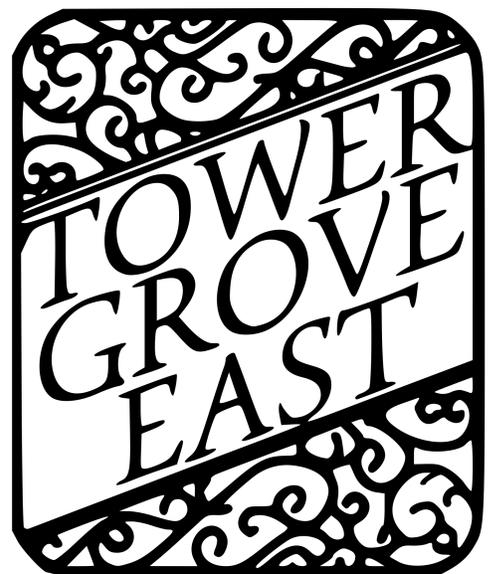


FEBRUARY 24, 2026

TOWER GROVE EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY MEETING RECAP



Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association

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PLANS FOR RAPID BUS TRANSIT AND NEIGHBORHOOD FORESTERS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT TUESDAY'S TGENA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association members on Tuesday heard about new plans for Rapid Bus Transit in South City plus an appeal for volunteers from the St. Louis Neighborhood Foresters.

Representatives from both spoke at the monthly members' meeting at Stray Dog Theatre, 2348 Tennessee Ave.

City Police Liaison Officer Gregory McClendon also gave a report about crime in the neighborhood, including the murder at the Starbucks on Grand; and Seventh Ward Alderwoman Alisha Sonnier urged residents to attend meetings about traffic plans for Gravois Avenue.

BUS RAPID TRANSIT REPLACES RAIL PLANS

Scott Ogilvie, a planning executive for the city, made the major bus line presentation, accompanied by Taylor Bardsley of Vector Communications, and Chris Poehler, vice president of Capital Programs.

Ogilvie said the city and Bi-State Development Agency, which oversees the region's mass transit, dropped the previous MetroLink light rail expansion plans and pivoted to bus rapid transit instead because federal funding was in doubt. The rail line would have cost a reported \$1.1 billion; the bus line is reported to cost \$400 to \$450 million.

The previously planned 5.6-mile rail system linking the city's north and south sides would have run along Jefferson Avenue from Chippewa to Fairground park. The new rapid bus line route has several alternatives but may run along the same route, possibly ending at the Civic Center downtown.

Rapid transit buses run along a dedicated lane and pick up and drop off passengers only at dedicated stations, Ogilvie said. Fares will be paid at the station, not to the bus driver. He showed what similar bus lines look like in Albuquerque, NM, and St. Paul, MN.

During Q&A, he said they will study traffic to make sure there is minimal impact on drivers. He also said signs at the stations will say when the next bus is expected to arrive.

Ogilvie emphasized planners need public feedback and urged people to check out the following link and send in their views: <https://greenlinebrt.com/>

ST. LOUIS NEIGHBORHOOD FORESTERS

Suzanne Leguey-Feilleux and Anne Moore of St. Louis Neighborhood Foresters said the aim of their organization is to grow a tree canopy in every St. Louis neighborhood. The city's forestry department is very small, they pointed out, and the need is greater than ever because of damage from last May's tornado.

Moore said that while the tornado loss of 5,000 trees has been publicized, that number applies to Forest Park alone. She estimates the city lost a total of 50,000 from the twister.

They said they have discovered many big trees the city plants don't make it through the long, hot summer: "We try to care for these babies, get people to water them." They help residents prune, water and mulch trees.

At present, they are working in nine city neighborhoods, including Tower Grove East, and hope to cover all 79 neighborhoods eventually. They work first with the city's forestry division, and also work with Forestry Relief. They are reaching out to arbor organizations for help and want to set up a tree board.

Pruning of trees will end soon; mulching will then begin, they said. They urged volunteers to meet them at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday morning of each month in the parking lot behind Commerce Bank.

More information [here](#) and [here](#).

TGE POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Officer Glen McClendon reported that TGE crime increased 25 percent last month compared with a year ago. He cited the homicide at the South Grand Starbucks, three burglaries and six felonies among crimes committed.

To search for TGE statistics, check here and look for Tower Grove East neighborhood;

<https://slmpd.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Neighborhood-January.pdf>

Here is the police report on the Starbucks killing:

<https://slmpd.org/man-wanted-in-connection-to-s-grand-ave-homicide/>

During Q&A, several audience members talked about reports that the suspect had held up several other businesses along Grand and urged police to publicize this kind of information. "Police underestimate how much we watch our neighborhood," said Anne Moore. McClendon responded that he would pass this idea along.

He said that the victim, Gabrielle Linehan, did not know the suspect and was a victim of a "robbery gone wrong...He walked around with an AR and found his first victim," McClendon said. Police ended up apprehending the suspect at 1:50 a.m. the next morning, he said.

McClendon added that in response to requests from the neighborhood, police had traffic patrols writing tickets along South Grand.

ALDERWOMAN ALISHA SONNIER REPORTS

Sonnier said among the ordinances she is supporting is one to raise the threshold from \$500 to \$2,500 for city purchases that require extensive red tape.

It was passed unanimously out of committee, she said.

She has also filed legislation to define what a Community Development Corporation is and is pushing a bill for a senior housing project. She also supports a five-year moratorium on establishing non-municipal detention facilities in the city.

Sonnier added that she serves on the planning commission, and all who came to a recent meeting were opposed to setting up a data center in the city.

Sonnier asked residents to attend:

- Gravois Town Hall at the International Institute, 3401 Arsenal, on Saturday, March 7 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Free childcare and refreshments will be provided. Traffic engineering plans will be presented at the meeting.

You also can make your views known at: <https://publicinput.com/gravois30>

- Her office hours:
 - March 3, 7-8:30 p.m., Taco Buddha. 1634 Tower Grove
 - March 16 11:30 to 1 p.m., Meskerem, 3210 S. Grand
 - March 23 6:30-8 p.m., Barr Branch Library, 1701 S. Jefferson
 - March 30. 6:30-8 p.m., Barr Branch Library, 1701 S. Jefferson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Tower Grove East Neighborhood Association Social Night will take place Tuesday, March 31, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Adventures of Intrigue Escape Room/VIP Room, 2400 S. Jefferson Ave. Tickets, regularly \$35, will be \$5 per person.

NEXT MEETING

March General Neighborhood Meeting: Tuesday, March 24th, 2026 @ 7PM - Stray Dog Theatre + Zoom
