

REMEMBER TO VOTE!
FORT LAUDERDALE'S
DISTRICT 2 ELECTION IS
** MARCH 10 **



From The Desk Of
DEAN TRANTALIS

Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner • District II

FEBRUARY 2015

Major progress on horizon for District 2



Earlier this month, I had the honor to help officiate a wedding of almost 100 couples at the W hotel on Fort Lauderdale's beach. Organized by the Convention & Visitors Bureau, the event celebrated the recent court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage in Florida.

The ceremony was certainly another sign of the growing diversity of our community and the respect we have for one another. It also spoke to something larger occurring. A new day is dawning in Fort Lauderdale.

We are witnessing an evolving mindset. I'm confident that we're headed for a time when the community is more engaged in helping those who cannot help themselves, when city government places the desires of neighborhoods ahead of special interests and when we see an end of growing pains where development outpaces public services.

Take a look at some recent steps.

The City Commission adopted a public participation ordinance that requires developers to present their projects to neighborhoods for input before seeking City Hall approval.

In District 2, planning efforts are underway so neighborhoods from Sailboat Bend to the Central Beach can chart their own future. We're also beginning to discuss the possibility of a special improvement district to bring

crime.

Although the city stumbled last year in how it imposed a new set of ordinances to deal with homeless-related problems, it's my hope that court-ordered mediation results in a solution that guarantees our parks, sidewalks and streets are available for all to use. We can't have the city seem blighted and people afraid to take advantage of all the city has to offer.

You can't help but notice that Fort Lauderdale is entering another growth spurt. New housing is opening in downtown's Flagler Village, and construction

is beginning again across the barrier island.

Some of the change is exciting. The city just was presented plans for a Four Seasons hotel on the beach, and a new proposal for

needed beautification to the North Beach section of the barrier island. And, we've brought together South Middle River, Middle River Terrace, Lake Ridge and Lauderdale Manors at monthly strategy sessions to create a community effort to fight

the Bahia Mar seems at first blush to be a major improvement over what was suggested several years ago. It has more space devoted to public uses and the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.

Still, as anyone who drives down Sunrise or Las Olas boulevards can attest, we must ensure our transportation system and our infrastructure keep pace. We can't lose sight of what makes the city great.

Along that line, the city is working on long-range plans to deal with both tidal and stormwater flooding. We're already seeing improvements in flood control from Victoria Park to Las Olas Isles. The city is in the second year of a five-year plan to repave streets and is reviewing a proposal to improve the condition of neighborhood sidewalks.

We're working with our regional partners to create quiet zones along the Florida East Coast Railroad line so train conductors no longer need to blow their horns at intersections.

Our attorneys are also drafting a new ordinance to deal with problems created by short-term vacation rentals. These rentals have popped up in almost every neighborhood, and we've been inundated with complaints about noise, parking and cleanliness.

You can expect to see some





improvements coming soon.

All Aboard Florida has begun construction for its downtown station, a first step toward commuter rail service between Miami and Orlando. We also hope to launch the Wave streetcar downtown within two years.

Repairs to State Road A1A needed because of Hurricane Sandy should be completed this summer. We're working with the Florida Department of Transportation to beautify the medians and improve crosswalks throughout A1A as well.

In South Middle River, the city kept its promise to pave the dirt road section of Northwest 14th Street. The City Commission now has hired a contractor to upgrade similar unpaved segments of Northwest 15th Street and Northeast 12th Street. Construction should start soon.

Design work is underway on improving Northeast 13th Street in Middle River Terrace. Its construction should start later this year. Engineers are also working on plans to turn Dixie Highway into more of a neighborhood street complete with traffic-calming measures. The county's transportation planning agency has sufficient money set aside to pay for that project.

In both cases, city staff will bring designs back to the neighborhood for some final discussion before work begins. With 13th Street, we are also undertaking a full-scale traffic

study before deciding whether to reduce the street to one travel lane each direction. The city also has a study underway in Lake Ridge exploring how to improve traffic flow and safety there. Two things I'd particularly like to see in that area are additional pedestrian safety measures around the Gateway intersection at Federal Highway and Sunrise Boulevard and an improved intersection at Northeast 15th Avenue and Sunrise.

In Sailboat Bend, we have \$330,000 available to deal with traffic calming. And we've been beautifying Poinsettia Heights -- with new decorative street signs and a new entrance monument as well as re-constructed speed humps.

On Las Olas Boulevard, we are beginning phase 2 of improving traffic flow so residents of the beach and Las Olas Isles can more easily reach the rest of the city.

In this phase, we intend to remove the four-way stop on Northeast 15th Avenue between Las Olas and Broward boulevards, expand turn lanes and fix the turning radiuses for trucks at both ends of 15th Avenue. It will include the removal of all on-street parking on that stretch of 15th Avenue.

The City Commission is also looking at ways to improve quality of life.

We've been working aggressively on changes in Victoria Park. We have been consulting with new donors who want to see a top-of-the-line dog park, one we can all be proud of. And, our

efforts to secure more neighborhood enrollment in area schools should soon allow more children who live in Victoria Park, Lake Ridge and Flagler Village to attend Virginia Shuman Young or Harbordale Elementary.

Although things are moving more slowly than anyone would like, engineering work continues on burying utility lines in several Las Olas Isle neighborhoods and we will hold the promised votes on whether to advance the project to construction. You can guarantee that we've been pressing FPL to move as fast as possible.

In South Middle River, I'm hopeful we can expand the small pocket park on Northwest 6th Avenue. We're also working with staff at the Florida Inland Navigation District to dredge the Intracoastal Waterway as well as the entrances to such key locations as Bahia Mar and the Las Olas Marina.

Long-planned work to improve sidewalks, drainage, landscaping and lighting in Progresso Village is advancing. At the same time, we're changing zoning rules to encourage more development in this section of town with the hopes of carrying Flagler Village's success west across the railroad tracks.

The City Commission is set to make several critical decisions on redeveloping the beach.

Personally, I want to spend the money we've saved on expanding the Las Olas Marina and undertaking a well-thought-out renovation of the aquatic center. I also favor a plan that would evenly disperse new parking garages along the beach so Las Olas Boulevard is not overwhelmed.

All in all, we're looking forward an exciting couple years of progress for the city. Stay tuned.

Sincerely,



Building department announces Express Lane service

The Department of Sustainable Development recently announced major strides to reduce congestion and wait time in our permitting division of its building department.

The building department implemented an "Express Lane" window to provide a faster and more responsive service level to our residents. This innovative checkout experience reduces wait times, allowing people to process transactions that require minimal effort in a manner that is more efficient and effective.

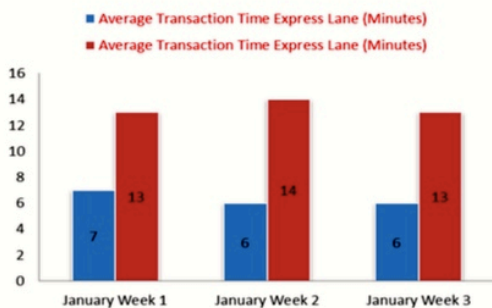
The service was formally launched Jan. 5.

Eliminating the need to wait unnecessary long wait times translates to an increased number of transactions processed and higher quality outcomes for residents.

The "Express Lane" processed 27 percent of total traffic handled by the building division. It serviced 642 residents with an average wait time of 13 minutes. On average, this new initiative services 55 people per day.

The Express Lane is available to all for the following services: contractor license updates, replacing TBD sub-contractors, print/reprint permits, permit corrections drop-off/pick-up, notary public, payments, revision (drop off) and voiding permit requests.

Fast Facts- Building Division Express Lane Enhancements:



Commissioner Trantalis welcomes directors of the Broward League of Cities to Fort Lauderdale's Bonnet House for their monthly meeting.



Commissioner Trantalis listens to residents during a recent town hall forum on historic preservation and development in the Sailboat Bend neighborhood.



Commissioner Trantalis marches with Mayor Jack Seiler during the recent Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

This year, the excitement begins at 7:30 a.m. March 14 with the Shamrock Run, a 4-mile race starting from Huizenga Plaza in Bubier Park and continuing through downtown. The fun continues throughout the morning at Huizenga Plaza with live music and a drum line competition with local high schools.

The parade begins at noon and will travel west along Las Olas Boulevard from Southeast 5th Avenue to Las Olas Riverfront. It will feature floats, pipe and drum corps, classic automobiles, bagpipers, marching bands, Irish dancers and street performers.

Following the parade, stick around for the best Irish celebration in town at the St. Patrick's Festival, which runs until 7 p.m. at Huizenga Plaza and along the Riverwalk.



IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION

Fort Lauderdale will hold its general election on March 10. The only contest on the ballot will be for the District 2 seat on the City Commission.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. that day at the 22 precincts that comprise District 2.

Anyone wishing to vote in advance by absentee ballot should contact the Broward County Supervisor of Elections Office.

Requests for absentee ballots can be made online, in writing, by phone or in person.

The phone number for the elections office is 954-357-7050. Their main office is in the Governmental Center at 115 S. Andrews Ave. in Fort Lauderdale. An online absentee ballot request form can be obtained at browardsoe.org.

A request for an absentee ballot must include the name of the voter, the voter's address, the voter's date of birth and the voter's signature on any written request.

The deadline to request an absentee ballot be mailed is no later than 5 p.m. on the sixth day before the election. Absentee ballots may be picked up through Election Day.

If you are uncertain of your precinct, you can check the elections website. Election Day polling places are as follows:

- **R014.** Fort Lauderdale Branch Library (ArtServe), 1300 E. Sunrise Blvd.
- **R016.** Second Presbyterian Church, 1400 N. Federal Highway
- **R017.** Sunrise Middle School, 1750 NE 14th St.
- **R018.** Holiday Park Social Center, 1150 G. Harold Martin Drive
- **R019.** Gateway Terrace, 1943 NE 6th Court N106
- **R020.** Fort Lauderdale Branch Library (Art Serve), 1300 E. Sunrise Blvd.
- **R021.** Second Presbyterian Church, 1400 N Federal Highway
- **R022.** Warfield Park Recreation Center, 1000 N. Andrews Ave.
- **R027.** Warfield Park Recreation Center, 1000 N. Andrews Ave.
- **R031.** Stranahan High School, 1800 SW 5th Place
- **R032.** Trinity Lutheran Church, 11 SW 11th St.
- **R033.** International Longshoremen's Local #1526, 440 NW 6th St.
- **R034.** Virginia Young Elementary School, 101 NE 11th Ave.
- **R036.** First Presbyterian Church, 451 Tarpon Drive
- **R037.** First Presbyterian Church, 451 Tarpon Drive
- **R041.** Salvation Army Center, 100 SW 9th Ave.
- **R046.** Coral Ridge Mall - NE Entrance, 3200 N Federal Highway
- **R055.** St. Sebastian Catholic Church, 2000 SE 25th Ave.
- **R056.** Lauderdale Manors Community Center, 1340 Chateau Park Drive
- **R057.** Warfield Park Recreation Center, 1000 N. Andrews Ave.
- **R058.** Riverside Park, 555 SW 11th Ave.
- **R060.** Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue Station 2, 528 NW 2nd St.