



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

JANUARY 2017

# Las Olas improvements coming this spring

## Railroad quiet zone to start in mid-2017; city eyes zoning regulations for medical marijuana

I wish you all a wonderful New Year and all the best to you and your friends and families.

It has not been a very auspicious start. The tragedy at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport brought too close to home the message that violent terrorism knows no boundaries. It also reminds us that the proliferation of semi-automatic weapons is a danger we can no longer ignore. Yet, the city continues to rent the War Memorial Auditorium to gun show promoters.



It's time to just say no.

In neighborhood news, long-awaited work to ease the drive from downtown to the Las Olas Isles and the beach is about to get underway.

The city's transportation department expects to begin work this spring to improve the traffic flow on Southeast 15th Avenue, the main street connecting Broward and Las Olas boulevards east of the city center. At the same time, the city will improve safety on Las Olas and address concerns about speeding and traffic volume on neighborhood streets in Colee Hammock.

The city will add dedicated left-turn lanes on 15th at its intersections with Las Olas and Broward. The traffic signals will be changed out to allow for the new turn-lane movements. A raised traffic table will be built at 15th and Southeast 2nd Street to accommodate the removal of the four-way stop sign there.

The city expects to receive final approval from the county for the 15th Avenue improvements in February and

issue a notice for contractors to begin work in March. The goal is to finish the project by June 2017.

### Railroad quiet zones

Later this year, we can also expect the completion of a countywide quiet zone along the Florida East Coast Railroad tracks.

The Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization has been working with Fort Lauderdale and the seven other cities along the railroad to make \$4.2 million in safety

improvements at train crossings. The improvements include four-quadrant gates and gates with raised medians.

With the heightened safety measures in place, the federal government can waive its requirement that trains sound their horns at each crossing. Conductors will use their horn only in an emergency.

This change will help reduce the noise for those residents who live near the tracks. This will be even more important in light of the FEC's planned high-speed passenger train service called Brightline.

About 30 additional trains will run each day along the FEC corridor.

The launch of the quiet zone will coincide with the start of Brightline. That should occur this summer.

### Marijuana dispensaries

Voters in Florida approved a constitutional amendment in November that allows marijuana to be prescribed to

patients suffering from a variety of ailments such as cancer, ALS and post-traumatic stress disorder. The state and local governments are discussing how to implement the change.

Fort Lauderdale is taking steps to prepare for the availability of medical marijuana later this year. The City Commission has imposed a 180-day moratorium on the cultivation, processing, dispensing and sale of the drug within the city limits so our planning staff can draft needed zoning regulations.

The city staff will look at such issues as where dispensaries should be allowed to operate, whether there should be a limit on how many can exist and whether there should be restrictions on how close they can be to each other. The city will also undertake an analysis to determine the potential impact on crime, city services, the value of surrounding property, traffic congestion and other aspects of health, safety and welfare.

We hope to have our rules in place before any requirements are imposed by the

Legislature or state health department. Many of us remember too well how the state limited local governments' ability to deal with the



massive expansion of short-term vacation rentals and the resulting problems with noise, parking and trash faced by neighboring residents.

Sincerely,





**GET TO KNOW YOUR CITY.**  
 JOIN US FOR NEIGHBOR SUPPORT NIGHT!

**Wednesday, February 8, 2017**  
**5:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Fort Lauderdale City Hall • 100 N. Andrews Avenue**



Vice Mayor Trantalis joins Broward tourism director Stacy Ritter and other officials in greeting executives of the Emirates Airlines after the first direct flight to Fort Lauderdale from Dubai.



Vice Mayor Trantalis joins the Transportation and Mobility Department in receiving the Road Leadership Award from Bike Florida and the Florida Bicycle Association for work on reducing bike and pedestrian accidents.



Vice Mayor Trantalis, along with other city commissioners, welcomes Councillor Paul Taylor from Fort Lauderdale's sister city of Gold Coast in Australia.



Vice Mayor Trantalis and other city commissioners and officials greet Lior Haiat, Israel's new consul general to Florida and Puerto Rico.