

# TOWN OF LANTANA

## STATE OF THE TOWN ANNUAL REPORT



A Look Back on **2024**

and

A Look Ahead to **2025**

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### **TOWN COUNCIL**

Karen Lythgoe, Mayor  
Mark Zeitler, Vice Mayor  
Kem Mason, Vice Mayor Pro Tem  
Christopher Castle, Councilmember  
Lynn Moorhouse, D.D.S., Councilmember

### **TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE**

Brian K. Raducci, ICMA-CM, Town Manager  
Kathleen Dominguez, CMC, Town Clerk  
Mariangel Rios, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

### **TOWN ATTORNEY**

Lohman Law Group, P.A.

### **DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS**

Eddie Crockett, Public Services Director  
Nicole A. Dritz, Development Services Director  
Stephen Kaplan, Finance Director  
Kristine Kreidler, Library Director  
Sean Scheller, Chief of Police  
Craig Spiegelhalter, Palm Beach County Fire Rescue District Chief

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# TOWN OF LANTANA STATE OF THE TOWN ANNUAL REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Annual report is for the Mayor to provide the Town of Lantana (Town) Town Council and Community with a high-level executive summary of the Town's prior year accomplishments as well as the current state and condition of various operational and capital projects. In addition, it provides a preview of the goals and expectations of the current year.

Happy New Year and warm greetings! As your Mayor, it is my privilege to welcome you into 2025—a year filled with hope, good health, and prosperity. I am deeply thankful to my fellow councilmembers, our dedicated staff, and the unwavering support of the community for everything we have achieved together in 2024. Looking ahead, I am excited to continue working alongside my fellow councilmembers and all of our business and community partners to tackle the challenges before us and work toward fulfilling our mission in the year ahead *“To preserve Lantana’s small-town atmosphere through responsible government and quality service.”*

## A LOOK BACK ON 2024

2024 was another exciting year for our Town. Below you will find a glimpse of some of the more significant accomplishments that occurred during the year.



### Municipal Elections 2024

In March 2024, I was honored to be re-elected to the Town Council for a three-year term. As a lifelong resident of Lantana, I am committed to our community's continued growth and prosperity. I look forward to working alongside my fellow councilmembers to shape a brighter future for our Town.

### Town Council Visioning Session

In April 2024, we gathered together to envision our community's future. The Town Council, Town Manager, department directors, and other key staff held a public visioning workshop to review our recent achievements and develop our goals and shared vision for the [FY2024/25 Adopted Annual Budget](#).

### Adoption of the Annual Budget

The adoption of the annual budget is one of the Town Council's highest priorities as it serves as a policy document which provides the resources and establishes a plan for the operational budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The budget is transparent and performance-based, linking departmental goals to funding. The FY 2024/25 budget of \$29.5M reflects a commitment to fiscal responsibility and aligns with the priorities and goals that the Town Council established by consensus, at the Town Council Visioning Session.

Below you will find each of those priorities and goals and examples of how they have been implemented and achieved, respectively. It is important to note that some of the goals are long-term in nature and will be fully attained in future years. Staff has been busy improving our infrastructure and beautifying our Town to ensure a vibrant and thriving community. Here are just some of the highlights:

### Maintain infrastructure

- ✓ Worked closely with FPL to repair non-functional streetlights.
- ✓ Resurfaced the Sports Park basketball courts.
- ✓ Restored the Centennial Sculpture at Bicentennial Park.
- ✓ Replaced two (2) bus shelters on W Lantana Rd and one (1) on N Dixie Hwy.

- ✓ Repaved numerous roads throughout the community and installed new “School Bus Stop Ahead” signs in order to enhance safety and improve visibility for drivers approaching bus stops.
- ✓ Worked closely with Palm Beach County’s (PBC) Traffic Division and our traffic engineer to enhance Traffic Light Synchronization on Lantana Rd.
- ✓ Completed the E Lantana Rd Infrastructure Upgrade.
- ✓ Replaced the Water Main under the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway tracks at Pine St.
- ✓ Completed the Sea Pines Stormwater Pump Station Construction Project.
- ✓ Began Phase I of the Water Main Improvement Project (S Broadway & W Pine St). Design of Phase II is underway.
- ✓ Fire Hydrant Auto Flushing Systems were installed.
- ✓ Town Council authorized engineering services for the Dixie Hwy Median Project.
- ✓ Replaced the 30hp pump for the Town’s Master Sanitary Sewer Lift Station #1.



- ✓ The following steps on the Hypoluxo Island Drainage Project have been taken:
  - Town Council approved the project for N Atlantic Dr and Beach Curve Rd on 04/24/2023.
  - The project is currently in the 90% design submittal stage, including updated drawings, specifications, and cost estimates. Final review and approval expected in March 2025.
- ✓ These following improvements were made at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP):
  - Completed the High Service Pump Project.
  - Installed a 50-ton Brine Storage Tank.
  - Replaced the pump's Sodium Hypochlorite Skid System.
  - Began the Filter Media Replacement Project. As of today, all five (5) resin tanks have been restored and are significantly improving the clarity and softness of the water. Other related improvements are ongoing.
- ✓ Adopted a Stormwater Assessment Program on 09/09/2024.

Continue beautification projects

- ✓ Worked closely with SOLitude Lake Management to treat and remove invasive plants and trees from the Lantana Nature Preserve (Preserve) and to identify the different exotic plants. In addition, we replaced the Preserve’s large deteriorated timber pedestrian bridge and the replacement of the small bridge is underway.
- ✓ Displayed colorful seasonal banners on the Town’s major roadway corridors.
- ✓ Installed new fencing and concrete monuments at Evergreen Cemetery and repaired the north fence along Lantana Rd.
- ✓ Installed new fences, water fountains, and obstacle courses/exercise stations at Maddock Park Dog Park.

- ✓ Installed new signage at the Recreation Center and the Greater Lantana Chamber (Chamber) of Commerce facilities.
- ✓ Expanded holiday lights, displays, and decorations around the Town Hall site.



### Responsible development

#### Water Tower Commons:

- ✓ Town staff is processing permits and inspections for the eastern commercial side and Fifth Third Bank.
- ✓ The Town Council approved a Special Exception, Site Plan, and Landscape Plan for Carl's Jr. and Panda Express.
- ✓ The Town continues to work closely with the Developer and PBC to determine when the traffic level has reached the required level to necessitate the installation of the Mast Arm Traffic Light (required by PBC) at the project's entrance.

#### Lantana Village:

- ✓ Integra Solutions, LLC purchased the former Kmart site in April 2023.
- ✓ Town Council held two (2) Workshops:
  - The first to review multiple potential redevelopment proposals for the former Kmart site and to determine their vision (by consensus) for the site.
  - The second, so that Integra Solutions could provide a conceptual redevelopment plan for the properties referenced above. The plan was well-received by the Town Council and those in attendance.



After more than two (2) years of progress, during the 01/13/2025 Town Council meeting, Town Council unanimously approved a Site Plan and related items presented by Integra Investments, for the redevelopment of the former Kmart 18-acre site located at 457 Greynolds Circle, 1201 S Dixie Hwy and 1301 S Dixie Hwy. The approved site plan includes 426 dwelling units and 21,967 sq. ft. of ground-floor commercial space, with a phased development approach due to an existing lease with Winn-Dixie. Phase I features three-story buildings with 307 units, commercial space, public open areas, wide sidewalks, outdoor seating, and elevated street furnishings. The project aims to create a village-like community with a mix of uses, open spaces, parks, and pedestrian areas. Key elements include electric vehicle charging stations, enhanced landscaping, environmentally-focused design, and modern coastal architecture to ensure sustainability and aesthetic appeal.

#### Master Plan Update:

- ✓ The adopted Townwide Master Plan has been posted on the Town's website at: <https://www.lantana.org/291/2147/Town-of-Lantana-Master-Plan>.
- ✓ Staff has formed the Master Plan Committee, a volunteer group of residents from various neighborhoods to provide input on the Master Plan and ongoing projects.
- ✓ Digital copies of the Master Plan have been distributed to potential developers and stakeholders.
- ✓ Staff presented to the Town Council highlights of the Master Plan in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the former Kmart site on 02/13/2024.
- ✓ Staff continues to meet monthly with the vacant Ocean Ave property owners on a redevelopment plan that aligns with the Master Plan.
- ✓ Staff has and will continue to explore redevelopment plans for Lantana Beach (Beach) as it relates to the Master Plan.
- ✓ On 11/04/2024 staff met with members of the EAU's management team to discuss potential partnership opportunities pertaining to the redevelopment of the beach.
- ✓ \$200k worth of funding has been budgeted for related projects; (i.e., two (2) separate \$100k appropriations were included in the FY 2023/24 and FY 2024/25 budgets, respectively).

#### How to attract/retain valuable employees

Like many municipalities, we continue to find ourselves in a very challenging labor market, and as a result, the Town has had to become more creative and flexible in order to attract and retain valuable employees by:

- ✓ Providing a safe, family-friendly work environment and offer a competitive salary/benefit package.
- ✓ Supporting the Employee Committee which plans, organizes, and implements employee-related activities, and the Safety Committee which develops, organizes, and coordinates employee safety programs.
- ✓ Providing employees with valuable training that allows them to provide high-quality customer service to our residents, business community, and visitors alike.
- ✓ Each month, the Town highlights employees in the monthly Town Manager Report, with the goal of recognizing their contributions and achievements.

As a result of these changes, the Town has experienced a significant decrease in employee turnover.

Continue to attract businesses

The Town's Development Services Department continued to:

- ✓ Assist new business opportunities by encouraging them to reach out to the Department prior to moving forward to determine if there are any restrictions that may limit their plans and to guide businesses through every step of the Town's processes and requirements.
- ✓ Grant permit extensions where work remains in an "Active Progress" (i.e., when the permit has received an approved inspection within six (6) months).
- ✓ Work with the Chamber to attract and improve business opportunities for our community.
- ✓ In April, Town staff approved a demolition permit for 201, 211, 225, and 235 E Ocean Ave and in May demolition began. All structures, hardscape as well as some trees and landscaping were removed. Since then, the Town Attorney and staff have continued to work closely with representatives of the vacant Ocean Ave property owners on a redevelopment plan that is consistent with the approved Townwide Master Plan.
- ✓ The Town achieved LEED Silver Certification.

Promote community engagement

- ✓ Councilmembers and the Town Manager traveled to Tallahassee for PBC Day, to provide networking opportunities; to personally observe our Legislative process; and to meet with members of our lobbying firm, State Legislators, and their staff in hopes of gaining their support to fund the Town's State Appropriation Requests.
- ✓ The Town held a Visioning Session Workshop at Finland House in preparation for the FY 2024/25 Budget.
- ✓ This year, the Town buzzed with exciting and successful events including the following:
  - Drive-In Movie Nights.
  - Farm Share Event.
  - Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt.
  - Beach Cleanups.
  - Arbor Day Tree Planting.
  - A patriotic July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration that brought friends and neighbors together.
  - September 11<sup>th</sup> Ceremony.
  - Spooky fun came alive during the Haunted Nature Preserve Event.
  - A Veterans Day Ceremony that honored our service men and women; and
  - The Winterfest Event at Town Hall that brought holiday cheer.



- ✓ Town Manager Report: Every month, the Town provides this Report to the Town Council and Community in order to offer a high-level executive summary of the status of the Town's major projects and various current and upcoming operational matters.

- ✓ Town Calendar: The Town's departments take a lot of pride in preparing the annual calendar each year as it includes fantastic photos and showcases information about our many services, amenities, and special events. All of the Town's important dates are identified (i.e., Town Council Meetings, Special Magistrate Hearings, Planning Commission Meetings, Holidays, Special Events, and many more).
- ✓ New Website: To further enhance community engagement, the Town redesigned its website to be more user-friendly. Residents can now subscribe to receive important notices and stay informed about upcoming events.
- ✓ Interactive Video Tour: This year, we are thrilled to announce the launch of our new Lantana Video Tour, created in collaboration with CGI Productions. This interactive video experience invites viewers to explore the heart of our vibrant community. The tour showcases
  - Our charming neighborhoods and scenic beauty.
  - The dedication and professionalism of our public safety services.
  - The resources and welcoming atmosphere of the Library.
- ✓ The Code Enforcement Division (Division) is committed to enforcing Municipal Codes fairly and consistently. The Division prioritizes safety violations and takes a proactive approach to prevent blight. It also plays a crucial role in maintaining community standards, and in ensuring a safer and more organized neighborhood. Later this year, we plan on launching a new online portal where residents will be able to check the status of ongoing cases.

We encourage you to visit [www.lantana.org](http://www.lantana.org) and embark on a virtual tour of Lantana!

The Town continued to support our community by:

- ✓ Lending a helping hand with a Food Distribution Drive-Thru.
- ✓ Celebrating Arbor Day by planting a tree at the Lantana Sports Park.
- ✓ Hosting a holiday cheer with a heartwarming Toy Drive.
- ✓ The Police Department hosted the DEA National Rx Take Back Day event, providing the community with the opportunity to safely dispose of unneeded medications



We also upgraded our agenda publishing system so citizens can search and find meeting materials online anytime, and stay informed by signing up to receive agenda notifications when the agendas are posted.

Continue to support Library

The Library celebrated its grand reopening in February 2023, showcasing a renovated historic building with upgraded features. Since then, the library has experienced significant growth, with a 225% increase in new card issuance and a 52% increase in book checkouts.

Key renovations include:

- ✓ Dedicated learning and play areas (i.e., teen room, kids' room, study room, and community room).
- ✓ Spaces for connection (i.e., outdoor garden, makerspace/conference room).



The Library aims to:

- ✓ Offer cutting-edge technology and engaging programs.
- ✓ Support literacy through school partnerships and outreach.
- ✓ Maintain Little Free Libraries throughout the Town.
- ✓ Foster a welcoming and inclusive community space.

Key highlights from 2024 include:

- ✓ Held a successful Summer Reading Program.
- ✓ Partnered with the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County to provide one-on-one tutoring sessions for struggling readers in grades 1-3. The program launched on September 10, 2024, and continues every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- ✓ Championed Early Literacy – The Lantana Public Library successfully participated in Read for the Record (RFTR) 2024, reading “Piper Chen Sings” to local schools and daycares. This initiative, aimed at promoting early literacy, earned the Library the RFTR PBC 2024 Small Municipality Winner award for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row.
- ✓ Throughout the year, the Library continued its outreach efforts by visiting schools to encourage reading and Library visits.
- ✓ Added one (1) Full-Time Community Engagement and Outreach Coordinator Position.
- ✓ Added 14 hours a week for part-time staff to cover Saturday hours. The Library now offers Saturday hours from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- ✓ To further strengthen community engagement, the Library redesigned its website: <https://www.lantanalibrary.org/>.
- ✓ Installed new computers (\$10k) and a printer/copier/scanner for use by our patrons.



Dune Restoration Project:

The Town began collaborating with the Town of Palm Beach and South Palm Beach on a beach renourishment project in 2021. However, the project faced delays due to various factors, including insufficient beach area, hurricane damage, and competing projects.

In February 2024, the Town re-engaged with Palm Beach to revive the project for the fall. The Town sought funding from Palm Beach’s Environmental Resources Management (ERM) program to contribute sand for the project.

Unfortunately, on 10/24/2024, Palm Beach informed Lantana that it would not be included in the current project due to several challenges:

- Insufficient sand supply.
- Tight project timeline.
- Funding requirements.
- Easement and survey requirements.

Despite this setback, the Town will continue to explore future collaborative opportunities with neighboring communities for beach renourishment projects.

Install ADA accessible ramp

- ✓ The design of the ramp had been on hold until the Dune Restoration Project referenced above was completed. Since it appears that the Dune Restoration Project is unlikely to begin anytime soon, this project will be revisited as we look for ways to enhance the Beach.

Enhance Public Safety with state-of-the-art Technology

The Lantana Police Department continues to uphold public safety and community well-being while continuing its mission to deliver courteous, professional law enforcement and community services to our citizens by:

- ✓ *Enhanced Traffic Enforcement* – The Police Department continues to address traffic violations through education and enforcement. Officers utilize the Selected Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) to target various areas throughout the Town where speeding and stop sign violations occur. Additionally, the speed-measuring trailer is placed at different locations to inform vehicle operators of their speed while traveling our roadways.
- ✓ *Supporting Vulnerable Residents* – Works collaboratively with our County liaisons to help connect homeless individuals with available services and resources.
- ✓ *Investing in Safety* – Our officers are trained and equipped with state-of-the-art technology such as body-worn cameras to ensure transparency, a drone to assist in locating missing/endangered individuals, to monitor community events, and to conduct emergency management operations. In addition, new equipment like computers, vehicles, and safety gear have been acquired to reinforce their capabilities.
- ✓ *Heroic Recognition* – Officers Kevin Neus, Jace Alexander, Christina Strong, and Stephanie Crowley received the 2024 Life Saving Award for their actions, which, through disregard for personal safety and prompt, alert response, resulted in saving human lives.
- ✓ Some members of the Police Explorers were recognized for their dedication, devotion, and commitment to the Town, as well as for starting military boot camp.
- ✓ Implemented the Citizen Observer Patrol (COP) as a valuable resource for supporting law enforcement.



## GRANTS

The Town has continued to aggressively pursue operating and capital grant opportunities in areas that improve and enhance the delivery of our services. In order to maximize our potential for obtaining this vital funding, our in-house Contract and Grants Administrator works closely with many business partners that include:

- ✓ Ryan Ruskey from RMPK Funding (RMPK). RMPK is an external grant writing firm that assists the Town in obtaining funding for a wide range of capital improvement projects that enables us to better meet the unique and diverse needs of our community. To date, RMPK has been instrumental in the Town securing nearly \$2.3M in such funding.
- ✓ Mat Forrest from our Lobbying firm – Ballard Partners, has previously set up in-person meetings with our State Senator and Representative during Palm Beach Day in our State Capitol so that the Town could gain their support for our various state appropriation requests for infrastructure improvements. To date, as a result of Mr. Forrest’s efforts, the Town has been awarded \$1.2M in state appropriation funding.
- ✓ We continue to work closely with our Congressional partners – Congresswoman Lois Frankel and her staff. The Congresswoman has supported and assisted/is assisting the Town in securing the following federal appropriations:
  - Secured \$1.2M in FY 2022/23 to assist in funding our Water Main Replacement Project (includes Phase I of our A/C Pipe Replacement Project).
  - Secured nearly \$960k in FY 2023/24 to assist in funding our Water Main Replacement Project and WTP Improvements (i.e., includes Filter Media Project).
- ✓ On 07/15/2024, the Town was informed that \$1.1M was included in the FY 2025 Interior Appropriations Bill, recently passed by the House Appropriations Committee. This included funding for upgrades to our WTP Control Panels and Instrumentation Equipment. Final funding determination is contingent upon Congress passing the FY 2025 Budget.





[Palm Beach County Day 2025](#)

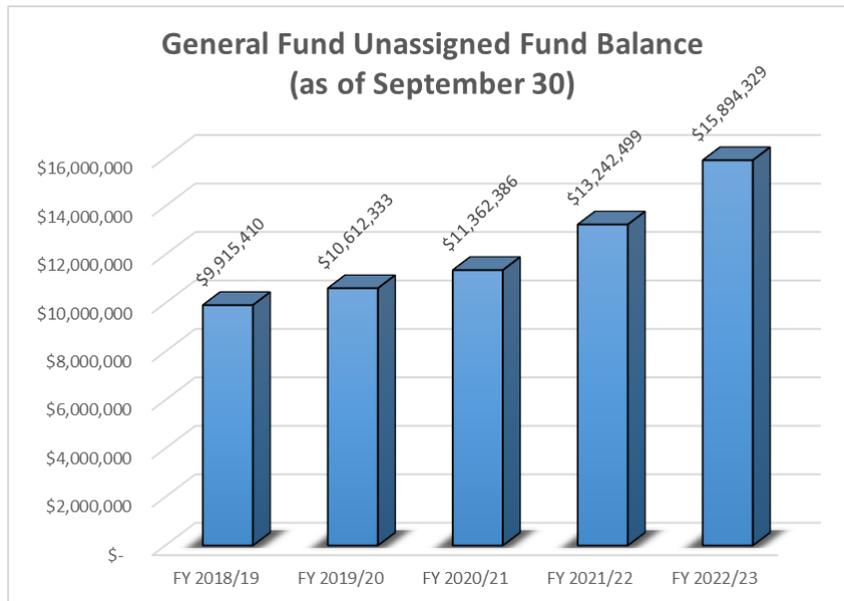
On 12/17/2024, Mayor Lythgoe and Town staff met with Mat Forrest from our lobbying firm to discuss the State’s upcoming legislative season. PBC Day in Tallahassee is scheduled for 03/04 – 03/05/2025. During this event, members of our Town Council and the Town Manager will travel to the State Capitol to observe the legislative process in person, meet with members of our lobbying firm, and network with other municipalities and organizations attending the event. The Town hopes to utilize this opportunity to meet with both State Senators and Representatives to discuss gaining their support

for funding the Town’s FY 2025/26 State Appropriation Requests. During this time, the Town will provide a first-hand account of its challenging capital and infrastructure needs.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE**

The Town maintains an unassigned fund balance (fund balance that has not been restricted, committed or assigned to specific purposes within the General Fund) that equals or exceeds 25% of General Fund operating expenditures (i.e., \$4.1M for FY 2024/25). At the end of FY 2022/23 (09/30/2023) – our most recent completed audit, the Town added more than \$2.6M to the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance bringing it to a total of nearly \$15.9M. These reserve funds may be utilized to cover costs related to an unanticipated emergency, deficit or shortfall in the current or future years.

This accomplishment was due in large part to the Town Council’s vision, guidance, and support in ensuring that the Town’s Administration continues to operate the Town in a proactive, progressive, and fiscally prudent and responsible manner. In addition, the Town was able to maximize its financial leverage through the effective and efficient utilization of grant funds.



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

From infrastructure upgrades to green spaces, get ready for exciting changes coming to the Town in 2025! Here's a glimpse of what our future plans have in store for you:



### Investing in Quality of Life

- ❖ Expect improved landscaping, trash receptacles, and various Beach improvements.
- ❖ Look forward to upgraded bus shelters and smoother roads that will result from additional paving.
- ❖ Recoat the seawall at the Beach.
- ❖ Design and replacement of the ADA Ramp at the Beach.
- ❖ Renovation of the Town Council Chambers.
- ❖ Construct classrooms and an Emergency Operations Center at the Police Department.
- ❖ Replace asbestos concrete piping.
- ❖ Replace water meters with an Automated Meter Reading System (AMR).
- ❖ Repair the seawall at Bicentennial Park and Sportsman's Park.
- ❖ Install curbs at intersections.
- ❖ Continue work on the Filter Media Replacement at the Water Treatment Plant (completion expected by 05/2025).
- ❖ Continue work on the Water Treatment Plant Instrumentation and Control Improvements (completion expected by 06/2025).
- ❖ Install shade structures for the Sports Park bleachers.
- ❖ Make improvements to the Library bathrooms.
- ❖ Replace the Lyman Kayak Park launch ramp with a concrete ramp.
- ❖ Design and conversion of lift stations into submersible pump stations.
- ❖ Replace two (2) chlorine tanks at the Water Treatment Plant.
- ❖ Replace the split-rail fence at Maddock Park.
- ❖ Interconnect with the City of Lake Worth Beach.
- ❖ Continue working on the Dixie Hwy Median Project.
- ❖ Continue to work with Integra Solutions, LLC for the redevelopment of the former Kmart site.
- ❖ Continue collaborating with vacant Ocean Ave property owners on a redevelopment plan that aligns with the Master Plan.

### Working Together for Progress

The Town Council and dedicated staff are committed to working together with residents and partners to make Lantana an even better place to live, work, and play. We are excited for the future and invite you to be a part of it!

We are committed to partnering with residents, businesses and securing grants to keep these projects moving forward. Stay tuned for updates and get involved in shaping Lantana's future!



The Town strives to be responsive to our citizens' needs and makes decisions based on the best interests of the residents' health, safety and welfare. I will continue to serve this Town most efficiently and effectively, and hearing from you and receiving your thoughts is the best way to accomplish that goal. So again, I thank you and look forward to working with each of you to make a better Lantana for generations to come.



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