



# Week in Review

Jan. 28 - Feb. 2, 2025

The *Week in Review* is prepared and published by Laurie Hayes, Director of Communications, for the staff and residents of the City of Bartow, 450 N. Wilson Avenue, Bartow, Florida 33830

Welcome to the new *Week in Review* via Constant Contact.

## Meeting Planned to Discuss Jackson Ave. Improvements



A study was done in 2024 that evaluated safety, operations and existing facilities along the 1.3-mile corridor of S. Jackson Ave. between E. Clower St./E. Soledad Ave. and E. Main St. to identify improvements that could lower motor vehicle speeds and enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Results of a speed survey focused on traffic between E. Wabash and E. Lemon Streets indicated that the average car was traveling more than 10 mph above the posted 25 mph limit, with some cars traveling nearly twice the limit.

The City already has plans for improvements in the area to include better lighting and additional four-way stops - two of which will be installed in the coming week - but also is considering features that would support future designation of the corridor as a segment of the long-distance Collier to Polk Trail being planned by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Grant funding may be available to implement the final design and construction of this and other study recommendations, including the extension of the corridor from Mary Holland Park to the southern end of the Fort Fraser Trail along the south side of State Road 60.

Public feedback on the proposed improvements and support for the funding application will be sought at a Public Meeting on Traffic Safety along Jackson Ave. at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, February 11 at Bartow City

Hall, 450 N. Wilson Ave. Residents, especially those who live near or frequent the area designated for improvements, are encouraged to attend.



## CRA Hosts CDBG Meeting

Last Thursday, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) hosted a Public Meeting at the Carver Recreation Center on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), with 22 attendees seeking to better understand the Federal Program and its guidelines.

The discussion with the City Departments, Parks Recreations, Public Works, City Clerk, and CRA covered how CDBG funding supports community development initiatives, highlighting the types of projects eligible for funding, such as infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, and public services.

Attendees also gained insight into common ineligible activities based on projects and area in addition to the ability to provide suggestions on the types of projects they would like to see in their community. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for residents and stakeholders to engage in the funding process, ensuring a more informed approach to leveraging CDBG resources for community impact.

Proposals for City Projects utilizing CDBG funds will be presented to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) on Thursday, February 6, at 6pm at City Hall in Commission Chambers.

## BFD Assists County with Brush Fires

This past week, the Bartow Fire Department assisted Polk County Fire Rescue with mutual aid extinguishing a few brush fires. A reminder that it is very dry out and brush fire season is upon us.

Thanks to Lieutenant Matthew Murphy for the photos.



## Storyteller Helps Celebrate Black History Month at the Library

This February, in celebration of Black History Month, a special guest is coming to the Bartow Public Library, 2150 S. Broadway Ave. Storyteller Tamara Green will share touching stories from Africa, her family and Florida beginning at 6pm on Thursday, February 13.

Born in Memphis, TN, the Home of the Blues, she holds an MFA in Performing Arts and a Bachelor of Science degree in English

education and has served as the Youthful Voices Director for the Florida Storytelling Association. Her love of stories comes from her father, and Library staff is excited for her to share them with the community! All ages welcome.

The Library will be celebrating Black History all month long with a window display, make and take art kits, an exploration of how potato chips were first created (credit: George Crum), book displays, interactive lessons in the contributions of Black authors, poets, scientists, inventors, political figures, and more.

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## Fluoride Workshop Scheduled

The Bartow City Commission will hold a public Workshop regarding the pros and cons of adding fluoride to the City's water supply on Tuesday, February 18 from 6 -8pm at the Bartow Civic Center, 2250 Floral Ave. Panelists will include Florida Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Lapado and American Fluoridation Society President Dr. Johnny Johnson.

Following presentations on both sides of the issue, there will be an opportunity for questions and public comments.

Based on the information and feedback gleaned from the meeting, the Commission will vote on whether to continue to add fluoride to City water at a future regular meeting.

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## Bright Ideas Innovation Sessions Planned

Last year, the City launched a Bright Ideas Innovation Program. Spearheaded by City Manager Mike Herr, the program creates a framework for every member of the City staff to develop and submit ideas for review, feedback and adoption.

Ideas are reviewed monthly by an employee advisory group, who will evaluate and make recommendations to the City Manager's Leadership Team. That Team will determine whether implementation of the Bright Idea is feasible, based upon resources and alignment with the City's mission and goals.

If the idea moves forward, the employee who submitted the Idea will assist in leading the implementation. Once put into practice, he or she will receive an innovation award ranging from \$100 to \$3000, based on financial impact, productivity improvement or intangible benefit.

The City will host three Bright Ideas Innovation Sessions for City staff to share more about the program and offer assistance in submitting an idea either in writing or online. The sessions will be held on February 27 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the Commission Chambers at City Hall; on March 19 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the Gause Room at the Carver Recreation Center and on March 28 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the PRCA Conference Room at the Civic Center.

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## 13th Annual Blarney Duathlon slated for March 15

City of Bartow Parks & Recreation once again will host the Annual Blarney Duathlon / 5K on Saturday, March 15. Now in its 13th year, the duathlon consists of a 1 mile run, an 11 mile Bike ride and a 3 mile run. A 5K race will be held at the same time.

Discounted entry fees are available on a sliding scale through March 9. Register at



## Registration Open for Father - Daughter Dance

Dads, granddads and other father figures: Make plans now to attend the City of Bartow Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Father-Daughter Dance on February 21 from 6-8 pm at the Bartow Civic Center.



You and your girl(s), ages 5-18, should dress to impress and come prepared to dance the evening away. Dinner included! \$30 for an adult and child (\$15 per additional child) Register at [Bartowrec.recdesk.com](http://Bartowrec.recdesk.com).

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450 N. Wilson Ave., Bartow, FL 33830  
(863) 534-0100

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