



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No: 25-204

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission
FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*
DATE: October 17, 2025
SUBJECT: **66th Annual Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show**

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to provide the City Commission with an update on City staff preparations in support of the 66th Annual Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.

The Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show (FLIBS) is the largest in-water boat show in the world, attracting more than 100,000 visitors and over 1,000 exhibitors each year. Celebrating its 66th year, the show will take place from Wednesday, October 29, 2025 through Sunday, November 2, 2025. Held across multiple marinas and venues throughout Fort Lauderdale, the event showcases everything from luxury superyachts to cutting-edge marine technology. In total, the show covers nearly 90 acres and more than 3 million square feet of exhibit space including at the Broward County Convention Center.

FLIBS is not only a celebration of maritime culture but also a major economic driver, generating nearly \$1.8 billion in local economic impact and bringing positive global attention to the city. Setup for this year's show has already begun and City staff are prepared to assist the event and mitigate impacts to our neighbors.

Traffic Operations

The City is actively coordinating with the Broward County Traffic Engineering Division and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for implementation of special event traffic signal timing along major corridors. This is expected to help manage traffic conditions during this large-scale event. Residents and visitors should expect heavier-than-normal traffic on the barrier island near Bahia Mar, Las Olas Marina, the Broward County Convention Center, and Pier Sixty-Six.

Additionally, through coordination with FDOT, digital message signs on I-95 and I-595 will advise drivers of increased traffic in the event area and digital message signs along State Road 84 and US-1 will promote the new Convention Center Connector (Bypass Road) which is expected to open on October 20, 2025.

Maintenance of Traffic Coordination

In order to mitigate construction-related disruptions during the show, the City's Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) staff identified all active MOT permits in the vicinity of the event and requested that permit holders suspend all activities affecting travel lanes or sidewalks. As part of this effort, all sites must be fully restored and available for public use during event days.

Circuit Operational Plan

To avoid congestion, the City's Micro Mover Circuit service will not operate in the area of A1A south of Las Olas Boulevard. Operating changes are being communicated to the public through the Strategic Communications Department and via the Ride Circuit mobile app.

Parking Management and Staffing Support

As communicated via Memorandum No. 25-178, a special parking rate of \$30 will be in place at North Beach Parking Lot, Las Olas Garage and for on-street parking from Vistamar to Las Olas Boulevard from October 30, 2025 through November 2, 2025. Parking staff will monitor demand and supply at barrier island parking facilities and manage demand/supply as appropriate. Additionally, parking staff will be available to assist with traffic control as needed.

Communications and Public Outreach

The Strategic Communications team is preparing outreach to keep residents and visitors informed throughout the event. This includes traffic alerts and detour notices shared via social media, email, and the City website.

Public Safety and Emergency Management

The City's Emergency Management and Public Safety teams are coordinating with event organizers to ensure a safe event environment. Fort Lauderdale Police (FLPD) will deploy enhanced ground and marine patrols, and crowd management measures will be in place throughout the event. Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue (FLFR) will be on-site each day with special detail units and additional personnel strategically located throughout the event site to assist with any medical, fire, or marine-related incidents. To ensure consistent connectivity, the Information Technology Services Department will be onsite to support radio communications.

The City is in communication with external law enforcement and regulatory agencies including, but not limited to, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to ensure that sea turtle nests are protected and lighting along the beach complies with all environmental requirements.

Economic and Hotel Impacts

FLIBS is one of the city's largest economic generators. Visit Lauderdale's 2024 figures estimate the event generated \$600 million in total economic impact for Broward County. Attendance is projected at more than 100,000, with approximately 6,600 room nights requested, ninety-eight percent (98%) of which are in Broward County. The average

contracted room rate is \$351.70, and forty-five percent (45%) of attendees are expected to come from outside the area.

Across Fort Lauderdale Beach hotels, occupancy is expected to reach ninety to ninety-five percent (90-95%), based on past events and current booking trends. Most beachfront hotels in the vicinity of the show site are nearing full capacity. While properties farther north may see less direct impact, hotels downtown, on Las Olas, and in the airport districts typically benefit from overflow demand.

Additional spending at restaurants, retail shops, parking facilities, and event services further amplifies the show's overall contribution to the local economy and business community.

City Support and Expenses

City departments provide a wide range of support services during FLIBS, including public safety, traffic and parking management, permitting, and sanitation. These coordinated efforts help ensure the safety of attendees, smooth traffic flow, and the overall success of the event.

Under the City's agreement with Informa Markets, the show's producer, Informa submits an escrow deposit to cover all City service costs associated with the event. The estimated cost for the 2025 show is \$815,000, which encompasses staffing and operational support across multiple departments.

Concurrent Events

There are several FLIBS-related events planned to occur during the show period. In addition to FLIBS and its ancillary events, other major events taking place in Fort Lauderdale during the same time period include the Pickleball World Cup at The Fort from October 27, 2025 - November 2, 2025, a concert performance by Kodak Black at War Memorial Auditorium on November 1, 2025, and Sunday Jazz Brunch at Esplanade Park on November 2, 2025.

I would like to acknowledge and thank staff from the following departments who continue to work diligently to prepare for this year's event: Community Services, Development Services, Fire Rescue, Information Technology Services, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Strategic Communications, and Transportation and Mobility.

c: D'Wayne M. Spence, Interim City Attorney
David R. Soloman, City Clerk
Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
City Manager's Office
Department Directors