



BILL MUTZ, MAYOR

January 20th, 2023

Priorities for Commission Consideration Impacting **FY 2023 & 2024**

NOTE: Objectives Are Clustered by Topical Groups and exclude existing CIP & Infrastructure Projects Which Are Already Scheduled

This document populates some ideas for aligning the highest priority elements deemed essential by each Commissioner before the Commission's FY 24 Strategic Planning sessions.

ENHANCING THE TONE:

- 1) Maintain the consistent top priority from the Commission to Honor Everyone. This value provides the "true north" for decision-making involving intentional considerations, equity, and accessible opportunities for all Lakeland Citizens.
- 2) Continue the collegial Commission body that listens well, respects others, considers thoughtfully, and creatively responds while balancing future vision opportunities against current budget priorities, maximizing Smart Growth over time.

ADVANCING PUBLIC SAFETY:

- 1) Accommodate Staff's Vision Zero recommendations *on an ongoing basis* with the ultimate goal of eliminating traffic-related deaths for pedestrians, bikers, and vehicle occupants as deliberately as possible.
- 2) Implement policies supporting ADA / Safe Streets compliance for disabled citizens allowing them to navigate Lakeland more securely.
- 3) Include an assigned Commissioner to participate in the scheduled ADA or Safe Streets committee meetings.
- 4) If required, provide policy and funding support to ensure LPD's newly initiated Body Cam and Axon systems are effectively used while enhancing officer training and proficiencies in a continuing effort to reduce crime.
- 5) Advocate and support Staff's expeditious property acquisition for Fire Station 8 so completion can occur within FY25 and response times north of I-4 are reduced.

- 6) Request that Staff seek enforceable noise ordinances reducing loud sounds or music coming from vehicles or playing outside businesses or homes to appropriate levels.

PROVIDING GREATER CITIZEN INCLUSION:

- 1) Implement Lift Lakeland elements that continue inclusion and expand mentoring groups, which propel our City closer to Honoring Everyone, so it becomes a notable Lakeland distinction to others in the years ahead.
- 2) Provide inclusion that celebrates distinctions through multi-generational and multi-culture integrations to be more readily accepted.
- 3) Intentionally create increased minority business opportunities through entrepreneurial training, minority business financing programs, or other supportive initiatives.
- 4) Accelerate the elimination of the digital divide aggressively by considering as many mesh network options as possible to help level the playing field most affordably.
- 5) Consider cost-effective ways to expand senior citizen services with existing organizations near seniors' homes.

IMPLEMENTING LONG-TERM SMART GROWTH PROJECTS:

- 1) The Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) has unified its county-wide members and identified the individual alternative water supply (AWS) projects which will support participating members. Support the COL staff recommendation to allocate the expenses of our AWS participation at rates to fund those development expenses as they occur. Because PRWC has complied broadly and supportively, the Southwest Florida Management District has agreed to absorb 50% of those development costs for these vitally needed future water needs.
- 2) Advocate continuing development of supporting tools advancing location-deciding considerations for developers wishing to invest in Lakeland's future growth. Tools such as **Catalyst 2.0**, guiding prospective developers into strategically desired options, and **NewToLakeland.com**, providing talent recruitment information and addresses workforce and educational availability, are excellent examples.

CONNECTING THE DOTS:

- 1) As a Commission, continue to work closely with the City Manager and Staff to advocate for and aggressively expand the growing wastewater (currently being studied) and growing traffic needs at a rate that exceeds Lakeland's growth rate. Determine the required financial load and allocate the necessary funding into the annual budget and CIP to meet anticipated needs.

- 2) Encourage staff development and advocate for design options connecting pedestrian and biking trails to Bonnet Springs Park from both Downtown and Northwest Lakeland. This need is becoming increasingly essential to alleviate BSP parking congestion.
- 3) Advocate a Lake Hunter pedestrian & bike path connection with aesthetic consideration over the lake rather than immediately alongside the high-speed traffic of Harden Boulevard. This potential design will provide excellent safety, corridor enjoyment, and fishing options. Aggressively seek additional state funding sources to help absorb incrementally required costs.
- 4) Encourage CRA planning to include a plan to utilize vacant second-story downtown spaces, identifying the amenities required to make that possible.
- 5) Maximize the number of public-use parking spaces within existing garages for evenings and weekends.
- 6) Consider creative funding opportunities to expedite the construction of additionally required downtown parking garages supporting future parking needs identified by the staff study currently underway.
- 7) Accelerate the Dixieland Road Realignment engineering and design, property acquisition, and construction activities to accelerate project completion as rapidly as possible.
- 8) Identify desired and alignable assets to encourage future Brightline consideration of a Lakeland stop and accordingly prepare options for that possibility.

DRIVING DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT:

- 1) Continue to align P3 Developers for Downtown Multifamily [targeting approximately 1,200 new units] while providing new multi-use retail spaces. **(GOAL:** Approve four concurrent downtown projects breaking ground within FY 23) All projects must absorb their projected resident and visitor parking needs.
- 2) Support staff's recommendation to revise the public activities available within Munn Park, dramatically increasing citizens' daily use of our city center.
- 3) Support enhanced squad policing and its measurable effectiveness in the downtown corridor, assuring citizen safety and homeless compliance while reducing negative impacts on downtown businesses. This goal anticipates willing mutual respect and understanding from all parties.
- 4) Establish a permit requirement system to feed the homeless in the downtown area by citizen groups who wish to exercise this service so that it happens only at a defined time by eligible parties at predesignated spaces specified by the ordinance.

- 5) Continue to encourage NFP expansion of housing and services for compliant homeless needs helping to provide access for behavioral health needs and providing individuals with an enhanced life purpose to the extent possible.
- 6) Explore the feasibility of building a new Community Theatre using existing City property with existing adjacent parking for patron's needs. Seek private funding to construct this revitalized citizen arts amenity. Enhanced features will provide a larger stage, appropriately sized dressing rooms, and comfortable, adequate-sized audience seating as necessary elements. Moving the theatre to this more prominent location will allow future Residential and Multi-Use Retail development to occur on the east side of Lake Mirror as may be required.
- 7) Coordinate with landowners east of Barnett Park, considering how the CRA might help establish an art district if desirably feasible.
- 8) To help support remaining TIF opportunities and the effectiveness of the CRA to fund portions of future projects, request a formula beyond the typical 5-year, 50% TIF reimbursement baseline that rewards developers for more TIF consideration if they include specifically identified elements beyond standard projects.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1) Support a phase-in schedule establishing User Fees that match PRWC Water Cooperative Projected Annual Expenses for the COL share of in-process costs as they occur.
- 2) Review the needs identified by the General Employee Pay and Benefits Study and hear staff recommendations to address the most significantly identified gaps as they impact future budgeting considerations.
- 3) Request staff review for the feasibility of an MSTU tax to create identifiable funds to support Parks & Recreation projects more aggressively. These funds can immediately facilitate citizens' recreational needs matching Lakeland's growth rate and changing recreational preferences, such as additional pickleball courts. These amenities are decision influencers for existing and future citizens, helping them identify another reason they wish to live in Lakeland.
- 4) Due to accelerating urban growth planning to accommodate significantly more downtown residents, the City has increasing amenity needs at an unprecedented rate. Whereas the Core Impact Fee Exemption for both Parks & Rec / Transportation historically was minimized to attract commercial and retail growth, it now prohibits the ability to fund residential amenity needs adequately. Request a study to consider removing the Core Impact Fee exemption effective October 1st for FY 24.

ADVANCING HOUSING SOLUTIONS:

- 1) Request city planning to identify at least 5,000 housing living spaces in Lakeland from 2023 through 2027. The goal is to include a deliberate mix of market-price, affordable, veteran, and workforce housing and coordinate these opportunities with P3s that purposefully seek to support varying aspects of meeting our City's housing goals.
- 2) Increase the number of micro-housing units and small lots, but implement thoughtful floorplan square footage considerations while maximizing our housing mix.
- 3) Plan to attract more daycare centers throughout the City, particularly on the south side, making their proximity to jobs an anchoring community amenity.
- 4) Continue to seek mission-minded Affordable Housing developers aggressively.
- 5) Consider a high-rise workforce housing single-bedroom development in the downtown core area.
- 6) Encourage Staff to identify as many by-rights criteria as possible to minimize variance approvals and reduce the time and costs required for project completion. To the extent possible, identify those with Catalyst 2.0 for easy information access.

LRH GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PREPARATION:

- 1) Prioritize near-term needs required by LRH to facilitate the forthcoming 190+ new students. As GME residents arrive, address housing and commercial needs as synergistically as possible.
- 2) Support other identified Graduate Medical Education needs for LRH as proactively as possible.

OPTIMIZING THE AIRPORT:

- 1) Provide any policies or governing initiatives aiding Staff to finalize the Hughes FFA Air Traffic stabilized instrument approach landing plan for final approval by December 2023.
- 2) Consider officially pausing the active pursuit of Commercial Airline carriers for LAL. The exception to this could be a newer, self-sustaining carrier that seeks Lakeland for its central Florida hub.
- 3) Implement the recently approved Amazon two additional 767 pads and nimbly support Amazon's longer-term growth of up to a 500,000+ square feet expansion for their future LAL air center needs.

- 4) Continue to implement the Airport Master Plan in affordable FAA increments and seek any opportunities to shorten the timeline when possible.
- 5) Pursue additional cargo carriers or MRO facilities to be built on the northeast quadrant of the airport.

ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURS AND EDUCATION:

- 1) Continue to support PCSB with early vocational interest alignments and direction towards academies to maximize student interest and opportunities.
- 2) Couple student mentoring needs with local not-for-profits or businesses interested in providing voluntary employees as mentors for secondary students. A model for this is the two groups of high school Junior/Seniors City employees are doing with BBBS. Support Polk Vision as the significant coordinating engagement entity in expanding this participation.
- 3) Create an Eco-Mapping System that identifies existing sidewalk entrepreneurs (typically 1 or 2 employees) to help link, train, or provide future synergies aligning and helping them become more financially sustainable long-term.

IMPACTING INNOVATION:

- 1) Celebrate Staff as they use innovative techniques to reduce operational costs, increase predictable failures earlier, and, by department, regularly identify and seek the “Next Big Thing” being studied or implemented operationally by Staff as they are seizing future opportunities.
- 2) Encourage Staff to provide departmental innovation updates from assigned task reviews and continue to solicit and review comparative studies of other cities’ successfully implemented ideas—request Staff updates to the Commission as they occur.
- 3) Align alongside the Innovation District to support accelerated research using the uniquely paired Florida Polytechnic / SunTrack facilities and personnel, if possible.

OTHER COMMISSION SUGGESTIONS FOR STAFF CONSIDERATION:

- 1) Provide media tools that increasingly help citizens become more informed of City matters through our Communications Department and request a supporting there is a supporting budget to maximize COL and Citizen voices.

On a more granular basis, update the third-floor Commission Chamber hallway to reflect State-of-the-Art activities recently implemented in Lakeland. Consider a media-driven City history or show educational videos showing complicated COL services that its citizens rarely see. This

venue should leave developers and citizens saying, “Wow!” as it reflects our progressive growth and innovation instead of hosting a tired collection of artifacts in old, unlit cases.

- 2) Encourage adequate LPD speed monitoring, particularly near changing traffic patterns or road construction sites which inadvertently can create alternative route side street speeding increases.

Here is space for Additional Commissioner Topics or Suggestions:

3) Additional:

4) Additional:

5) Additional:

6) Additional:

7) Additional:

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9) Additional:

10) Additional:

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