



From the desk of  
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Fort Lauderdale City Commission • District II

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# Central Beach Master Plan moves forward

## Long-awaited planning update focuses on streetscape improvements, zoning code amendments

Last month, the city took a significant step forward updating the master plan for the Central Beach area.

The public workshop held at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort could not have come at a more important time. Almost 400 residential units and hotel rooms are under construction in that area, with 900 more approved to be built. New proposals for the Bahia Mar and Bahia Cabana also loom on the horizon.

The city planning staff sought input from residents and business owners to help prioritize future streetscape initiatives and change the zoning code. We want to establish clear design standards for future development and streamline the code so the development process is more predictable for both residents and builders.

The master plan update builds off the landmark 2009 study by the international consulting firm Sasaki Associates. Sasaki urged the city to do more to create a continuous beach experience, activate the Intracoastal Waterway, make streets more pedestrian-oriented and build more usable public spaces.

One of the concepts proposed in the master plan update is active building facades. We no longer want garage openings and loading bays to dominate the street, but rather there should be consistent landscaping along the street edge and more ground floors with stores and restaurants.

Much of the focus of the workshop was North Beach Village. It's home to quaint boutique hotels and mid-modern architecture,



but suffers from an antiquated street design.

The master plan update envisions a series of steps in North Beach to beautify the streets, reduce speed, and create a safe, comfortable and connected environment for pedestrians.

One idea is to remove central parking bays on Vistamar and Riomar and replace them with greenery. Another idea is to create landscape islands between parking areas and to repurpose asphalt space by narrowing vehicle lanes and adding bike lanes.

Bulb-outs are suggested for some street corners. Other intersections would be painted with artistic designs much like has occurred on Las Olas Boulevard.

The city has received some financial assistance to make this vision a reality.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded a grant to conduct a hydrological assessment of the area. And, the National Endowment for the Arts is funding a project called Botanizing North Beach Village to design stormwater gardens as public art. While on the one hand attractive, the gardens will also reduce the chance of flooding.

The city expects to finalize the streetscape improvement plan and zoning changes for the Central Beach by July. We will then hold another public meeting by early fall to present the draft master plan. If residents like it, the City Commission will undertake its approval.

Here is some other news about progress around our district:

### State Road A1A

The Florida Department of Transportation has begun a project to make improvements to A1A from Sunrise Boulevard south to the Mercedes River.

Between now and next spring, FDOT will resurface the road, upgrade crosswalks to handicapped-accessibility standards, add countdown timers to pedestrian crossing signals, add bike lanes to A1A south of Mayan Drive, and install embedded lighting at several key crosswalk locations.

### Bayshore flooding project

The city will soon begin construction on a project to improve drainage around 777 Bayshore Drive. Tidal and stormwater flooding have been damaging the area. We will add new gutters, swales and tidal valves by the end of October.

### PACE Program

The City Commission recently approved a Property Assessed Clean Energy program that will provide upfront financing for energy conservation, renewable energy efforts and wind-resistance products.

Residents and businesses can use PACE to reduce their carbon footprint and energy costs. Examples include energy-efficient cooling systems, roofing repairs, solar panels and impact-resistant windows.

The state Legislature authorized cities to create such programs in 2010. Fort Lauderdale will join the Clean Energy Green Corridor initiative operated by Ygrene Energy Fund Florida, which is in 21 other cities in Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

In closing, I'd like to announce that my colleagues on the City Commission recently named me to serve as Fort Lauderdale's vice mayor. I previously served as vice mayor 12 years ago during my first tenure on the commission and succeed Commissioner Robert McKinzie in the post.

Sincerely,







The Air Show returns to Fort Lauderdale's beach May 7-8 after a two-year hiatus.

The show will feature some of the premier civilian and military acts, including the U. S. Air Force Thunderbirds, the Canadian Air Force Snowbirds and the Breitling Jet Team.

General viewing is free. A premium viewing area is available north of Sunrise Boulevard along State Road A1A. Tickets and additional information are available at [fortlauderdaleairshow.com](http://fortlauderdaleairshow.com).



Commissioner Trantalis joins Andrew Gordon, president of the Victoria Park Civic Association, at the neighborhood's annual Spring Fling event.



Commissioner Trantalis meets with Carolyn Pierce, president of the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, while reviewing the portfolios of graduating students.



Commissioner Trantalis joins Mayor Jack Seiler in painting a green stripe on Las Olas Boulevard in preparation for the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Commissioner Trantalis joins Alex Coffey of the Community Appearance Board to recognize Don Crile of the Seven Isles neighborhood for beautifying his home.