



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, AUGUST 4, 2025 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

January-December 2025

Attendance

Peter Partington, Chair (via Zoom)	P	7	0
Marta Reczko, Vice Chair	P	7	0
Gerald Angeli	A	5	2
Gregory Barnett	P	6	1
Shane Grabski	A	3	4
James LaBrie	P	7	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	7	0
Lindsey Way	P	3	2
Ralph Zeltman	P	7	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
Pauline Ricketts, Administrative Supervisor
Brad Kaine, Public Works Director
Todd Hiteshew, Acting Deputy Public Works Director
Dr. Nancy Gassman,, Deputy Public Works Director/Chief Resiliency Officer (via Zoom)
Karen Warfel, Transportation Planning Division Manager
J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

1. Call to Order

i. Roll Call

Vice Chair Reczko called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2026

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

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. LaBrie, to allow Mr. Partington to participate virtually at today's meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Barnett, to authorize our Chair Peter Partington to be a voting member during today's meeting.

Mr. LaBrie asked why the Chair would be allowed to vote while participating remotely, as this has not been permitted in the past. Ms. Williams explained that the Resolution governing remote participation changed on July 8, 2025 and now allows for voting during remote attendance.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

ii. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mr. LaBrie, seconded by Mr. Walters, to approve today's meeting Agenda. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. Old Business

Vice Chair Reczko introduced new Fort Lauderdale Public Works Director Brad Kaine at this time. Mr. Kaine stated that he expected the Fortify Lauderdale program to be instrumental in ensuring that the City secures the future of its infrastructure, and acknowledged that there are ongoing challenges, including the City's Consent Orders and related projects. The Committee members introduced themselves and shared their concerns.

3. New Business

i. Update on the Sidewalk Masterplan

Transportation Planning Division Manager Karen Warfel showed a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Sidewalk Master Plan. The purpose of the Sidewalk Master Plan is to fill gaps in the City's sidewalk network. She reviewed a number of small and large gaps, some of which are located on major corridors and near schools.

The Sidewalk Master Plan uses Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data commissioned by the Public Works Department. It also uses data gathered through other means in order to compare this different information and create a comprehensive baseline across the City.

Ms. Warfel continued that the system's gaps and layers were broken down into small segments and scored to establish priority. The Plan is divided into several tiers based on natural breaks in scoring and grouped together to create manageable priority lists.

The Master Plan also considers data collection on how individuals use the City's streets, which includes information on activity and exercise, walking pets, moving to and from destinations, and how to make the streets safer to use. Lighting was identified as one key challenge. The project team also conducted exercises to determine neighborhoods' priorities. This feedback included a desire to focus City dollars on neighborhood streets and allowing developers to provide connections in the Downtown area.

The information collected was arranged into four prioritized categories:

- Likelihood of walking: proximity of schools, parks, trails, and other aspects that generate walking
- Demographics: a transit-dependent population needs to be able to walk to get from place to place
- Roadway character
- Improvement requests from the community

Ms. Warfel clarified that the Master Plan addresses quantifiable gaps in the sidewalk network and does not focus on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements, either existing or planned.

Mr. Barnett asked if there is a process which links new building, planning, and permitting to the existing database. Ms. Warfel replied that there is an online portal listing all sidewalks, which is intended to remain active as more development occurs. The portal is updated as improvements are made. There is no system for communication between permitting of new construction and the Sidewalk Master Plan at this time.

Vice Chair Reczko requested additional information on the high-injury network. Ms. Warfel replied that this term refers to the number of pedestrian-related crashes on a corridor. Most of these roadways are larger arterials which are not owned by the City, but by Broward County or the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Some local streets, including neighborhood collectors, also have a historically high number of crashes, which helps to prioritize those areas.

Mr. Walters asked if the Transportation Planning Division oversees bike paths as well. Ms. Warfel stated that this depends upon the streets: bike paths on local streets are addressed by this Division, but paths on larger roadways are owned by the County or FDOT.

Mr. Walters emphasized the importance of providing bike paths on narrower streets as well. Ms. Warfel offered the example of NW 15th Avenue, which will include a 10 ft.

shared-use path which is separate from cars. Shared-use paths are preferable to bike lanes when possible.

Mr. Zeltman asked if it is City policy to widen narrower sidewalks to widths of 5 ft. or 6 ft. when possible. Ms. Warfel replied that sidewalks are typically upgraded in this manner where there are corridor-wide projects.

Ms. Warfel reviewed a map of prioritized areas throughout the City, including neighborhoods with schools and/or several existing sidewalks. Small gaps can be filled in several neighborhoods in order to complete the neighborhoods' networks. A variety of approaches are being used to ensure equity across various neighborhoods. She also reviewed the scoring used for the Master Plan, which focuses on the first two tiers.

Next steps for the Master Plan will include reviewing the feasibility of projects, followed by continued outreach to neighborhoods to clarify their priorities. Ms. Warfel emphasized that the Master Plan will not construct sidewalks where they are not wanted.

Mr. LaBrie commented that some neighborhoods may want sidewalks, but homeowners may object to sidewalks that could interfere with their landscaping. Ms. Warfel explained that the City seeks support from the appropriate neighborhood associations to coordinate these projects for the good of the community.

Deliverables for the Sidewalk Master Plan are being reviewed in advance of the finalized document. The team will then work with neighborhoods to identify which ones are supportive of projects, and will revisit priorities as goals are accomplished. A variety of funding sources has been identified for sidewalk projects, including surtax dollars and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds.

Chair Partington asked if CIP applications are submitted each year for sidewalk projects. Ms. Warfel explained that the City Commission has placed funding in the Sidewalk Master Plan for the next five years.

Chair Partington asked if surtax funding requires an application process. Ms. Warfel confirmed that both the CIP and the Broward County transportation surtax have application processes, although the Commission may act on their own initiative. The City has secured \$3 million in surtax funding for sidewalks and is working through the required funding agreements and other processes. The City also submits projects to the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for funding.

Mr. Zeltman noted that the scope of the Sidewalk Master Plan includes the reshaping of swales, and asked how this will impact individual property owners. Ms. Warfel stated that small sidewalk projects are not yet underway; in the case of corridor projects, swales are reshaped in order to install new sidewalks.

ii. Update on Bike Paths

Ms. Warfel addressed LauderTrail, which is also managed by the Transportation Planning Division. This project has been underway for approximately seven years, and the City Commission has appointed an advisory board to develop this trail system of over 40 miles. The program focuses on connecting parks and existing bike trails and greenways.

The City has hired a nonprofit consulting company with experience creating trails in major metropolitan areas to create the LauderTrail Master Plan. The City Commission approved this Plan in 2022 and has allocated parks bond money toward LauderTrail's design plans. The first five segments are currently approaching 100% design.

Ms. Warfel reviewed a number of LauderTrail segments and connections, noting that some components will be accomplished by developers, while the City will provide other elements. The City has received grant funds for some portions of the system.

Mr. LaBrie asked how the system works in proximity to the FEC railroad tracks. Ms. Warfel advised that this is extremely challenging, particularly with increases in commuter rail service. Segments near the tracks are not moving forward at this time.

Mr. Barnett asked if project managers for different projects, such as the Sidewalk Master Plan and the City's water mitigation project, communicate with one another when working on the same neighborhoods. Ms. Warfel replied that work is underway to restructure CIP project managers in order to allow for better communication. The Transportation Planning Division does its best to communicate with other divisions regarding ongoing projects.

Mr. Barnett also asked if data on water and sewer projects is also fed into the Sidewalk Master Plan's database to provide layering. Ms. Warfel replied that this has not yet been done, but noted that this additional Geographic Information Systems (GIS) layer could be added. Mr. Barnett recommended that a link also be provided for information on new building permits as they are filed.

4. Public Works Update

i. CIP Financial Report

Vice Chair Reczko noted that the current fiscal year will close at the end of September, and pointed out that several CIP items are at or near 50% completion. The Committee members suggested color-coding of the reports to provide clearer information in the future.

ii. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

Ms. Williams advised that the members were provided with water and sewer break reports and mapping for both June and July 2025.

Vice Chair Reczko addressed grease traps, requesting clarification of whether or not the City has a program for the maintenance of these items. Todd Hiteshew, Acting Deputy Public Works Director, confirmed that the City has an Ordinance overseeing grease traps, and added that when gravity blockages occur, Staff typically reaches out to the restaurant and the community to provide education. The City is working to increase its level of service regarding grease traps, including the tracking of inspections. A significant amount of grease can come from residential properties as well as restaurants.

5. General Discussion & Comments

i. Committee Members

Mr. Barnett addressed the Victoria Park neighborhood, stating that there has been significant new construction in that area, including the demolition of houses built in the 1940s and 1950s. Many of these older homes had wells, while the new homes being constructed in their places do not. He pointed out that this will place more of a strain on City water services and infrastructure, and asked if new builders can be incentivized to install wells in order to lessen water processing demand.

The members discussed wells, with Vice Chair Reczko clarifying that the South Florida Water Management District will no longer allow wells to be drilled and tapped. New construction is required to connect to the City's water and sewer systems. Mr. Hiteshew advised that the City uses utilizes a water conservation rate structure with dedicated irrigation meters. . Homeowners are charged a higher rate for irrigation water than for potable water, which uses a domestic meter. The intent is to encourage homeowners to conserve water.

Dr. Nancy Gassman, Deputy Public Works Director/Chief Resiliency (Sustainability), explained that a significant portion of the City's groundwater has experienced saltwater intrusion, which means it cannot be used for irrigation. This is one reason why most homes, particularly those east of the US-1 roadway, use City water rather than wells. She added that the City is also adopting automated meter-reading, which will be one way they can monitor the use of irrigation lines.

Mr. Walters requested updates on the following items:

- Progress of the City's new Police Station, including costs
- Progress of the new City Hall
- Costs associated with the drinking water system, including the new water treatment plant

- The potential effect of artificial intelligence (AI) on the City's monitoring of systems

The Committee members discussed the new Police Station further, with Mr. Zeltman expressing concern with the possibility of structural issues, including concrete compression. He recalled that he had asked City officials if he could visit the site, but was not permitted this access.

Vice Chair Reczko requested clarification of the entity responsible for overseeing the construction of the new Police Station. It was explained that the project is being managed through the City Manager's Office. Vice Chair Reczko also asked for an update on this project at the next meeting.

Mr. Zeltman requested that the Committee members be provided with the opportunity to visit the site, reiterating his concerns with the structural stability of the building. Ms. Mack advised that if site visits are approved, the members would need to visit individually due to the Sunshine Law.

Vice Chair Reczko stated that the Committee would like information on where the design process stands for the new City Hall, as well as any information on the selection of a consultant, significant change orders, and identification of the parties responsible for the costs of the change orders. She noted that the reports on the Police Station and the new City Hall could be provided at two separate meetings if that is more convenient for Staff.

Chair Partington recalled that the Committee was informed tests were scheduled to determine how the new water treatment plant's equipment would be configured to ensure that per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) standards would be met. He requested that the Committee be provided with the results of these tests. Vice Chair Reczko asked for information on where the City stood in regard to the recent PFAS settlement.

Dr. Gassman stated that the City Manager has issued a City Commission Information Memo regarding the PFAS study. The Committee's liaison can distribute this memo to the members. She confirmed that money from the PFAS settlement will not be limited to the Water and Sewer Funds.

Ms. Way and Mr. Walters each suggested that new City Manager Rickelle Williams be invited to meet with the Committee.

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, September 8, 2025

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There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:57 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.]