



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TOWER 101 – SUITE 1100, 101 NE 3RD AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2025 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

<u>January-December 2025</u>		<u>Attendance</u>	
Peter Partington, Chair	P	6	0
Marta Reczko, Vice Chair	P	6	0
Gerald Angeli	P	5	1
Gregory Barnett	A	5	1
Shane Grabski	A	3	2
James LaBrie	P	6	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	6	0
Lindsey Way	A	2	2
Ralph Zeltman (via Zoom)	P	6	0

As of this date, there are 9 appointed members to the Committee, which means 5 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

- Semele Williams, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Shaelyn Mack, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Omar Castellon, P.E., Assistant Public Works Director – Engineering
- Dr. Nancy Gassman, P.E., Assistant Public Works Director – Sustainability (via Zoom)
- Jill Prizlee, P.E., Chief Engineer
- Roberto Betancourt, P.E., Stormwater Division Manager
- Igor Vassiliev, Project Manager II
- J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

- 1. Call to Order**
 - i. Roll Call**

Chair Partington called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. LaBrie, to allow Mr. Zeltman to participate via Zoom. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Partington clarified that while Mr. Zeltman may participate in the meeting, he is not permitted to vote while attending remotely.

ii. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Angeli, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Angeli, to approve the minutes with corrections.

Mr. Walters noted a correction on p.6, paragraph 7: the City Commission Conference Agenda meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2025 rather than June 2.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. Old Business

i. Ongoing Discussion of ITFAC

Chair Partington reported that the City Commission, at a recent meeting, agreed that the Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee (ITFAC) should be made a Board rather than a Committee, and indicated there was no need for a joint meeting between the members and the Commission. The City Attorney was instructed to prepare an Ordinance that would change the Committee to a Board.

The following Items were taken out of order on the Agenda.

4. Public Works Update

i. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

Omar Castellon, Assistant Public Works Director (Engineering), advised that there were two water breaks and five sewer breaks during the month of May 2025. Some of the sewer breaks were related to businesses' grease trap clogs.

Vice Chair Reczko asked if the City monitors businesses' maintenance of their grease traps. Dr. Nancy Gassman, Assistant Public Works Director (Sustainability), explained that the Department of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs performs regular grease trap inspections. The City has recently determined that it will increase the frequency of these inspections, as there has been an increase in the number of blockages.

Vice Chair Reczko noted that businesses are required to contract with grease trap cleaning companies and to provide the City with a copy of that contract, as well as appropriate documentation confirming when a grease trap has been cleaned.

Mr. Walters asked how the City's inspection program is administered. Dr. Gassman advised that in addition to inspection of documents, City Staff physically inspects the grease trap to ensure that businesses are meeting the requirements of the City's Ordinance. All businesses that have grease traps are required by state law to maintain contracts for the cleaning of these items.

Vice Chair Reczko requested additional information on a force main break that occurred on May 21, 2025. Mr. Castellon replied that he would send the members information on this break.

5. General Discussion and Comments

i. Committee Members

Chair Partington recalled that at the May 5, 2025 Committee meeting, it had been noted that a presentation on the prioritization of stormwater improvements in City neighborhoods was scheduled to go before the City Commission. The presentation is now scheduled to be heard by the Commission at their June 17, 2025 meeting.

Chair Partington also recalled that the Committee had requested a presentation on sidewalks and bicycle lanes. The City's Department of Transportation and Mobility is in charge of installing new sidewalk infrastructure, while the Public Works Department oversees the maintenance of sidewalks. The Department of Transportation and Mobility has a Master Plan for future sidewalk connections, as well as the installation of ramps or other infrastructure in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Chief Engineer Jill Prizlee explained that when a City roadway is resurfaced, the intent is to also repair damaged adjacent sidewalks and ramps to meet ADA standards. If more comprehensive design of the sidewalk is needed, a project is created and managed by the Department of Transportation and Mobility (TAM).

Mr. Walters requested clarification of how "wave-and-ride" bus service is accommodated in locations where there is no ADA infrastructure. He expressed concern that the City has not met all necessary ADA requirements for its sidewalks.

Chair Partington stated that when the Committee saw a presentation on the status of the new water treatment plant, there had been discussion of standards for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). He was concerned that a study to determine the best method of treating water to meet PFAS standards may be a lengthy process and could take longer than the anticipated time frame of the new plant's construction.

Mr. Castellon advised that beginning in August 2025, a pilot study will be conducted to determine which type of membrane is most effective in removing PFAS. He recalled that when the City signed the agreement to proceed with the new plant, PFAS was not a major consideration at that time. He concluded that the Committee will be informed of the results of the pilot study.

Chair Partington addressed future meeting dates, pointing out that the City Commission's last meeting before its summer break is scheduled for June 30, 2025. The Commission will not meet again until August 19. He noted that the next three ITFAC meeting dates are set for July 7, August 4, and September 8, and requested discussion of whether or not the Committee should meet on all three dates. There was also consideration of whether or not members would be available for those meetings.

Motion made by Chair Partington, seconded by Mr. Walters, to cancel July 7. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 4-1 (Chair Partington dissenting).

It was determined that the Committee would make a decision at their August meeting on whether or not to meet in September.

3. Old Business

i. Update on City's Procedure for calculating water and wastewater capacity

Igor Vassiliev, Project Manager II, gave a presentation on the City's process for evaluating water/wastewater capacity in relation to new developments. Mr. Castellon clarified that while the team which performs this calculation is funded by Public Works, it is physically based in the Department of Sustainable Development.

Mr. Vassiliev explained that when a development is proposed, the developer is required to obtain a water and wastewater capacity letter. The developer submits an application, including information reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC), such as flows and the Site Plan. The team reviews this information to determine whether or not it fits the existing infrastructure for water and wastewater at the location. The analysis is performed using computer modeling.

The result of the analysis is a report including calculations and layouts to demonstrate whether or not the new development can be supported by existing infrastructure. If it cannot be supported, the report specifies any improvements that will be required in order for the development to fit into the area.

The Committee members discussed the capacity letters, with Mr. LaBrie asking if the report is updated when a subsequent developer proposes a project in the same area.

Mr. Vassiliev confirmed this, stating that letters are issued on a project-by-project basis.

Chair Partington observed that the wastewater capacity calculation considers the pipes to which a development is connected, as well as any pump stations affected by the project and finally the treatment plant. Mr. Vassiliev confirmed that all of this information is included in the report.

Mr. Zeltman asked if the determination of water main capacity considers the fire rating of new buildings. Mr. Vassiliev confirmed that this is also part of the calculation, pointing out that fire flow is often a factor that necessitates changes to the water system.

Mr. Walters asked if the formula used to calculate capacity has changed. Mr. Vassiliev replied that the procedure for the calculation remains the same, although the application process may have changed slightly over the years.

Vice Chair Reczko requested clarification of whether or not the City is approaching the limits of its capacity. Mr. Vassiliev confirmed that there is still additional capacity for both water and wastewater treatment; however, there are several components to be considered, including the functionality of the wastewater treatment plant, the wastewater pump stations and force mains, and the gravity system. Some neighborhoods may not have sufficient capacity for these functions and may require upgrades to certain infrastructure components, such as pump stations or sewer mains.

Vice Chair Reczko also requested clarification of which entity would be responsible for upgrading infrastructure if it is determined that improvements are required to accommodate a project. Mr. Vassiliev replied that there are several ways this can be addressed. The City informs the developer that upgrades are necessary, at which time the developer and the City may work out an agreement to fund the upgrades. If this is not done, the developer may wait until the City has made capital improvements to the area. These improvements are typically scheduled in advance as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), so the City can inform the developer of when they are anticipated. If the developer does not wish to wait until this improvement is scheduled, they may fund the improvement on their own.

Roberto Betancourt, Stormwater Division Manager, stated that developers are asked to pay expansion fees that go toward upgrades to the system. Chair Partington characterized these as impact fees.

Mr. LaBrie asked if the impact fee is the same for the second project to be developed in an area as it is for the first project coming into that area. Mr. Betancourt replied that impact fees are directly related to equivalent residential connections (ERCs). One ERC, for example, is equivalent to a single-family home, while a large building with

hundreds of residential units would generate a higher impact fee. The type of use and square footage are also factors to be considered.

Mr. LaBrie requested clarification of the City's current impact fee based on one ERC. Mr. Betancourt replied that one ERC of water is \$1,077, while one ERC of sanitary sewer is \$1,880.

Vice Chair Reczko asked if there is a balance which takes impact fees into account. Mr. Betancourt advised that if a developer chooses to fund infrastructure improvements, they are entitled to a refund up to their capital expansion amount, including design fees.

Mr. LaBrie asked if stormwater review is part of the capacity calculation. Mr. Castellon replied that stormwater is only a factor when utilities are involved. The City must ensure that the installation of utilities does not interfere with stormwater infrastructure. There is no study associated with stormwater.

Chair Partington asked if existing infrastructure on-site is examined to determine whether or not it is sufficient for a new project. Mr. Betancourt stated that this is done by the City Engineer in the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) as part of the permitting process. Mr. Vassiliev's team, which is part of the Public Works Department, addresses only water and wastewater capacity. He further clarified that DSD examines the needs of private development, such as on-site stormwater retention, while Public Works focuses on the public right-of-way.

Mr. Vassiliev stated that developers must pay for the calculation of capacity letters. Once a developer has been sent the capacity letter, the project is added to a spreadsheet for flows. When the DRC approves a project, the flow is considered to be committed and is moved to a list of committed flows. The letter expires after one year.

Mr. Betancourt added that once DRC approval has been given, capacity is considered to be reserved. If a building permit is not secured by a specific date following approval, the reservation is lost, along with all entitlements. Extensions to this time frame are available. He reiterated that flows are not reserved without DRC approval.

Vice Chair Reczko asked how the City communicates with other municipalities, such as Wilton Manors or Oakland Park, which send flows to Fort Lauderdale's regional wastewater facility. Mr. Vassiliev replied that every municipality that sends wastewater to the plant is allowed a certain number of gallons. The City has signed agreements with large users such as the two municipalities mentioned above. This allocated capacity is determined by population projections. Because Fort Lauderdale bills those municipalities each month, it may review their flows in comparison to the contractual limits.

Dr. Gassman added that the large user agreement also addresses inflow and infiltration (I&I). If one of the municipalities is approaching its maximum capacity to an extent that may hinder development, they must increase their efforts to limit I&I within their own systems. Mr. Betancourt also noted that if very large peak flows are observed from large users, indicating I&I issues, those users are charged a 25% surcharge.

Mr. Walters asked if capacity in other municipalities refers to used, unused, or total capacity for those cities. Mr. Betancourt replied that each large user is allocated a portion of the total capacity of the wastewater treatment plant. That amount is reserved for the large user.

Vice Chair Reczko asked if the large user municipalities are required to secure capacity letters from Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Betancourt explained that these municipalities must keep track of their own capacity; no letter from Fort Lauderdale is necessary unless a development is proposed which would produce more than 100,000 gallons per day. He noted that some large users are approaching their contractual limit.

Mr. Betancourt continued that Fort Lauderdale and its large users pay the same water/sewer rate, although the large user municipalities may have to charge their users a higher rate because they are getting water from another city.

Chair Partington asked what criteria are used to determine the capacity of pump stations. Mr. Vassiliev replied that run time for a pump station should not exceed 10 hours; if this occurs, that station is considered to be over capacity.

5. General Discussion and Comments

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, July 7, 2025

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]