MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR

Greetings Oakland Park Community,

At last, we are nearing the end of a difficult time. Our hearts go out to those who have suffered due to the pandemic, but as I reflect on the state of our City, I am proud of the way our community responded. Working together, we overcame the challenges we faced.

When vulnerable seniors could not access vaccines, we opened the first city-run vaccination site in Broward on January 9. City staff and volunteers worked with the Florida Department of Health and local organizations to get thousands of shots in arms and save lives. As families stretched to make ends meet, we partnered with Feeding South Florida, Fort Lauderdale, and Wilton Manors to open a food distribution site. For 14 months, we staffed weekly distributions and made home deliveries to keep food on the table.

As businesses struggled to keep their doors open and employees working, we provided hundreds of thousands of grant dollars. We hosted webinars on financial assistance programs, launched Find It In Oakland Park to encourage residents to shop and dine locally, set up the Business Concierge Service to help companies adapt to restrictions, and delivered 3,000 Recovery Kits.

We showed our gratitude for our heroes by creating the Parade of Orchids. With more than 1,500 orchids donated to date, this magnificent addition to the Stunson Nature Trail will serve as a lasting symbol of our appreciation and a serene retreat for future generations. As we recognize those who helped us persevere, we renew our commitment to keep moving Oakland Park in the right direction. As we look ahead to our centennial, I am grateful to be part of this exciting time and look forward to working with you to bring our vision for Oakland Park to life.

-Mayor Jane F. Bolin
Oakland Park is headed in the right direction, according to overwhelmingly positive feedback from a recent citywide survey. Results also revealed strong resident support for economic development in the downtown corridor.

The results of the survey were unprecedented and the most positive we have ever found.

- Dr. Jim Kitchens, The Kitchens Group

Residents were surveyed about City services and quality of life issues to gauge satisfaction and awareness. The statistically valid, random sample was balanced to reflect the composition of the City based on demographics including age, race, ethnicity, and gender.

Responses reveal extremely favorable opinions of City operations, with 69% of residents saying Oakland Park is headed in the right direction and 78% giving positive ratings for management of services. When asked what they like most about living in Oakland Park, residents cited the City’s convenient location and sense of community.

The survey was conducted by the Kitchens Group, a national firm that has conducted public opinion research for more than 50 cities. Results were presented at the April 7, 2021 Commission Meeting and are available at www.oaklandparkfl.gov.

I am so proud to represent the people of Oakland Park and see how pleased they are with the work we’re doing and the services we provide.

- Mayor Jane Bolin

Results Show Strong Support for Economic Development Initiatives!

76% agree | Redeveloping downtown is needed to attract jobs
77% agree | Attracting new jobs should be a top priority
77% in favor | Having a local commuter rail stop downtown
DOWNTOWN’S NEXT CHAPTER

Oakland Park has spent years laying the groundwork to recreate its downtown. The magnificent vision encompasses lively and inviting, pedestrian-friendly promenades that unfold among outdoor cafes, and lush open spaces. The momentous culmination of strategic partnerships, code updates, and unique opportunities are bringing Oakland Park’s extraordinary vision to reality.

BRIDGING DOWNTOWN WITH OP SKY

City Hall will relocate to the Sky Building as part of an exciting public-private partnership with NR Investments. OP Sky will be constructed on the vacant lots across from the current City Hall, on the west side of Dixie Highway. The mixed-use development will include two buildings on either side of 38 Street, with about 140 residential units, 16,000 square feet of commercial space, parking, and a new City Hall on the top floor of the south building. Sky’s modern design is the work of Zyscovich Architects. The global architecture firm is also designing the City’s bond facilities, which will ensure that a similar aesthetic is carried throughout the planned projects and give a cohesive, signature look to the new Oakland Park taking shape.
With City Hall relocating across Dixie and the library moving to City Park at NE 38 Street and Third Avenue, the existing site will be available for redevelopment. The City is exploring opportunities to revitalize the seven-acre parcel to connect east and west and create a unified and compact downtown along the Dixie corridor with a mixed-use, urban environment for residents, businesses, and visitors. Oakland Park envisions a pedestrian-friendly downtown within walking distance to existing and planned projects, including Jaco Pastorius Park and City Park. The City awarded a design planning contract to Zyscovich in November 2018 and has since held several public meetings to get input on redevelopment, which showed a desire for a mix of residential, retail, parking, and public gathering spaces to support a vibrant and active downtown.

SUPPORTING COMMUTER RAIL PLATFORM

Seventy-seven percent of residents support a rail stop in downtown Oakland Park, results of the 2021 citywide survey show. The City has been supporting a rail stop in its downtown for more than a decade and is currently one of two cities being considered as potential stops, along with Wilton Manors. With the downtown properties poised for revitalization, a potential platform along Dixie Highway could support development and spur economic growth throughout the area. A rail stop could see downtown properties appreciate approximately 20 to 30 percent within three to five years.

NEW GUIDELINES FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Oakland Park partnered with Zyscovich Architects to update and improve the City’s Downtown Code and Design Guidelines to attract and encourage quality development and businesses consistent with the vision for the downtown corridor. Working with residents, business leaders, and property owners, the City gathered input and created a roadmap to promote activity in the Downtown Development District (OP3D). Guidelines call for new residential units to support businesses and promote sustainable economic development, as well as green space to create inviting outdoor amenities. New building design standards will enhance neighborhood aesthetics and preserve the unique small-town character of the surrounding area. OP3D will lay the foundation for an exceptional livable and walkable urban environment with a variety of housing, shopping, and employment opportunities that will allow Oakland Park to realize long-term economic investment.
BUILDING OUR 2ND CENTURY

The transformation taking shape in Oakland Park extends well beyond the downtown corridor. A modern array of major capital improvement projects is underway throughout the City as part of a $40 million bond measure that was approved by 67% of voters in 2018. City Park, North Andrews Gardens Community Center, Fire Station 9, and Fire Station 20 are just some of the community and public safety improvements underway that will enhance quality of life and support economic growth in Oakland Park.

CITY PARK

Since the bond was approved, the City has been collaborating with residents to gather input and understand the needs and priorities of the community. The City is also working to bring the community vision to life through cohesive and unique design. The most-anticipated bond project is City Park, which is an expansive, centrally located, nine-acre, multi-use park and library complex that will be located at 3900 NE 3 Avenue. The City broke ground on Phase 1, which will feature a splash-pad, playground, pickleball and basketball courts, new restrooms, and covered pavilion. Designs are underway for Phase 2, which is slated to include a new City library and community center, an urban forest, butterfly garden, and jogging trail. When completed, the facilities and natural surroundings of City Park will serve as an extraordinary community amenity.
NEW FIRE STATIONS

As part of the bond initiative, Oakland Park plans to relocate and construct new buildings to house Fire Stations 9 and 20. Fire Station 9 will be relocated to 3881 NE 6 Avenue and Station 20 will move to 880 West Prospect Road. Station 87, located at 2100 NW 39 Street, will undergo extensive renovations. The new and upgraded stations will be ADA-accessible, hurricane-rated and feature sufficient training space and increased capacity to improve overall response capabilities and better-serve the community.

NEW NORTH ANDREWS GARDENS COMMUNITY CENTER

The soon to be built multi-purpose Community Center at North Andrews Gardens will create a spectacular amenity for the community with new public meeting space, playground, and basketball court. The site survey and environmental assessment have been conducted and the project is in the design phase. The City has been awarded $250,000 in grant funding for this project and will continue to pursue additional opportunities to supplement the general obligation bond.
NEW PROJECTS CREATE JOBS AND HOUSING

As the City makes progress on its capital projects, private investors are taking note of all that Oakland Park has to offer. Ram Realty, headquartered in Palm Beach Gardens and known for developing quality properties in select high-growth markets in the Southeast, is constructing a 12.1-acre project at the southeast corner of Oakland Park Boulevard and NE 6 Avenue. The mixed-use development will include 288 apartments, 12 town homes, a 23,000 square-foot grocery store and 7,800 square feet of commercial space. The City worked with Ram to help further its vision to create an inviting and walkable downtown. The project will feature a publicly accessible Riverfront Promenade and pedestrian trail that will provide access from Oakland Park Boulevard to the walkway on Middle River, which borders the south side of the property.

PROPERTY VALUES RISING

Fortune 500 companies are capitalizing on Oakland Park’s appealing attributes. Pulte Homes, the third largest home construction company in the United States, is building the Oak Tree community west of Prospect Road and NW 21 Avenue. The 140-acre development will include 273 single-family homes and 132 townhouses. The property will also feature about 50 acres of open space, including 9.3 acres of public parkland and a fitness trail along the south and east side of the development. Construction of the residential properties is underway; the first certificate of occupancy was issued in late May. As the home to Oakland Park’s first million-dollar new construction property, houses in the sought-after community are selling rapidly.

NEW DEVELOPMENT ENHANCING THE CITY’S IMAGE

Project O is another exciting residential development coming to Oakland Park. Planned for the northwest corner of Oakland Park Boulevard and Federal Highway, the 11-story “L-Shaped” building will be located next to the circular KenAnn Building and will complement that iconic structure. Project O will feature 274 residential units and approximately 19,000 square feet of retail space.
SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

With the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Oakland Park businesses have been significantly impacted. To build support for small businesses, the City rolled out an exciting new campaign called Find It In Oakland Park. The campaign encourages residents to dine and shop within our community and promotes local businesses via social media, web, print, and more.

The City also created an easy-to-use GIS map of local businesses and launched a new incentive program, “Live Like A LoakL,” which partners with local businesses to provide discounts to residents, or “loakls,” who support local merchants. Visit www.opcra.com and follow @oaklandparkcra on social media to keep up-to-date.

BUSINESS INCENTIVES

The City offers new and existing businesses a variety of incentives to aid in their growth and development. These incentives foster job creation and Downtown revitalization. Visit www.opcra.com for a Business Incentive application.

INCENTIVES INCLUDE:

- Façade Improvement
- Relocation Assistance
- Strategic Investment
- Expedited Permitting
- Low Impact Fees
- Merchant Assistance

"I can’t thank the CRA enough for the special grant programs they offer, allowing landlords like myself to have a partner in improving the City and what we can offer to the residents. In part, thanks to this $10,000 grant, I have created a shaded courtyard area for people to walk around and shop under. I’m looking forward to many more property owners taking advantage of these efforts to improve our City."

David Bowles, Oakland Park Resident, Property Owner, Business Owner and Façade Grant Recipient
PRIORITIZING QUALITY OF LIFE

ADDING OPEN SPACE

With a vision aimed at maximizing green space, Oakland Park’s Comprehensive Plan requires three acres of park land per 1,000 residents. The City exceeds those conditions at 4.58 acres and more than 207 acres in inventory, but it continues to explore opportunities to increase open space even further.

Oakland Park is using a creative approach to overcome the challenges of expanding public space in an urban setting. The City is working with developers to encourage them to incorporate public areas into new construction projects. The Oak Tree project by Pulte Homes and the Ram Realty project on the former Kmart site will both provide public recreational space, adding more than 25 acres of park land to the City inventory.

GROWING OUR TREE CANOPY

Protecting and increasing the local tree canopy is a City priority. Recognized as a Tree City USA since 1991, Oakland Park has proudly celebrated the importance of urban trees for years.

Since 2015, the City has invested more than half a million dollars to plant over 930 trees and has distributed 5,400 trees to residents at free bi-annual tree giveaways. In 2019, the City began committing $50,000 annually towards the citywide tree canopy in the Capital Improvement Program, an investment it plans to continue through 2026.
SAVE THE PLANET...
DO CITY BUSINESS ONLINE

Save yourself a trip! Get remote access to City services on our website at www.oaklandparkfl.gov. From paying your utility bill and submitting a permit application to participating in a Commission Meeting or registering a business, the City now offers many services online to make it more convenient to live and work in Oakland Park.

Taking advantage of online services offers several benefits. Online services are available from anywhere, anytime, so you have the flexibility to access them when and where it is convenient for you. By saving a trip to City Hall, you have more time for other activities. You can also save money on gas and help the environment by reducing the number of cars on the road and lowering carbon emissions.

1. Pay your utility bill
2. Watch and participate in City Commission Meetings
3. Get or renew a business tax receipt to operate a business
4. Register for Parks & Leisure Services activities
5. Get permit forms, submit an application and get permit cost estimates
6. Schedule an appointment for permit review or code inspection
7. Use the Request Tracker to submit and monitor City concerns
8. Use E-code to submit and track code inquiries or concerns
9. Search for a Public Record in our extensive digital document library
10. Sign up for Notify Me™ to receive public notices and meeting announcements

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO FROM ANYWHERE, ANYTIME AT oaklandparkfl.gov
ENHANCING RESILIENCY

With inland waterways, proximity to the coast, and low-lying land, Oakland Park is vulnerable to the effects of climate change and sea level rise. The City is actively addressing environmental concerns to adapt to changing conditions and reduce vulnerabilities to improve resilience. From capital improvement projects and pilot programs to regional collaboration, Oakland Park is taking proactive steps and investing in long-term solutions to create a more sustainable community.

ASSESSING RESILIENCY BENCHMARKS

Oakland Park is participating in a pilot program with the Alliance for National and Community Resilience (ANCR) to identify resilient measures already in place and opportunities to improve comprehensive resilience in the future. ANCR launched the benchmarking program to help communities understand the need for increased resilience, identify strategies and improve overall resilience community-wide. Benchmarking creates an awareness of potential threats to buildings, housing, and water systems, and will help communities like Oakland Park to become more resilient to natural hazards or other emergencies. Following an assessment of its facilities, buildings and infrastructure, the City will work to outline strategies to improve resilience and identify potential funding sources for recommended protective measures.

WORKING WITH LOCAL PARTNERS

Recognizing that climate change is not confined to our municipal borders, Oakland Park has partnered with Wilton Manors on a Joint Climate Action Plan (CAP) to address environmental issues from a broader perspective. The aspirational Climate Action Plan was developed to create more sustainable infrastructure to improve resilience into the next decade and beyond. The goals of the plan are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1% a year through 2028, and to enhance sustainability through efficient and cost-effective means. Since adoption, both cities have completed Greenhouse Gas inventories and identified baseline figures so they can measure progress towards reducing their carbon footprint and achieving the goals of the CAP. Going forward, the cities will continue to collaborate to leverage resources and work towards greater regional resilience.
CONFRONTING SEA LEVEL RISE

The City is taking steps to minimize flooding in vulnerable areas and create a safer and stronger community. Through a comprehensive Stormwater Master Plan update, Oakland Park is making necessary infrastructure investments to minimize the effects of climate change, particularly in the western lakes area and central Oakland Park, from I-95 to Dixie Highway. Protective measures including pumping stations, stormwater preserves, exfiltration trenches, pervious pavers, dry retention areas, and swales are improving stormwater operations and reducing the local flood hazard. Last year Oakland Park received a $70,000 grant to conduct a citywide flood vulnerability assessment. Those results are being used to update the Stormwater Master Plan and identify future infrastructure improvements to enhance operations. The City also participates in the Broward County Water Advisory Board and the Technical Advisory Board to collaborate on water-related issues including new 100-Year Flood Maps and updated sea level rise projections to improve regional sustainability.

SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

From tree giveaways to recycling programs, Oakland Park encourages residents to participate in green initiatives to improve sustainability. The City is working on a code amendment that would make it easier for residents to go green at home by installing vehicle charging infrastructure during new home construction. The code revision was proposed as a proactive measure in anticipation of an increase in electric vehicles, and to prevent residents from having to make costly retrofits to install charging stations post-construction. The ordinance would require that circuit breakers, conduit, wiring, and a receptacle for a vehicle charger be installed during construction of new single-family, two-family and townhouse units.
EMBRACING OUR DIVERSITY

CELEBRATING INCLUSIVITY

Oakland Park is a City committed to diversity. The City launched an inclusion sign project in 2021 to champion human rights and equality for all. Fourteen signs are being installed in prominent locations throughout Oakland Park to serve as proud symbols of the community's welcoming and inclusive spirit.

The idea came from a group of City employee “Diversity Ambassadors” who teamed up to celebrate diversity and affect lasting change following the tragedy of George Floyd.

The sign tagline “Our community STANDS with you” is meant to foster a sense of unity and inclusion regardless of a person’s backgrounds and beliefs. As it looks ahead to its centennial in 2029, the City will continue to ensure that the “Building Our 2nd Century” effort is all-inclusive for the next 100 years and beyond.

RECRUITING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Oakland Park’s commitment to diversity starts at City Hall. The City’s workforce represents a variety of ethnicities similar to the community it serves, with 43% Caucasian, 39% African American, and 16% Hispanic. Women occupy almost 40% of the leadership and supervisory positions in the City, including the roles of Assistant City Manager, City Clerk, Police Chief, and several department directors and assistant directors. There are also more gay and lesbian employees than in previous administrations. The City was among the first in Florida to provide employees with domestic partner benefits, recognizing relationships that include the LGBTQ+ Community. For its commitment to equality, the City earned a score of 99 out of 100 in the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s 2020 Municipal Equality Index.
A CONVERSATION WITH OUR CITY MANAGER

For seven years, City Manager David Hebert has navigated Oakland Park toward its second century. He was interviewed this year by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, the International City/County Management Association, the Florida City and County Management Association, and the environmental organization, Tree People, about the future. We invite you to learn what’s on the horizon for the City of Oakland Park.

Q: Why is City Hall moving to the west side of Dixie Highway?
The City owned polluted land that remained vacant for 15 years. We crafted a plan to clean up the property and find a developer to bring new life to our downtown. This also helped free up the property where the current City Hall is located for future development and the possibility of a train stop in our downtown. By moving City operations to the west side of Dixie, we are making a conscious effort to break down barriers and unite our community.

Q: What are your plans for the existing City Hall site?
Our downtown has struggled for a long time due to the lack of residential units to support businesses. To help empower businesses and support a train stop, we are seeking potential development of the City-owned property around City Hall to include residential and commercial space, a train platform, and public parking for businesses and the commuter rail.

Q: What is the status of the train stop in Oakland Park?
The Commission has supported the possibility of a commuter rail stop in downtown Oakland Park for years and we continue to pursue that goal. A stop north of Fort Lauderdale will either be in Oakland Park or Wilton Manors. We will do everything we can to bring the train to Oakland Park.

Q: You just broke ground on City Park, tell us about that project.
The Commission decided to move the City library to the existing site of Collins Community Center. That area is economically underprivileged and was identified as an Opportunity Zone. By investing in that neighborhood to create places where residents can learn, play sports, and access park amenities, we are demonstrating that we care and believe in the people who live there.

Q: What were the results of the resident survey, and were they surprising?
Overwhelmingly positive! The team of professionals who work for the City are outstanding, they care so much about this City and the work they do, that I was confident we would get a favorable reaction. The survey company, which has worked with 50 other cities, said “The results were the most positive we have ever found.”

Q: Can you talk about the private development underway?
It’s an exciting time in Oakland Park. Development activity has been explosive. New projects will bring residential opportunities and commercial activity to our City. We are going to ensure that these developments are at a scale and quality that is going to continue to improve our community and keep our small-town City feel by encouraging new businesses consistent with the DIY, Mom and Pop culture that is at the heart of Oakland Park’s identity.