

City, developer ready to ride new roads to prosperity

By Nancy Zoellner-Hogland

Lake Ozark City Administrator Dave Van Dee said once the city starts realizing revenue from stores opening at the Shoppes at Eagles' Landing, he hopes to convince aldermen to invest in a professionally prepared master plan.

"There have been a lot of philosophical discussions about what we've done wrong in the past, but I'd like to see a long-range plan put together so we could do things right in the future. It doesn't have to be cast in stone – we need to have some flexibility – but I think it would be good for the city to have some direction," he said, adding that he would like the plan to include more "concrete steps" that could be used to attract development to the city than what was included in a comprehensive plan adopted in 2006.

At that time, Route 242 was only a dream so while future development along the Route 242 corridor was taken into consideration the group focused more on zoning changes that would be allowed. The plan also

looked at funding infrastructure improvements; reducing traffic volumes on Bagnell Dam Boulevard; providing affordable housing; planning for enhancement of the city's riverfront; and establishing parks. Finally, the plan laid out rezoning suggestions for future development on W, the quarry area off Highway 54 and the areas on the south side of the city behind the Strip.

Van Dee said while the comprehensive plan included a "wish list" similar to the one in place today, he would like the new plan to be more proactive.

"I don't know that the city needs to take the lead on the search but I think we should look at working as a partner to go out and recruit business," he explained. "So much emphasis has been placed on tourism but I would like to see an effort placed on attracting more year-round businesses and institutions that would provide a more stable income. I don't want manufacturing but I would love to see clean office operations, call centers, higher learning in-

stitutions—those sorts of things. Without those types of businesses, there's no incentive for young people who want to stay in the area to obtain a college education. And there's no incentive for college graduates to return to the area once they're finished with their schooling."

Van Dee said he also hopes to attract developers who build high-quality, yet affordable housing to serve the middle-income residents.

In the meantime, at the opposite end of the Expressway, Matt Duenke, head of Duenke Family Enterprises and son of the late Burton Duenke, who developed Tan-Tar-A Resort and Tan-Tar-A Estates, is continuing to work with the Zanola Company to address the same situations. The Duenke family owns 900 acres of mostly undeveloped ground along the new 54 Expressway and around the KK interchange.

The Zanola Company provides Market Graphics homebuilding and demographics research for the St. Louis, Central Missouri, and Southwest Mis-

souri regions to help builders, developers, banks, planners, elected officials and others to better plan successful development. The firm also acts as a business improvement consultant, a marketing turnaround expert and a sales management coach.

Anticipating the additional opportunities that would be provided by the Expressway, and to determine the best use of the land not just for Duenke but for the community, last year researchers with the Zanola Company drove every road in the tri-county area, cataloging service and retail establishments. They used that information to compile a list of needs that were adequately served and those that were under-served. The study determined the Lake area lacked a high-quality, dynamic retirement community that would serve the needs of those who want independent living all the way thru life stages until they require continual nursing care. They also determined there is a shortage of electronics stores, auto dealerships and

service providers, family clothing stores like Old Navy, specialty food shops, home furnishing stores like Pottery Barn or Bed, Bath and Beyond, and that the Lake area is lacking in a variety of restaurants.

"The commercial real estate market has been pretty stagnant but I expect that to change now that the Expressway is open," Duenke said. "I can't be too specific, but I think one of the first things we'll see is a convenience store. Most people don't want to get off the highway and drive several miles to get gas so we think that's a 'natural,' for this area," he said, adding that they hope to make an announcement soon on that development.

In order to overcome objections by major retailers that the Lake population and resulting economy had too many fluctuations, the Zanola Company also developed a formula that looks at the "effective population" of the area. That formula was derived by looking at annual sales tax revenues from Camden,

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Realty

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