



APPROVED
BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
May 21, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.
101 NE 3rd Avenue, Tower 101,
11th Floor Conference Room,
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Board Member	Attendance	10/2024 through 9/2025 Cumulative Attendance	
		Present	Absent
William Brown, Chair	P	6	0
Melissa Milroy, Vice Chair [arrived 5:16]	P	6	0
Norbert Belz	P	5	1
Melinda Bowker	P	5	0
Olivier Cale	A	3	2
Ross Cammarata	A	4	2
Rich DeGirolamo	A	5	1
Desorae Giles-Smith	P	2	0
Mildred Lowe	P	4	2
Prabhuling Patel	P	4	2

Staff

Rickelle Williams, City Manager
 Susan Grant, Assistant City Manager
 Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager
 Christopher Cooper, Acting Assistant City Manager
 Laura Reece, Acting Assistant City Manager
 William Schultz, Police Chief
 Porshia Garcia, Acting Director of Development Services
 Juan Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Development Services
 Ella Parker, Division Manager of Development Services
 Talal Abi-Karam, Acting Director of Public Works
 Jason Snifeld, Division Manager of Public Works
 Yvette Matthews, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget
 Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
 Charmaine Crawford, OMB Department and Board Liaison

Communications to the City Commission

None

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Budget Advisory Board was called to order at 5:02 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – May 14, 2025

Mr. Cale had requested a change to the minutes in writing.

Motion made by Ms. Bowker, seconded by Mr. Patel to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

IV. Floor Open for Neighbor Input

None

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

None

VII. Communications to/from City Commission

None

VIII. Board Member Comments

None

IX. Adjourn (Regular Meeting)

The regular meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Special Meeting - FY 2026 Departmental Budget Review Presentations

- Police, Development Services, and Public Works

William Schultz, Police Chief

Chief Schultz thanked staff for their help. He stated he had six requests. The first was for assistance with the Special Event Overtime for \$1.9 million in addition to regular overtime funding for officers who were often mandated to work these events. The second request was for Maintenance of New Police Headquarters Building [interior and exterior]. Next was Equipment to Enhance Neighborhood Security, including additional digital message boards with built-in license plate readers, and two tower surveillance camera trailers. The fourth request was for Special Event Public Safety Initiatives, including several additional CCTVs, two more rapid barricades, and 100 removable bollards. The next request was for a second forensic specialist position which would allow the City's two specialists to review each other's work instead of relying on BSO for that review. This would reduce the average review time from 28 days to 14 days. The sixth request was for Police Department Reorganization to document and memorialize what already existed in the organization. He noted this request had no financial impact.

Chief Schultz explained that they worked with other agencies and shared information with other cities from license plate readers. Yvette Matthews, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget described how they had calculated the overtime for events accurately. Chief Schultz said 14 days for DNA peer review was an accepted standard amount of time. He noted there were already 100 City-owned cameras throughout the City but they also had the ability to contract with businesses to have access to their cameras. He said he and Carl Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation, had just spoken about the need for cameras in parks. Mr. Belz thought the City could consider sponsorships for City events to help offset the costs of Police overtime. Chief Schultz stated there was no standard regarding how many officers they should have. He said once they got to full staffing, he would feel comfortable but noted the City was always growing and they needed to constantly keep up.

Porshia Garcia, Acting Director of Development Services

Ms. Garcia reviewed Development Services divisions. Their first Decision Package request was for a Sailboat Bend Historic District Streetscape Beautification Plan for \$100,000 to hire a consultant to create a plan to beautify the district. This would tie into the existing Vision Plan for the area. The second request was for a Building Services Facilities Worker I to be funded from both the Building Fund and the General Fund. This position would help them address cleanliness at the various locations from which they operated. The next request was for the Office of Cultural Affairs Division Program Enhancement to sponsor programs, finance temporary and permanent art installations, fund arts marketing, and add an Administrative Assistant position. They would adopt a film permit to help fund this request. The next request was for a Shared Administrative Resource for Zoning and Business Tax Administrative Support. The next request was for \$50,000 for a consultant to create a Himmarshee Historic District - Small Scale Street Beatification Plan that would include a Streetscape Plan. They were also requesting a Building Services Senior Administrative Assistant to assist with the Building Safety Inspection Program and the Code Enforcement Board. They also wished to Transfer a Code Compliance Officer from Transportation and Mobility to Development Services. From the Unified Customer Service Fund, they were requesting a Customer Support Center Division Manager to provide a more centralized overview of Customer Service. In addition to that manager, they were requesting Customer Support Center Operational Enhancements of \$75,000. Some would go toward improving software to replace some manual processes.

Ms. Garcia stated the total outstanding was \$66 million associated with enforcement cases and information would be presented to the City Commission on June 17. Ms. Garcia said they would defer to the IT Director and the City Commission regarding any upcoming policy for utilizing AI. Mr. Cooper noted this application was in its infancy but thought that in the future there may be opportunities to use AI to create efficiencies in the Plan Review process. Ms. Garcia said they would explore supplemental funding sources for the Himmarshee District beautification. Ella Parker, Division Manager of Development Services described how the projects were identified and noted Sailboat Bend had been

in the works for a long time. Ms. Garcia described the duties of an Administrative Assistant. She then discussed collection of Code Enforcement fines and lien amnesty. She could not say if the five grants in the Mural Grant program were one per district and said the Public Arts Advisory Board would review the applications. Chair Brown asked how they were adjusting to the decrease in new construction demand in the City. Ms. Garcia said permit intake staff had been reassigned to the online environment.

Talal Abi-Karam, Acting Director of Public Works

Mr. Abi-Karam said cost increases for commodities and chemicals would be rolled into the operational budget instead of in a decision package. They had three decision packages. In the first, the Water and Sewer Fund, they were requesting 18 positions for the new Prospect Lake Clean Water Center, which was mandated. The positions were mostly water treatment plant operators, mechanics, and electricians. Mr. Abi-Karam said they would need to operate both plants at once as part of the transition to the new plant. The cost for the new positions, \$2.85 million, would be ongoing for operation of the new plant. The second request was for the Expansion of Waterway Sampling with Molecular Source Tracking (MST) Integration. This would add five to the existing 10 locations. The City Commission had also requested material source testing to determine the source of contamination. The next request was from the Stormwater Fund, for a Comprehensive Roadway Elevation Master Plan, an initiative pursuant to the Urban Land Institute review. Mr. Abi-Karam said they had considered efficiencies when drafting their decision packages.

Mr. Abi-Karam then discussed the department's divisions, funds, programs and initiatives. He reviewed the new Prospect Lake Water Treatment Plant, which was a \$660 million investment. He recalled they had been spending a lot of funds on the sewer system to comply with a Consent Order and were now shifting to pipe replacement. They were also working to reduce Infiltration and Inflow. He said the second phase of their large initiative, Fortify Lauderdale, would be presented to the City Commission in June with rankings and ratings of the individual projects. He stated they were short \$212 million for the remaining phase II projects. He said their General Fund demands were split between roadways, sidewalks, potholes, Fire Stations, and bridges. Mr. Abi-Karam discussed staffing levels and recruitment and retention challenges. He remarked on the increase in chemical costs and the impact tariffs had on operations. He stated they had an updated bridge Master Plan, with "repair" and "replace" schedules over zero to 20 years and were executing the program per that plan.

Ms. Milroy noted the critical nature of many of these programs and wondered where the funds would come from. Mr. Abi-Karam said water and sewer impact fees amounted to approximately \$13 million per year and must be spent to address capacity expenses. Ms. Reece described how the Stormwater assessment was reviewed and set each year by the City Commission. Mr. Abi-Karam discussed how they prioritized the Infiltration and Inflow projects and sidewalk repairs. He said sidewalks had been assessed in 2014 and the assessment had been updated in 2024. He stated the South Ocean Drive bridge replacement project was ongoing and the report indicated it would be completed next

year but Mr. Patel pointed out the project was supposed to be completed in two weeks. Mr. Abi-Karam explained they needed to wait for FPL to move a pole on one of the approaches. Staff reported “substantial completion” was targeted for June 5, 2025, with final completion by September 2025. Mr. Abi-Karam said they were considering more frequent catch basin cleaning to help prevent flooding.

Chair Brown asked if anyone had contacted individual contractors to inquire about why they were not bidding on projects. He said there were accusations of collusion among contractors to not bid against each other. Mr. Abi-Karam could not confirm that and stated they had not contacted them. He noted the construction contractors were constrained by not having adequate skilled labor. Anthony Fajardo, Assistant City Manager, described how they had to coordinate with developers on projects. Ms. Reece said Miami Waterkeeper was a non-profit and when the City partnered with a non-profit they were not required to go through competitive bidding. Mr. Abi-Karam said they had requested additional project managers to help cover Fortify Lauderdale projects and he felt they were adequately staffed. Ms. Matthews informed the Board that Stantec had taken the upcoming operational cost increases into account when calculating the rate increases. Chair Brown asked about substantial revenue increases this year and Ms. Matthews said they would have a better picture of the preliminary budget by the Board’s next meeting.

Chair Brown said the City had some serious shortfalls projected for the next few years. He commended the Office of Management and Budget and department heads for their presentations.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.



City of Fort Lauderdale Bridge Master Plan Update

Bridge Master Plan - Part A

The City of Fort Lauderdale Engineering Division contracted with TranSystems Corporation to prepare a Bridge Master Plan with short-term and long-term recommendations for repairing and replacing City Bridges, which was delivered on August 6, 2014. In developing the Master Plan, TranSystems Corp. inspected 46 City owned bridges.

The Bridge Master Plan was broken into two recommendation groups short-term repairs and then a long-term repair and replacement plan over a 20-year timeframe. The short-term repair recommendation included 12 bridges, and all repairs have been completed at this time. The Long-Term Repair and Replacement Plan Breakdown is as follows:

- **Years 1-5 (2014-2018): Six (6) repairs and two (2) replacements**
- **Years 6-10 (2019-2023): Three (3) repairs**
- **Years 11-15 (2024-2028): 13 repairs and four (4) replacements**
- **Years 16-20 (2029-2033): Two (2) repairs and 11 replacements**

- To date, all repairs and replacements scheduled in the first ten (10) years have been completed.
- The repairs scheduled in years 11-15 continue to be addressed using the Annual Bridge Repair Contract.
- Funding is available for the design of the four (4) recommended bridge replacements and funding for construction of two (2) of the bridges was approved in the FY25 adopted Community Investment Plan (CIP), while funding for construction of the other two (2) bridges has been included in the FY 2026 - FY 2030 draft Community Investment Plan .

Bridge Master Plan - Part B

In November 2024, TranSystems Corp. delivered Bridges Master Plan Update Part B. This document primarily addresses the needs of bridges considered as single point ingress and egress for many City finger isles.

TranSystems estimated that the cost to implement the recommendations for Part B is approximately **\$11,991,000** and includes replacing one (1) bridge and repairing one (1) bridge between 2029 and 2033, repairing one (1) bridge between 2034 and 2038, and repairing one (1) bridge between 2039 and 2044. The recommended repairs and replacements are in addition to the recommendations made in Master Plan Part A.





Projected Funding for Bridge Repair

Projected funding for the bridge repair program is currently slated at \$1.5 million. However, Engineering Staff recommends increasing funding to account for inflation and project management costs.

Local Agency Program (LAP Agreement)

On June 18, 2024, via Commission Agenda Memo CAM #24-0589, the City Commission approved a Local Agency Program (LAP) agreement between the City of Fort Lauderdale and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the replacement of four (4) City bridges identified in the Master Plan. Through this agreement the **City will fund 25% of the replacement cost** and **FDOT will fund 75%**. The City's portion of the cost for design of the four (4) bridges is **\$1,549,491**.

The design phase of the four (4) projects has started and should be completed in the second quarter of FY 2026. The construction phase is scheduled to start during the first quarter of FY 2027, with LAP negotiation starting in FY 2026.

