

Population of Viera doubles

Past decade has seen a surge in development

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Florida Today USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Back in 1992, construction crews started shaping homesites in Hammock Lakes, the first neighborhood within the newly designated Viera East off Murrell Road.

Today – spurred by an ongoing development surge west of Interstate 95 – The Viera Co. is fast approaching the midway point of projected “buildout” of the 32-square-mile master-planned community.

Measuring 8 miles from north-to-south along I-95, Viera’s population has leaped from 19,193 residents in 2010 to more than 30,250 residents today. That’s a 58% jump.

And housing demand remains so high that preconstruction lotteries are being conducted to buy lots and build homes in the Reeling Park, Avalonia and Sierra Cove subdivisions.

“Viera is one of the major stakeholders in this community. And we’re catapulting forward,” said Todd Pokrywa, president of The Viera Co.

“There’s a gravitational pull towards Central Florida and Viera.

We're seeing that with tremendous job growth in aerospace contracting, commercial space and high-tech industries. The latest example being Terran Orbital: more than 2,000 jobs announced with that company, with an average annual salary of (about) \$85,000," Pokrywa said.

"We continue to be the most desired

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North American Properties hopes to open the \$60 million Luna apartment complex – Viera's tallest building – in November. TIM SHORTT/FLORIDA TODAY

Viera

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location within the Space Coast market, given our geography and accessibility," he said.

Emblematic of rapid development growth, construction crews celebrated the "topping out" — or placement of the final beam — last month at the future six-story Luna apartment complex next to The Avenue Viera. This is Viera's tallest building.

The \$60 million, 245-apartment project off Lake Andrew Drive may open in November, North American Properties Managing Partner Shawn McIntyre said. Workers have assembled more than 2,000 precast pieces to create the complex, which includes a four-

level parking garage.

Today in Viera, about 10,630 workers are employed by 805 businesses. By 2050, The Viera Co. projects that workforce will increase to more than 25,000 employees at more than 1,000 businesses — while the population will top 70,000 residents.

“We still have a really long runway in front of us before the community of Viera is built out. The best is yet to come,” Pokrywa said.

Pokrywa outlined an array of development updates during a Feb. 10 “Business is Booming in Viera” speech to the Melbourne Regional Chamber at Holiday Inn Melbourne-Viera.

Development details of note:

h Wawa should break ground this quarter on its long-discussed store-gas station at Viera Boulevard and Stadium Parkway.

h Inspired by Celebration Park Naples, a future lakefront community park is slated to host music concerts, art and food festivals, and other activities just west of Luna in the Viera Town Center. Construction may begin by early 2023.

h North American Properties plans to build a three-story office building just west of Fairfield Inn & Suites at the Viera Town Center.

h Crews have finished building a pedestrian walkway around the 30-acre lake anchoring the future Borrows West commercial area,

just southwest of the I-95 Viera Boulevard interchange.

h Just south of Chick-fil-A at Borrows West, a two-story wine bar – Venezia Wine Veranda – is planned.

h Northeast of Costco, planners envision a “full-service hotel with meeting space.”

Pokrywa labeled Costco’s new warehouse, which opened in December, as “the gateway to over 3,000 acres in future development” west of the I-95 Pineda Causeway interchange. Costco will anchor Viera’s third mixed-use commercial district, joining its counterparts at the Viera Town Center and Borrows West.

Near Costco, The Viera Co. will soon start building the unfinished segments of “Pineda Boulevard” – a westward expansion of the Pineda Causeway Extension – along an S-shaped path to connect with Wickham Road near the Ritch Grissom Memorial Wetlands.

Construction may commence in August on unfinished portions of this 1.3mile roadway, Pokrywa said. Estimated cost: \$8.5 million-plus.

Crews may substantially complete the road within 12 months, subject to delays based on weather, materials and labor shortages, and Brevard County inspections, he said. Workers are also extending Town Center Avenue westward beyond Luna to link with Stadium Parkway, near Duran Golf Club.

Pokrywa said road construction should wrap up by late summer

or early fall — opening more land for high-density development.

RCLCO Real Estate Advisors recently ranked Viera 13th on its list of its Top 50 best-selling master-planned communities across the United States.

Viera home sales increased from 500 in 2019 to 723 in 2020 to 732 last year. RCLCO released its Top 50 list in January.

Last month, The Avenue Viera announced five new tenants had just opened or are opening soon: Tuscany Grill, Crumbl Cookies, Apis Cor, Sola Salon Studios and Brian Ellison Designs.

“The addition of two restaurants, a beauty salon suites concept, an interior design showroom, and a 3D homebuilding technology showroom allows us to support local entrepreneurs while delivering the types of service tenants the Viera community enjoys,” Michelle Reyes, marketing director at The Avenue Viera, said in a news release.

Officials at The Viera Co. do not plan to seek expansion of Viera’s geographic boundaries, Pokrywa said. Areas slated for future development are projected to be built out over roughly the next 20 years,

Viera population

2000: 7,123 residents 2010: 19,193 residents Today: 30,250-plus residents 2050: 70,000-plus residents **Viera homes**

2000: 3,275 2010: 8,939 Today: 13,300-plus 2050: 31,000-plus

Viera demographics

Average household size: 2.42 people Median age: 49.5 Average household income: \$101,025

One of the crew was the lucky winner of a big screen TV. North American Properties, developer for the upscale Luna Apartments on Rodina Drive, across from The Avenue Viera, had a Topping Off ceremony for the workers on Feb. 4. The event included a lunch catered by Honeysuckle Southern Style Home Cooking in Titusville, and various raffle prizes for the crew, including gift cards and a big screen TV. PHOTOS BY TIM SHORTT/FLORIDA TODAY

North American Properties, developer for the upscale Luna Apartments on Rodina Drive, across from The Avenue Viera, had a Topping Off ceremony for the workers. North American Properties plans to build a three-story office building just west of Fairfield Inn & Suites at the Viera Town Center and a \$60 million, 245-apartment project off Lake Andrew Drive may open in November.

Costco Wholesale warehouse manager Mike Sinanian, left, prepares to cut the ribbon during the Melbourne-Viera Costco's Dec. 9, 2021, grand opening alongside Michael Ayers, president and CEO of the Melbourne Regional Chamber, and Todd Pokrywa, president of The Viera Co. TIM SHORTT/ FLORIDA TODAY

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President of The Viera Co.

