**HI NEIGHBORS**

Hello and Happy Pride Month!

June is the time of year when we prepare for our summer rains and, yes, also Hurricane season. I hope you will find some great information in this issue about preparedness and how to protect yourselves. There are a lot of great events coming up too! This is the season to get out there with your family and friends and enjoy everything our city has to offer. As most of us know, June is Pride Month here in St Pete. I hope you will join our city in celebrating the diversity that makes our city special. Have a great month!

- Brandi

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**GATEWAY MASTER PLAN**

Last month, Forward Pinellas presented the first public open house about the Gateway Master Plan to a variety of citizens, business owners, and local politicians. The Master Plan aims to create an identity for the Gateway area which includes parts of Largo, Pinellas Park, St. Pete, and unincorporated Pinellas County. Currently, the area is home to over 114,000 jobs and multiple Fortune 500 companies. In order to continue positive growth and make the Gateway an area to live, work, and play, work on the Master Plan began in March, 2018. Now in phase 2, planners are working to identify ways to maximize the waterfront, capture future investments, create urban mixed use centers, and facilitate greater housing choice. Guide the area’s growth to incorporate increased connectivity will improve quality of life for the entire community and ensure that the Gateway area remains a strong link between St. Petersburg and Tampa. For more information visit forwardpinellas.org

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**SCHOOL SAFETY**

After the school shooting at Parkland High School earlier this year, Governor Rick Scott signed the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act into law. The Act mandates that a School Resource Officer (SRO) be placed in every school in Florida in order to increase the safety and security of students. The problem with the mandate came in finding the funds to pay for all of the additional officers. St. Petersburg Police considered transferring their Community Service Officers to schools to fulfill the mandate, until last month when Mayor Kriseman and Police Chief Holloway announced their plan to place security guards at schools instead of sworn officers. Other nearby cities are also using security guards instead of SROs because they are more affordable and don't require as much training. The city plans to pay about $126,000 for three additional SROs for St. Pete high schools, maintain the current SROs at middle schools, and ask the Pinellas County School Board to pay for security guards at all elementary schools.
HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Take advantage of the Hurricane Tax Holiday running now through June 7th to get ready for Hurricane season. Buying now can also save you the stress of preparing right before the storm and dealing with low inventory in stores. Items such as flashlights, batteries, coolers, ice packs, tarps, tie down straps, radios, and generators can all be purchased without sales tax during the holiday. Items like bottled water, canned food, first aid kits, prescription and nonprescription medications, and baby food and formulas are always exempt from sales tax. For a full list of items that qualify visit floridarevenue.com/disasterprep. It's also a good idea to attend the St. Pete Prepares Hurricane Expo on Saturday June 9th from 9-1 pm at Lake Vista Park. During the expo you will learn how to prepare and stay safe during the storm and even receive a free preparedness kit! Another great way to prepare is by checking your flood insurance policy to make sure your coverage limits are adequate and you are covering your contents.

SUMMER FERTILIZER BAN

Remember to protect our local waterways by not using fertilizers containing nitrogen or phosphorus until rainy season ends. In fact, a Pinellas County ordinance makes it illegal to do so from June 1st through September 30th. If you do choose to apply fertilizer after the ban ends, please remember not to apply within 10 feet of a body of water or when heavy rains is forecasted. You can also do your part in keeping our waterways and sewers clean by picking up grass clippings, leaves, and other yard waste to keep them out of the streets, sidewalks, and storm drains.