



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, NOVEMBER 3, 2025 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

January-December 2025

Attendance

Peter Partington, Chair	P	8	2
Marta Reczko, Vice Chair	A	8	2
Gerald Angeli	P	8	2
Gregory Barnett	P	9	1
Shane Grabski (arr. 2:12)	P	6	4
James LaBrie	P	10	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	10	0
Lindsey Way	P	6	2
Ralph Zeltman	P	10	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
- Todd Hiteshew, Deputy Director, Public Works
- Garry Brandy, Utilities Distribution and Collection Manager, Utility Services
- Jill Prizlee, P.E., Chief Engineer, Public Works
- Albert Carbon, Utility Services Director
- Talal Abi-Karam, Assistant Utility Services Director
- Gabrielle Bork, Senior Project Manager
- Roberto Betancourt, P.E., Division Manager, Engineering
- J. Opperlee, 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 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

ii. Approval of Agenda

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

iii. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – October 6, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Zeltman, to approve the October 6 minutes with or without corrections. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. Old Business

i. Update on Consent Orders

Assistant Utility Services Director Talal Abi-Karam showed a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Consent Orders.

In 2019, an incident occurred at the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE) when a subcontractor drilled through a raw water line which fed the Fiveash Water Treatment Plant. As a result, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) imposed a water Consent Order which required the City to create a digital global information systems (GIS) -based database of the City's entire water distribution system. This Consent Order was closed on October 18, 2024.

Mr. Abi-Karam explained that the second water Consent Order resulted from a series of water main breaks which occurred during the last two years, as well as several boil water advisories which affected parts of the City. The draft Consent Order is estimated to be a three-year agreement and will include an assessment phase, followed by implementation of an asset management system for maintenance and tracking.

Mr. Grabski arrived at 2:12 p.m.

Mr. Abi-Karam continued that the City remains below the American Water Works Association's (AWWA's) general guidelines regarding breaks per miles per system. The second water Consent Order takes a holistic view of the number of breaks, the age and reliability of the system, pipeline materials, and events resulting in extended boil water notices.

Mr. Barnett asked if City contractors will have access to CityWorks so they are aware of the location of utility lines before beginning work. Mr. Abi-Karam advised that all contractors are required to submit tickets through Sunshine 811, which is a service that provides the location of all utility lines, including electric, water, sewer, gas, and more. The contractor may not begin work until they have determined the location of all utilities in an area.

Engineering Division Manager Roberto Betancourt further clarified that CityWorks is a City tool used to track infrastructure and monitor work orders, while Sunshine 811 is used to determine the location of underground infrastructure before construction begins. CityWorks is not available to the general public.

Mr. Walters asked how the City can satisfy the Consent Orders. Mr. Abi-Karam replied that based on the draft document, the City will perform an assessment of its system, based in part on information and maps included in the 2017 Riess Report. This information considered the age and installation dates of the City's assets. The assessment phase will update this information, including new installations and collected data since 2017, as well as probability and consequences of failure.

On the wastewater side, the first Consent Order was negotiated in 2017 following an accumulation of sanitary sewer overflows from 2014-2017. Consultant Hazen and Sawyer was engaged by the City to perform several assessments, including the condition of pipelines and pump stations. That Consent Order was further amended in 2020 following two major breaks in the Rio Vista neighborhood and George English Park area.

The City is currently in the process of negotiating a new Consent Order that will focus primarily on reducing inflow and infiltration (I&I). While the original deadline for completion of the 2017 Consent Order was September 2026, the duration of that Consent Order has been extended through March 2027 as a result of the 2020 amendment. Current negotiations focus on a new amendment which will address I&I reduction.

Mr. Abi-Karam further clarified that while the City had been in favor of closing out the previous Consent Order and entering into a new one, FDEP favored amending the original Consent Order. Two new draft Consent Orders are under negotiation, one involving the water distribution system and the other involving sewer infrastructure and I&I reduction.

Chair Partington asked if amending the Consent Order would require the City to increase the amount of funding allocated to address I&I. Mr. Abi-Karam recalled that a consultant was hired approximately 18 months ago to analyze and assess all of the City's basins and devise a phased approach to address I&I throughout Fort Lauderdale..

Mr. Abi-Karam continued that the water Consent Order, which began in 2017 and was amended in 2020, includes 76 milestones, of which 71 have been completed thus far. All projects related to this Consent Order remain on schedule for completion by the amended deadline of March 2027.

Senior Project Manager Gabrielle Bork reviewed several force main replacements in City neighborhoods, most of which are expected to be complete in calendar year 2026. One completion date has been extended to March 2027 due to the effects of tariffs and the availability of construction materials. Some projects include the creation of redundancies and rehabilitation of older lines for this purpose.

Additional projects include the following:

- Effluent force main replacement at the George T. Lohmeyer Wastewater Treatment Plant (GTL)
- Submittal of semi-annual reports to FDEP
- Ongoing project along NE 38th Street in Oakland Park
- Rehabilitation/replacement of additional force mains at Victoria Park, Beverly Heights, GTL, Port Everglades
- Installation of a temporary generator and four permanent generators at GTL

Mr. Abi-Karam advised that when the 2020 Consent Order amendment was negotiated, it included a requirement to install backup power for the entire system in case of a loss of power. This requirement included the addition of at least one generator as soon as possible, with work on remaining generators to follow. A temporary generator was installed in fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022. Staff is currently working on the installation of four permanent generators which can provide power to GTL's effluent pumps and wellfield in case of emergency. This project is currently on schedule.

Utility Services Director Albert Carbon introduced himself to the Committee at this time.

Chair Partington observed that a presentation on the City's new water treatment plant is scheduled for the November 4, 2025 City Commission Conference Agenda meeting.

3. New Business

None.

4. Public Works Update

i. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

It was noted that a total of five water main breaks occurred, three of which were associated with the age of the pipes and two of which were struck by contractors. Mr. Barnett requested clarification of the repercussions to contractors who break water lines. Mr. Abi-Karam replied that the City is currently reexamining its cost recovery structure for these types of incidents. In addition, a minimum penalty of \$10,000 applies by State Statute to contractors who do not call the Sunshine 811 system in advance of work.

5. General Discussion and Comments

i. Committee Members

Mr. LaBrie recalled that City consultant Hazen and Sawyer has made recommendations regarding the ranking of neighborhoods in the next tranche of development for the City's

stormwater system; however, the City Commission has not yet made a decision to approve these proposed rankings. It was clarified that City Staff will present qualitative rankings to the Commission at their November 18, 2025 meeting.

Mr. LaBrie also recalled that one City Commissioner had recommended accelerating the entire program. Mr. Betancourt advised that bonds for this program are set to be distributed over a three-year period. Deputy Director of Public Works Todd Hiteshew noted that funding is the biggest issue in relation to the stormwater projects. Staff continues to look for grant opportunities to offset costs when possible. Chair Partington noted that he has suggested inviting a member of the City's Finance Department to address the Committee regarding bonds.

Chair Partington requested an update on the Commission's most recent discussion of prioritizing neighborhoods for stormwater improvements. Mr. LaBrie replied that the ranking of 12 projects was presented based on quantitative information, but no decision was made at that time.

Mr. Walters emphasized that in addition to stormwater projects, there are several other City projects to which no funds are currently allocated, including sidewalks, bike paths, and more improvements. Chair Partington recalled that in the past, the Committee had recommended that the City Commission allocate 10% of its General Fund budget toward these types of projects.

Mr. Barnett pointed out that each month, the Committee receives updates on major City projects, but does not track the major milestones of those projects moving forward. He suggested that the Committee track major projects' milestones going forward, citing occupancy of the new Police Station and the beginning of operations at the new water treatment plant as examples of these milestones.

Mr. Abi-Karam advised that a presentation on the new Police Station is planned for the November 4, 2025 City Commission meeting, as well as a discussion on the Prospect Lake Clean Water Center.

Mr. Barnett continued that other projects on which the Committee has recently seen presentations include the Victoria Park stormwater project, which had a start date of January 2026. He requested clarification of the next major milestones for the new City Hall project, as well as the City's sidewalk and seawall projects.

Chair Partington suggested that a document be drafted by Staff to provide updates on various projects' milestones, including target dates.

The Committee members discussed clarification of milestones for specific projects on which they had seen presentations over the last 12 months, including:

- Victoria Park stormwater project: January 2026 start date
- New Police Station occupancy: March 2026

- Prospect Lake Clean Water Center coming online: September 2026
- New City Hall: next presentation of proposals

It was noted that there were no specific milestones identified for the City's sidewalk and seawall improvements, both of which are ongoing. Chair Partington suggested that the Committee request progress reports on these, including objectives to be established by specific dates.

Mr. Barnett reiterated that the Committee members should review the topics presented to them over the past 12 months to ensure they are included on the list, and then request clarification of those projects' major milestones and target dates.

Mr. Walters requested an update on the status of changing the Committee to a Board. Mr. LaBrie advised that he had spoken with the City Auditor, who had indicated the Interim City Attorney is drafting an Ordinance to this effect. Chair Partington requested that Staff follow up on this item.

Mr. Zeltman stated that he had been made aware of a concern regarding a portion of Bayview Drive where roadway accidents have regularly occurred. Mr. Betancourt explained that the City's Stormwater Operations Department has asked that structures be cleaned out and swales reconditioned at this location. He noted that the area is curbed, and the drop-off from the sidewalk to the swale meets state criteria.

Mr. LaBrie thanked Staff and the Committee members for their work during his tenure on the Committee.

Mr. Barnett requested that the Committee determine whether or not the new City Hall and its construction are under their purview, and if so, whether they may meet with the owner's representative at a future meeting. Chair Partington advised that if members feel the Committee should have a role in this process, they may wish to contact their appointing Commissioners and request greater involvement. He added that the new City Hall should be included on the list of milestones discussed earlier so the members can determine the extent to which they would like to be involved.

ii. Public Comments

None.

6. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: Monday, December 2, 2025

Chair Partington clarified that the date of the next meeting will be Monday, December 1, 2025.

Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee

November 3, 2025

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There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:22 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.]