

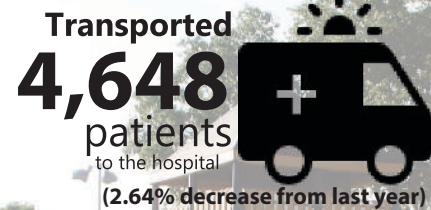
CITY OF  
**SANFORD**  
FLORIDA



**CITY MANAGER'S  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

# CITY BY THE NUMBERS

# City Manager's Statement



*Fiscal Year 2020 started out strong, built on a solid plan and a solid City budget; little did we know what an unprecedented year we would all find ourselves in due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Navigating through uncharted waters, with safety being number one, the City of Sanford managed well during a fiscal year filled with so many unknowns due to the pandemic. City employees worked together, providing non-stop service to our residents. Using innovation and technology to our benefit, the City provided a seamless user-friendly virtual experience for our customers and for employees. Virtual procedures are still offered throughout City departments today. City capital projects, services and programming continue to move forward, given the professional expertise of the City of Sanford employee family. Looking into Fiscal Year 2021, with safety measures in place, the future continues to be bright for the City of Sanford. We will get through this together.*

*This report includes a summary of Department accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2020 (October 1, 2019-September 30, 2020).*

*Thank you.  
Norton N. Bonaparte, Jr., ICMA-CM  
City Manager*



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## For Our Economy

The City of Sanford is a thriving community of over 60,000 residents and nearly 4,500 businesses of all sizes. Sanford has become much more than just a quaint, small city with historic charm. We work together with numerous local and regional partners continuously to promote the City, in order to attract new businesses, as well as to retain and grow those that are here. With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic most of the year, many projects were delayed. Projects that were already under construction were completed or are still under construction. It's expected that over 2,000 new direct and indirect jobs will still be created. Over \$1 billion in residential and commercial investment is in review or under construction.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on our downtown business community, we have seen a few restaurants, breweries and shops close their doors. Several of these have been able to open back up. The San Leon project on Sanford Avenue has broken ground and will be going vertical soon. The Mark Nation mixed-use project on 2nd Street is under construction again. The Henry's Depot Culinary Collective on First Street was completed. The three-block Heritage Park catalyst project in the heart of downtown is still moving forward. The developers are expected to go vertical in 2021, soon after Florida Power & Light finishes the electrical portion of the project. More unique eateries, craft breweries and another distillery are still being planned for the downtown area.

COVID-19 has a tremendous impact on our local economy, particularly our small businesses. The City of Sanford launched a Small Business Relief Grant (SBRG) program to assist in retaining local jobs and to assist in stabilizing the businesses that have been affected. The City Commission approved the SBRG program to provide a one-time grant to qualified businesses classified as non-essential, mandated to close and/or modify operations by Executive Order. The focus of the program was to support businesses that are reopening to rehire employees and to assist with the payment of back rent or mortgage payments. Top priority was given to businesses that met the criteria and had not received funding from other sources. The City has funded over 50 impacted businesses that qualified. Nearly \$500,000 has been allocated to assist the businesses in navigating through these uncertain times.

The City's overall mission involves much more than providing incentives to new expanding businesses. The City of Sanford offers a wide range of services that include, but not limited to, ongoing business retention efforts, business education, business connections, promoting available properties, transportation and natural assets.

Due to our excellent business climate, Sanford remains the northern "Gateway to Central Florida." Business and population growth continue to be steadily increasing, propelling the City into one of the highest property value appreciation trends in Seminole County. With property values increasing from 9-15%, Sanford is an excellent place to invest.



## For Our Business Community

The City of Sanford's Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) was established to solicit recommendations relative to economic development initiatives and strategies. The EDAB is charged with facilitating the creation of public-private partnerships, developing a base of stakeholder input for economic development activities, advising the City Manager on development incentives and programs, enhancing employment opportunities, surveying and assisting businesses, and promoting Sanford to new businesses.

In addition to ongoing infrastructure investments, attractive incentive packages and a very positive economic environment for investing, the City of Sanford continues to assist its businesses with workforce matters. The City continues to assume an important role in job creation and working with our partners to navigate the uncertainty of the current labor market. Those industries working to develop a more prepared workforce, including government and education, require stronger partnerships and collaboration to create more effective initiatives. The City of Sanford is proud to be an active participant in these partnerships to direct needed resources toward developing our citizens to meet immediate job needs and preparing our students for those future job opportunities.

We are experiencing a growth in industrial buildings more than we have seen in many years. North Port Commerce Park, built by Scannell Development, has seen several buildings completed and occupied such as, Home Depot distribution and Xylem Pumps. Hundreds of new jobs are being created. Ganesh International on Upsala Rd. will be building four new buildings for prospective businesses. Fastenal has acquired land adjacent to the Orlando Sanford International Airport to build their statewide warehouse/distribution center in the near future. Over 140,000 square feet of new industrial space and 400,000 square feet of commercial space are being constructed. A new hotel has been built and several more are being planned.

With the major expansion taking place at the Orlando Sanford International Airport, the new Riverwalk Trail and Roadway Project taking place along the St. Johns River, SunRail, Interstate 4 expansion, the proposed development within the City's Transportation Oriented Development Zone and the major new North Port Commerce Park, Sanford will continue to be the northern "Gateway To Central Florida!"







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