

## Economic Development



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THIS NUMBER

# \$30M+

Amount the city of Winter Park has allocated over the past 15 years for infrastructure improvements along Fairbanks Avenue, including sewer lines and other upgrades to draw development.

MAJOR THOROUGHFARE

# Winter Park aims to draw development to Fairbanks

## Leaders want to see a mixed-use projects become a gateway.

Peter Moore said there has been a rumor that prospective Rollins College students would be told to exit on Lee Road and go down Park Avenue when going to the college.

The director of the office of management and budget for the city of Winter Park mentioned the urban legend was that Fairbanks Avenue was so horrible that it was causing parents to turn back and decide they did not want their children to go to the school.

On the flip side, developers have told the city it is one of the last areas where they can do something substantial. "So much of the rest of the city has been built out, but this is really your last great hope," Moore said.

The city has allocated more than \$30 million in the past 15 years for infrastructure like sewer lines, and millions of property sales have happened in the last few years. Still, development has not fully come through, so the Winter Park City Commission met Sept. 11 to workshop how to guide development between Interstate 4 and Orange Avenue on Fairbanks.

Multiple commissioners — including Mayor Sheila DeCiccio — favored a mixed-use approach for the area. DeCiccio said her main goal would be that any development is a gateway to the city and is visually appealing. She also said that development could help meet the community's need for affordable housing.

City staff also identified the potential to provide incentives to help developers or to use existing Community Redevelopment Agency grant funds. Winter Park City Commissioners voted on Sept. 10



SPOKEN MOTION STUDIO

**"If you're traveling through the city on I-4 east or westbound, you are more likely to come through that corridor."**

John Crossman, founder of CrossMarc Services

to add an Economic Enhancement District in the CRA to allow property owners to apply for grants for environmental cleanup, something that developers have indicated they want from the city.

Meanwhile, local stakeholders like brokers and prospective developers have told the city there are challenges in assembling parcels along Fairbanks, leaving a lot of smaller properties that make it harder to build big projects.

John Crossman, founder of CrossMarc Services, told *Orlando Business Journal* that the corridor is unique because of where it is located in the city. "If you're traveling through the city on I-4 east or westbound, you are more likely to come through that corridor."

Winter Park staff will now meet with the city's Planning and Zoning Board as well as the Economic Development Planning Board to build a comprehensive approach to guide development in the corridor. The city also will privately identify potential catalyst sites that the CRA may be able to purchase to help encourage projects.

City staff also identified potential branding as the South of Fairbanks District, or Sofa District, for some of the properties south of Fairbanks.