



Town of Surfside
Office of the Town Manager
9293 Harding Avenue
Surfside, Florida 33154

November 22, 2023

Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners
Town of Surfside
Town Hall
9293 Harding Avenue
Surfside, Florida 33154

RE: Annual Evaluation of the Town Manager

First and foremost, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve in an organization which is personal and dear to me. As we approach the one-year anniversary of serving as your Town Manager, I want to take the time to share with you some of the milestones we have accomplished together:

1. Cost-Saving Measures and Efficiency:

- Saved approximately \$60,000 earmarked for bus shelter improvements by demonstrating ADA Compliance to FDOT.
- Lowered fiscal year 2024 budget compared to fiscal year 2023 and implemented operational strategies in enterprise funds (Solid Waste and Utilities Fund) to reduce losses.
- Re-evaluated criteria for site contamination, saving over \$100,000 in remediation costs at Town Hall. Did this through effective technical negotiation with DERM-RER specific to testing criteria.
- Established a new Capital Improvement Projects Department to manage projects in-house, resulting in cost savings. The cost savings will occur by bringing various project management layers in house.

- Re-negotiated at a lower cost Town employer based health care; saving approximately \$80,000 for fiscal year 2024.
- Obtained a new in-house street sweeper to deliver street sweeping services 5 days a week and increased street cleanliness which ultimately allows stormwater systems to work more effectively.
- Re-implemented the previously stopped after school programming with the YMCA. Negotiated the program to be cost effective for residents while costing the Town no funds.

2. Infrastructure and Community Development:

- Completed and in-progress with major construction projects for parks (96th Street Park, Hawthorne Tot Lot), beach ends, and traffic modifications (7 improvements).
 - Installed beach gym equipment for residents' health and wellness.
 - Conducted a Town-wide Traffic Study (near completion) and Stormwater Master Plan (finalized).
 - Secured grants for vulnerability assessment, critical facilities analysis, beach nourishment, and sargassum clean-up to ensure the Town's ensuring environmental resiliency initiative pushing the Town into the environmental forefront of the South Florida region.
 - Initiated projects currently in design phase like Dune Resiliency, Tennis Community Center, and Collins Avenue Water Main Replacement Design.
 - In progress to commence the first phase of the Downtown Walkability project by installing new curbs that will encompass future walking areas (scheduled to be performed December 2023).
 - In progress to implement a FREEBEE on-demand transportation program with FDOT State funding and support (obtained grant and pending Commission approval for December 2023).
3. Pursued recognition from Better Cities for Pets and successfully achieved Certified City status. In recognition of our dedication to fostering a pet-friendly environment and promoting the well-being of both residents and their pet companions, Mars Petcare honored us with Certified City status in August 2023.

4. Project Management and Government Collaboration:

- Successfully negotiated with agencies (FDOT, DERM-RER, FDEP, FDOS) for grants, implementations, and collaborations on various projects.
- Managed projects like Utilities Undergrounding, Abbott Avenue Drainage Improvements, and Downtown Walkability project with efficient re-design and cost-effective solutions. Implemented creative negotiation strategies to obtain Abbott Avenue Drainage Improvement re-redesign at no cost to the Town.
- Officially commenced the project to build a Champlain Tower South Memorial with over \$2,750,000 dollars of out-side funding from development and other governmental agencies (seeking commission approval for December 2023). Commenced the process by composing a detailed request for qualification process which had all stakeholder input.
- Eradicated all invasive species in the Town Dune system. By doing this, promoted a healthy dune system, resilient against erosion and storm surges.
- Commenced the 91 Street Beautification Project and will seek partial funding by the Village of Indian Creek.

5. Technology and Communication Improvements:

- Upgraded technology infrastructure with a new ADA-compliant town website and a TYLER CSS Portal for the Building Department scheduled to be both fully integrated into the Town's web interface commencing December 2023.
- Launched official town social media platforms for improved communication and engagement with residents. Previous presence was only through tourism platforms.
- Re-branded the Town Gazette in an editorial format which spotlights Town information on a monthly basis. Increased advertisement fees in order to have a more content filled, financially sustainable program.
- Deployed new surveillance and camera systems throughout the Town to assist the Police Department with residential safety.
- Received a State of Florida Cybersecurity Grant that provided the Town a full year's worth of cybersecurity software, resulting in substantial savings of approximately \$90,000 in software

expenses. Additionally, actively collaborating with the State's Digital Services office to acquire and implement cybersecurity best practices.

6. Community Engagement and Events:

- Assisted the Tourist Board and organized over 20 town events, boosting resident and tourism experience, leading to increased Tourism Surtax figures.
- Conducted workshops and resident engagements on safety, utilities, traffic, and other community concerns for direct resident involvement.
- Re-commenced the Community Service Aide Program underneath the Police Department to assist with community policing on the beach and our Downtown district.
- Enhanced safety along the hardpack by actively securing full private property approval for implementation of night time solar bollards. Obtained additional private funding of approximately \$88,000 for project as a voluntary proffer. Installation near complete.
- Held the 2nd Year CTS Memorial Anniversary with a streamlined program designed for long-term sustainability and replication.
- Pursued recognition from Better Cities for Pets and successfully achieved Certified City status. In recognition of our dedication to fostering a pet-friendly environment and promoting the well-being of both residents and their pet companions, Mars Petcare honored us with Certified City status in August 2023.

7. Government Efficiency and Policy Implementation:

- Managed town staff effectively to deliver more Ordinances and Resolutions aligned with the Town Commission's policy direction that ever before in one fiscal year.
- Pursued FDOT to install new crosswalks in the Harding Avenue and Collins Avenue corridor. These new initiatives will be completely funded by FDOT and are currently in the design phase.
- Expanded our policing capacity through renewing agreements and relationships with other agencies such as FDLE.
- Actively engaged local leaders in order to push Town Commission legislative agenda. Obtained \$750,000 to re-

transform Town Alleyways and obtained \$500,000 towards Champlain Tower South (CTS) reimbursement from the State.

8. Development

- Successfully negotiated the 8777 Collins Avenue future site Development order with a record voluntary proffer and post approval coordination for the relocation of the loading dock.
- Successfully negotiated a total of two Townhouse future development projects with voluntary proffers to go towards utilities undergrounding project.

The provided summary only shows some of the many accomplishments we have made. All the efforts outlined were not completed alone. That is why I want to thank the hard and relentless efforts of all Town Staff that comes everyday to work to deliver a quality level of service for all residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hector Gomez' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hector Gomez
Town Manager
Town of Surfside

CC: Lilian Arango, Town Attorney
Sandra McCready, Town Clerk