

**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD
Fort Lauderdale Fire Station 2
Third Floor Conference Room
528 NW 2nd Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
August 28, 2023 – 6:00 PM**

Cumulative Attendance					
1/2023 through 12/2023					
	Members	Appt by	Attendance	Present	Absent
1	Sofia Thordin, Vice Chair	M	P	7	0
2	Vacant	I	-	-	-
3	Robert Daoust	II	P	6	0
4	Kelly Charles	IV	P	7	1
5	David Blattner, Chair	I	A	6	1
6	Suzee Bailey	C	P	4	0
7	Whitney Dutton	IV	P	4	3
8	Cameron Steagall	III	P	2	1
9	Jason Kirchhoff	II	P	7	0
10	Vacant	III	-	-	-
11	Jason Hignite	M	A	3	4

Staff Present

Public Works Department

Glen Hadwen, Sustainability Manager
Stefan Perritano, Sustainability Coordinator, Staff Liaison
Luz Ramirez, Sustainability Analyst
Laura Tooley, Urban Forester
Karen Warfel, Transportation Planning Program Manager
Jamie Opperlee, Prototype, Inc.

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. The roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Bailey reviewed a list of proposed changes and clarifications to the June 26, 2023, meeting minutes. Consensus was to amend the comments section of the minutes to change the reference to green technology to blue economy, and to change the purpose of the proposed oyster project from reduction of red tide to helping to prevent future algae blooms.

A **motion** to approve the June 26, 2023, minutes as amended was made by Mr. Daoust and seconded by Mr. Kirchhoff. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Staff Liaison Report

Vulnerability Assessment Update

Mr. Perritano advised that the kick-off meeting with Arcadis, the contractor for the vulnerability assessment, had been held earlier in the day. He highlighted the volume of work to be done and stated the goal was to have a finished product by May 2024.

Net Zero Update

Mr. Hadwen stated the Commission will award a contract to a consultant for the Net Zero initiative at their September 5 meeting, and planning efforts should begin later this year.

Introduction of New Urban Forester

Mr. Hadwen introduced Laura Tooley, the City's new Urban Forester. Ms. Tooley provided a brief overview of her background, noting she was previously in the Development Services Department. She shared that since shifting roles in July, she has been working primarily on the Urban Forestry Master Plan bid package and the canopy study.

Presentations

Fort Lauderdale Complete Streets Program and Vision Zero

Karen Warfel, Transportation Planning Program Manager, provided a presentation regarding the City's Complete Streets Program and Vision Zero. She provided a brief overview of the creation of the program and its goals and objectives. She discussed improvements completed and those planned, highlighting partnerships and engagement with the processes of other organizations. Continuing, she reviewed the Vision Zero program and changes which have taken place since its inception. She shared specific examples of recent projects and their impacts.

A question-and-answer segment ensued. Ms. Warfel responded to questions regarding traffic circles, sidewalk planning, crossings in tight rights-of-way, public transportation, bicycle traffic, pedestrian zones, and specific intersections of concern.

Presentation is attached.

New Business

None.

Old Business

Discussion of LEED for Cities

Mr. Perritano advised that he had sent the LEED for Cities scorecard to the Board by email.

Mr. Kirchoff asked about the City's low scores in water and trash. Mr. Perritano provided additional details and discussed the challenges of meeting the requirements and providing the data requested. He noted feedback had been provided to LEED. Discussion ensued regarding potential regionalizing of the program in the future.

Termite Impact on Urban Forest

Item addressed with Proposed Communication.

Proposed Communication

Discussion continued regarding submission of a Communication to the City Commission addressing the termite impact on urban forests, and the following was drafted:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Fort Lauderdale’s goal is to reach 27.4% urban forest canopy coverage by 2024. However, invasive Formosan termites represent a significant threat to the sustainability of the City’s forest canopy as well as its built infrastructure. The Formosan termite has ecological traits that make it significantly more problematic than either of the two native subterranean termite species found in south Florida. With their large colony size, high foraging distance, and rapid reproductive rates, Formosan termites cause greater damage over shorter periods than native species. In Florida, damage estimates from Formosan termites are between \$500 million and \$1 billion each year. By effectively combating the threat of Formosan termites, we can mitigate the severity of damage this nuisance pest is causing and safeguard our tree canopy.

THE ASK

The SAB recommends that the City Commission take the steps necessary to implement a Formosan termite program including public awareness and control.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

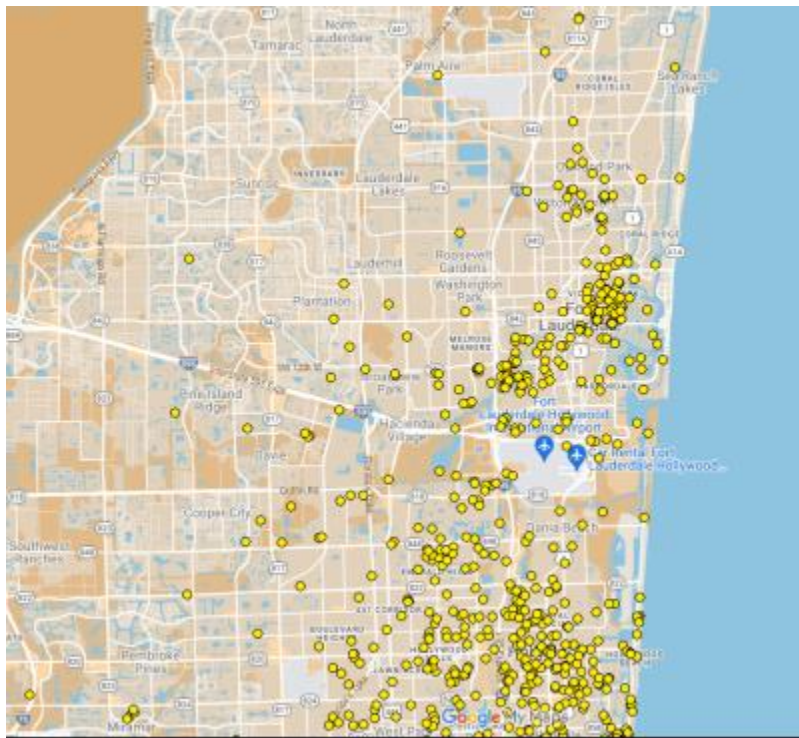


Figure 1. Distribution of the Formosan Subterranean Termite in Broward County

The Formosan termite, an invasive subterranean termite species native to Asia, has ecological traits that make it significantly more problematic than either of the two native subterranean termite species found in south Florida. With their large colony size, high foraging distance, and rapid reproductive rates, Formosan termites are able to cause significantly greater damage over much shorter periods than native species do. For example:

1. Formosan termite queens produce up to 3,000 eggs/day, which is 3x greater than native termite species;¹
2. Formosan termite colonies contain around 1 million termites in comparison to native termite colonies, which contain between 50,000 to 200,000 individual termites;¹
3. Formosan termites build extensive belowground networks that allow them to forage up to 300 ft from the colony, which is 3x greater than the foraging distance of native termite species;¹
4. Formosan termite colonies contain up to 20% soldier termites in comparison to 2% in native colonies (suggesting more resistance to natural predators like ants);¹
5. Formosan termites can consume cellulose from the endangered Dade County Slash Pine, which native termite species cannot.²

Although Dade County Slash Pine stands are limited within the City of Fort Lauderdale, this wood was heavily used in construction of homes until the late 1960s. Dade County Slash Pine wood is extremely dense and resistant to termite infestation. As such, while homes built with this wood are able to withstand native termite populations, they are now at risk of damage caused by Formosan termites. In Florida, estimates put the cost of damages caused by Formosan termites between \$500 million and \$1 billion each year.³ Further, Formosan subterranean termites pose a significant threat to our tree canopy and the city's goal of increasing Fort Lauderdale's urban canopy, impacts that these economic estimates do not even begin to cover.

CONTROL OF FORMOSAN TERMITE INFESTATION

Recognizing that this species is now established, it is imperative that steps are taken to prevent establishment of new colonies, control Formosan termite populations, and, ultimately, reduce the risks associated with termite damage to City homes and trees. There are successful techniques to substantially control and mitigate Formosan termites impacts. These efforts involve a small amount of training to identify tree infestations and treat tree infestations by applying a low-cost topical bait that effectively eliminates Formosan termite colonies. Most notably, identification and treatment of infested trees can be done quickly and the cost of the baits is minimal. Given its minimal impact on City staff time and budget, the SAB recommends that the City Commission direct staff to take the steps necessary to

¹ https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/urban/termites/formosan_termite.htm

² Chouvenc, T. and J.R. Foley. 2018. *Coptotermes gestroi* (Wasmann) (Blattodea[Isoptera]: Rhinotermitidae), a Threat to the Southeastern Florida Urban Tree Canopy. *Florida Entomologist* 101:79-90.

³ <https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2023/02/22/uf-ifas-entomologist-lists-top-eight-invasive-species-that-invade-households-and-empty-wallets/>

establish and implement a Formosan termite control program. To further this goal, Dr. Chouvinc has offered his assistance at no cost to the City, including providing training for staff as appropriate. The SAB further recommends the allocation of necessary funds for treatment, as this will enable us to maintain a healthy tree canopy and prevent unnecessary loss in a timely manner.

In addition, to improve public awareness of the growing threat of Formosan termites, the SAB recommends the creation of an awareness program, which includes issuance of an annual communication, in some format, distributed each February, to remind city residents of the upcoming swarming season and encourage them to check trees and property for signs of infestation, as well as to provide guidance for proper treatment and control of infestations.

By effectively combating the threat of Formosan termites, we can mitigate the severity of damage this nuisance pest is known to cause and, importantly, safeguard our tree canopy, while promoting a greener and more sustainable Fort Lauderdale.

More detailed information on the Formosan termite can be accessed at:

- University of Florida (UF)
https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/urban/termites/formosan_termite.htm
- University of Florida Termite Distribution Map
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1YNo4MTPGEAK7O39K6GFvn6CfQRk&ll=26.12016085346513%2C-80.14090567025438&z=14>
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) Formosan Termite Program [Formosan Termite Program / Termites / Protect Your Home from Pests / Health and Safety / Consumer Resources / Home - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services \(fdacs.gov\)](#)

A **motion** to send the Communication to the City Commission regarding the impact of termites on the Urban Forest to the Commission pending the agreed upon changes was made by Mr. Daoust and seconded by Mr. Kirchhoff. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Comments

None.

Items for Next Meeting

Mr. Perritano stated the Board had requested a discussion regarding parking standards, and he could reach out to Benjamin Restrepo, Transportation/Traffic Engineer with DSD for a presentation. He noted other options would be inviting Dr. Schonna Manning, Assistant Professor and researcher at Florida International University, to discuss waterway quality, or a presentation from the new Urban Forester. Discussion ensued and consensus was to invite Mr. Restrepo to speak in September.

Mr. Kirchhoff asked if there was any overlap between the parking standards and electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Perritano explained that an ordinance was going before the Commission later in the week to ask them to direct staff to create guidelines for charging stations in new developments.

Ms. Bailey requested a presentation regarding the tree canopy and discussion of urban heat Islands. Mr. Perritano noted the City has an Urban Heat Island Study completed. Discussion ensued briefly.

Ms. Tooley highlighted a tree preservation ordinance revision which would be going before the Commission during the last quarter of the year. Mr. Hadwen noted there would be opportunities for input from the Board in that process.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. The next meeting of the SAB will be held on September 18, 2023.