



Memorandum

Memorandum No: 25-001

Date: February 7, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and City Commissioners

From: Susan Grant, Acting City Manager *Susan Grant*

Re: Florida Historical Marker for War Memorial Auditorium – Proposed Text

On January 22, 2025, the City Commission adopted a resolution approving the historic designation of the property known as “War Memorial Auditorium” located at 1000 E. Sunrise Boulevard (aka 800 NE 8th Street) in the City of Fort Lauderdale. In addition to the designation, the City is preparing an application to the Florida State Historic Preservation Office to place a Historical Marker at this Site. The proposed text which was shared with the Historic Preservation Board at their December 2, 2024, meeting is shared below. All the board members present expressed that they were in favor of a marker, but did not vote on a motion to express their support. The proposed marker text is the Statement of Significance from the Historic Designation Report.

Proposed Marker Text

The unimaginable conflagration that was World War II left in its wake not only physical destruction but the devastation to humanity as measured by the wounded and killed in its worldwide theater of operations. At its end, a grateful nation sought to honor the former combatants such as the construction and dedication of buildings. Fort Lauderdale’s War Memorial was to become a “living memorial” to the war’s heroes. With the City’s donation of the land, a public subscription was begun to fund the massive auditorium designed to seat three thousand. Ultimately costs escalated to \$400,000 but through the City’s taxing initiatives and donations of materials and labor, the building was dedicated on January 14, 1950. Architects Gamble, Pownall, and Gilroy designed the massive structure, rising the equivalent of three stories, with a free-span barrel roof that allowed for uninterrupted views of the stage. Over the decades the War Memorial has been a venue for all manner of entertainment and a vital part of Fort Lauderdale’s cultural community. It is significant not only for its Depression Moderne design, but also in its continued historical role as a symbol of a local community’s gratitude.

Next Steps

An application to the Florida Historic Marker Program will be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office for review by the Florida Historical Marker Council who may provide suggested edits that would revise the above text. If approved, the marker will be ordered and installed at the War Memorial Auditorium in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department. It is expected that this process will take approximately six to nine months to complete.



Sample Marker

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Trisha Logan, Principal Urban Planner, at 954-828-7101 or via email at tlogan@fortlauderdale.gov.

- C: Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager
- Christopher Cooper, AICP, Acting Assistant City Manager
- Ben Rogers, Acting Assistant City Manager
- Laura Reece, Acting Assistant City Manager
- D'Wayne Spence, Interim City Attorney
- David R. Soloman, City Clerk
- Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
- Department Directors
- CMO Managers