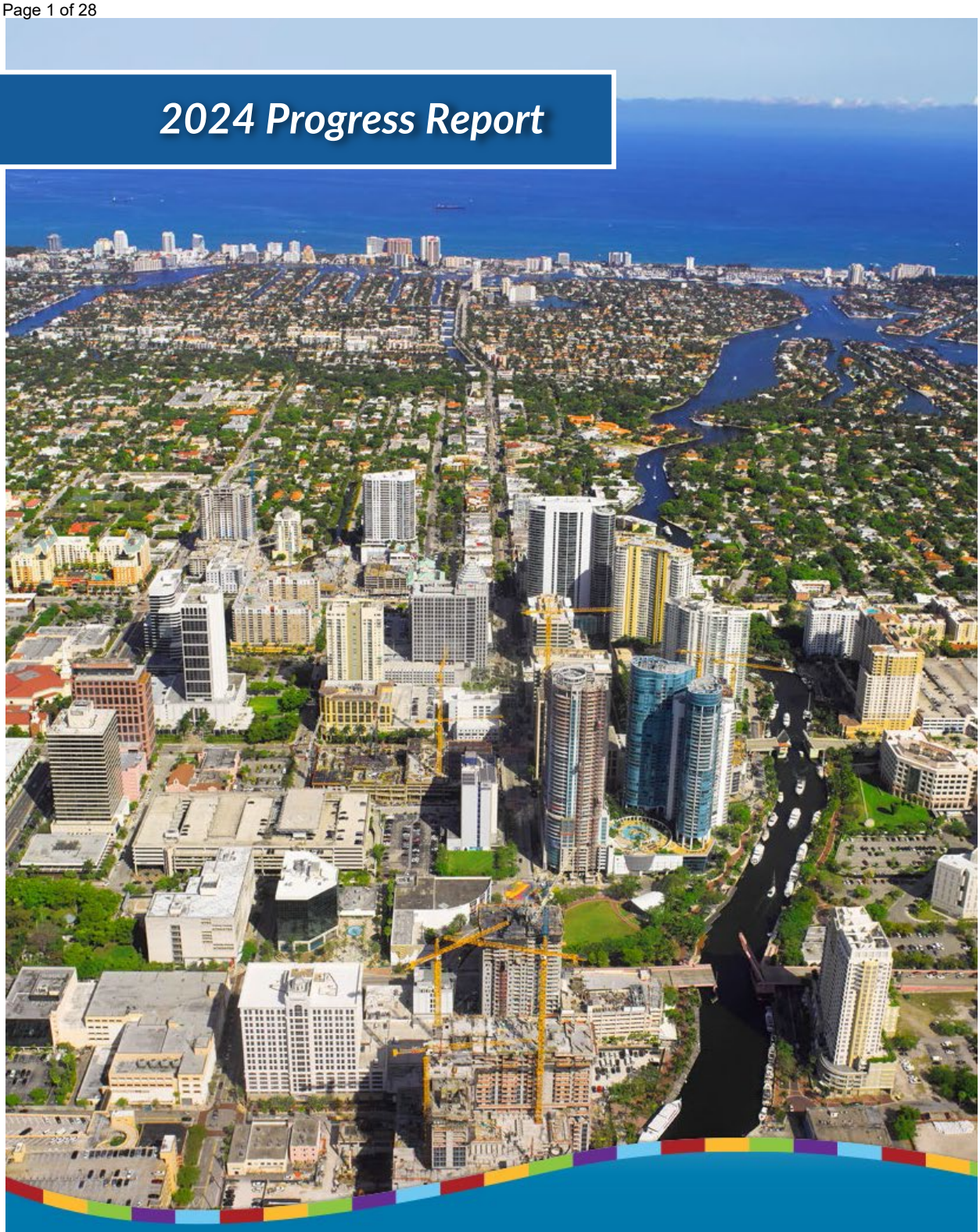
2024 Progress Report



PRESS PLAY FORT LAUDERDALE

Our City, Our Strategic Plan 2024

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The City Commission adopted Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024
on October 15, 2019, by Resolution No. 19-207.

PRESS PLAY
FORT LAUDERDALE
Our City, Our Strategic Plan 2024

Message from the City Manager

I am pleased to share the fifth and final annual progress report for *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024*, the City's five-year strategic plan. Since its unanimous adoption by the City Commission in October 2019, the plan has guided significant progress toward achieving the established goals that are important to the community. Over the last year, the City has made critical improvements and met key milestones in support of the Strategic Plan. Central to the City's success has been a strong focus on accountability and performance, ensuring that the City's programs and initiatives remain aligned with the goals set out five years ago. This report highlights the progress made and the accomplishments of each strategic goal, showcasing the lasting value each brings to Fort Lauderdale.

The FY 2024 Commission Priorities, selected in January 2023, also play a vital role in advancing the Strategic Plan as part of the City's broader strategic management framework. These six priorities are woven throughout the report, reflecting the symmetry between the Commission's priorities and the City's strategic goals.

The City remains guided by its mission, "We Build Community," and provides the highest quality of public services to our neighbors. The progress made over the past year is a testament to the dedication and collaboration of all involved. Together, we are creating a thriving community that truly embodies the spirit of being "the City you never want to leave".

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Grant

Acting City Manager

WeAreFTL

Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale: Vision 2035

VISION STATEMENT

FAST FORWARD FORT LAUDERDALE

Our City, Our Vision 2035

WE ARE CONNECTED.
We move seamlessly and easily through a safe transportation system where the pedestrian is first.

WE ARE READY.
We are a resilient and safe coastal community.

WE ARE COMMUNITY.
We are a neighborhood of neighborhoods.

WE ARE HERE.
We are an urban center and a vacationland in the heart of South Florida.

WE ARE PROSPEROUS.
We are a subtropical City, an urban laboratory for education and business.

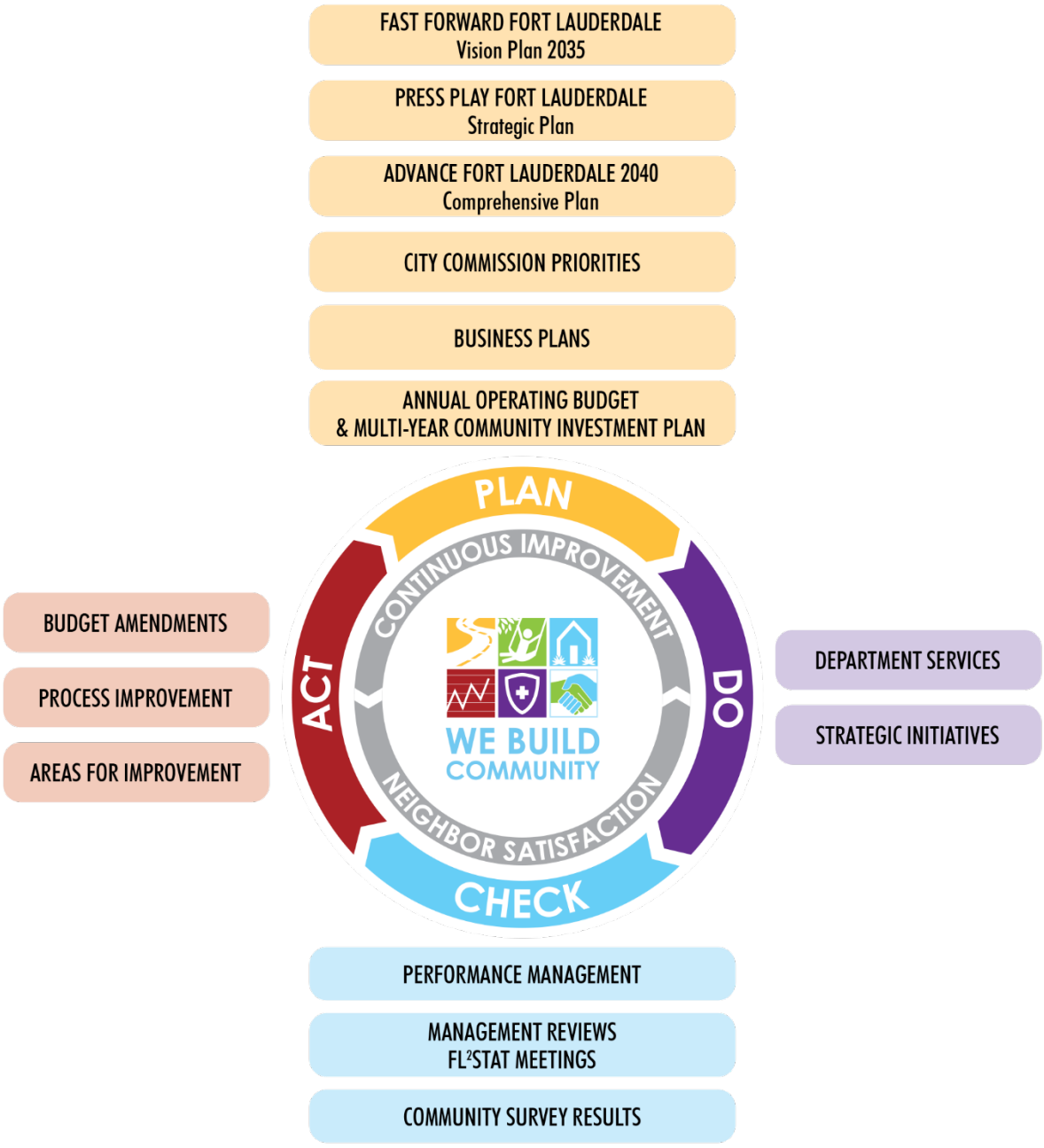
WE ARE UNITED.
We are a strong and vibrant kaleidoscope of multi-generational cultures, ethnicities, and community partners.

We are Fort Lauderdale, a community of choice.
We are the City you never want to leave.

Strategic Management

Under Press Play Fort Lauderdale, the City outlined a results-focused and neighbor-centric government culture by creating FL²STAT, the City's quality management system. This robust quality and strategy management system connects planning, budgeting, measuring, and continuous improvement, linking the City's long-term Vision Plan to day-to-day operations. This approach is illustrated in the model below.

Using the Plan – Do – Check – Act process model as a guide, the City continually plans for the future by tracking and monitoring performance, evaluating progress toward its goals, demonstrating its commitment to providing the highest quality of services, and continuously improving service delivery for neighbors.



Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024 - Focus Areas and Goals

Infrastructure

Goal 1: Build a sustainable and resilient community.

Goal 2: Build a multi-modal and pedestrian friendly community.

Public Places

Goal 3: Build a healthy and engaging community.

Neighborhood Enhancement

Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.

Business Development

Goal 5: Build an attractive global and local economic community marketplace.

Public Safety

Goal 6: Build a safe and well-prepared community.

Internal Support

Goal 7: Build a values-based organization dedicated to developing and retaining qualified employees.

Goal 8: Build a leading government organization that manages all resources wisely.

Infrastructure

Goal 1: Build a sustainable and resilient community

Objectives:

- Proactively maintain our water, wastewater, stormwater, road, and bridge infrastructure
- Secure our community's water supply and support water conservation measures
- Effectively manage solid waste
- Ensure climate change resiliency and implement local and regional strategies to reduce our carbon footprint
- Reduce flooding and adapt to sea level rise
- Actively monitor beach resiliency and support nourishment efforts
- Grow and enhance the urban forest
- Promote energy efficiency and the expansion of renewable energy sources

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Infrastructure and Resilience

The City's infrastructure is comprised of a vast network of roadways, sidewalks, bridges, pipes, and water and wastewater treatment facilities. Each of these systems is vital to the City's quality of life and potential for future growth.

Safeguarding Against Flooding

The City once again saw a significant flood event caused by heavy rainfall in June 2024 following the historical storm in April 2023; since then, leadership has continued progress on several initiatives aimed at alleviating the impacts of flooding on neighbors as well as improving the infrastructure around the City. It is critical that the City take a multi-faceted approach to address the impacts of flooding considering both long-term infrastructure improvements and immediate remediation. Recognizing that heavy rainfall events and flash floods are becoming more frequent in the region, the City identified that its comprehensive emergency management plan was lacking a specific flash flood action plan. A specific action plan to address such events was drafted this past year and includes communications standards and key contact information for external agencies. As an additional strategy, the City is also evaluating the feasibility of using surplus City-owned properties to improve the stormwater system and increase its capacity.

This last year, the City launched its Fortify Lauderdale Program, which builds upon the existing Stormwater Master Plan to address and safeguard neighborhoods most vulnerable to flooding and climate change. Over the past two years, the City has invested over $10 million in improvements for the River Oaks, Edgewood, Durrs, and Dorsey Riverbend neighborhoods.

This year the City was able to complete construction on the following projects aimed at improving stormwater infrastructure:

- Edgewood stormwater improvements
- 1544 Argyle Drive stormwater improvements
- SE 5th Avenue – Andrews Avenue tidal valve replacements
- River Oaks stormwater pump stations

Lastly, the City implemented the new “Save Our Swale” program that is aimed at rehabilitating swales fronting residential properties to enhance stormwater drainage. Inefficient or damaged swales can impact stormwater drainage by slowing down the flow of runoff water which increases the amount of water that is infiltrated into the City’s groundwater table. The most significant flooding events in Fort Lauderdale occurred because of an overly saturated groundwater table from consistent rainfall. Through this program, homeowners in the City can apply for swale installation or rehabilitation, tackling a root cause of major flooding events. The City looks forward to seeing homeowners take advantage of the Save Our Swale program to make their property more resilient against localized flooding from rainfall events.

The City is steadfast to oversee these important projects and programs that build stormwater capacity in neighborhoods that have historically struggled with heavy rainfall events. Looking forward, the City is expanding the Stormwater Operations Team to ensure the peak performance of the system and the timely completion of projects. The City’s Community Investment Plan, in conjunction with the commitments of the Fortify Lauderdale Program, remains an effective tool for the City to provide impactful infrastructure changes in a fiscally responsible manner.

Prospect Lake Clean Water Center

The Prospect Lake Clean Water Facility project has made significant progress since breaking ground last year. A key milestone includes the excavation and backfilling of the site. Additionally, most of the necessary pipes and electrical conduits have also been laid, establishing a solid foundation for the upcoming phases of construction. Looking ahead, the facility remains on schedule for its final completion in September 2026. The steps taken this year are instrumental in establishing the future of clean water in Fort Lauderdale and to neighboring municipalities relying on the Prospect Lake facility such as Davie, Oakland Park, Tamarac, Wilton Manors, and Dania Beach. Once online, the facility will be able to treat and facilitate 50-million gallons of pristine drinking water per day through even the fiercest of hurricanes.

Progress at the site of the new Prospect Lake Clean Water Center

Roadway, Sidewalks, and Alleys

The City is finalizing a comprehensive condition analysis and inspection of the City's roadways, alleyways, and sidewalks. This analysis assessed 529 miles of roadways and alleyways and more than 400 miles of sidewalks, finding the majority to be in good to fair condition. The findings provide updated data regarding the age and overall condition of these infrastructures, enabling more informed decision-making for future maintenance and improvements.

Including sidewalks in this evaluation allowed for an analysis that is critical in guiding future project planning. The insights gained will not only help prioritize repairs and upgrades but will also lead to stronger and more widely accessible sidewalk infrastructure. Ultimately, this proactive approach will enhance safety and accessibility for all neighbors, ensuring that the City can meet the evolving needs of the community as we continue to become the City you never want to leave.

Goal 2: Build a multi-modal and pedestrian friendly community

Objectives:

- Improve transportation options and reduce congestion by working with partners
- Improve roads, sidewalks, and trails to prioritize a safe, more walkable and bikeable community

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Transportation and Traffic

Sidewalk Gap Master Plan

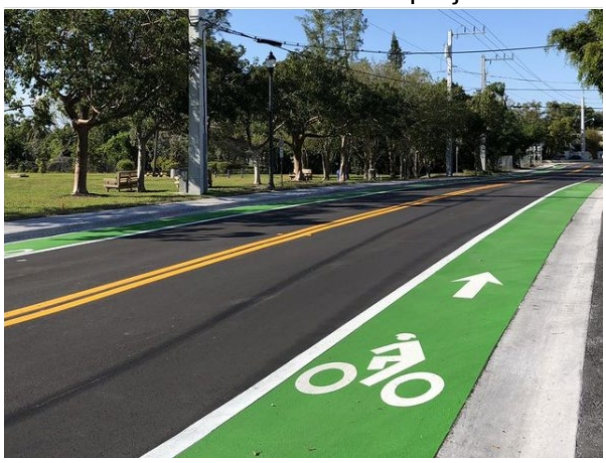
The City has made significant progress this year in completing a Sidewalk Master Plan Gap Assessment which aims at making our community more pedestrian-friendly. The purpose of the assessment is to proactively identify existing gaps in the City's sidewalk network and create a prioritization strategy for filling those gaps. The City has completed a review of current sidewalk locations to complete the map of missing gaps and finalize the prioritization criteria used to evaluate which sidewalks need to be attended to first. Feedback and requests for sidewalk infills from homeowners' associations and neighbors were additionally included within this master plan's prioritization criteria so the City is equipped with a comprehensive plan that also brings awareness to the areas most affecting neighbors. The Master Plan marks an important first step in making Fort Lauderdale a more walkable community which has broad local economic impacts, reduces neighbors' reliance on vehicles as a mode of transportation, and makes it easier for neighbors and visitors to walk around and see the beauty the City offers. Looking forward, the City has begun programming gap sidewalk funding into the Community Investment Plan to ensure that there are resources in place to begin addressing the addition of new sidewalks in identified areas.

Neighbors bike along the City's New River Riverwalk

Citywide Traffic Calming Projects

As development continues throughout the City, it remains paramount that Fort Lauderdale's streets and major corridors remain safe for vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. An important effort taken this year has been the installation of a variety of traffic calming devices, such as the installation of speed radar signs, and refreshing pavement markings throughout Fort Lauderdale. The City spearheaded the installation effort with the intention to improve safety by slowing down vehicles and ensuring the visibility of important pavement markings in key areas. By reducing vehicle speeds, the risk of crashes, particularly in areas with high pedestrian traffic, parks, and schools, is reduced. Beyond physically slowing traffic, these efforts help to create safer and more predictable environments for both drivers and pedestrians.

In addition to the installation of traffic calming devices, the City oversaw traffic calming improvement projects that created physical improvements through street design. Design has been completed for traffic calming through the raising of intersections and crosswalks on Riverland Road which experiences significant impacts due to cut-through traffic from State Road 7 to Davie Boulevard. The project aims to address speeding issues in the area that is frequented by walkers, bicyclists, and children commuting to school. An innovative design for traffic calming is underway at NE 16th Court in Middle River Terrace to address safety and traffic calming on this important neighborhood street. Both the Riverland Road and NE 16th Court projects are funded for implementation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.



Example of completed traffic calming improvements

Lastly, the City Commission was informed this year about the successful grant award of $5 million from the Department of Transportation to the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) initiative, along with a $1.25 million local match by Broward County. The MPO is aimed at reducing fatalities and serious injuries on Broward County roads which include the City of Fort Lauderdale. As part of this effort, historical crash reports for all of Broward County between 2018 through 2022 were utilized to complete three metrics of analysis including High Injury Networks, High Risk Networks, and equity mapping. At the conclusion of this review, 11 high impact areas were identified and will move forward to conceptual design; four (4) of those areas are located within and/or are impactful to Fort Lauderdale.

- Northwest 31st Avenue
- Sistrunk Boulevard
- East Broward Boulevard
- US 441/State Route 7

Additional topic specific studies are being completed that will benefit the City including a School Safety Study for North Side Elementary School and a Neighborhood Intrusion Study of Lauderdale Manors. All these efforts will develop recommendations for safety improvements in those areas. The City is excited to contribute and be a part of the MPO's effort to make streets and corridors a safer place for both vehicles and pedestrians. The City was also successful in receiving its own grant from the SS4A Program to supplement the efforts of the MPO by updating the City's Vision Zero Plan, completing safety studies on four high crash corridors, and developing two concept plans for design changes to improve safety on those corridors. All these efforts are with the intent of being able to apply for future funding sources to continue to work toward the goal of creating a safe multimodal community.

Public Places

Goal 3: Build a healthy and engaging community

Objectives:

- Improve access to and enjoyment of our beach, waterways, parks, and open spaces for everyone
- Improve water quality and our natural environment
- Enhance the City's identity through public art, well-maintained green spaces, and streetscapes
- Offer a diverse range of recreational and educational programming

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Public Places

Las Olas Marina

The City was thrilled to host the grand opening of the Las Olas Marina in October 2024. The vision of this iconic marina has been nearly a decade in the making, allowing for expansion in the heart of the City's barrier island, establishing a world class marina that can host the world's largest yachts with slips accommodating boats up to 315 feet. The enhanced marina represents an investment of $130 million that will bring a myriad of economic benefits to the area. Most notably, the Las Olas Marina served as a scenic backdrop for the 65th annual Fort Lauderdale Internation Boat Show where brokers across the world showcased their vessels to prospective buyers. This investment is not only suited for the luxurious vessels that call Fort Lauderdale home seasonally, but will also feature waterfront dining, retail shopping, and a lush pedestrian-friendly landscape for all neighbors and visitors to enjoy. The marina also includes the replacement of sanitary sewer pump stations to a state-of-the-art facility, utilizing the latest technology, to ensure that while the City welcomes

City leaders cut the ribbon and celebrate the new Las Olas Marina

new vessels from across the world, it is doing so in a manner that preserves its beautiful waters and natural environment.

City Waterways

The City is also proactively monitoring the state of its 165 miles of navigable waterways by creating a new Chief Waterway Officer position that will report directly to the City Manager's Office. This position will be responsible for advancing policy, seeking grant opportunities, and coordinating with external agencies such as the Coast Guard to secure the health and enjoyment of the City's waterways. The Chief Waterway Officer will also be instrumental in addressing concerns around noise and events and investigating sources of contamination.

Park Improvements and Public Art Initiatives

Fort Lauderdale continued to make improvements to its vast inventory of parks and public spaces this year to build a healthy and engaging community. The newly opened DC Alexander Park includes a viewing platform with a ramped walkway, new street and park landscaping, traffic improvements, installation of sea turtle friendly lighting, and undergrounding of all overhead utilities. The new park will serve as a vibrant and resilient public space for tourists and neighbors.

This year marks another year of progress toward the City's voter-approved parks bond projects. The City has been able to initiate construction on six (6) key projects and enter the bidding/purchasing phase on another 10 projects. Some of the key projects that began construction this year were at Warfield Park, Bayview Park, and Riverside Park with improvements such as new outside exercise and fitness stations, playground improvements, field drainage improvements, upgraded field and court lighting, community center renovations, and updated shade and walking structures. At Dillard 6-12 School Park, two (2) of the existing tennis courts were converted into six (6) new pickleball courts and the remaining tennis courts have been renovated. As the City provides parks with these new amenities and upgrades, neighbors will have unique opportunities to engage and exercise in a variety of ways.

The new and improved DC Alexander Park

In addition to improving the amenities at parks across the City, public art initiatives have been implemented at Tunnel Top Park and Mills Pond Park. The new Tunnel Top Park, located in the heart of the Las Olas entertainment district, was given a large seashell art piece that pays homage to the City's tropical oceanic climate. This new landmark of the Las Olas corridor was created by British artist Marc Quinn and was funded by the donation from the estate of the late James Wilder Laird. Moreover, this year Mills Pond Park unveiled a new mural that captures the spirit of community engagement in sports.

Neighborhood Enhancement

Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods

Objectives:

- Work with partners to reduce homelessness by promoting independence and self-worth through advocacy, housing, and comprehensive services
- Ensure a range of affordable housing options
- Create a continuum of education services and support

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Housing Accessibility

Homelessness Initiatives

Fort Lauderdale remains focused on creating outcome-based programming that addresses the root causes of homelessness while ensuring solutions are sustainable for all stakeholders involved. This last year, the City assigned an Acting Assistant City Manager to lead efforts on addressing homelessness, with a focus on developing and implementing comprehensive strategies. This role includes coordinating the City's response to State Statute 125.0231 which prohibits overnight camping on public property, aligning interdepartmental efforts, and regularly reporting on progress and challenges to the City Commission and the public. This role's unique position of authority in the organization allows for greater coordination with external partners, such as non-profit organizations, county officials, and state agencies to maximize resources and community impact, and additionally help to navigate legal, policy, and logistical challenges by keeping all partners informed and unified.

In FY 2024, the City added three (3) new police officers to the Homeless Outreach Team which dedicates police patrols to address homeless congregations at key locations throughout the City. The dedicated police patrols not only address homeless congregations at traffic intersections but also connect individuals to support services and reunite them with family members willing to help them become housed. Beyond the addition of new officers, the City launched an interactive dashboard that supports management and provides real-time tracking capabilities to the efforts of the outreach team. The dashboard reports on the various property checks the team completes across the City and provides updates on the total number of homeless individuals encountered, reunifications completed, and warnings/Notices to Appear (NTA) issued. Moving forward, the dashboard will be an effective tool for the City to monitor the activity of the

outreach team and the progress made on specific complaints. This comprehensive police presence coupled with a new dashboard tailored to ensure complaints are addressed timely will aim to provide measurable progress in alleviating homelessness in Fort Lauderdale.

To facilitate this comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness, the City integrated a new feature into the FixIT FTL customer service application to allow neighbors to report public sleeping or camping through GPS-tracked complaints. This tool not only improves the efficiency of response, but also gives staff the opportunity to review and analyze data on long these complaints take to address and establish trends in areas where the most complaints are received. This data will then be used to proactively identify and focus on highly trafficked areas.

FixIT FTL app that has been updated with a reporting function to respond to State Statute 125.0231

The City has also focused on increasing its inventory of emergency shelter options for individuals experiencing homelessness. Historically, there has been a lack of available shelter beds across all of Broward County once existing shelters reach capacity. With the adoption of the FY 2025 budget, the City contracted to dedicate the use of 20 shelter beds for use by the City and immediately began filling them with individuals on a permanent housing and employment plan.

Affordable Housing

The City continues to prioritize affordable housing to ensure Fort Lauderdale remains accessible for all neighbors. To advance this goal, the City completed 10 rehabilitation projects for low-income homeowners this past year, addressing critical repairs that allow neighbors to safely stay in their homes. Rehabilitation projects can raise the property values of affected homes by addressing essential repairs, improving safety, and enhancing overall aesthetics. These projects also positively impact low-income seniors in Fort Lauderdale by retrofitting their homes to become more Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and allow them to continue comfortably living in the City. In the long term, these improvements help homeowners protect and increase the value of their assets, preserve their living conditions, and contribute to a more vibrant and stable community.

Moreover, the City funded the acquisition of three duplexes, which are being converted into affordable housing for homeless seniors with mental disabilities. These units directly address the urgent need for affordable housing, particularly for a vulnerable population which struggles to find stable living conditions. By providing safe, stable housing for seniors with mental disabilities, these projects improve quality of life, offering a sense of security and dignity. The City also provided rental assistance to 937 neighbors, helping them retain their housing and remain part of the Fort Lauderdale community. Rental assistance helps ensure that low-income neighbors can remain in Fort Lauderdale, preventing displacement and allowing them to continue contributing to the community. By stabilizing housing for these individuals, the program supports the City in maintaining a diverse and thriving population.

Business Development

Goal 5: Build an attractive global and local economic community marketplace

Objectives:

- Create a responsive and proactive business climate to attract emerging industries
- Nurture and support existing local businesses
- Create educational pathways and partnerships for workforce development
- Provide best-in-class regional general aviation airport amenities and services

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Economic Development

Startup FTL

The City of Fort Lauderdale is dedicated to fostering the growth of small businesses through the establishment of Startup FTL. This initiative partners with the acclaimed Kauffman FastTrac curriculum, providing a proven roadmap to entrepreneurial success tailored specifically for the local market. The program offers small-group attention, ensuring participants receive personalized guidance to maximize their learning experience. Additionally, Startup FTL provides free resources, including bookkeeping and business planning support, while inviting successful local entrepreneurs to share their insights and experiences in navigating business success in Fort Lauderdale. The program is open to individuals who are committed to completing the 10-week course and either reside in or operate a business within the City.

Film Industry

The Film Lauderdale program has achieved a significant milestone, with production investments from film permits issued in 2024 surpassing $80 million for Fort Lauderdale. This success has bolstered Fort Lauderdale's reputation as a premier filming location and provided a boost to the local economy, generating job opportunities for 2,825 local crew members. In 2022, the arts and culture sector generated a total of $288.7 million in economic activity, including $103.0 million from nonprofit arts and culture organizations and an additional $185.7 million from event-related spending by their audiences. These contributions support 4,897 jobs, generate $200.2 million in household income for local neighbors, and deliver $60.2 million in tax revenues to the local, state, and federal government. It is clear that film is a thriving economic industry for the City and is attracting productions to Fort Lauderdale.

Some notable productions filmed in Fort Lauderdale over the past year include feature films and series such as *Bad Boys: Ride or Die*, *Love & Hip Hop*, *Casefiles*, *The Ultimatum*, *A Man's Promise*, and *Sed de Venganza* for Telemundo. The City also hosted national commercial and print projects for major brands like Volkswagen, PUMA, GQ, Bon Appetit, Lowe's, Velveeta, Wells Fargo, Scholastic, Bose, Hyundai, PNC Bank, Home Depot, and Major League Soccer at Chase Stadium. Additionally, Fort Lauderdale has been the backdrop for travel shows and documentaries produced for the BBC, Hilton, PBS, Visit Florida, and an upcoming documentary highlighting the airport and port.

Scene from Bad Boys: Ride or Die showcasing Fort Lauderdale Beach

Community Redevelopment Agency

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) serves to reduce slum and blight and improve the economic health of targeted areas throughout the City. As a strategy to accomplish this goal, the CRA encourages public and private investments through incentives which give developers the flexibility they need to build new establishments from which the community will benefit. Just this past year, nine incentive projects were completed that represent a total CRA investment of nearly $5 million. The CRA continues to empower neighbors by investing in their small businesses which will ensure the economic health and stability of all Fort Lauderdale neighborhoods.

B&D Trap Texas BBQ Restaurant: one of many completed CRA incentive projects

Public Safety

Goal 6: Build a safe and well-prepared community

Objectives:

- Prevent and solve crime in all neighborhoods
- Provide quick and exceptional fire, medical, and emergency response
- Be the leading model in domestic preparedness
- Educate stakeholders on community risk reduction, homeland security, and domestic preparedness

FY 2024 Commission Priority:

- Public Safety

Public Safety Personnel

Fort Lauderdale continued to strengthen its public safety team to meet the demands of a growing population with the FY 2024 budget, funding several key new positions across the Police and Fire Departments. Additions to the Police Department included 11 new patrol officers and three officers for the Homeless Outreach Team. Adding new police officers in Fort Lauderdale improves the Department's capacity to respond to calls, reduce response times, and enhance the public's overall feeling of safety. The establishment of the Homeless Outreach Team, backed by three (3) new officers, will assist the homeless population and respond to complex situations that may require specialized approaches. Moving this initiative forward means that the City is proactively creating a separate response mechanism for homeless-related calls that require a specialized approach while simultaneously releasing the rest of the Department to respond to other public safety concerns. All these changes were overseen by a newly appointed Police Chief who began leading the department in December 2023.

Police Chief William Schulz speaks at a Coffee With The Chief event

This last year, nine (9) new Fire Lieutenants were added to increase the number of medical rescue units that are staffed with three people each. A three-person team allows for more comprehensive patient care and greater efficiency during complex medical responses rather than a two-person team. The City also opened Fire Station 54 this past year which allowed personnel to move out of a temporary facility and into a new permanent station.

The City has also brought in a public information specialist within the Fire Rescue Department to enhance communication efforts. The new position will enhance communication around public safety, particularly for the fire, emergency medical services, and disaster response, and play an important role during extreme weather events like flooding and hurricanes. By coordinating closely with other departments, the public information specialist will also ensure consistent messaging across platforms.

Public Safety Grants

The City has secured significant grants to strengthen both its fire and police services. First, a three year, $11.4 million Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will allow the Fire Department to hire 28 new firefighters. This enhancement is in addition to the nine Fire Lieutenants added as part of the FY 2024 budget and will increase its capacity by providing additional third person staffing to another six medical rescue units. The grant funds will help ensure the City is aligned with national safety standards for efficient emergency response and emphasize the importance of having a third person on rescues.

The City also secured two (2) U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grants. The first, a $750,000 COPS Hiring Grant, will help fund six (6) new police officers for five (5) years, expanding community policing efforts. The second grant will initiate a Co-Responder Pilot program to hire one (1) position, funded for two (2) years, wherein a civilian clinician will respond to calls for service involving persons in crisis with mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. With this added funding, the City will enhance its ability to respond effectively

Fort Lauderdale firefighters

to individuals with mental health needs, focusing on appropriate interventions beyond arrests when necessary. Together, these grants bolster the City's public safety capabilities, supporting rapid emergency responses and community-centered policing.

Responding To Gun Violence

Fort Lauderdale revamped its gun violence unit, transforming the former Rapid Offender Control Unit into a Gun Intelligence Unit (GIU) to focus on reducing gun violence through advanced technology. This strategic restructuring is aimed at consolidating resources and enhancing efforts to address gun violence. The unit will be responsible for responding to active crime scenes, assisting in follow-up investigations related to shootings and homicides, and identifying critical evidence to support these cases. More updates to the unit include leveraging the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) to trace firearms used in crimes and implementing the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system to enable faster response times and pinpoint gunshot locations more accurately. The NIBIN system connects ballistic evidence from crime scenes, making it harder for criminals to avoid detection if they use the same firearm in multiple incidents. Meanwhile, ShotSpotter provides real-time gunshot detection, not only enabling police to respond more swiftly but also giving the City critical data in areas where gunshots are more prevalent.

Shot Spotter technology installed on a streetlight

Internal Support

Goal 7: Build a values-based organization dedicated to developing and retaining qualified employees

Objectives:

- Establish an organizational culture that fosters rewarding, professional careers
- Improve employee safety and wellness
- Provide effective internal communication and encourage employee feedback
- Continuously improve service delivery to achieve excellence through innovation
- Be a diverse and inclusive organization

Permitting Process Improvement

Fort Lauderdale continues to foster a culture of innovation and process improvement, most notably spearheaded by the Development Services Department (DSD) in 2024. The City underwent a process improvement project to streamline over 100 building permit types into four general categories, simplifying the permit application process for the public. This initiative reduced customer burden, improved customer experience, cut voided permits and payments by more than 50%, and saved over $100,000 in personnel processing time.

It was clear that this process improvement project was one that could be showcased beyond just the City's limits so the team made their way to the 2024 Sterling Leadership Conference in May. The City presented this project to conference attendees, impressing judges with their systematic approach to identifying and solving the issue, implementing solutions, and achieving measurable results. As a result, the City was honored with the Greatest Organizational Impact Award at the conference.

DSD Process Improvement Team at the Sterling Leadership Conference

Improving Communication and Transparency To Neighbors

The City continues to build public trust through transparency and regular communication with its neighbors. This past year, the City launched its first ever open data portal which centralizes and reports key datasets to the public. This information is provided to ensure a continued focus on public oversight and insight into government operations and performance. The information reported includes data and access to key statistics for public safety, homelessness, development services, and the strategic plan as well as financial data and GIS maps. The new open data portal can be found at *www.fortlauderdale.gov/OpenData*.

The City is also enhancing how it engages with the community and shares progress on key projects. The City launched a new landing page on its website, to serve as a central hub for major projects and capital assets. This page includes resources such as:

- Large Projects and Partnerships - provides an overview of key projects, including timelines for completion, status updates, and the City's point of contact for each project
- LauderWorks - offers a snapshot of all funded General Infrastructure Projects (GIP) charted on an interactive map with information such as the project's description, location, status, and the managing department
- Parks Bond Projects - lists parks funded by the Parks Bond, detailing the improvements planned, the amount allocated, and the current project status
- LauderStreet - delivers information on road closures, special events, and sidewalk work, along with anticipated timelines for completion

Additionally, the City shares key information and reports on the progress made toward the City Commission's priorities for the year through its *FTL Connect* magazine. The magazine is published twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, providing content that is both informative and enjoyable to read. Neighbors and readers in Fort Lauderdale are not the only ones to take notice of the magazine, as the City was awarded the Silver Circle Award from the City-County Communications and Marketing Association (3CMA). This national recognition highlights the ongoing efforts of the City to effectively engage and inform neighbors.

Cover of the award winning FTL Connect Magazine

Reimagining Public Safety

The City was selected to join Bloomberg Philanthropies and Harvard University's Leadership Innovation Track, a no-cost, nine-month program designed to equip City leaders with the tools needed to address complex community issues. Through this program, staff identified key contributors to declining perceptions of public safety which included increased number of homeless individuals, neglected infrastructure, lack of visible police presence, and longer than expected police response times. The City responded by holding a co-creation session open to the public, where over 350 ideas to improve in these four areas were generated. Two ideas from the session stood out as having the most potential to improve the community's perception of public safety: a Co-Responder Model which would utilize non-sworn police personnel to respond to non-emergency calls, and a "Door Dash" Model which would offer real-time updates of responding officers similar to updates one receives from mobile food delivery or rideshare applications.

Goal 8: Build a leading government organization that manages all resources wisely and sustainably

Objectives:

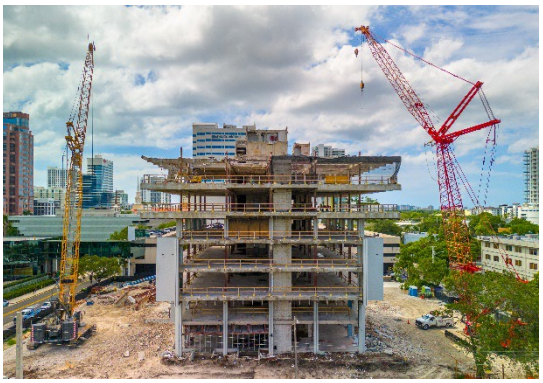
- Maintain financial integrity through sound budgeting practices, prudent fiscal management, cost effective operations, and long-term financial planning
- Achieve excellent procurement services through technological advancements, improved procedures, and outreach programs
- Provide a reliable and progressive technology infrastructure
- Provide safe, well-maintained, and efficient facilities and capital assets
- Integrate sustainability and resiliency into daily operations

Fleet Sustainability

This year the City was honored to have earned the rank of #39 Green Fleet in North America by the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA). Fort Lauderdale was the only city recognized in Broward County and one of only four government agencies in the entire state of Florida to be listed (alongside Miami-Dade County, the City of Miami Beach, and the City of Tallahassee), standing out for its sustainability initiatives. The Green Fleet Awards honor fleets for outstanding sustainability practices, including the use of alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles, fuel conservation, purchasing policies, and long-term environmental planning. This award propels Fort Lauderdale closer to its sustainability and resilience goals by reinforcing its commitment to eco-friendly practices in daily fleet operations. By adopting alternative fuels, hybrid vehicles, and fuel-saving policies, the City not only reduces its environmental footprint but also builds a more resilient, cost-effective fleet. The recognition encourages ongoing improvements and supports the City's long-term strategies to become a more environmentally cautious organization that is leading the way in Broward County and the entire state of Florida.

Reimagining City Hall

In 2024, Fort Lauderdale deconstructed its old City Hall to make way for a new facility designed to serve neighbors, businesses, and stakeholders. In preparation for the new facility, the City hosted a series of workshops inviting community input on critical aspects of the new City Hall. These workshops, developed in coordination with the Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee, gathered valuable neighbor opinions on the ideal location, financing options, and desired amenities for the new building, ensuring that the new City Hall reflects the needs and vision of the community it serves. By actively acquiring the feedback of the community, the City promotes transparency and strengthens public trust to create a civic space that genuinely reflects the interests and priorities of those it serves. The City is excited to continue to make important steps forward in the coming years to make the public's image of the ideal City Hall come to life.



City Hall demolition site

Awards

As a leading government organization, the City has achieved several awards in recognition of the high-quality services it provides, both internally and to neighbors. The awards listed below highlight service areas where the City is a leader among its peers in pursuit of becoming the "City you never want to leave."

- 2024 Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) – Special Distinction for Strategic Goals & Strategies
- 2024 Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) – Special Distinction for Financial Policies
- 2024 National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA) – #39 Green Fleet in North America
- 2024 Sterling Leadership Conference – Process Improvement Project with the Greatest Organizational Impact
- Livability's Top 100 Best Places to Live in America
- Niche's #5 Best Cities to Retire in America
- WalletHub's #11 Best Places to get Married in the United States
- 2024 P3 Bulletin's Award for Best Private-Public Partnership (P3) Utility Project of the Year
- Perfect Score of 100 On the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation's Municipal Equality Index (MEI)
- Recognized by The Center for Digital Government for utilizing technology to strengthen cybersecurity, enhance transparency, digital drivacy rights, digital equity, and finding innovative ways to support solutions for social challenges
- Recognized by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact for its work to collaboratively reduce regional greenhouse gas emission, implement adaptation strategies, and build climate resilience

Performance Measures

Strategic planning is a dynamic, future-oriented process of assessment, goal-setting, decision-making, and reassessment that maps the path between the present and the goals and vision of the City. The City uses performance measures to assess the successes of the City's programs and to ensure that it is agile when implementing new initiatives that support and advance the multi-year view of the City's goals and vision. Below are the key performance measures used to evaluate the progress of the Strategic Plan.

GOAL 1 Build a sustainable and resilient community.	2018 BASELINE	2024 ACTUAL	2024 TARGET
CIP funds spent	$89,404,212 28.1%	$166,775,066 19.9%[1]	25.0%
Utilities maintenance budget as a percent of overall utilities asset value	9.31%	13.52%[1]	Monitor Trend
Percent of citywide tree canopy coverage on public and private property	25.9%	26.6%	27.4%
Percent of households participating in waste diversion programs	N/A[2]	71%	75%
Aerial square footage of dune system	N/A[2]	376,578	370,822
Percent of catch basins proactively inspected	37%[3]	112%	100%
GOAL 2 Build a multi-modal and pedestrian friendly community.	**2018 BASELINE**	**2024 ACTUAL**	**2024 TARGET**
Satisfaction with the overall flow of traffic	18%	14%[4]	47%
Percent of neighbors that drive to work alone[5]	78%	62%	<78%
Percent of neighbors that use public transportation to commute[5]	3.3%	3.0%	>3.3%
Installed linear feet of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and shared use paths	206,135	380,461	456,135

GOAL 3 Build a healthy and engaging community.	2018 BASELINE	2024 ACTUAL	2024 TARGET
Percent of neighbors that live within a 10-minute walk of a park	89%	84%	90%
Percent of neighbors that perceive the overall appearance of the City as excellent or good	59%	N/A[6]	69%
Satisfaction with the quality of Parks and Recreation programs and facilities	71%	N/A[6]	75%
Percent of 3rd grade students meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) grade level proficiency	47.6%	51.6%[7]	>47.6%
GOAL 4 **Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.**	**2018** **BASELINE**	**2024** **ACTUAL**	**2024** **TARGET**
Number of homeless	459	N/A[8]	250
Percent of households spending 30% or more of income on housing[5]	44%	45%	<44%
Percent of students entering kindergarten "kindergarten ready"	43%	46%[7]	>43%
Students enrolled in public schools	19,329	17,925	>19,329
GOAL 5 **Build an attractive global and local economic community marketplace.**	**2018** **BASELINE**	**2024** **ACTUAL**	**2024** **TARGET**
Unemployment rate[9]	3.4%	2.5%	3.4%
Percent of Broward County tourism tax generated by Fort Lauderdale[9]	45.4%	45.4%	50%
Number of jobs committed by contract created through Qualified Target Industries (QTI) projects	180	115	500
Number of active retail/restaurant properties	925	961	1,000
Percent of neighbors aged 18-44 with an associate degree or higher[5]	38.4%	43.6%	>38.4%
GOAL 6 **Build a safe and well-prepared community.**	**2018** **BASELINE**	**2024** **ACTUAL**	**2024** **TARGET**
Crime rate per 1,000 neighbors	55.0	75.9[10]	53.3
Emergency Medical Services (EMS) total time for first unit arrival (minutes)	7:55	8:30[11]	6:00
Percent of City employees trained in National Incident Management System (NIMS) certification requirements	44%	91%	95%

GOAL 7 Build a values-based organization dedicated to developing and retaining qualified employees.	2018 BASELINE	2024 ACTUAL	2024 TARGET
Employee turnover rate	6%	9%	5%
Average hours of training per employee	70	56	36
Neighbor satisfaction with the quality of customer service from City employees	57%	37%[4]	61%
GOAL 8 **Build a leading government organization that manages all resources wisely and sustainably.**	**2018 BASELINE**	**2024 ACTUAL**	**2024 TARGET**
Property values (billions)	$36.1[12]	$59.0	$44.1
Bond rating evaluation by Standard & Poor's national bond rating agency: general obligation	AA	AAA	AAA
Bond rating evaluation by Standard & Poor's national bond rating agency: revenue	AA	AA+	AA
Percent of General Fund balance available for use at or above requirements	24.6%[13]	27.1%[1]	25.0%
Total fleet fuel consumption (gallons)	1,320,885	1,315,412	<1,188,797

[1]The FY 2024 reported actual value is an estimate as FY 2024 year-end financial data is being finalized as a part of the year-end audit process.

[2] The abbreviation N/A stands for "not available;" data for this period is not available at the time of publication.

[3]The 2018 Baseline data was developed from FY 2017 year-end data; the reported baseline figure has been updated to reflect FY 2018 year-end data for consistent trending.

[4]Survey methodology was modified in 2023 due to a vendor change for survey administration.

[5]Data is reported for the prior year as reporting for the American Census Survey is delayed.

[6]Survey methodology was modified in 2023 due to a vendor change for survey administration. As a part of this transition, this question was not included in the 2024 survey.

[7]FY 2024 data utilizes data from the Fall Semester of the 2023-2024 school year. Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, new standardized assessments were implemented, and results cannot be compared to former ELA and Mathematics assessments.

[8]Data is not available because no Point In Time (PIT) count was conducted by Broward County in 2024.

[9]Data is reported for the prior year as reporting for the Broward County Taxes and Treasury Division is delayed.

[10]The FY 2024 Group A crime rate is based on data in the Police Department's records management system and is subject to change after the Florida Departmental of Law Enforcement validates and audits totals.

[11]Final FY 2024 data is unavailable at the time of report, actual results represent FY 2024 year-to-date performance as of June 30, 2024.

[12]The gross taxable value has been updated and finalized from the estimate according to the Broward County Property Appraiser's certification of taxable value.

[13]Data has been updated and finalized as a part of the year-end audit process.

For historical data, supporting information, and data visualizations visit our City's Strategic Plan Dashboard.

www.fortlauderdale.gov/pressplay

A Foundation For Success

As the City concludes the final year of its 2024 Strategic Plan, Neighbors can look back at five years of impactful accomplishments across every goal that advanced Fort Lauderdale forward. During this time, the City leveraged a voter-approved parks bond to enhance its facilities by renovating existing parks, developing new ones, and securing land for future recreation. The City constructed a state-of-the-art aquatic center for professional events and community use while breaking ground on a new Police Headquarters and the Prospect Lake Clean Water Facility that will service the public for decades to come. To create an eco-friendly and convenient transportation solution, the City worked with a third-party provider to establish the Fort Lauderdale Micro Mover electric shuttle program which expands transportation options throughout the City. Internally the City modernized its financial management with a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that has brought its practices into the 21st century and launched a newly consolidated Customer Service Center and application.

It is clear that this Strategic Plan has built a foundation of improved services, sustainable initiatives, and enhanced community spaces and while there is still work to be done it is important to look back and see how Fort Lauderdale has grown. Fort Lauderdale is thrilled to build on these achievements and progress forward with launching the new 2029 Strategic Plan that is inspired by our shared vision of growth, resilience, and inclusivity.