



LauderBriefs

Updates from City Commission Meetings

The City of Fort Lauderdale hosts City Commission meetings in person at various temporary locations. If any person wishes to address the City Commission, the person shall sign up using the City Clerk's iPad. The public can listen to and view City Commission meetings on [FLTV](#), [YouTube](#), Comcast Channel 78, and AT&T U-verse Channel 99. To learn more about City Commission meetings, visit fortlauderdale.gov/citycommissionmeetings.

In case you missed them, the following are highlights from the Fort Lauderdale City Commission meetings on Tuesday, February 6, 2024. The video is available at youtube.com/cityoffortlauderdale, and the vote summary will be available later this week at fortlauderdale.legistar.com/calendar.

CITY COMMISSION CONFERENCE MEETING

Commission Examines More Lighting Solutions for Las Olas Parking Garage Façade

Following guidance from the City Commission at a previous meeting, staff provided the Commissioners with additional solutions for the Las Olas Parking Garage façade lighting. The lighting, which wraps the entire structure located at 200 Las Olas Circle, was deactivated in 2023 due to ongoing issues. The Commission had previously reviewed five potential options to consider moving forward, from replacing all façade lights and upgrading the software to deactivating the light programming and leaving the façade as is. Staff provided new information about SACO Technologies, which has 30 years of experience in the development and supply of LED lighting solutions and was responsible for the lighting of the guitar at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, among other major projects. The Commission recommended that staff work with the Beach Business Improvement District to gather community feedback, issue a request for proposal to gauge potential costs, and explore additional funding options. For details, visit ftlcity.info/3udkjCs.

Commission Hears an Update About the New River Rail Crossing Effort

Discussions continued regarding the New River Crossing for Commuter Rail project with an update from BDO, the consultant conducting a study to explore estimated costs, potential funding, project scope, and the development of the design for a tunnel under the New River. BDO has engaged multiple stakeholders in discussions, including Broward County, FDOT, the Downtown Development Authority, Broward MPO, Florida East Coast Railway, and Brightline. BDO will continue to provide the Commission with ongoing updates as the process continues. Among the next steps for this effort, the Commission agreed that staff should apply for a federal RAISE Discretionary Grant and work with the Build America Bureau to submit a letter of interest to show the City would like to begin conversations exploring potential funding opportunities. The Commission agreed to support the county in advancing a mid-level bascule drawbridge if a tunnel is not feasible. For details, visit ftlcity.info/491yoSD.

Commission Reviews a Draft of Key Priorities for FY 2025

During a January workshop, City Commissioners outlined their individual and shared goals and priorities for fiscal year 2025. Staff compiled the feedback, grouped the ideas into categories, and presented a draft of the City Commission Priorities for consideration. The main priorities for the Commission included public safety; homelessness initiatives; affordable housing and economic development; transportation and traffic; infrastructure and resilience; and public spaces and community initiatives. Following the feedback from the Commission, staff will finalize the list of priorities and will present it to the Commission for a vote during the February 20 Regular Meeting. For details, visit ftlcity.info/3SLVFSL.

Commission Given Overview of Flood Recovery and Projected FEMA Reimbursements

The City Commission was provided with an update about the ongoing flood recovery efforts, including the current status and costs of flood-related FEMA projects following the April 2023 flood event. Projects that have been submitted to FEMA and are pending approval for reimbursement include citywide debris removal, City Hall emergency protective measures, Stormwater system pipe desilting, and repairs of damages at both Croissant Park and Riverland Park, at the cost of nearly \$38.5 million. Additional ongoing and future projects, including the demolition of the old City Hall building, will be submitted for work to begin later in 2024. To date, the total FEMA cost estimate is approximately \$62.4 million in damages. For details, visit ftlcity.info/42t8qVm.

Commission Walks through Presentation Detailing the Status of the LauderTrail Project

The City Commission heard an update about the LauderTrail project, a high-quality trail system designed for pedestrians and bicyclists who want low-stress routes and safe separation from traffic, serving as an alternate transportation system and a recreational option for residents and visitors alike. Among the current efforts in progress, two aspects are in the advanced stages of design, including a mobility hub to Carter Park and a north extension hub. Potential funding sources for four segments that are currently in or about to begin the design phase include the Parks Bond, grant opportunities, and funds from the MPO. When complete, LauderTrail will connect 270 businesses, 45 parks and green spaces, 35 neighborhoods, 17 bus routes, 12 schools, 12 Water Taxi stops, and two railway stations. For details, visit ftlcity.info/497gMEM.

CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Commission Accepts Grants to Fund Police Department Initiatives

The City Commission approved the acceptance of a \$750,000 grant from the federal COPS Hiring Program, which provides funding directly to law enforcement agencies to hire or rehire career law enforcement officers. The goal is to increase community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. The grant will cover up to 75% of the entry-level salary and benefits for six full-time officers and the City will meet the grant's required 25% match by funding the remaining balance. In the grant proposal, the City highlighted the desire to improve local law enforcement's response to individuals in need of mental health services, especially in cases where an arrest may not be the best course of action. In a separate motion, the Commission agreed to accept a grant of more than \$257,000 from the COPS Community Policing Development Program. The City plans to initiate a co-responder pilot program that sees a

civilian clinician respond to calls involving those with mental health and substance abuse issues. For details, visit ftlcity.info/42viVYo and ftlcity.info/3SPDQRJ.

Commission Clears Path for Grant for Cooley’s Landing Marina Replacement

The City Commission agreed to delegate authority to the City Manager to adopt a resolution and approve the acceptance of a grant award from the Florida Inland Navigation District to fund up to 50% of the project cost – not to exceed \$1.5 million – for the renovation of the Cooley’s Landing Marina. The grant requires the City to match the \$1.5 million, of which \$1.4 million in funding was generated from grants awarded by the Broward Boating Improvement Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The total project is estimated to cost \$3 million and will include the demolition and rebuilding of the marina. For details, visit ftlcity.info/3HM8FS9.

Commission Advances Agreement with Broward County for Improvement Project

The City Commission approved an agreement with Broward County for the funding of the City’s Roadway Improvement/Sidewalk Connections project using transportation surtax funding. The proposed interlocal agreement will set the project schedule and deliverables, reporting requirements, and the funding schedule for the design phase. The project will be applied to 42 locations throughout the City, and the design features 5-foot-wide sidewalks that will be installed in areas where there are no sidewalks or areas with existing sidewalk gaps. Once the design is completed, the surtax award includes \$2.6 million for construction funding. For details, visit ftlcity.info/493EL7D.

Commission Approves Motion to Strengthen Resiliency of Sewer Pipes and Manholes

The City Commission agreed to approve the final rankings of firms and negotiated fee schedule, as well as the approval of an agreement with Ardurra Group, Inc., for \$17 million for a Citywide Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Program. The City maintains nearly 370 miles of gravity sewer pipes and 10,000 sewer manholes, structures that may crack or fracture and allow rainwater and groundwater to seep into the sanitary sewer system. The agreement calls for program management services, data collection and analysis, inspections, testing, repair, and rehabilitation, among others. For details, visit ftlcity.info/496QJNU.

Commission Approves \$30.6 Million Agreement for Stormwater Improvements in Durrs

The City Commission approved an agreement with Man-Con, Incorporated, for the Durrs Neighborhood Stormwater Improvement project for \$30.6 million. The project will install new stormwater infrastructure and repair existing infrastructure to address flooding concerns in the neighborhood. The project also includes neighborhood roadway resurfacing, utility relocations, and landscape restoration. Durrs was among the neighborhoods most impacted by the April 2023 flood event. For details, visit ftlcity.info/49s2Sgg.

Information

For more information on the February 6, 2024, Commission meetings, visit fortlauderdale.legistar.com/calendar.

Upcoming City Commission Meetings

The next regularly scheduled City Commission meetings will take place on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Mary N. Porter Riverview Ballroom, 201 SW 5th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312.