



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No. 26-041

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission
FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *AW*
DATE: February 17, 2026
SUBJECT: Progress Update 2 – Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiative

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to provide an update on the City's Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiative to improve efficiency and effectiveness throughout city services. This update focuses on the Microsoft 365 Copilot for Government implementation initiative, led by the Information Technology Services (ITS) Department, and serves as an update to LTC No. 25-225, released on October 31, 2025.

Engagement

The City has completed the Microsoft Copilot Pilot. All fifty (50) licenses were deployed, with each department and Charter Office receiving two (2) or three (3) licenses. The pilot users were chosen by each department's respective director. The Copilot Pilot was executed using a structured, department-by-department engagement model to ensure clarity, alignment, and responsible adoption.

Adoption

Of the fifty (50) licenses issued, forty-four (44) people used Copilot during the two (2)-month period. A user survey was conducted to gain insight into usage and adoption. Thirty-seven (37) of the users responded. Survey results supplemented data ITS received from tools monitoring the application. The results demonstrate strong adoption, high usability, and measurable productivity gains across participating departments. Most users have actively integrated Copilot into their daily work, reporting reduced manual effort and improved efficiency.

Barriers to adoption were not resistance based, but rather related to training, use case clarity and confidence in advanced scenarios. Highlights include:

- Uncertainty about advanced Copilot use cases
- Desire for examples tailored to job roles
- Need for clarification on data source and best prompts
- Request for follow up training or hands on sessions

Productivity

Copilot is already delivering on its core promise: saving time and automating tasks. Eighty-one percent (81%) of Pilot participants reported that Copilot reduced repetitive or manual work, with forty-three percent (43%) seeing a significant reduction. Only nineteen percent (19%) saw no noticeable change.

Copilot Pilot Conclusion

The Microsoft 365 Copilot for Government Pilot has been successful, demonstrating strong user adoption, and measurable productivity gains across departments. Users are actively incorporating Copilot into their daily workflows and reporting reduced manual effort. The feedback indicates that with targeted training and support, Copilot is well positioned to scale citywide and deliver sustained operational value.

The next phase involves a full rollout to select City staff based on position responsibilities. Training classes will be conducted by ITS throughout February and March 2026, and this rollout is expected to be completed by the end of April 2026. Staff will need to attend at least one (1) training class to obtain their Copilot license. This ensures that all users are properly equipped to use the tool in a productive and responsible manner.

Next Steps in AI Solutions for the City of Fort Lauderdale

The City is also exploring other AI technology and advanced applications to improve city services. Some of these solutions include:

- AI-powered predictive maintenance systems for infrastructure;
- AI-driven traffic management tools to optimize flow and reduce congestion;
- AI-powered plan review software for development services; and
- Public safety applications that support emergency response optimization.

ITS has also maintained an intradepartmental AI Think-Tank that meets weekly to discuss AI applications and create smaller pilots to test their practicality for Fort Lauderdale. This AI initiative is already enhancing productivity and operational efficiency, reinforcing its value as a transformative digital tool for the City.

For additional information, please contact Ron McKenzie, Director of the Information Technology Services Department, at rmckenzie@fortlauderdale.gov or (954) 828-3525.

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