



Season's Greetings from The City of Osceola!

As we look back on 2024 it's worth talking about some of our successes in Osceola. We have built the tennis and pickleball court at Florida Park and placed a modern surface under the playground equipment. Our citizens voted for a quality-of-life tax that kicked in mid-2024 and will allow us to build our water park, renovate the Rosenwald building, and upgrade our other park spaces. We have also planted thousands of dollars of trees - in partnership with BRS Environmental - in honor of our 2nd year as a Tree City USA, that will help us to shade the open spaces of our parks.

We want to thank our citizens for your part in moving the city forward. It takes a deep belief in the future and potential of Osceola to decide to pursue these large goals. Many communities resist efforts to boldly build for their future. It can even be said that a growing community is one that believes and votes to develop for its future, while a dying community is one that refuses to do the same. Despite so many years of challenge, Osceola is once again – slowly but surely - becoming a thriving community. Additionally, we thank all of you for helping us keep the city picked up. Simple things like throwing away stray litter and putting out trash in a timely fashion do as much to better perception of the town as any number of projects and initiatives can do.

Even with the progress that has been made, we considered 2023 and 2024 preparatory years. The foundation was being laid for big projects that will begin taking shape in earnest in the coming year. Large building and renovation projects do not take place without careful planning. This year we are going to see key projects moving forward.

First, the water park will be breaking ground in the first half of the year. We will also get the first phase of the downtown streetscape underway on the east side of the courthouse. Rosenwald Park area renovations will continue throughout the year. Our two years in the federal Thriving Communities program is also coming to a conclusion and is resulting in an application for a federal RAISE grant to do a transportation master plan that would enable us to apply for much needed transportation infrastructure funding to potentially add paths, create a bus route, and place/revitalize sidewalks and other pedestrian mobility alternatives that the city badly needs. Finally, don't be surprised if you see contractor/city trucks in your neighborhood working on the badly needed upgrades to our stormwater system.

We hope that you have had a rejuvenating holiday season and are as ready as we are to see the future of Osceola being built. We are privileged to live in this exciting time in our town's history where we are changing the narrative from a town in decline to a thriving community. We ask you all for your trust, effort, and input as we labor together to make Osceola the ideal place to work, live, and play.

Warm Regards,

Mayor Joe Harris Jr.

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