

Walk Talk Week 5

Speaker: Kim DeGance, Palma Ceia Neighborhood Association President

When Kim wanted a sidewalk outside her Palma Ceia home so her children could walk and bike safely to elementary school, she was told no. Recognizing that one individual has less power than a whole community, she decided to re-energize the neighborhood association (PCNA). She successfully petitioned for a two-block sidewalk.

The location: San Luis St. sidewalk between Himes Ave. and Concordia Ave.

- This sidewalk, running along the south side of San Luis, provides a safe, connected walking route to crosswalks to Roosevelt Elementary.

The process: City of Tampa Sidewalks Program (<https://www.tampagov.net/tss-transportation/programs/sidewalks>) describes the petition process. The petition begins with a summary of the site and request and needs only 10 resident signatures, including 80% of those who would be directly impacted, meaning the sidewalk would pass through their yards. The petition will be graded on how well it meets 8 criteria, listed on the city website. Kim's project rated a 4-5. When the petition is approved, it is added to a list of completed projects.

The roadblock: The list of approved sidewalk petitions includes over 100 projects. Currently, this program does not have funding in the city budget. Kim notes that her persistent calls and meetings helped drive the San Luis sidewalk project to completion.

Kim's efforts demonstrate the role neighborhood associations and similar community groups can play in improving the city. Residents can better identify projects most beneficial to their community, but need an effective voice at communicating those needs to government officials. To support projects like sidewalk petitions, residents can join their neighborhood association.

- Palma Ceia Neighborhood Association: <http://www.palmaceiana.com/>
- Culbreath Heights Civic Association: <https://chcatampa.hoa-express.com/>
- Virginia Park Neighborhood Association: <mailto:virginiaparkna@gmail.com>

PCNA ongoing projects:

- Sidewalk petition to complete the sidewalk on the south side of Bay to Bay Blvd. between MacDill Ave. and Ysabella.
- Moving utility poles on the north side of Bay to Bay Blvd. out of the sidewalk: http://www.tampabay.com/news/transportation/Bay-to-Bay-traffic-advocates-earn-small-victory-from-TECO_168750947
- Corona Park street mural/traffic calming feature: <https://www.pcsstompers.org/news/2018/6/10/the-story-of-sterling-avenue-part-2-public-art-for-public-safety>

Walk Talk is designed to create a collective and collaborative voice for pedestrian safety advocacy. The goal is give us a common language and background for demanding traffic improvements from our elected government.

- Walk Talk coordinators: Emily Hinsdale (emilyhinsdale@gmail.com); Meg Steiner.