



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No: 26-145

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission
FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*
DATE: May 15, 2026
SUBJECT: **Summer Focus Time Pilot Initiative**

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to inform the City Commission of the City leadership team's Summer Focus Time Pilot Initiative. This pilot is designed to enhance productivity, support uninterrupted work, and reinforce strategic planning across the organization.

At the February 2026 Management Retreat, senior leadership identified the need for consistent, focused work time to complete high-value tasks requiring greater concentration. A suggestion that emerged from that discussion was introducing Focus Time so that senior staff could have uniform meeting-free periods available for uninterrupted work.

This concept is not unique to Fort Lauderdale. A study conducted by MIT Sloan School of Management found that, "regardless of the number of meeting-free days instituted, employees subsequently reported improvements in factors like autonomy and cooperation and decreases in stress." The study further notes that, "rather than being pinned down by a schedule, they [employees] owned their to-do lists and held themselves accountable, which consequently increased satisfaction."

Beginning June 1, 2026, and through July 31, 2026, all senior leaders (Management Category 1 employees under the purview of the City Manager) will observe designated Focus Time on the following weekly schedule:

- Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Senior leaders are encouraged to use these dedicated work periods for tasks such as:

- **Strategic Planning and Analysis:** Allowing leadership staff to focus on long-term strategy, such as setting departmental goals, conducting performance management reviews, or planning community initiatives.

- **Policy Development and Drafting:** Providing dedicated time to draft and review policy, legislation, regulatory, or contractual documents that require intense concentration.
- **Deep Work and Problem Solving:** Using focused sessions to address complex challenges that require deep thinking, such as program evaluation, troubleshooting project issues, and analyzing organizational performance measures and financial transactions.

The Summer Focus Time Pilot Initiative reflects the City's commitment to continuous improvement and organizational effectiveness. By protecting uninterrupted time for focused work, our organization could strengthen its capacity to deliver high-quality services to our neighbors and to each other.

Following the pilot period, I will seek feedback from the senior leadership team to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot. **Should there be an emergency or critical situation during the Focus Time schedule, staff will engage and address as appropriate.**

Thanks in advance for your cooperation on this initiative. For additional information, please contact Yvette Matthews, Assistant City Manager, at [ymatthews@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:y.matthews@fortlauderdale.gov), or 954-828-6103.

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