installed solar-powered pedestrian lighting, sidewalks, swales and landscaping.

The ribbon-cutting capped a major

community effort to rid South Middle River of dirt roads. After being told in early 2013 that the work might be a decade away, residents united in calling for faster action.

The city completed upgrades to NW 14th Street in the fall of 2014 and then undertook the work to 15th Street and a small unpaved portion of NE 12th Street.

Days after the 15th Street event, the Police Department announced the results of a six-month undercover investigation in the neighborhood called Operation Bad Karma. The police teamed with the State Attorney's Office and the U.S. Marshals Service to investigate the sale and distribution of illegal drugs in South Middle River. The investigation resulted in the arrest of 22.

The neighborhood had demanded the police take a strong response to drug-trafficking and violence after the series of murders over the past year. Two bodies were found in January on the same property off NE 13th Street where another man had been killed months earlier.

Museum of Discovery

The city has stepped up to help the Museum of Discovery and Science expand. The museum plans to build a Science Park on the Broward Boulevard side of its property. Visitors will be able to experiment with basic principles of the physical world through hands-on explorations in an outdoor setting.

Science Park will be a critical new element of the museum's goal of helping teach science, technology, engineering and mathematic skills to the area's future generations of workers. Almost a half-million people a year visit the museum to see its science exhibits, view movies in its iMax theater and explore its EcoDiscovery Center.

The city will contribute \$1 million to the expansion, with Broward County chipping in the same amount and the state Division of Cultural Affairs providing a \$500,000 grant.

Sincerely,



City helps fight spread of Zika virus

The city of Fort Lauderdale is working closely with the Florida Department of Health and Broward County to support mosquito control efforts related to Zika.

Broward County's mosquito control section has responded by spraying door to door, eliminating mosquito habitats and sampling adult mosquitos to gauge effectiveness of the treatments.

While the county and state are the lead agencies, the city is taking steps to prevent the spread of the Zika virus.

- A special response team from Code Enforcement

and Building Services is citing properties for improper pool maintenance or stagnant water.

- The team is working with the Unsafe Structures Board to address pools at abandoned properties.

- Public Works crews are canvassing the city with vacuum trucks to clean blocked storm drains and clear areas with standing water in the right-of-way.



If you see a property with improper pool maintenance or stagnant water, report it to the city's 24-hour Neighbor Call Center at 954-828-8000 or online with Lauderserv.



Vice Mayor Trantalis joins Mayor Jack Seiler for the ground-breaking of the Gale, a new hotel in North Beach Village encompassing the historic Escape Hotel.



Vice Mayor Trantalis joins Dr. Rosalind Osgood, chair of the Broward School Board, for the national Night Out Against Crime event at Carter Park.



Vice Mayor Trantalis and the rest of the City Commission receive the U.S. Defense Department's Seven Seals Award for city support of employees in the Guard and Reserve.



Vice Mayor Trantalis poses with longtime tourism executive Ina Lee at the annual Red Eye arts festival at ArtServe located on Sunrise Boulevard.