



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FORT LAUDERDALE EXECUTIVE AIRPORT
RED TAILS CONFERENCE ROOM
6000 NW 21 AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:30 P.M.**

January-December 2024

Attendance

Marilyn Mammano, Chair	P	1	0
Peter Partington, Vice Chair	A	0	1
Gerald Angeli	P	1	0
Shane Grabski	P	1	0
James LaBrie	P	1	0
Michael Lambrechts (arr. 2:08)	P	1	0
Michael Marshall (via Zoom)	P	1	0
Marta Reczko	A	0	1
Fred Stresau	A	0	1
Roosevelt Walters	P	1	0
Ralph Zeltman	P	1	0

As of this date, there are 11 appointed members to the Committee, which means 6 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

- Alan Dodd, Public Works Director
- Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works -- Engineering
- Vickie Beauvais, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Laura Reece, Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Karen Warfel, Transportation Planning Manager
- J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

1. Call to Order

i. Roll Call

Chair Mammano called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

ii. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Zeltman, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2023

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Zeltman, to approve as written. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

It was clarified that because Mr. Marshall was attending the meeting remotely, he would not be able to vote on any Items.

2. Old Business

i. City Hall Replacement

Sheryl Dickey, president of Dickey Consulting Services, showed a PowerPoint presentation on the public workshops addressing City Hall replacement, including what has previously been discussed and what will be presented to the public going forward. The focus of the workshops continues to be on public engagement.

Mr. Lambrechts arrived at 2:08 p.m.

Ms. Dickey continued that the January 13, 2024 public workshop will include “breakout” sessions so attendees can discuss the services they would like to see at City Hall. The information covered at the December 2, 2023 workshop will also be reviewed. She also noted that the date of the March workshop has been changed to Saturday, March 23, 2024 in order to avoid a conflict with St. Patrick’s Day holiday activities.

Mr. LaBrie stated that the slides shown in today’s presentation would not add value to the next workshop. He felt any important information should be included in the summary of previous activities, and that there was no reason to show additional photo examples of city halls. Chair Mammano agreed, suggesting that a slide including bullet points of information from previous workshops could note which examples were preferred by attendees of the previous meeting.

Ms. Dickey suggested that the presentation include one slide showing the preferred building type, as well as why that type was selected. The top-rated public space interior and exterior, as well as the top-rated City Commission Chambers, would also be shown, including commentary on why these examples were rated highest.

Ms. Dickey also reviewed the survey results, noting that the survey remained available through the City’s website from November 1 to December 31, 2023. 39% of respondents indicated that they go to City Hall one to three times per year, while 24% visit City Hall monthly and 14% weekly. Most respondents went to City Hall to attend City Commission meetings, while others attended community meetings or met with

elected officials or City Staff. Fewer than 25% of respondents visited City Hall to pay utility bills.

The City Departments most often accessed through City Hall were the City Manager's Office and the Utilities Department, followed by Public Works and Human Resources. 75% of respondents interacted with City services online rather than in person.

Parking was identified as the greatest barrier to access of City Hall, followed by hours of operation. 45% of survey respondents were between the ages of 60 and 80, while 40- to 60-year-olds constituted 35%, 20- to 40-year-olds were at 12%, and 80- to 100-year-olds were at 8%.

The highest percentage of survey respondents, which was 37%, live in City Commission District 3. Ms. Dickey noted that her staff had attended neighborhood meetings in this district to let residents know about the workshops and survey. She emphasized that they will be willing to attend neighborhood meetings in other districts as well. 19% of respondents live in District 2, 18% in District 4, and 13% in District 1. 13% of respondents did not identify their district.

Ms. Dickey continued that the January 13, 2024 workshop is intended to narrow the scope of the discussion to public spaces only. The presentation will provide examples of these spaces and what could be included in them, including utility billing, permitting, and City-led meetings. The next workshop will focus on amenities.

Mr. LaBrie asked if there was value in including a slide that clarified the focus of the next workshop. Laura Reece, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, explained that this was intended to clarify the difference between amenities and space for participants in order to prevent confusion. Mr. LaBrie pointed out that an earlier slide lists the workshop schedule as well as the general purpose of each workshop. He did not feel a slide addressing the current workshop should refer to information about upcoming workshops, as this could be confusing.

Chair Mammano noted that some attendees may want to raise issues which are not on the agenda for the workshop they are attending, and should be provided with an opportunity to share their input on these issues. It was suggested that the focus of later workshops could be addressed in a slide referring to next steps.

Ms. Dickey explained that the workshop will also include breakout sessions which allow attendees to have group discussions, facilitated by a staff member to ensure that the discussions remain on topic. It was clarified that the information on later workshops could be provided immediately preceding the breakout sessions.

Ms. Dickey continued that facilitators will also discuss which services are provided off-site as well as those located within City Hall, as there may be a desire to move some

of these services to or from City Hall proper. There will also be discussion of what took place at the existing City Hall before its closure.

Chair Mammano observed that another reason residents may go to City Hall may include attendance at ceremonies. Ms. Dickey replied that these would be added to the appropriate slide.

Mr. Walters asked if this would also be the appropriate time to request input from attendees on what else could be done at City Hall. Ms. Dickey proposed that this be made part of the discussion during breakout sessions.

Ms. Dickey continued that architects will provide examples of the types of spaces observed in other city halls. Mr. LaBrie asserted that the slides showing these examples added no value to the presentation, as he felt the issues focused on at the workshop should drive discussions and generate feedback from attendees about the services they wished to see at City Hall. Ms. Dickey explained that the examples would include facilities from other Florida cities as well as international buildings, and will include discussions of what is available in those buildings.

Mr. LaBrie suggested that the examples be selected from cities with populations and sizes similar to Fort Lauderdale's, which also have large metropolitan areas. He reiterated that the slides did not add value to the presentation, pointing out that they do not refer to the functions of the buildings shown. Ms. Dickey further clarified that the examples are not intended to include discussion of the services provided by other city halls, but only of the spaces themselves.

Chair Mammano agreed that examples of European city hall facilities should not be included in the presentation, but felt there was some value in providing examples of the types of spaces in which municipal services are provided. She felt the examples could serve to stimulate conversation among attendees.

Mr. Lambrechts commented that while the photographic examples may be inspiring, the workshop should avoid having comments focus more closely on design than on function. Ms. Dickey confirmed that this will be emphasized for the attendees.

Mr. LaBrie cited examples of cities similar to Fort Lauderdale in size and population, pointing out that density will affect the utility of the buildings. He also noted that the examples do not need to be exclusively newer buildings.

Mr. Lambrechts observed that if a city hall was constructed 40 to 50 years ago, the needs of the community at that time may have been very different from present needs. He felt comparisons with older facilities may not be useful in determining the direction for Fort Lauderdale's City Hall into the future.

Mr. Zeltman advised that he also felt facilities from cities dissimilar from Fort Lauderdale in size and density were less useful as examples, and that any examples should focus on similar cities.

Mr. Angeli commented that photo examples were originally presented during a discussion of “lessons learned,” and did not feel there would be significant gains from reviewing photos of facilities that were not from cities of similar size or were not new.

Mr. Walters proposed that the discussion focus on function rather than appearance, emphasizing the importance of a facility that serves the community.

Mr. LaBrie expressed concern that the discussions during breakout sessions must focus on the task at hand. He felt it will be necessary to provide data to the breakout groups which will guide their discussions, including maps of where services are currently provided, data on what was previously offered at City Hall prior to the 2023 flood, and survey response data.

Ms. Dickey advised that the breakout sessions will allow attendees to sit at tables for their discussions and have their responses recorded by facilitators. The results of those discussions will be shared with the full group of attendees once the breakout sessions are complete.

Chair Mammano requested clarification of the instructions that would be given for the breakout sessions. Ms. Dickey explained that the sessions will include questions on the kinds of spaces the participants would like to see at City Hall, based on the services they believe should be located there. The intent of including photographic examples of buildings was to show how these services are being provided in other cities, as well as what those buildings could look like.

Chair Mammano offered the example of a space in which residents can pay their utility bills, stating that she was not certain the intent should be to offer a nicer space for this type of use. She pointed out that this would be a design issue, which was not the Committee’s charge. Mr. Zeltman commented that the intent of this type of space focuses less on aesthetics and more on expediency and functionality.

Ms. Dickey moved on to the survey for the January 13 workshop, which will include questions on the services expected and needed at City Hall, the types of public engagement the facility should offer, preferences regarding public engagement spaces, where residents prefer to meet with elected officials, and where the new building should be located. These survey questions will also be available online.

Mr. LaBrie stated that while he did not object to another survey, he felt there should be greater clarity, such as what types of public engagement spaces should be ranked. Ms. Dickey advised that this was intended to discuss preferences rather than rankings. Mr.

LaBrie felt this was a design question, and added that if there is a ranking element, the survey should provide the items respondents are asked to rank.

Mr. Angeli advised that he had understood this to be a ranking of “the qualities of the building,” such as efficiency, design, proximity, comfort, and other possible options.

Chair Mammano recommended that survey questions be more specific, clarifying the meaning of public engagement opportunities, which may not be easily understood by the public. She proposed simplifying the survey’s language for greater clarity.

Ms. Reece stated that the full survey provides more information, including questions on what the public expects or needs from City Hall. The online survey will include drop-down screens with options from which respondents can make selections. She reviewed the full list of survey questions and potential response options.

Mr. LaBrie asked if the survey should include a question regarding the potential location of a new City Hall. Chair Mammano recommended against using an interactive map with this question. Mr. Zeltman added that the intent is not to influence the public by this question.

Mr. LaBrie recalled that this had been discussed at the previous meeting, with the conclusion that the City Commission had determined the new City Hall would be located Downtown. Ms. Dickey confirmed that this was included on a recent fact sheet. Ms. Reece further clarified that the intent is to determine where residents can meet with their elected officials rather than where they would like City Hall to be located. Ms. Dickey pointed out, however, that the survey includes questions on both locations.

Chair Mammano suggested that the question regarding City Hall location could be modified to ask where residents would prefer public engagement opportunities. She pointed out that residents have requested meeting space in their own districts or neighborhoods rather than Downtown. These could include community centers, park space, libraries, and other potential locations, as well as a virtual option.

Mr. Walters pointed out that some residents may want changes made which cannot be accommodated, such as centralizing services which are currently provided at satellite locations. He pointed out that not all respondents or attendees are going to hear the answers they want. Chair Mammano noted that the surveys and workshops are not intended to give answers at this time, but to gather information.

Mr. Walters also asked if the Committee intended to participate in the workshop discussions or if they should listen and take notes instead of potentially influencing the conversation. He cautioned against exerting too much influence over the discussions.

Chair Mammano asked if the breakout sessions will begin with the survey questions. Ms. Dickey advised that she was in favor of this, as it will start the conversation with

attendees. She reiterated that a facilitator will be present at each table to take notes on the discussion.

Mr. Walters requested clarification of the next workshop date. Ms. Dickey replied that it is scheduled for February 17, 2024. Mr. Walters asked if the attendees at the February workshop will hear information on the previous workshops. Ms. Dickey explained that there will be a recap of previous workshop topics before the February workshop addresses the next topic, which will focus on amenities.

Mr. Walters also asked how attendees at the January 13 workshop will know what will be discussed at the February 17 workshop. Ms. Dickey stated that summary minutes of the January 13 meeting will be provided to the City, who will include them on the City's website. This information will also be recapped at the February meeting.

Ms. Dickey added that a brief summary of the information gathered at each workshop will be presented at the end of the workshop, and residents will be informed that this recap information will also be available online. Chair Mammano suggested that attendees also be informed of the dates of upcoming workshops and to follow the process on social media and online.

Mr. LaBrie noted that the date of the March 2024 workshop is incorrect on the City's website and should be corrected. He also addressed the order of slides in the presentation at the January 13 meeting and emphasized the importance of reviewing comments from attendees as part of the recap.

Chair Mammano suggested that the workshop in District 2 be held at Broward Health's community meeting space rather than holding two workshops in Holiday Park. Ms. Reece advised that postcards listing the Holiday Park location have already been sent out, and the City's preference was not to make further changes to locations. It is also preferred to hold the workshops in City facilities.

ii. Sidewalk Master Plan Survey Update

Transportation Planning Manager Karen Warfel showed a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Sidewalk Master Plan. The Master Plan process begins with data collection, including a sidewalk inventory as well as geographic information systems (GIS) layering of sidewalks. This information will be used to identify the locations of gaps in the City's sidewalks and work through how these gaps are prioritized.

The Sidewalk Master Plan will also use a public survey, which is available through the City's website. The survey is accompanied by a mapping exercise which allows the public to indicate on a map where they feel sidewalks are important for their individual neighborhoods. Prioritization work will also involve input from the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations. The prioritized list of gaps is expected to be available later in summer 2024.

Chair Mammano requested additional information on the survey. Ms. Warfel explained that it will include qualitative questions on how respondents use sidewalks, which may be followed by a second survey requesting feedback on prioritization. Whether or not there is a second survey will depend upon the level of public engagement.

Mr. LaBrie asked if this process will include repairs to damaged sidewalks. Ms. Warfel replied that the Master Plan focuses on new capacity and the construction of missing sidewalks. A separate team works with damaged sidewalks.

Mr. Zeltman asked if the Master Plan will include consideration of improvements related to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Ms. Warfel stated that these improvements would be included in the construction of new sidewalks which fill in gaps. ADA improvements to existing sidewalks would also be part of the work done by a separate team.

Ms. Warfel continued that there are corridor-wide sidewalk gaps in larger areas as well as short gaps. A variety of different types of gaps will be addressed through the Master Plan, depending upon prioritization. Some small gaps may have higher priority if they can be easily fixed.

Chair Mammano noted that backout parking, which can interrupt sidewalks in older developments, can be a divisive issue in some neighborhoods. Ms. Warfel confirmed that this can be a complicated issue.

Both digital and paper copies of the survey were sent out in late November 2023. As of January 2, 2024, 540 surveys have been returned. The time frame for receipt of surveys will be extended through the end of January before prioritization is addressed.

Roughly 45% of survey respondents use sidewalks daily in their neighborhoods, with 81% doing so for exercise and pleasure. Respondents indicated a desire for safety from traffic as well as better connectivity to destinations. 75% described the sidewalks in their neighborhoods as fair to poor in condition. Key challenges included a lack of sidewalks, fast-moving vehicles, and sidewalks which end abruptly. Additional concerns included flooding and drainage, car issues, and challenges with lighting.

More than half of survey respondents were not aware of how much funding is available for sidewalks. A majority supported dedicated funding for sidewalks. 75% indicated they would support a bond measure for sidewalk improvements.

Mr. Walters asked what forms of dedicated funding would be considered. Ms. Warfel replied that this funding could come through the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Bond support would come through a loan that is specific to the Master Plan and would address prioritized sidewalk gaps.

Chair Mammano requested clarification of the term “local funding” as used in the survey, suggesting that this term be clarified to determine whether respondents are willing to support new taxes or a bond. Ms. Warfel explained that this is intended to serve as a high-level test of how respondents feel.

Next steps include finalizing data collection, followed by prioritization factors. Ms. Warfel noted that different Fort Lauderdale neighborhoods indicated different wishes. Additional public engagement is planned. The end result will be both a priorities list and a funding strategy.

Chair Mammano proposed that public outreach be provided at Neighbor Support Night, which is planned in February. She recommended keeping the survey open through March 2024 in order to capture this feedback. Ms. Warfel advised that Neighbor Support Night will be used to bring in feedback on prioritization.

It was noted that funds to improve existing damaged sidewalks come through the CIP. Ms. Warfel stated that the City applies for corridor-wide funding each year through the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as well as through regional grants. A funding agreement for \$3 million in Broward County surtax funding for sidewalks is expected to come before the City Commission at their next meeting.

3. New Business

None.

4. Public Works Update

i. CIP Financial Report

ii. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

5. General Discussion and Comments

Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works (Engineering), advised that an update on the new water treatment plant, as well as on infiltration and inflow (I&I), will be presented at the next Committee meeting.

i. Committee Members

Mr. Walters requested explanation of a letter sent to the Committee members by the City Manager, which was included in the members’ backup materials. Chair Mammano recalled that the Committee had requested information on the City’s inter-local agreements with other jurisdictions regarding pumping into those jurisdictions’ outfalls during flood events. The letter was intended to show that the City Manager is working to gather this information.

Mr. Walters asked where funding for this effort would come from. Mr. Castellon stated that this is a permitting issue rather than a funding issue. It was clarified that the effort may include capital expenses which must be made outside the City to ensure coordination among jurisdictions.

Chair Mammano advised that Dr. Jennifer Jurado, Deputy Director of Broward County's Resilient Environment Department, is working on the Broward County Comprehensive Resiliency Plan and is willing to make a presentation on this Plan to the Committee. She suggested that this presentation be scheduled once the Committee has completed its work toward the new City Hall.

Mr. Zeltman commented that when water main breaks are repaired, it may be necessary to upgrade these mains from four or six inches to eight inches in areas with significant density. Mr. Castellon confirmed that this has been done as part of CIP projects, but noted that it is less common practice when making repairs.

Chair Mammano called the Committee's attention to two bills recently filed at the State Legislature. These include House Bill (HB) 0047 and Senate Bill (SB) 0104, which would prohibit municipalities from adding any surcharges to the cost of water and water utilities. She pointed out that Fort Lauderdale charges a 25% surcharge to this fee.

Alan Dodd, Director of Public Works, noted that more than 1000 bills have been proposed to the State Legislature at this time. Staff is working to identify the bills about which they have concerns so the City's lobbyists can respond to them accordingly. He added that bills similar to HB 0047 and SB 0104 have been proposed in previous legislative sessions.

Mr. Dodd also encouraged the Committee members to listen to the City Commission's Conference Agenda meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 9, 2024, as it will include a discussion of how much the City has bonded. There will also be a presentation on infrastructure needs. These conversations will help determine whether or not the Commission is interested in pursuing a bond for certain types of infrastructure projects, such as roads, sidewalks, and bridges. It will also focus on the City's capacity to absorb more debt. Slides from this presentation will be available on the City's website.

Chair Mammano asked if the presentation will include a listing of how much money City taxpayers are currently paying for bonds. Mr. Dodd confirmed that there will be a breakdown of current debt as well as the impact more debt could have.

Mr. Angeli noted that only 164 residents responded to the City Hall survey following the first workshop, which is only a fraction of the City's population. He suggested that surveys be placed at the front of the buildings in which City services are provided, asking why residents are there.

Mr. Lambrechts reiterated the suggestion that Staff reach out to a city of comparable size to Fort Lauderdale which has recently built a new City Hall. Chair Mammano recalled that this had been done with another South Florida municipality, which had not responded to the request for information.

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, February 5, 2024

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]