



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, SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

<u>January-December 2025</u>		<u>Attendance</u>	
Peter Partington, Chair	A	7	1
Marta Reczko, Vice Chair	A	7	1
Gerald Angeli	P	6	2
Gregory Barnett	P	7	1
Shane Grabski	P	4	4
James LaBrie	P	8	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	8	0
Lindsey Way (dep. 3:09)	P	4	2
Ralph Zeltman	P	8	0

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

Staff

- Pauline Ricketts, Administrative Supervisor
- Shaelyn Mack, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Kinshannta Hall, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Brad Kaine, Public Works Director
- Dr. Nancy Gassman, Deputy Public Works Director/Chief Resiliency Officer
- Roberto Betancourt, Stormwater Division Manager
- Shannon Barrett, Senior Financial Administrator, Public Works Department
- Jason Snifeld, Division Manager, Public Works Department
- Daniel Fisher, Senior Project Manager
- Brandy Leighton, Engineering Division Manager
- Anthony Fajardo, Development Services Director
- Ben Rogers, Assistant City Manager
- J. Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order

- **Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Barnett, to nominate Ralph Zeltman to serve as interim Chair. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved by consensus.

ii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – August 4, 2025

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

2. Old Business

Mr. Barnett addressed the discussion of sidewalks at the August 4, 2025 meeting, requesting clarification of whether or not information about sidewalk projects is shared with the City's Building Permit Office. This would allow the City to update its records on areas where sidewalks will be implemented as part of new building construction. Development Services Director Anthony Fajardo explained that this information is included in the City's land development management program, and noted that the Department of Sustainable Development and Transportation and Mobility Department often work together to ensure sidewalks are constructed where they are needed.

Mr. LaBrie asked if Code requires all new construction to install sidewalks. Mr. Fajardo replied that this is required under most circumstances, with some caveats, such as a neighborhood association that formally objects to the inclusion of sidewalks, or roadways on which they are not warranted, such as dead-end streets. The Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) only acts when sidewalks are required; it does not oversee the infrastructure program that addresses sidewalk gaps.

3. New Business

i. Update on the new City Hall

Assistant City Manager Ben Rogers reported that on May 15, 2025, the City received an unsolicited proposal from Meridiam Infrastructure which suggested a public-private partnership (P3) project for the development of a new City Hall building. On June 3, the City Commission reviewed and accepted the proposal and established a 60-day competition period in which other firms could submit similar bids for the same project.

On June 30, the City Commission approved an owner's representative agreement with Jacobs Engineering. This agreement was separate from the P3 process. The contract with Jacobs Engineering includes the following phases:

- Pre-design
- Design
- Pre-construction
- Post-construction

The 60-day competition period concluded on August 5, 2025, with the City receiving a total of six unsolicited proposals, including the original proposal from Meridiam. Staff is currently reviewing those proposals with a focus on qualifications, experience, corporate structure, financial wherewithal, compliance with Florida Statutes, references, and verification of comparable projects. This information will be compiled and tentatively planned for presentation to the City Commission on October 7, 2025. The Commission will then provide feedback on next steps.

Mr. Rogers further clarified that the City is currently considering the former City Hall site on N. Andrews Avenue as the proposed location.

Mr. Walters asked if the City plans to invite the community once more to provide input on the proposal, including the previous recommendations by the Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee (ITFAC). Mr. Rogers replied that a series of public meetings will likely be part of the process, depending upon the timeline direction provided at the October 7 City Commission meeting.

A/Chair Zeltman stated that the Committee would like to see a presentation on the process before a final selection is made so they can provide input. Mr. Rogers reiterated that this will be determined by the Commission's direction on October 7. Mr. Walters emphasized the need to ensure that the results of the previous public process for the new City Hall was taken into consideration.

Mr. LaBrie asked if any of the six unsolicited proposals would be eliminated from consideration at the October 7 meeting. Mr. Rogers replied that all proposals would be brought forward to the Commission and a matrix would be used to clearly identify which proposals are the most appropriate for consideration. The Commission may ask staff to move forward with review of all, none, or some of the proposals.

A/Chair Zeltman asked how it was determined that the new City Hall would be built at the same location as the previous City Hall. Mr. Rogers explained that Staff compiled a list of City properties which could have been used for the new facility, as well as land swap opportunities and other strategies, which were previously presented to the Commission. The Commission's consensus was to move forward with plans at the N. Andrews Avenue site. He pointed out that this does not mean a final decision has been made at this point. All documents related to the proposals are on the City's website.

ii. Update on the Police Station

Mr. Fajardo showed a PowerPoint update on construction of the City's new Police Station. He explained that the contract with AECOM, which is the architect of record, includes a clause addressing errors and omissions. The intent is for the City to recoup at least a majority of the funds lost through errors and omissions over the first 2%, for which the City is responsible. The City is currently working with AECOM on an amendment to the contract which would place deflection issues in a separate category that is not subject to the first 2%.

Mr. Fajardo recalled that in 2019, Fort Lauderdale voters approved a bond for the construction of the new Police Station, and the City broke ground on this project in 2023. The facility was planned as a 191,000 sq. ft., three-story building with a 200,000 sq. ft. garage and shooting range.

In March 2024, a deflection was discovered during installation of roof panels. Several meetings were held with City Staff, including the City's Building Official and Building Department, through May 2024 regarding the status of the project. The engineer of record developed an initial fix, and a third party engineer was brought onto the project to provide an outside opinion on the viability of the proposed solution.

Mr. Fajardo reviewed a rendering of the building, including the general location of the deflection. The initial fixes proposed included additional column enhancements, additional foundation enhancements on the ground floor, and a additional roof beams pinned into support areas. The deflection is being regularly monitored.

A/Chair Zeltman asked if, once the deflection was discovered, it was determined that the building will be able to function as originally designed. Mr. Fajardo replied that all steps taken by the engineering firms involved indicate that this is the case, including the structure's ability to withstand a Category 5 hurricane.

Mr. Fajardo continued that after the additional structural enhancements were implemented, the City Commission directed Staff to identify another third-party engineer. That firm began work in fall 2025, and a previous third-party firm was released.

Mr. Fajardo continued that the entire structure was evaluated in a phased approach, beginning with consideration of the deflection area only, followed by a second phase that reviewed the remainder of the building. The Phase 1 report, which was completed in December 2024, agreed with the findings of the two previous firms that structural deficiencies existed in the building. It also agreed with some of the enhancements, but recommended additional enhancements as well, including more columns, column jackets on first-floor columns, additional foundation work, polymer-reinforced fiber, and more upturned roof beams. Phase 1 is focused on the deflection area only.

Mr. Fajardo continued that Phase 2 addresses the remaining portion of the building. All design loads, criteria, drawings, and applicable reports were used to generate a draft report to the City, which was provided in April 2025. Findings were grouped into three categories:

- Life safety
- Serviceability
- Documentation

The life safety category considers the building purely from the standpoint of its ability to withstand a Category 5 hurricane. No imminent danger of collapse was identified. A number of proposed fixes and alternatives were identified, as well as a recommended timeline for implementation.

Mr. Walters requested clarification of the documentation category. Mr. Fajardo explained that this analysis identified errors and inconsistencies in some of the documentation which required clarification and/or updating. He concluded that the documentation category reviewed as-built standards rather than as-designed.

Mr. Fajardo advised that serviceability pertains to the completed building's ability to perform satisfactorily without excessive deflection or vibration.

Mr. Fajardo continued that there were 16 findings generated by the Phase 2 report, several of which are interconnected. The major finding shows insufficient shear wall capacity for the lateral loads placed on the building. The response to this finding involves the use of partially grouted masonry walls which will act as shear walls. There is some concern with the manner in which those masonry walls are tied into the individual slabs, as they have not been fully tested in South Florida conditions. He characterized this as an alternative solution.

A/Chair Zeltman requested clarification of which entity is paying for this work. Mr. Fajardo replied that the City is currently paying, but will recoup these expenses through AECOM.

Mr. Fajardo reviewed additional findings that have been or are being resolved, which included:

- Shear wall foundations
- Column foundations
- Slide bearings
- Structural integrity code revisions
- Column axial capacities
- Column shear capacities
- Roof beam capacities
- Roof drift
- Vibration
- Concrete cover

- Documentation of design criteria and mechanical equipment loads
- Partially grouted masonry walls
- Modifiers used to show connections

Of the items categorized under life safety, the shear wall is the primary issue, followed by two items that have been conceptually resolved pending additional information. All others have been resolved. One serviceability item has been fully resolved pending additional information. Three documentation items have been fully resolved, with one tied to the shear wall issue. Mr. Fajardo reiterated that many of these items are interrelated, concluding that the engineering firms involved have performed well.

Mr. LaBrie asked if the costs of bringing in third parties are included in the errors/omissions category. Mr. Fajardo confirmed that any activity resulting from the deflection will fall into that category, and AECOM has verbally indicated that they will cover these costs.

Mr. LaBrie requested additional information about other related structures. Mr. Fajardo explained that the state of Florida is building a new tower on Broward Boulevard and is preparing to submit plans to the City's Development Review Committee (DRC). Once the tower is complete, the City will relocate its Police Department equipment there; however, Police will remain in the current building until that work is done. In addition, when the existing Police Department building is demolished, the site will need to be abated for lead and asbestos. Radio equipment will also need to be relocated to the base of the existing tower, which has proved to be a lengthy process.

Once the existing building is demolished, additional site work will be required, including parking and landscaping. There are no plans at present for the remainder of the property to the west. There are no third-party leases on the property.

Mr. Fajardo concluded that while the original intent was to occupy the new building by December 2025, this has been delayed by approximately one month due to current conditions. The City is still working to determine what will happen as a result of time delays related to additional testing or structural enhancements.

Mr. LaBrie asked if interior work has been completed. Mr. Fajardo confirmed that the interior work is substantially complete.

Ms. Way left the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

A/Chair Zeltman and Mr. LaBrie expressed interest in visiting the site. Mr. Rogers advised that only one member may visit the site at the same time unless it is a noticed Committee meeting due to the requirements of Florida's Sunshine Law.

iii. Update on Water Treatment Plant (including results of PFAs treatment testing)

Senior Project Manager Daniel Fisher reported that a pilot project for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing has been slightly delayed until the end of September 2025. Construction of the new water treatment plant is approximately 50% complete, with all major structures in place. The project remains on schedule.

Mr. LaBrie requested additional information regarding public notice of water discoloration. Mr. Fisher explained that this notice was sent later than planned due to the need to isolate the wellfield. Mr. LaBrie recommended that the public have more warning in the future for these types of tests. It was noted that the only impact to consumers may be the color of the water.

4. Public Works Update

i. CIP Financial Report

Shannon Barrett and Jason Snifeld of the Public Works Department showed a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Community Investment Plan (CIP), noting that there have been no significant changes since their last presentation. Ms. Barrett explained that the document has been color-coded for easier reference and includes a spreadsheet identifying projects which include bonds among their funding sources. It also shows the percentage of funding spent to date on the projects, which is not necessarily reflective of the project's completion stage.

Ms. Barrett noted that funds spent to date and funds currently committed are also identified, as well as encumbrances such as purchase orders.

Mr. LaBrie asked if it is possible for a project to reach 100% completion before all funds show as spent. Ms. Barrett stated that a separate spreadsheet shows a summary of all activity for a given project. Mr. Snifeld added that a small amount of funding is kept back during the warranty phase in case additional money is needed for project management fees or other necessities. If funding remains after completion, it can be moved into other projects where there is a need, with City Commission approval.

Ms. Barrett noted examples of projects that appear to be over budget, explaining that these can occur due to double postings within the City's financial system. Staff works with the Finance Department to address these situations. Change orders are tracked through a separate section, and project managers can provide specific updates on projects with active change orders.

ii. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

5. General Discussion and Comments

i. Committee Members

Mr. Grabski addressed undergrounding of utilities by Florida Power and Light (FPL), asking if these projects are reviewed by the City. He pointed out that not all utilities are undergrounded when electric cables are moved. It was clarified that the City does not typically instruct utility providers to move their cables underground, as there is no official City program overseeing this activity.

Ms. Ricketts recalled that at the previous Committee meeting, the members had requested the City Manager attend a future meeting. The City Manager has indicated that she will attend the next Committee meeting beginning at approximately 3 p.m.

Mr. Angeli stated that a walkway is being installed in Annie Beck Park so individuals can launch personal watercraft from that site, and pointed out that parking is not allowed along the park itself. He expressed concern that this project was not planned properly. A/Chair Zeltman suggested that Mr. Angeli and other concerned residents may want to reach out to their City Commissioner and/or the City's Parks and Recreation Department. He suggested that the Committee have a more active role in the planning stages for these types of projects.

Mr. LaBrie recommended that the Committee first follow up on the progress of its change to an advisory board rather than a committee. Mr. Rogers stated that he has had conversations on this topic with the City Attorney's Office on this topic, and estimated that it may go before the City Commission at their second meeting in October 2025.

Ms. Barnett stated that Staff would like to add an Agenda item for the Committee's October meeting regarding plans for a triplex parking station. Staff hopes the Committee can provide a letter of support for the project.

Mr. Barnett stated that he would like to see a list of the projects the Committee has reviewed in the past year. It was confirmed that this list can be provided. Mr. Barnett added that he would like to see other infrastructure-related projects listed "from a high-level perspective" to ensure the Committee is aware of all ongoing major infrastructure projects.

A/Chair Zeltman expressed concern that the Committee may not be contributing as much as they could to make recommendations to the City. Mr. LaBrie requested clarity of the Committee's role and its core responsibilities, including how the change from a committee to a board would affect this role.

ii. Public Comments

Julio Tejada, representing the South Florida Water Management District, announced that the District plans to host a Central and South Florida (C&SF) draft study for Broward County at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at the Oakland Park

Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Interested parties may also attend virtually through a Zoom link at the District's website.

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

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 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.]