

JOHN D'AGOSTINO: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS LAKE PARK TOWN MANAGER (2023 UPDATE)

Last month, John D'Agostino celebrated his eighth anniversary with the Town of Lake Park. During his tenure, Lake Park has seen (and continues to see) exceptional levels of growth and development.

As noted in the past, external developments have taken place while simultaneously fostering internal growth. As Town Manager, John D'Agostino has created an environment in which staff works together cohesively inter-departmentally, and not just intra-departmentally. This results in greater efficiency and higher productivity levels. Further, he ensures employees feel recognized and valued through the provision of holiday gatherings, personalized letters and an in-office celebration on National Employee Appreciation Day, Publix gift cards at Thanksgiving, weekly bagels, a candy supply designed to satisfy a wide range of chocolate cravings and more.

While there have been numerous achievements during his eight-year tenure, many particularly noteworthy developments have happened in recent years, and others are :

TOWN:

- **Nautilus 220:** The largest project to ever come to Lake Park, this luxury high-rise, which has begun construction, will change the face of Lake Park visually, and will provide nearly \$2 million to the Town's annual tax base. The project's developer quickly became an ardent supporter of the Town, donating funds to help support the Lake Park Public Library, Sunset Celebration, and the Lake Shore Park playground, as well as donating a golf cart to Lake Park Elementary and more. Once completed, Nautilus will create a wide array of jobs, and residents of Nautilus will patronize local businesses, thereby supporting the Town in myriad ways. This project started with the Town Manager's support to fund the US-1 land development regulations initiative, which has proven to be successful, as well as his continued flexibility to accommodate market and construction conditions.
- **Safety and security:** license plate readers, surveillance cameras and ShotSpotters were installed in strategic locations throughout the Town. This forward-thinking endeavor has led to a significant drop in crime in the Town and enhanced the ability of PBSO to solve the crimes that are committed.
- **Lake Shore Drive Drainage Initiative:** this major project, which utilized green infrastructure to eliminate flooding along Lake Shore Drive and improve the quality of the water that drains into the Lake Worth Lagoon (which is a protected water body), was completed thanks to funding from a \$3.5 million grant from FEMA and \$2 million in one-cent sales tax revenue. There was no financial assessment to residents necessary. This was the first of several major drainage programs that will utilize green infrastructure to improve drainage Town-wide, all at no cost to residents or local businesses.
- The Town was the first municipality in Palm Beach County to complete a Vulnerability Assessment Report. This project was funded through a \$75,000 grant from the Department of Environmental Protection. The Vulnerability Assessment will serve as a key element in future

grant funding requests, positioning the Town ahead of other municipalities that lack this vital information.

- The Town celebrated the construction of the Lake Shore Park playground in December of 2022. This vast project was funded through two years of CDBG grants, a donation from the developer of Nautilus 220, and funds from a one-time fee totaling 1% of the construction costs of Nautilus 220 (the Town's Public Improvement Fund). The park regularly attracts visitors from other municipalities in addition to Lake Park residents.

LAKE PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

- The Lake Park Public Library won the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County's Read for the Record Award in the Small Municipality category in 2021 and 2022.

CRA

- BusinessFlare worked with the Town to update the CRA Master Plan, which was adopted. They are currently working on two expansion areas that have already been approved by the Town's CRA and are awaiting final approval by Palm Beach County.
- Two microbreweries – Kelsey City Brewery and Coastal Karma – made Lake Park their home and regularly serve local residents and patrons who travel to the Town for this purpose.

FUNDING

- Under the direction of the Town Manager, the Town has been awarded significant funding through grants and for was awarded two significant grants for green infrastructure drainage projects:
 - A grant of \$553,758 through the Resilient Florida Program for the strategic placement of roadside bioswales along 2nd Street by Foresteria Drive and Evergreen Drive, where flooding has been documented.
 - A grant of \$11,067,635 through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program to be used to retrofit the Town's aging drainage system using low-impact green infrastructure and help solve flooding issues, ultimately resulting in long-term sustainability.
 - The award of this grant also resulted in significant positive media coverage for the Town.
 - A State Appropriation in the amount of \$700,000 for enhancement of the previously completed Lake Shore Drive Drainage Program
 - A grant of \$325,000 from the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources for the preservation of Town Hall by replacing the roof and waterproofing the building.
 - In addition, the Town is currently slated to receive \$1 million from the State of Florida for the implementation of a major septic-to-sewer project. This will become official once the Governor signs the State budget.

STORMWATER AWARDS

- The Town has now been honored two years in a row by the Florida Stormwater Association. Just last week we received the 2023 Stormwater Program Excellence Award, which is given to public sector member organizations that have demonstrated a high level of distinction in stormwater programs, projects, and public education efforts. Awardees must exhibit sustained demonstration of excellence in public sector stormwater, and further considerations include ongoing and frequent development and implementation of innovative projects, a stable and talented staff, adequate funding, and noteworthy responsiveness to water quality improvement challenges.

Last year, the Lake Shore Drive Drainage Improvements Project was the recipient of the FSA's Outstanding Achievement Award, which recognizes successful implementation or outstanding projects in one or more areas of public sector stormwater management or finance, including stormwater utilities, permit compliance, intergovernmental coordination, best management practices, water quality improvement and illicit discharge detection.

LOOKING AHEAD

- The P3 (public-private partnership) for the Marina is an ongoing major initiative that will enable us to reinvent the Lake Park Harbor Marina and allow for additional uses, amenities and services that will benefit not just the community, but the entire region, and serve as an added economic engine.
- Land development regulations for the C-3 area have been adopted and developers are looking closely at this property for a residential or mixed-use development opportunity. The existing owner had a site plan (residential with 250 units) that is also pending Publix review/approval; this continues to be an option for redevelopment also.
- The Park Avenue Downtown District (PADD) Town comprehensive plan amendments and land development regulations related to a modified PADD that allows for increased density and intensity, along with an expansion of its boundaries including the future train station site, has been adopted. Development plans are being worked on by several development groups for parcels at various locations within the PADD. These site plan applications are forthcoming. If they all move forward and are realized, there is a potential to have up to have a billion dollars in private investment in the PADD alone (including a fully integrated train station site).
- 700/748/754 Park Avenue has been sold. The new owner has been working with the Town on a "reimagined" plan that includes a fresh, new look for the existing 700-748 Park Avenue buildings and completion of façade and exterior improvements on the 754 Park Avenue property (in early 2024), with interior end user buildouts planned for later in 2024.
- Oceana Coffee received site plan amendment approval for their jointly owned property at 1301 10th Street. This joint venture also received a grant from the CRA. The redevelopment project is underway and demolition of the existing structure is scheduled for late June/early July 2023.

Construction permits for vertical construction will be issued by mid-September 2023 and construction will be complete by December 2024.

- Brooklyn Cupcakes received their final inspections in mid-June 2023. They are working on their final interior design installations and will be open sometime in July 2023. They are working on partnerships with other businesses in Town in order to cross-promote and provide support for other local businesses. The owner of Brooklyn Cupcake has joined the CRA Board as a means of further supporting Lake Park.
- Clean Sweep, to be located at 810 Water Tower Road, is currently working through infrastructure work that is required before they can go vertical.
- Silver Beach Industrial (371K+ square foot office/warehouse) between Silver Beach Road and the Park Avenue Extension road is nearing completion; final Certificates of Completion are forthcoming.
- DXD Capital (four stories, 99,990 square foot self-storage facility) on Water Tower Road between 13th and 14th Streets is moving forward with construction.
- Texas Roadhouse in the Congress Business Park PUD is nearing site plan approval and intends to begin construction in the last quarter of 2023.
- The Town has held several meetings with the property owner of 1415 10th Street (where Ceviche Arigato, Family Dollar and others are located) regarding redeveloping their property. Staff is looking into rezoning this area to mixed-use and developers have expressed interest in investing \$150-\$200M in a mixed-use redevelopment project. If negotiations between buyer and seller are successful, a site plan application may be submitted in the last quarter of 2023.
- The Town's Mobility Plan has been approved and is ready to be implemented so that mobility funds can begin accruing and the Town is able to pursue mobility projects.
- The Town's Parks Master Plan for Kelsey and Lake Shore Park has been approved with various projects and initiatives that will serve to revitalize the park area in order to promote recreation activities and create another destination for residents and visitors along the US-1/Lake Shore Drive corridors. Project prioritization and implementation is forthcoming.
- Discussions regarding the development of a Community Center in Bert Bostrom Park are ongoing. Staff has toured a neighboring facility and is gearing up for stakeholder meetings towards the end of 2023.

CENTENNIAL

- The Town is currently celebrating its centennial anniversary with a year-long array of activities thanks to an initiative spearheaded by John D'Agostino.