**Contact:**

Megan Brewster

PR Director, Aqua Marketing & Communications, Inc.

(617) 285-0771 • [Megan@WelcomeToAqua.com](mailto:Megan@WelcomeToAqua.com)

Melissa Cederquist

PR Manager, Aqua Marketing & Communications, Inc.

(239) 398-3019 • Melissa@WelcomeToAqua.com

**Metro Development Group Celebrates Official, Exclusive Opening of**

**Nation’s First Crystal Lagoons**® **amenity at Epperson Community in Wesley Chapel**

*Resident VIP Opening Event Held to Debut Highly Anticipated Amenity Planned for December 16*

**Tampa, Fla.** (December 14, 2018) – Tampa-based Metro Development Group, the developer of Metro Places communities, officially opened the nation’s first Crystal Lagoons amenity right here in Wesley Chapel in their community of Epperson. This Metro Lagoon saw its first wave of residents last weekend for a Preview Event, and now plans to ring in the holidays by hosting another resident event on Sunday December 16, which is aptly named *Christmas in Paradise* since it will be complete with a tropical backdrop that includes the 7-acre lagoon along with Santa and his elves.

The exclusive event will serve as both a holiday celebration as well as a Tampa Bay Buccaneers tailgate and watch party. Residents and select members of the media are invited to the lagoon between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to enjoy activities and entertainment, including a large video wall at the main hub which will feature a holiday-themed movie in the morning and the kickoff and NFL game in the afternoon. There will also be a catered barbeque, music, bounce houses and a special visit from Santa at 1:00-3:00. Extending their annual tradition, Metro will also be accepting donations of unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots, with collection boxes placed around the entrance of the lagoon.

Operated using sustainable technology and maintained remotely by Crystal Lagoons to ensure crystal clarity, this 7.5-acre lagoon – which will serve as the centerpiece of the 4,000-home gated community – offers a variety of aquatic recreational activities, including kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, a waterslide with rock wall, private cabanas, an in-water Wibit obstacle course, family beach, an event pavilion and so much more with bars, café and retail coming soon.

Opening ahead of the holidays, the lagoon at Epperson will now remain open seven days a week to current residents only. Limited access to non-residents is expected to be granted in early 2019. Additional amenities across the community have also been completed and will be available for residents to enjoy, including a shaded Tot Lot, small and large dog parks, golf cart paths and more.

“This is the most exciting weekend to date for Metro and its residents at Epperson,” said Metro President Greg Singleton. “While there are many to thank for their contributions and commitment, including the Epperson staff and the team at Pasco County, our residents deserve the most praise for their ongoing patience and support as our team worked to provide them with the amenity of their dreams. With this opening, Metro has forever changed the landscape of master planned communities and we cannot wait to see our residents enjoying the lagoon.”

In anticipation of the opening, Metro hired Eric Wahlbeck, former Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Works for the Town of Belleair, to serve as Managing Director of Metro Lagoons. Metro and Wahlbeck have also amassed an expert team of more than 30, including a General Manager, Bar Manager, Events Manager and additional supervisors and professionals who bring with them years of experience providing leisure management and customer service.

Looking ahead, Metro will now shift its focus towards day-to-day operations at Epperson’s lagoon as well as aiding prospective buyers in their home search with the initiation of guided discovery tours (available by appointment). Supervising these tours is former Busch Gardens educator and certified interpretive guide Vicki Perrington who will serve as a Lagoon Tour Supervisor and showcase the one-of-a-kind amenity.

Wahlbeck and his team will also soon oversee the openings and operations at all planned Metro Lagoons, including Southshore Bay in Hillsborough County, Brightwater in Ft. Myers and Mirada, located just north of Epperson in Wesley Chapel. Groundbreaking for these lagoons is expected throughout 2019. In addition, there are 7 more lagoons planned for development which would make 11 in total for this developer, all located in and around West Central Florida.

“My team and I are dedicated to providing value and safety for all residents and guests of the Epperson Lagoon,” added Wahlbeck. “The vision is for each Metro Lagoon to become a central meeting point, where people want to spend time enjoying the weather, meeting their neighbors and building a community. We are so excited to celebrate this vision becoming a reality.”

Homes in Epperson range in price from the mid $200s to the $600s and feature the homes of award-winning builders, each hwith hsales offices and model homes in the community. For more information, please visit: epperson.metroplaces.com

**About Metro Development Group**

A Tampa-based company founded in 2003, Metro Development Group is committed to bringing some of the most innovative technologies and amenities to homebuilders and homebuyers. With the introduction of Metro Places, ULTRAFi, the Connected City and Metro Lagoons by Crystal Lagoons, Metro continues to be the gold standard in the development of master planned communities.

For more information, visit [www.MetroPlaces.com](http://www.metroplaces.com/?__hstc=34196222.27491b4ed2eabe8d3954d7e731bfd246.1526922123240.1530893696417.1531242766803.6&__hssc=34196222.26.1531242766803&__hsfp=3986264363) or [www.MetroDevelopmentGroup.com](http://www.metrodevelopmentgroup.com/).

**About Metro Lagoons by Crystal Lagoons**

Established in 2017, Metro Lagoons by Crystal Lagoons is available exclusively in West Central Florida’s Metro Places Lagoon Communities. Metro Lagoons features a team that is dedicated to the fun and safety of the world’s most transformative aquatic amenity. Honored to have earned the distinction as first official Crystal Lagoon in the nation, Metro Lagoons has plans for eleven clear-blue Lagoons ranging in size from 5 acres to 15 acres surrounded by palm trees, sandy beaches, swim-up bars, recreational rentals and planned events. For more information, please visit [www.MetroLagoons.com](http://www.MetroLagoons.com)

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