



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, FEBRUARY 5, 2024 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:30 P.M.**

January-December 2024

Attendance

Marilyn Mammano, Chair	P	2	0
Peter Partington, Vice Chair	P	1	1
Gerald Angeli	P	2	0
Shane Grabski (arr. 2:47)	P	2	0
James LaBrie	P	2	0
Michael Lambrechts	P	2	0
Michael Marshall	A	1	1
Marta Reczko	P	1	1
Fred Stresau	A	0	2
Roosevelt Walters	P	2	0
Ralph Zeltman	P	2	0

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

Staff

- Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works -- Engineering
- Semele Williams, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Laura Reece, Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Yvette Matthews, Assistant Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Daniel Fisher, Senior Project Manager
- Brandy Leighton, Senior Project Manager
- Scott Teschky, Public Works Division Manager – Engineering
- J. Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.
- K. Cruitt, 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 2:03 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

ii. Approval of Agenda

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

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2024

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

2. Old Business

i. Reimagine City Hall Upcoming Workshop

Sheryl Dickey, president of Dickey Consulting Services, showed a PowerPoint presentation on the most recent public workshop addressing City Hall replacement. Chair Mammano commented that she felt the January 13, 2024 workshop was the most successful thus far.

Ms. Dickey advised that there were 28 attendees at the January workshop and 53 individuals participated in the most recent survey. Mr. LaBrie asked how attendance might be increased. Ms. Dickey recalled that there have been discussions of including notice in the *Sun-Sentinel* as well as in newsletters from various neighborhood associations. Chair Mammano encouraged the Committee members to reach out to their individual City Commissioners and ask them to more actively promote the workshops.

Chair Mammano asked if notice of the workshops has been posted on the City's Facebook page. Ms. Reece recalled that the City's Public Information Office has a communications plan, and advised that the members would be sent an update on that plan, which includes social media and email blasts.

Chair Mammano recommended that notice be posted on NextDoor in advance of the next workshop. She encouraged the Committee members who are active on various social media outlets to comment on the workshop notices there. Yvette Matthews, Assistant Director of the Office of Management and Budget, explained that before each workshop, notifications have been posted on Facebook and NextDoor with highlights from the workshops.

Vice Chair Partington requested clarification of the date on which the former City Hall will be demolished. Ms. Reece replied that there is a request on the February 6, 2024 City Commission Agenda to appropriate \$13 million for demolition. A number of approvals from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other entities are required as well. There is no specific timeline for the demolition thus far.

Vice Chair Partington explained that the media is likely to show more interest in a new City Hall as demolition of the old building approaches, which could provide an opportunity to share more information on the workshops. Chair Mammano suggested that the Committee and Staff members reach out to any contacts they may have in local media to encourage them to publicize the workshop process. Ms. Reece stated that a representative of the Public Information Office would be invited to the next Committee meeting to provide additional information.

Ms. Dickey continued that information from the breakout sessions at the January 13 meeting was captured and categorized. She reviewed some of the responses, noting that community meeting space for residents was discussed at almost all the breakout tables, as was dedicated space for City officials. The responses indicated a desire for most City administrative functions to be located in one place. Chair Mammano noted that this did not preclude the option of satellite locations for these functions as well.

Ms. Dickey advised that the responses also indicated a desire for convenience, and that even decentralized services should be represented at a central location. Other responses recommended housing the City Manager and City Attorney in the building, as well as free parking. Responses also addressed the size of the new facility in relation to the number of employees who would work at City Hall and the type of work environment provided.

Mr. Walters requested additional clarification of satellite services. Ms. Dickey explained that the responses provided by the public during the breakout sessions would eventually be narrowed down by the Committee. Ms. Reece cited the example of signing children up for camp: this can be done at both neighborhood parks and City Hall.

Mr. LaBrie stated that he had understood this differently, offering the example of a resident who needs a building permit: these documents should be available at locations in the appropriate district rather than in a central location. Ms. Dickey confirmed that different members of the public had expressed different desires for these types of services.

Ms. Reczko also acknowledged that many of the responses are contradictory, recommending centralization and decentralization at the same time, and suggested that the Committee focus on what most participants agreed on, such as free parking, availability of government components, and presence of City officials. Ms. Dickey explained that it is her responsibility to share all input with the Committee members, even if it is contradictory, in order to properly represent what was said.

Ms. Dickey continued that respondents indicated a desire for space to meet with elected officials and City Staff at City Hall. They also requested community meeting spaces, permitting, and utility billing. 3% of respondents preferred to receive services

online. Vice Chair Partington noted that most survey responses represented an older demographic.

Regarding public engagement opportunities, 22.9% of survey respondents listed City Commission meetings as their top priority, followed by public outreach meetings, advisory board/committee meetings, and civic association meetings. Chair Mammano noted that a number of attendees at the workshop had indicated an interest in locating historical records and exhibits at City Hall.

Ms. Dickey continued that survey respondents were in favor of meeting elected officials at a central City Hall, although they also wished to participate in public engagement opportunities in their own districts.

Ms. Dickey also reviewed the intermediate plan for the relocation of 310 City employees who previously worked at City Hall. Chair Mammano commented that this does not answer the question of how many employees would be located at a new City Hall. Ms. Reece explained that the full Reimagining City Hall exercise is intended to lead toward an answer to this question and develop guiding principles to consider. This information will ultimately be provided to the City Commission.

Chair Mammano noted that the survey results do not indicate a desire for a large number of Staff to be located at City Hall. Ms. Dickey pointed out that this represented the respondents' opinions: they may not know which Staff members need to be at City Hall. City Staff's opinions should also be taken into consideration.

Mr. Walters requested information on the City's position on bringing employees who may currently work from home back into an office environment. Ms. Reece confirmed that this is the City's intent. Mr. Walters cautioned that the number of employees who would return to work at City Hall may change over the next several years, and asked how this might be addressed.

Ms. Reece stated that at the end of the workshops, the Committee will be asked to provide input on which services should be centralized or decentralized, according to the guiding principles developed throughout the workshop process.

Mr. Walters also expressed concern with the possibility of artificial intelligence (AI) being implemented in lieu of Staff. Chair Mammano observed that AI would most likely be used primarily to augment services, at least over the next five to ten years, rather than entirely replacing staff.

Vice Chair Partington noted that the City Manager has indicated a preference to bring several members of senior management staff together in a single building. He added that while some individuals are returning to an office setting, they may be doing so within a four-day work week, which could require less space.

Mr. Grabski arrived at 2:47 p.m.

Ms. Dickey addressed the next workshop, which will focus on amenities, including some which have been previously discussed as well as suggestions from the public. Data on current amenities will be presented, as well as examples from other communities. This will be followed by breakout sessions with facilitators.

Mr. Walters requested clarification of the type of open space that would be presented as an option. Ms. Dickey replied that this term will apply to both internal and external open spaces, both of which will be explained for the public.

Mr. LaBrie asserted that the photos selected for the next workshop would not drive discussion. Ms. Dickey explained that the photos would serve as examples of what other cities' facilities offered, including both indoor and outdoor spaces. Mr. LaBrie stated the consultants should help facilitate public input. Ms. Dickey advised that descriptions would be added to the photos for clearer understanding.

Vice Chair Partington observed that he was interested in whether or not the public felt City Hall should be representative of Fort Lauderdale, or should serve only as an office. He acknowledged that the first option would be significantly more expensive. Ms. Dickey recalled that elected officials had indicated an interest in an iconic building.

Chair Mammano suggested that the public could be asked how important they felt it would be to have a recognizable and iconic building. Vice Chair Partington cautioned, however, that the construction of this type of building could have inherent problems and may be more expensive to maintain.

Mr. LaBrie did not feel this level of architectural detail was part of the Committee's task. Chair Mammano agreed that the discussions should not include architectural details, but felt the question was an important one to ask the public.

Ms. Dickey recalled that in a previous workshop, the public had indicated an interest in "a place to come together," with a campus that could serve as "a gateway to Fort Lauderdale" as well as a customer service-oriented facility. Mr. Angeli pointed out that if features, amenities, and functionality are to be presented for ranking, their costs must also be considered.

Ms. Dickey noted that most of the examples of amenities to be presented during breakout sessions at the next workshop were suggested by the public at previous workshops.

Chair Mammano reviewed the following questions from the next survey:

- What amenities would you desire and utilize?
- Other than City business and services, what would you like to see at City Hall?
- Are there any non-essential services that should be included in City Hall?

- Where would you like the new City Hall to be located? (select from map)
- Is there any additional input you would like to share regarding the new City Hall?

Chair Mammano also noted a reference to the possible repurposing of the federal courthouse. Ms. Reece explained that the City Commission had asked that this be included in the discussion; during the Commission's recent goal-setting workshop, the Mayor had indicated that there are ongoing conversations with the federal Government Services Administration (GSA) regarding what the City would like to see done with that space. Repurposing the space for City Hall was one option.

Chair Mammano pointed out that the question of the federal courthouse does not address the topic of amenities. Ms. Reece reiterated that the Commission plans to discuss that building with the GSA in the near future and has requested feedback.

Ms. Reece concluded that the final question provides an opportunity for respondents to give feedback on items other than amenities.

ii. Update on New Water Treatment Plant and Associated Infrastructure

Senior Project Manager Daniel Fisher showed a PowerPoint presentation on the new water treatment plant, recalling that the City Commission approved an agreement for this facility in February 2023. Roughly another month was needed for approval of contracts and conditions. The plant is expected to be constructed and operational within 42 months, which would bring it online in September 2026.

Mr. Fisher advised that 25% of the contract period has elapsed and roughly \$11 million has been paid to the project company thus far. The company's equity portion was spent in January 2024 and the City will foot the bill for the remainder of the project. Mass excavation has been completed on the site.

The next planned activity on the site will be the drilling of two deep injection wells, which is approximately a two-year operation. The project has begun the Building Department's permitting process, with permits expected to be issued this month.

The City also has an obligation for enabling works. A comprehensive agreement was signed on January 9, 2024 for a 28 in. water main at a cost of roughly \$48 million. One 48 in. line will connect the new water treatment plant to the existing Fiveash Water Treatment Plant.

Mr. Zeltman asked if there has been any consideration of providing an alternate line between the new and existing plants in case of emergency. Mr. Fisher replied that in the next Capital Improvement Program (CIP) cycle, the City will include rehabilitation of one of the existing lines, which are 42 in. and 48 in.

Designs for the remaining enabling works, including water, sewer, and power, are currently underway, with the first set of written plans expected in March 2024.

Mr. LaBrie requested clarification of the difference between substantial and final completion. Mr. Fisher replied that substantial completion refers to the time when commercial operations begin and water is being produced, although there may be minor components of the site which are not finished, such as landscaping. Final completion occurs when 100% of construction activities are complete.

Vice Chair Partington requested a description of the project's overall management. Mr. Fisher stated that consultant firm Hazen and Sawyer acts as the owner's representative for the City, and meets weekly with the design build contractor. The City is familiar with all aspects of coordination, including the design of the plant.

Mr. Walters expressed concern with the possibility of cost overruns. Mr. Fisher replied that the City's contract with the project company is for the lump sum of \$85 million. The City has a separate contract with Hazen and Sawyer.

Mr. Fisher continued that the project company was required to spend their portion of the equity first, which was approximately \$120 million. The City has only had to pay for items related to enabling works thus far.

Mr. Fisher moved on to PFAS testing, which showed an average concentration in the City's wells of 29 parts per trillion. This concentration must be reduced to four parts per trillion. The nanofiltration process is expected to remove a significant amount of this concentration.

Ms. Reczko asked if the City was aware of the settlement of a class action suit against 3M and DuPont with regard to the testing for PFAS in drinking water sources. She pointed out that if the City has conducted testing for these contaminants, they may submit the results of the testing to the attorneys bringing forward the class action suit.

Ms. Reczko suggested outreach to the City Attorney's Office to look into the possibility of joining the suit. Omar Castellon, Assistant Director of Public Works (Engineering), clarified that the City is already a participant in the class action lawsuit. Chair Mammano requested that Mr. Castellon ask the City Attorney's Office to provide the Committee with a memorandum on the status of this participation.

Mr. Castellon added that lead testing is underway at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL), with a report expected in a few months. Chair Mammano noted that the City had previously tested for the presence of lead in its water, and asked if the discovery of lead at the Airport would change the situation. Mr. Castellon explained that if lead is present in City soil, it is more likely to be at the Airport than elsewhere. The presence of lead in the soil also does not necessarily mean it is also present in the water. Mr. Zeltman cautioned that because lead is water-soluble, lead in

the soil can eventually cause contamination elsewhere. Chair Mammano requested that testing for lead at FLL, along with its potential impact on water sources, be placed on a future Agenda.

iii. Update / Future Plans on I&I

Senior Project Manager Brandy Leighton showed a PowerPoint presentation on the City's inflow and infiltration (I&I) reduction program. Operationally, I&I can affect pump station run times, resulting in a cascading effect. Economically, it results in higher operations and maintenance costs, increased power costs, and overdesign of infrastructure. Environmentally, I&I can lead to sewer backups, overflows, and spills, loss of fresh groundwater, saltwater intrusion, and failure to meet regulatory requirements.

A City Commission Agenda Memo will be submitted to the City Commission on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 to award a contract to the Ardurra Group for consultant and program management services for the City-wide I&I reduction program. This group has experience with local I&I and has demonstrated measurable results and cost savings on prior projects. They have a large pool of field staff and local resources. The three-year contract is for approximately \$16 million.

Vice Chair Partington recalled that Hazen and Sawyer has previously served as a City consultant with respect to I&I. Mr. Castellon clarified that this was specific to the Consent Order.

The strategy of the I&I reduction program includes:

- A comprehensive base plan
- Identification of I&I sources
- Data collection from the field
- Public education and outreach
- Establishment of protocols
- Quality assurance and control
- Identification of funding opportunities, such as grants
- Policy adoptions
- Quantifying actual savings

The program's goals include reduction of I&I at the George T. Lohmeyer (GTL) Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, mitigation of the dilution effects on the plant as well as the need for added chemical usage, reduction of operations and maintenance (O&M) processes associated with pumping excess flows, increasing capacity to the wastewater collection and transmission systems without substantial costs, and avoiding regulatory agency involvement.

The program will begin with data collection, followed by a sanitary sewer evaluation survey, development of a cost-effective correction action plan using data management

and advanced analytics, and review of policies. At present, there is nothing in place that would require a property owner experiencing I&I issues to take care of their private lateral lines. The consultant and Staff will discuss the best way to approach this issue.

Mr. Walters asked how the City would enforce the I&I reduction program within cities to which Fort Lauderdale supplies water treatment services. Ms. Leighton replied that the City will need to ensure that its large users are looking into I&I, which will need to be written into the large user policy.

Scott Teschky, Division Manager (Engineering), explained that part of the program development with the Ardurra Group will include investigation of large users and private laterals. The intent is to develop an ordinance or other action to bring before the Commission as an enforcement mechanism. He characterized this as a lengthy process.

Vice Chair Partington noted that one issue with private laterals is the illegal connection of roof drains to sewer pipes. Any such connections will need to be identified and disconnected. It was clarified that this can be identified through smoke testing. Ms. Leighton advised that this is one reason the program will include a public education aspect so property owners are aware of how problems arise and what they can do to help.

Ms. Reczko suggested that when large users request capacity letters from Fort Lauderdale, the City could then establish conditions for the approval of increased capacity. She added that the City will need to demonstrate the action it has taken to address I&I in its collection system before the wastewater treatment plant's permit can be renewed.

Chair Mammano asked when the Ardurra Group might be able to make a presentation to the Committee once its contract has been approved by the City Commission. It was estimated that this may be six months or more.

Mr. Castellon advised that the I&I reduction program will not recommend lining of every pipe, but will help identify which pipes have the worst leaks. Mr. Teschky also clarified that the initial contract is for three years, with two one-year renewal options, which would effectively result in a five-year contract.

Mr. LaBrie asked if there are other cost-effective corrective actions besides lining. Ms. Leighton explained that this depends on the defects that are identified. Actions that may be taken as part of the reduction program include night flow assessment and isolation during the wet season, smoke testing during the dry season, and year-round manhole and closed-circuit TV inspections.

The team will look at factors including critical and high I&I, peaking factors affecting rain-dependent I&I, tidal I&I, king tides, and sanitary sewer overflows. This information

will be used to determine the most cost-effective repairs and make the biggest difference in I&I reduction as early as possible.

The program is funded in the fiscal year (FY) 2024 adopted budget under Fund 454, which lists \$3.7 million. The Public Works Department has laid out their proposed CIP, which will go to the City Commission for approval. The program includes \$5 million in FY 2025 and roughly \$15 million between FY 2026 and FY 2029. A water/sewer bond has been approved to fund a number of projects, including I&I.

Ms. Leighton reviewed Phases 1 and 2 of the reduction program, which include prioritization and ranking of deficiencies, development of a cost-effective corrective action plan, and rehabilitation and monitoring. The City has approximately 177 basins throughout the City, of which 45 have been identified as the most problematic. The phased approach will allow the City to begin repairs more immediately and see faster results.

3. New Business

None.

4. Public Works Update

i. CIP Financial Report

Chair Mammano noted that this information was included in the members' backup materials.

5. General Discussion and Comments

i. Committee Members

Chair Mammano noted that a bill has been proposed in the Florida Legislature which would prohibit cities from charging a surcharge to large users. The bill has passed its first committee. She expressed concern with the possibility that the bill may pass. Mr. Castellon confirmed that Staff is monitoring the bill's progress.

Ms. Reczko further clarified that there are three such bills in the State Legislature, each of which would eliminate the 25% surcharge to large users. Two of the bills remain from previous years, while one is new. She agreed with the Chair that the City may need to lobby more actively to address these bills.

Mr. Castellon advised that the City is lobbying the State Legislature with regard to the bills and monitoring the situation. Chair Mammano requested that an update on this issue be placed on the next meeting Agenda.

Mr. LaBrie requested clarification of why the bills have been proposed. Ms. Reczko explained that the City's large users, which include other Broward municipalities, are required to pay a 25% surcharge for the water they purchase from Fort Lauderdale, which is perceived as unfair by those communities.

Chair Mammano also asked that an update on lead testing be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Castellon pointed out that it has not yet been determined when the report on lead testing will be available.

Vice Chair Partington requested an update on a sewer break that occurred on Bayview Drive, including how much effluent was spilled. Mr. Castellon advised that the break was due to a collapsed pipe, and repairs are expected to be complete today.

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, March 4, 2024

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18 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.]