

Overview of Public Safety Initiatives

Police Department

Over the past few years, the City Commission has been steadfast in prioritizing patrol service enhancements and in making significant investments in the Police Department. Full details on the upcoming FY 2025 commitments are available in the City Commission Priority Matrix (**Attachment 3**).

To help ensure the City is set up for long-term success while meeting the growing needs of the community, the following strategies have been implemented to bolster police services:

- **Staffing Enhancements:** Over the last three years, the City has increased its personnel complement by forty (40) additional sworn officer positions. In FY 2025, the City plans to fund one (1) additional Police Sergeant position and reassign one (1) Police Officer position that was servicing the Building Fund back to patrol services. In addition, the preliminary budget includes funding for an innovative recruitment program to assist with filling vacancies within the department.
- **Compensation and Benefits:** Last year, the City ratified one of the strongest compensation packages for sworn police officers in Broward County. This landmark agreement included significant pension benefits and additional wages for officers in specialized units estimated at \$2.0 million annually. Such provisions are a testament to the City's unwavering commitment to recruiting and retaining qualified, high performing law enforcement officers.
- **Enhanced Community Presence Initiatives:** The FY 2025 Preliminary Budget allocates \$500,443 in new enhanced funding to launch a school zone speed enforcement program at four (4) elementary and middle schools across the City. This initiative will assist in reducing the speeds of vehicles within school zones during school activation hours. In addition, it will free up sworn personnel, including the City's motor unit, for other critical public safety needs.
- **Technology Improvements:** The FY 2025 budget includes \$233,100 in funding for an additional year of the License Plate Reader (LPR) Expansion Plan, which will add six (6) LPR systems. This strategic investment, coupled with funding to maintain the ShotSpotter service and the City's real-time crime center (RTCC), enables sworn personnel to dedicate more time to proactive policing efforts and to strengthen community relationships with residents.
- **New Police Headquarters:** This \$145 million state-of-the art facility is designed to meet the needs of 21st century policing, which is expected to open in Fall 2025.
- **Grant Initiatives:** In FY 2024, the Fort Lauderdale Police Department received approximately \$1.0 million in Federal grants to hire additional public safety personnel. This includes \$750 thousand in Community Oriented Policing (COPS) funding to hire six (6) new full-time police officers and \$257 thousand for one (1) civilian clinician to start a Co-Responder Pilot program for crisis response involving mental health or substance abuse.

POLICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL ENHANCEMENTS
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Fire Rescue Department

The City Commission has been committed to prioritizing the construction of, and staffing for, the new Fire Rescue substations, along with increasing the number of third-person rescue units. These initiatives aim to decrease service response times and increase unit availability throughout the City. Full details on the upcoming FY 2025 commitments are available in the City Commission Priority Matrix (**Attachment 3**).

To proactively position the City for long-term success and growth, the following strategies have been implemented to strengthen fire rescue services:

- **Staffing Enhancements:** Over the last three years, the City has increased its Fire Rescue General Fund personnel complement by forty-one (41) firefighter positions. In FY 2025, the City plans to appropriate approximately \$565 thousand in enhanced funding to support another five (5) additional Fire Lieutenant positions. This will allow for the April 2025 deployment of an additional third-person rescue unit, which will increase the availability of emergency management services (EMS) units throughout the City.



- **New EMS Substations:** The City is in the process of expanding its public safety infrastructure with the establishment of additional substations, which include: the Downtown EMS Substation and the Heron Garage Substation. The Downtown EMS Substation is anticipated to open in FY 2026, followed by the Heron Garage Substation in FY 2027. Until the Downtown EMS substation officially opens, the new staffing positions are operating out of Fire Station #2, providing enhanced EMS services to the downtown district and surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Compensation and Benefits:** Last year, the City ratified a three-year agreement with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) which included considerable wage and pension benefits compared to other municipalities in South Florida. Such provisions ensure that the City can competitively recruit and retain highly qualified firefighter paramedics.
- **Critical Equipment:** The preliminary budget allocates \$803,205 for the replacement of critical equipment such as extrication gear, bunker gear, and trailers. In addition, \$5.3 million in funding is included for the replacement of 19 vehicles, among them a critical fire rescue engine for the department.
- **Fire Station Development:** Nearly \$55 million in funding has been appropriated to support Fire Rescue Bond Projects. Among these projects, Fire Station 13 represents the final project, with \$12.8 million in funding appropriations to date. A significant portion, approximately \$8.1 million, is sourced from the General Fund.
- **Grant Initiatives:** The City has applied for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Department of Homeland Security in the amount of \$11.8 million to fund 28 additional firefighter positions. If awarded, the City is committed to providing \$3.5 million in financial support over the three-year grant period.