

CITY MANAGER REPORT

FEBRURY 7, 2008

FOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING FEBRUARY 11, 2008

1. WORKSHOPS

February 11 – 6 p.m.

Water Policy

February 25 – 6 p.m.

No workshop

Public Hearing on Brownfields for Lakeside Station

John R. Trinkle Center at Hillsborough Community College

March 10 – Open

March 24 – Open

April 14 – Open

April 28 – 6:30 p.m.

Financial Trends

May 12 – Open

May 27 – Open

June 9 – 6:30 p.m.

Vision Statement – Strategic Plan

June 23 – 4 – 6:00 p.m.

Preliminary Budget Workshop

July 14 – 4 – 6:00 p.m.

Budget Workshop

July 28 – 4 – 6:00 p.m.

Budget Workshop

August 11 – 6:30 p.m.

Strategic Plan

August 25 – 6:30 p.m.

Comprehensive Plan Update – Planning Commission Staff

September 8 – 6:30 p.m.

Comprehensive Plan Update – Planning Commission Staff (if needed)

2. 911 CELL PHONE CALLS

Police Chief Bill McDaniel has provided the following report:

9-1-1 Cellular Caller Data

The following information is provided in answer to Vice-Mayor Robert Brown's questions regarding information displayed when citizens use their cellular telephone to call 9-1-1:

What are the current standards for location information on cellular calls to 9-1-1?:

Current federal mandates require cellular service providers to provide the following information to 9-1-1: Date and time; subscriber's cellular phone number; name of the originating cellular tower; county of origin for the call; wireless company information; cellular tower phone number; and, location of caller (proximity) including latitude, longitude and elevation.

Does a caller's location show up on 9-1-1 when they call us from a cell phone?

The caller's exact location does not show up on 9-1-1 when they call from a cell phone. The location of the cell tower, from which the call is routed, is reported to the Communications Center. In a best-case scenario, the caller's location can be pinpointed to within approximately 3 meters of their actual location.

However, this level of accuracy in determining the caller's exact location depends on the following issues:

The call itself: There are many variables that may cause a caller's location to be undeterminable.

The cell phone service carrier: There are many variables affecting a cell phone carrier's capability of accurately reporting a cellular caller's location.

The phone itself: Some phones utilize GPS while others use a system of triangulation

The cell tower: The condition, owner and capabilities of the tower determine what information is relayed and how the caller is located. Some towers use GPS technology while others use a series of three cell towers to triangulate a person's location. Again this all depends on the tower and the carrier and how they interact with each other.

Local versus non-local callers: Out of state cell phones can provide false locations depending upon the cellular carrier.

Communications personnel always verify the location of the caller and never depend on the 9-1-1 system to document the caller's location.

Is there a difference between cell phones and/or carriers that affects the type of information provided to 9-1-1?

While each cell phone provider gives different information, all providers are required by the federal government to provide a minimum data set. Cellular carriers can elect to provide more data, but not less than the minimum. The minimum requirements set by the FCC are:

Date and time
Cell number
Tower name
County
Wireless company
Cell tower phone number,
Location of caller (proximity) by providing latitude, longitude, and elevation of cell phone tower

Final Thought:

The 9-1-1 system cannot be depended upon to provide a definite location of a cellular caller in the event of an emergency. Emergency call-takers are trained to not rely upon data supplied by the cellular carriers and to, when possible, obtain location data from the caller. Pinpointing a cellular caller's location without voice verification is not currently reliable.

The 9-1-1 system is maintained by the county. An official with Hillsborough County 911 advised that the extant E9-1-1 system in use in Plant City is the most current technology and we are not lagging behind any other agencies.

3. REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE DOGS

I have authorized the purchase of four police canines from Shallow Creek Kennels, located in Sharpsville, Pennsylvania, at a total cost of \$23,700, which includes air freight charges to ship the dogs to Plant City Police Department.

Shallow Creek Kennels provided the lowest and best bid out of three kennels. Police Service Dogs of Oxford, Florida, submitted a bid of \$26,000. Ruffhaus Kennels of Lake County, Florida, submitted a bid of \$28,000.

The purchase of police canines will be funded by money currently on deposit in both the Federal Equitable Sharing account and the Law Enforcement Trust Fund account. This use of these asset forfeiture funds was approved by the City Commission at its January 14, 2008, regular meeting.

4. **MIDTOWN RFQ/PROPOSALS ISSUED FOR FORM BASED CODE**

Staff has issued a Request for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P) for creating a form-based code to guide future development and redevelopment activity in Midtown. The intent is to achieve a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment consistent with the Midtown vision plan adopted by the Commission, and the code will help accomplish that goal. The RFQ/P responses are due in early March. Staff anticipates selecting a consultant by the end of March. The consultant will be tasked with completing the code within 90 days following award of the contract. This will be a CRA funded activity.

5. **CHERRY STREET PAVING AND OTHER PROJECTS**

Following is status of various public works project contracts:

Ellis Methvin Park

The contractor is due to mobilize begin mobilizing by Wednesday, February 6, 2008 but no later than February 11, 2008. We anticipate it taking 3 to 4 weeks for the construction of the 2 soccer fields funded under FRDAP I. This time line will leave 6 weeks for the City to finish the other grant items.

Alexander Street

Staff has worked out with the contractor – milling the areas needing resurfacing in lieu of just resurfacing for less than \$5,000 which is available in contingency. The City will take possession of the millings, which has an estimated value of \$8,000+. The contractor will work at night and is scheduled to start February 18, 2008.

Evers Street

The contractor began work the week of Monday, February 4, 2008.

Victoria/Cherry

Cherry Street from Park Road to Wills Street has been paved.

6. **FLORIDA COMMUNITIES FOR A LIFETIME**

In response to the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative which was authorized by a resolution of the Florida House of Representatives encouraging all Florida communities to support former Governor Jeb Bush's endeavor to retain current seniors and attract more retirees to Florida, the City Commission passed a resolution and notified the Department of Elder Affairs of our willingness to participate in this program. The purpose of the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative is to assist local elected officials, community leaders and residents in working together to plan the most effective use of existing funding to achieve goals and benefits of being a community that is responsive to the needs of all of its residents between birth and death.

The next step in the process for creating a Community for a Lifetime is to form committees to inventory and assess elements important for senior independence and care. Team members have been recruited to provide support for inventorying existing services,

identifying needed elements to create a “livable community, and preparing a community action plan. Meetings have been set up with five committees who will be performing an assessment of the need for improvement in areas such as housing, transportation, healthcare, recreation, education, and accessibility. Upon completion of the self-assessment, the committee identifies areas in need of attention and incorporates them into a community action plan with a timeline for completion. Dates, times, and places for the meetings are as follows:

Committee	Date	Time	Place
Education/Cultural & Social Opportunity	February 18	12:00 p.m.	Bruton Memorial Library
Health Care	February 21	12:00 p.m.	South Florida Baptist Hospital Community Community Room
Transportation	February 25	11:00 a.m.	City Hall City Manager Conference Room
Community Development	February 26	12:00 p.m.	Chamber of Commerce
Physical Spaces/Land Use	February 29	10:00 a.m.	City Hall Development Services Conference Room

7. **DOWNTOWN CONDITIONS REPORT**

The City Commission recently requested a report on the condition of downtown. Staff from Building & Code Enforcement, Planning & Zoning, and the Solid Waste Division of Public Works assisted in the preparation of this report. The City Attorney provided input, as did Chamber of Commerce President Marion Smith.

Several topics are discussed in this report. These are listed below in no particular order. The current or observed conditions associated with each topic are presented along with the steps either already taken or that will be taken to correct any existing problems.

Code Enforcement

Staff toured the downtown and noted a few areas where conditions warranted follow up visits with the property owner. Most of the problems involved trash and debris dumped on a property. Staff has begun the follow up visits and will issue notices of violation if the problems are not corrected. (Please note that staff has already received complaints of “harassment” as a result of these initial visits. We are keeping careful records of staff activities to ensure a fair and evenhanded approach to these code enforcement cases. Nonetheless, the Commission may also begin to hear these complaints directly from property owners.)

Other more sensitive code enforcement issues involve technical violations of the building code, zoning code, or property maintenance code. These include air conditioning condenser units located on top of overhangs, illegal signs painted or hung on the sides of

buildings, improperly maintained exterior walls, etc. Staff is reviewing these on a case-by-case basis to determine if the observed conditions existed prior to the adoption of the pertinent sections of each code. (Building code violations involving basic life/safety issues will be required to be corrected regardless of the date.)

Staff will begin separate tracking of downtown code enforcement notices of violation. For definition purposes, this separate tracking area will mirror the downtown core referenced in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Parking Areas

The City established a "parking exemption area" several years ago in the downtown core. The ordinance reads that parking uses are not required to adhere to the same standards as parking in other areas of the City. Generally speaking, these types of exemption areas are established in acknowledgement that space for parking is constrained in most downtowns. Property owners who develop in downtown areas often do not have sufficient space upon which to locate adequate parking. Thus, parking requirements are eased in order to facilitate new development.

Planning staff have previously issued an interpretation that the parking exemption *does not* exempt downtown parking lots from all physical standards (grading, stormwater control, paving, striping, etc.). The parking exemption *does* allow the number of spaces to be reduced.

One vacant lot prominently located in the downtown core was purchased in mid-December 2007. That lot previously had a structure on it; the structure burned down a few years ago. The lot remained vacant until it was sold a few weeks ago. Now a local restaurant uses the lot for customer parking (the new property owner has restricted usage to restaurant customers only).

Ideally that parcel would be redeveloped with a mixed-use building since it occupies such a prominent location in the downtown. Nonetheless, the City's zoning code currently allows that parcel to have a primary use as a parking lot. Staff therefore will meet with the restaurant owner to discuss the parking requirements that apply to his newly-acquired vacant lot.

If the Commission desires to avoid future situations like that described above, then one option would be to change the code to allow downtown parking lots only as a secondary use. (Please note that all existing parking lots would be grandfathered and allowed to remain; the code change would apply only to new parking lots.) However, if this course of action is followed, then parking may become more difficult for private businesses to provide. Downtown lots generally tend to be relatively small. Providing for a suitably-sized building and for adequate parking on the same parcel may prove very difficult. The City subsequently may be asked to provide more public parking.

The Wall

One wall remains from the building destroyed by fire at 110 South Collins Street. On February 5, 2008, Johnson's Excavating applied for a demolition permit to take down that wall. The Building Division approved the permit. The permit is valid for up to six months; demolition could occur anytime within that period. Planning & Zoning staff has taken several photographs of the wall and will forward those to the Plant City Photo Archives.

Fenced Lot

In 2005 the property owner of the lot at the northeast corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and Wheeler Street requested permission to fence the lot. Permission was granted for fencing to remain for a 12-month period. The fencing was to be removed at the end of that period. However, the fencing still remains; overgrown weeds also have been a problem on that property in the past. Staff will meet with the property owner to discuss removal of the fence and an ongoing maintenance plan for weed control. Failure to address these issues will result in staff presenting the case to the City's Code Enforcement Board.

Dumpster Clean-Up

Staff toured the dumpster locations in downtown with Sanitation Supervisor Troy Martin. A few locations had material around the dumpsters that appeared to have been there for some time. Staff agreed upon a protocol for notifying the Sanitation Division when uncollected items are observed. Staff also will be working on ways to provide screening for dumpster areas. Screened dumpster areas will improve the aesthetic appearance of the downtown, but will need to be designed using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. (Please note, however, that such screening will have a cost. No decision has been made at this point re how to pay the cost for screening.)

Graffiti

Multiple graffiti hotspots have been observed throughout downtown and Midtown. Staff refers those items to the Police Department Gang Task Force for action. The Streets Division of Public Works handles graffiti removal on the City's utility boxes and signs. The Gang Task Force provides private property owners advice and educational materials to help minimize the opportunity for graffiti. Staff believes this process works well at this time and should continue as currently structured.