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Oakland Park's 2018 State of the City Address by Mayor Tim Lonergan Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 6 p.m.

It has truly been an honor and privilege to serve as your Mayor this past year and I am proud to share Oakland Park's annual State of the City Address with you tonight.

Oakland Park continues to evolve. The City continues its amazing transformation with a flurry of recent activity, including but not limited to the dramatic redevelopment of the Federal Highway corridor and the recent sale of our West Dixie lots which is the impetus for the future Oakland Park Square mixed-use development of businesses, apartment homes and live-work units.

We envision "Oakland Park Square" as a Downtown magnet attracting residents, business owners and visitors. This public-private partnership seeks to energize our Downtown both aesthetically and financially.

One of the most significant opportunities for change was created last year when the courts sided with Oakland Park regarding the legality of a City Ordinance. It led to two longtime adult entertainment establishments moving out of our City and the properties being redeveloped with a much wider appeal in mind.

By discouraging these adult establishments, pain clinics, puppy mills or other businesses than can negatively impact quality of life, we are attracting a higher quality of economic development and revitalizing our Federal Highway district.

Oakland Park voters spoke loud and clear last month when they overwhelmingly approved the City's \$40 Million Dollar Bond Referendum by more than a two to one margin.

The bond will fund the modernization of the City's three fire rescue stations, our municipal Library and three community centers that serve Oakland Park's diverse population, including children, seniors, and adults.

The City's continued infrastructure investments include the Bid Pack 8 Project and Andrews Avenue Roadway Improvements.

The Bid Pack 8 project in southeastern Oakland Park is the culmination of the City's \$142 million dollars in infrastructure improvements to enhance our water, sewers, drainage and roadways.

The nearly \$2 million in Andrews Avenue Roadway Improvements between Oakland Park Boulevard and Prospect Road includes re-constructed sidewalks, installation of bicycle lanes, a mid-block pedestrian crossing, enhanced lighting and landscaped medians.

Our staff continues efforts to beautify Oakland Park with enhanced landscaping of our major corridors, a new outdoor storage & fencing ordinance, and more attractive medians. We are also becoming more pedestrian friendly and making the neighborhoods around our schools safer by adding new sidewalks.

Oakland Park invests \$50,000 dollars annually to replace & expand our tree canopy and conducts semi-annual free tree giveaways – the next one is scheduled for Saturday, February 23rd. Oakland Park also received an Arbor Day Foundation/TD Bank grant for a successful tree planting project in the Prospect Gardens neighborhood.

Besides assisting our dedicated Community Volunteer Corps with the free tree giveaway events, I was pleased to join the family and friends of our late City Manager John Stunson for the opening of the beautiful Stunson Nature Trail on the southeast side of Royal Palm Park. In just

a few short months, this nature preserve has become a haven for wildlife attracted to the lush landscaping and natural wetlands. Over the next few months, increased foliage will be added along the perimeter of the nature trail. If you have yet to experience this piece of paradise, please do so.

Oakland Park is also attracting new residents and visitors through an ambitious cultural events calendar which reflects our diverse community. We've added new events such as the "Art & Antique Walk," "Community Soul," "Latin Fest," and "Summer Nights in the Park" to our more established events that people have come to love, including Taste of Oakland Park, Dancing in the Street, Navy Days, Polynesian Cultural Festival, Youth Day and last weekend's Holiday Village celebration.

We have made Oakland Park a more attractive destination to live, work, play and visit. We are pleased to welcome high quality residential development from the beautiful waterfront community "Pointe at Middle River" with all 40 units sold to Urbn Village featuring 90 new residences on NE 5th Avenue.

This increased energy and excitement is helping Oakland Park draw new businesses which in turn generates more jobs and additional tax revenue.

There are many components that comprise Oakland Park's growth and success. Several of the City's efficiency improvements this past year include promoting our recycling services, reminding residents about the free trash drop-off sites available to them and implementing the "Smart Metering Program" for Oakland Park utility customers. The meter infrastructure upgrades will enhance customer service, provide early leak detection, increase revenue, and reduce operation costs. This project will result in an estimated \$15.5 million of cost savings over the next 15 years.

In talking with residents, business owners and visitors, the pride in Oakland Park is real and genuine. Our City's "Proud Oakland Park"

(POP) initiative continues to recognize the beautification of residential and commercial properties with our “POP Star” Awards and our Community Redevelopment Agency presents “Proud to be Oakland Park” Business Awards to local businesses taking pride in Oakland Park.

One of the aspects that helps to make Oakland Park a unique and charismatic community is our “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” approach. The City’s Community Volunteer Corps is actively staffed with a loyal team quick to participate in the Tree Assistance Program, Operation Our Neighbor, Waterway Cleanups, Parks Cleanups, Filling Sand Bags and the Adopt-a-Street program.

This citizen activism has also contributed to Oakland Park’s lowest crime rate in decades. The BSO/Oakland Park District third quarter crime report documents a continued lower crime rate in comparison to past years. This is a continuation of the success leading to historically low crime rates in the City.

The BSO/Oakland Park District credits citizens for their key role in reducing criminal activity by being adept at recognizing suspicious behavior and promptly reporting to deputies. Let’s keep the momentum going and always remember, if you see something suspicious, report it!

The Oakland Park Fire Rescue Department has joined with the neighboring municipal fire departments of BSO/Lauderdale Lakes, Tamarac, and Fort Lauderdale, to form a “closest unit response” aid network for the most critical calls to automatically dispatch the closest unit to the location, providing a “Best Practices” model for emergency response.

Oakland Park is also proud to work with our next-door-neighbor Wilton Manors to create a Joint Climate Action Plan to address and improve infrastructure and resilience in the future. We believe cities can lead the effort in climate resiliency to better prepare for rising seas and increasing extreme weather events.

During my travels and conversations throughout Oakland Park, one of the suggestions I make most often is to encourage residents to apply for the City's Local Government Academy. I was proud to join my fellow City Commissioners (and fellow LGA graduates) at the LGA Class of 2018 graduation when we celebrated with 24 new graduates. The 2019 Class is now being organized and there are still a few openings so submit your application early.

These Oakland Park LGA ambassadors and other activists also help strengthen the level of public safety in our community – from signing up for our Fire Rescue Department's CPR classes, working with the BSO/Oakland Park District on improving neighborhood safety and school safety, and helping remind everyone of the importance of rail crossing safety.

Earlier this year, the Oakland Park City Commission, the City's School Advisory Board and many of our community activists were on hand to voice their support in favor of the Broward School Board's vote to approve a \$41.2 million dollar proposal for the much-needed construction and renovations at Northeast High School. Our City is grateful to all of the students, parents and other supporters of public education who long advocated for improvements to the high school facilities.

I am also proud of our City administration for their continuing efforts to provide a Summer Food Service Program. Staff served approximately 10,000 free lunches and 10,000 free afternoon snacks to children 18 years of age and younger this summer.

Another strong attribute of Oakland Park is our financial stability. Our City Commission lowered the Millage Rate for the fifth (5th) consecutive year with our City in the top third of lowest millage rates in Broward County. We commend our City Administration and staff for receiving the highest accolades in financial reporting and budgeting.

Our diligent staff has also generated nearly \$23 million dollars in grants since 2015. We've also worked to secure the long-term retirement

security of our firefighters by working together with the Florida Retirement System, one of the nation's most well-funded and highly-regarded pension programs.

All of this adds up to quality of life that my husband and I consider second to none in South Florida. As Mayor this past year, I am proud the Municipality Equality Index deemed Oakland Park as one of nine cities in Florida to be named an "All-Star City" for our continued equality efforts. And we continue to explore ways to ensure a quality of life we can all enjoy, including short term rental regulations and advocating for quiet zones along our rail lines.

This evening we will begin the new City Commission session with Sara Guevrekian sworn in as Mayor, Matthew Sparks as Vice Mayor, the newly elected City Commissioner Jane Bolin and City Commissioner Michael Carn re-elected to his second term. We also salute two-time City Commissioner and former Mayor John Adornato for his eight years of service and know he will continue to be an active voice in our community.

Before I close, will the 2017 -2018 Commission please join me up here at the podium. I'm thankful and proud to have served with such a dedicated and determined team. Each one of you brought a unique perspective and skillset to the Commission which made us more effective.

- Commissioner/Mayor Adornato: Thank you for your service over the last year and for your dedicated service to the people of Oakland Park over the past 8 years.
- Commissioner Carn: Thank you for your service over the last year and for your dedicated service to the people of Oakland Park over the past 3 years.
- Commissioner Sparks, shortly to be Vice Mayor Sparks, Thank you for your service over the last year and for your dedicated service to the people of Oakland Park over the past 2 years.

- Vice Mayor Guevrekian, shortly to be Mayor Guevrekian, Thank you for your service over the last year and thank you for your dedicated service over the past 6 years.

Will you please join me in a round of applause to thank the 2017-2018 Commission for all their hard work!

A final shout out of THANKS goes out to:

- To the City Manager's office and all the City Staff who work hard providing service and improving the Quality of Life in Oakland Park.
- To the BSO Oakland Park District and the Oakland Park Fire Rescue teams for working hard keeping us safe.
- To Oakland Park Business Owners for investing in Oakland Park and providing service to our residents and visitors.
- To Oakland Park Residents for making Oakland Park their hometown of choice.

On behalf of our City, we wish you all a safe, happy and healthy Holiday Season and look forward to an exciting 2019 as we continue to make Oakland Park a community we can all be proud to call our home. Thank you and please join us for refreshments in the lobby before we call our first meeting of the new City Commission to order.