



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No: 26-146

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission
FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*
DATE: May 15, 2026
SUBJECT: Florida Senate Bill 180 (2025) Impact on Land Development Amendments

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to provide the City Commission with an update on Florida Senate Bill 180 (SB 180), and its impact on proposed amendments to the City of Fort Lauderdale's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR).

State Statute

SB 180, signed into law in 2025, aims to expedite community recovery after a hurricane by restricting local governments from imposing certain development-related limitations following a federal declaration of disaster for the event. The law restricts a local government's ability to propose or adopt the following:

- A moratorium on construction, reconstruction, or redevelopment of any property damaged by such hurricanes;
- A more restrictive or burdensome amendment to its comprehensive plan or land development regulations; and
- A more restrictive or burdensome procedure concerning review, approval, or issuance of a site plan, development permit, or development order.

Section 18 of SB 180, codified in Florida Statutes (F.S.) 252.422, imposes these restrictions on impacted local governments for one (1)-year after a hurricane makes landfall, where the local government's home county is listed in a federal disaster declaration and located entirely or partially within 100 miles of the actual track of a hurricane.

Section 28 of SB 180 imposes these restrictions on impacted local governments from August 1, 2024, until October 1, 2027, where the county was listed in the Federal Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Debby, Helen or Milton. As a result, all sixty-seven (67) counties and all municipalities in the State of Florida are currently subject to these restrictions.

Following the adoption of SB 180, the City of Fort Lauderdale, in conjunction with twenty-four (24) other municipalities, jointly filed a lawsuit challenging the law for its violation of “home rule” authority and the future implication of the law which would potentially be a continuous, on-going restriction depending on the frequency of storms. The City’s complaint seeks declaratory and injunctive relief, more specifically that the court enter a judgment; (1) declaring the enactment of SB 180 violated Art. VIII, §§1(f), 1(g), 2(b) of the Florida Constitution and all Florida Statutes codifying Home Rule Powers; (2) declaring the purported preemptions in SB 180 invalid as impermissibly vague; (3) enjoining the enforcement of SB 180; and (4) granting such other relief as the court deems just and proper. The case is in the early stages, and the court is considering various motions made by the parties.

During the 2026 State of Florida Legislative Session, Senate Bill 840 (SB 840) and House Bill 1465 (HB 1465) were filed to amend SB 180 but ultimately failed to be passed by the legislature.

SB 840 sought to narrow the definition of “impacted local government” from counties within 100 miles of a hurricane’s track to those within fifty (50) miles. It also would have refined the scope of actions that an impacted local government may not enforce following landfall; clarified circumstances under which post-storm land use action may still be enforced; removed the private right of action, injunctive relief, and attorney fee provisions; clarified that the law may not be construed to restrict a local government from adopting or enforcing changes to the Florida Building Code or local technical amendments; and revised the temporary land-use freeze applicable to counties and municipalities affected by Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton by shortening the prohibition period and moving up the end date for the moratorium and “more restrictive or burdensome” land-use restrictions from October 1, 2027, to June 30, 2026.

HB 1465 did not narrow the geographic definition of “impacted local government” and retained the existing standard based on counties within 100 miles of a hurricane’s track and the municipalities within those counties. The legislation also proposed defining post-storm limitations to expressly include decreases in permitted density, intensity, floor area ratio. HB 1465 would have limited actions that:

- Increase impact fees by more than twenty-five percent (25%) over a two (2)-year period;
- Affect economic value;
- Create additional review timelines; or
- Delay final action on pending applications.

HB 1465 would have also allowed for certain enforcement of comprehensive plan or land development regulation amendments that are initiated to comply with changes in state or federal law.

It is unclear whether the Florida Legislature will consider amendments during future legislative sessions.

Proposed Amendments

The City has several planning initiatives and ULDR amendments that are impacted by SB 180. Table 1 contains a list of these amendments and the status of each. After October 1, 2027, staff will be able to move forward with each amendment. Staff will also continue to process amendments not affected by SB 180 for City Commission consideration. For any other amendments to be proposed or processed prior to October 1, 2027, the specific text in the amendment cannot be more restrictive or burdensome than existing ULDR language to allow the City to move them forward.

Table 1: List of ULDR Amendments Impacted by SB 180 (Florida Statute § 252.422)

INITIATIVE	SUMMARY	STATUS	OUTREACH COMPLETED	NEXT STEP	IMPACTED BY SB 180
CENTRAL CITY	Develop new zoning regulations, new zoning districts, and form-based code for the Central City CRA.	PZB Recommended Approval on November 19, 2025. Not currently scheduled for City Commission.	YES	SCHEDULE FOR CC	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT PHASE 1	Phase 1: Quick Amendments - Develop form-based design items referred to as "quick" amendments.	Draft code completed for Phase 1 "quick" amendments. Once CAO review is complete the item will be scheduled for PZB.	YES	REVIEW PAUSED	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT PHASE 2	Phase 2: Code and Illustrative Document - Complete form-based code for mixed-use development with supportive design illustrative document.	Draft code language and the illustrative document are being finalized. Additional public outreach is needed.	NO	PREPARE DRAFT FOR INTERNAL REVIEW	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
HALF THE HEIGHT	Remove half height requirement for RMM-25, RML-25, and RMH-60.	Staff initiated research to proceed with amending the ULDR.	YES	PREPARE DRAFT FOR INTERNAL REVIEW	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
TOWNHOUSE REVIEW THRESHOLD	Amend the ULDR to require townhouse developments to be approved by the PZB.	Staff is conducting research on other municipalities in collaboration with CAO.	NO	UNDER REVIEW BY CAO	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
FORTUNE TELLERS /PSYCHIC READERS	Add Fortune Tellers/ Psychic Readers to the B-1 zoning district use table as accessory use.	Draft amendment reviewed and approved.	NO	SCHEDULE FOR PZB	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
VRS and TANDEM PARKING	Update VRS requirements for drive-thru restaurants and add vertical and mechanical tandem parking regulations.	Staff drafted proposed amendments.	NO	UNDER REVIEW BY CAO	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.
MAIL NOTICE REQUIREMENTS	PZB Communication to the CC to revise the distance requirements for notifications.	Conducting outreach.	YES	PREPARE DRAFT FOR INTERNAL REVIEW	YES May not move forward prior to October 1, 2027.

CAO = City Attorney's Office
PZB = Planning and Zoning Board
CC = City Commission

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Hetzel, AICP, Urban Design and Planning Manager, at 954-828-5019 or via email at jhetzel@fortlauderdale.gov.

c: Shari L. McCartney, City Attorney
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