



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
INFRASTRUCTURE ADVISORY BOARD
TOWER 101 – SUITE 1100, 101 NE 3RD AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301
MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026 – 2:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.**

March 2026-February 2027

Attendance

Marta Reczko, Chair	P	1	0
Peter Partington, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Gregory Barnett	P	1	0
Shane Grabski	P	1	0
Lisa Sharkey	P	1	0
Roosevelt Walters	P	1	0
Lindsey Way	P	1	0
Ralph Zeltman	P	1	0

As of this date, there are 8 appointed members to the Committee, which means 5 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

- Pauline Ricketts, Administrative Supervisor
- Semele Williams, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Miguel Arroyo, Water and Wastewater Treatment Manager
- Roberto Betancourt, P.E., Engineering Division Manager
- Otniel Rodriguez, Assistant Public Works Director, Engineering
- Jason Walker, Distribution and Collection System Supervisor
- J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to the City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order:

i. Roll Call

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

The following Items were taken out of order on the Agenda.

2. New Business:

i. Introductions

The Board members introduced themselves at this time, including new member Lisa Sharkey.

ii. Discussion of Chair and Vice Chair

Motion made by Mr. Partington, seconded by Mr. Walters, to nominate Marta as Chair of the Infrastructure Advisory Board (IAB). In a roll call vote, Ms. Reczko was unanimously elected Chair.

Motion made by Mr. Grabski, seconded by Mr. Walters, to nominate Peter as Vice Chair. In a roll call vote, Mr. Partington was unanimously elected Vice Chair.

It was clarified that there are remaining appointments to be made to the Board for a membership total of 11.

i. Approval of Agenda

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

iii. Discussion of Board Scope, Future Agenda Items and Meeting Calendar

Chair Reczko noted that the Board's scope is determined by its governing Ordinance. Otniel Rodriguez, Assistant Public Works Director (Engineering), advised that in addition to the written scope, the City Manager or City Commission may ask the Board to review special projects that fall outside that scope. He added that bridges have been added to the issues listed within the scope.

Vice Chair Partington asked if the Board would retain its current meeting date, which is the first Monday of each month. Ms. Ricketts confirmed that City Staff recommends keeping the current date, time, and location.

Motion made by Vice Chair Partington, seconded by Mr. Barnett, that we make our meeting calendar 2 p.m. of the first Monday of each calendar month.

It was clarified that in the event of a holiday which falls on the meeting date, the Board would discuss and reschedule that meeting date during the previous month's meeting. They may also choose to cancel a regular meeting in the same manner.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 7-1 (Ms. Sharkey dissenting).

Ms. Sharkey explained that her concern was for the likelihood of holidays with long weekends that may carry over onto Mondays. Vice Chair Partington noted that members are permitted to attend remotely if arranged for in advance.

Ms. Sharkey stated that she wished to change her vote to the affirmative.

Mr. Rodriguez requested that the Board advise Staff of how they would like items within their scope to be brought forward. He cited the example of a bridge replacement project discussed at a recent homeowners' association meeting, which he will present to the Board in April 2026. The residents provided feedback on the aesthetic components of three separate bridges as well as relocation of an existing water main beneath that structure. There may be other specific projects on which Staff would gather feedback prior to bringing them before the Board.

Vice Chair Partington asked if projects brought before the Board will have already been presented to the surrounding neighborhoods, or if the Board would be asked to discuss those projects before neighborhood input. Mr. Rodriguez advised that in his example, the bridges have already been presented to the community; ideally, items would be brought before the neighborhood and the Board concurrently. In addition to aesthetic features, concerns for the bridges include rights-of-way, height, and the need for small vessels to travel beneath the structures.

Mr. Barnett asked if the Board's feedback will be limited to the three specific bridges slated for replacement or if they will be asked to discuss the entirety of the City's bridge maintenance program. Mr. Rodriguez replied that both can be done, clarifying that the three bridges that will come before the Board in April are approaching 90% design completion.

Mr. Walters observed that the Board's governing Ordinance indicates that they will hear input from the public, and requested additional information on how this will be done as well as how the Board would report this to the Commission. Chair Reczko suggested that this may depend upon the magnitude of the items, pointing out that the Board may be able to work with Staff to coordinate public workshops or joint meetings with other advisory entities. She concluded that Staff will let the Board know if they have heard feedback from residents or if a joint meeting should be scheduled.

Vice Chair Partington observed that at their February 3, 2026 meeting, the Board members were provided with a list of ongoing projects on which status updates are requested going forward. He reviewed the following items on the list:

- CityWorks system
- Consent Orders
- Sidewalk Master Plan
- Stormwater improvements for Victoria Park
- Seawall Master Plan
- New water treatment plant
- New water meter deployment

Mr. Barnett advised that some additional projects, such as the new Police Station, the Holiday Park parking garage, and the progress of the new City Hall, are sufficiently complete that there is no reason for the Board to address them. He requested more information on how the Board's scope will involve roads. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the City entered into a special obligation bond for infrastructure which includes approximately \$16 million for roadways and \$12 million for sidewalk repairs. Staff plans to present an update on these items to the City Commission in summer 2026, including the current level of expenditures, neighborhoods in which projects are complete, and more information.

Mr. Rodriguez continued that roadway and sidewalk projects to be funded under the special obligation bond have been prioritized and rated, with those in the poorest condition receiving the top ratings. The goal is to spend a minimum of \$2 million per Commission District. Because the City has only one contractor for asphalt at this time, Staff is looking at creative ways to proceed, such as "piggybacking" on other municipalities' contracts to bring in additional resources and implement the program in a more timely manner.

Mr. Barnett recalled that the Board had previously discussed the raising of seawalls, including ways the City could help individual private property owners finance these improvements. He recommended further discussion of this type of program.

Mr. Rodriguez explained that the City Commission saw a presentation in late 2025 on a potential fee abatement program that would assist property owners who wish to install living seawalls. Some or all of the permit fees associated with living seawalls would be waived. Other municipalities have different programs to incentivize residents to elevate their seawalls, and any recommendations are welcome.

Mr. Walters asserted that the City should take the lead in identifying ways to help property owners who are unable to afford the cost of repairing/replacing their seawalls. Mr. Barnett agreed that this discussion should remain on future Agendas. Chair Reczko recommended inviting representatives of the City's Finance Department as well as the Planning Department to speak to the Board on this issue.

Ms. Way recalled that at the February 2026 meeting, she had proposed that the Board be informed of rezoning requests so they might be able to provide feedback with regard to infrastructure. Chair Reczko pointed out that rezoning is addressed by the Planning and Zoning Board.

Ms. Way also noted that the Board had requested updates on the Fortify Lauderdale program. Mr. Rodriguez replied that he is drafting a letter to the City Commission which provides this update. The last projects in Phase 1 of Fortify Lauderdale are pending construction. \$330 million in bond funds are expected to be spent, with \$100 million of that total going toward Phase 2 design. He concluded that a comprehensive update could be shared with the Board once these funds are released, followed by quarterly updates on the program.

Vice Chair Partington also addressed rezoning, pointing out that rezoning can make areas more intensive in ways that may exacerbate stress on existing infrastructure. Ms. Way explained that her intent was for the Board to be provided with a means of input on zoning changes requested by developers.

Mr. Betancourt further clarified that the City conducts an analysis for all developments, monitoring impacts on water and sewer infrastructure. The condition of the infrastructure is communicated to the developer, and improvements may be required before a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is issued. This is done prior to Planning and Zoning Board meetings.

Vice Chair Partington stated that many proposed infrastructure improvements are likely to be funded by bonds, and requested a presentation explaining which bonds relate to infrastructure, where the City stands with those bonds, and what challenges the City faces when future infrastructure improvements are funded by bonds or by a different mechanism.

Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that funding is consistently a challenge, as it is often insufficient to address all needs. He pointed out that at present, seawall and bridge projects are being funded through the City's General Fund, which has limited resources. The City is seeking every possible grant opportunity to identify additional funds.

Mr. Rodriguez continued that underground water, sewer, and stormwater projects are likely to be funded through bonds, as these projects must be completed in order to comply with Consent Orders. He concluded that Staff can update the Board on the progress of funding, including bonds, and provide a high-level review of different projects they are able to fund in fiscal year (FY) 2027.

Chair Reczko asked if there are currently any active bonds regarding water and wastewater. Mr. Rodriguez replied that he was not aware of any such bonds at the moment; the only current bond funds Fortify Lauderdale. Chair Reczko requested that when the next bond is issued, she would like the Board to be aware of its date of issuance, the length of the cycle, and a list of projects. She asked that these items be presented each month.

Mr. Rodriguez advised that the special obligation bond for roadway and sidewalk projects is City-wide, and he can provide the Board with a list of the neighborhoods in which these projects will take place. The Fortify Lauderdale bond is expected to be issued in summer 2026 and information on its neighborhoods provided as well, along with a list of projects being designed.

Mr. Rodriguez further addressed capacity and zoning, stating that when a developer applies for permits, Staff reviews the specific location of the project. If the existing infrastructure is not sufficient to serve the development, upgrades will need to be made.

At this point, the party responsible for the project, often the developer, must either make the improvement themselves or pay an impact fee for the City to do it.

Mr. Walters recalled that in its former iteration, the Board had requested information on how project funding was tracked, along with projects' progress and the amount of funding remaining after expenses. He recommended that regular updates on these projects be reinstated for the Board. Chair Reczko noted that Staff has indicated they will provide monthly or quarterly updates on bonded projects.

Chair Reczko concluded that she will work with Staff to develop upcoming Agendas for Board meetings.

3. Utility Services Update:

i. Water & Sewer Breaks Report w/Mapping

It was noted that no sewer breaks occurred in February 2026. An 18 in. water main broke and a boil water notice was issued. Testing is ongoing and repairs are not yet complete.

4. General Discussion and Comments:

i. Committee Members

Vice Chair Partington requested clarification of how the minutes from the February 3, 2026 Infrastructure Task Force Advisory Committee (ITFAC) meeting would be approved. Ms. Williams replied that those minutes did not require review by the ITFAC, which has passed its sunset date. They are posted on the City's website under ITFAC.

Mr. Zeltman recalled that the Mayor has indicated that when the new water treatment plant becomes operational, residents will see clear water without discoloration. He asserted that he did not agree, as clear water coming from the new plant may become discolored in the old transmission and distribution systems whenever they encounter cast iron pipes. He recommended that Staff educate the City's elected officials further on this possibility.

Water and Wastewater Treatment Manager Miguel Arroyo explained that the new plant will begin a pilot program to test orthophosphate, which was previously done at the Peele Dixie Water Treatment Plant in 2008. Orthophosphate is intended to minimize the potential for discoloration.

Mr. Zeltman expressed concern that some discoloration will still be prevalent, and recommended ensuring that the public is aware of the possibility that it may continue in some areas.

Chair Reczko asked if Staff has seen any increase or decrease in the number of complaints related to water discoloration, as well as the areas in which these complaints have occurred. Mr. Arroyo replied that there has been no increase in complaints. Chair Reczko stated that she wished to know which parts of the City have continued to experience discoloration.

Mr. Rodriguez reiterated that the Board would see a presentation on a specific bridge project at their April 6, 2026 meeting. Chair Reczko added that she would like clarification of the date of issuance for the bond that will fund roadway and sidewalk repairs.

ii. Public Comments

None.

5. Adjournment – NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: April 6, 2026

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:32 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.]