TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
               Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: January 20, 2026

TITLE: Motion Approving the City of Fort Lauderdale Financial Integrity Principles
               (2026 Update) - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission approve a motion to adopt the updated City of Fort Lauderdale Financial Integrity Principles (Exhibit 1).

Background

In 2014, the City first approved the Financial Integrity Principles and established a commitment to periodically review and update the principles and policies to reflect evolving best practices and financial conditions (CAM #14-1146). Maintaining a current and formally adopted set of financial principles is a critical component of sound financial governance. These adopted principles and policies help strengthen the City's credit ratings, clarify and communicate strategic intent, and align with best practices.

With the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, the City Commission established a new Emergency Reserve Fund. During the June 17, 2025 Joint Workshop with the Budget Advisory Board (BAB), staff presented the creation of the Emergency Reserve Fund to the City Commission and committed to collaborating with the Budget Advisory Board to establish guidelines for its use (CAM #25-0592). These guidelines have been incorporated into the 2026 update to the City's Financial Integrity Principles and Policies.

A draft of the 2026 update to the Financial Integrity Principles and Policies was presented to the BAB at its December 10, 2025 meeting. Feedback was also provided by the City Auditor. Following discussion, the BAB passed a unanimous motion recommending that the City Commission adopt the updated Financial Integrity Principles. A subsequent presentation was made to the City Commission at the January 6, 2026, Commission Conference Meeting (CAM #26-0041).

The financial integrity principles set forth a basic framework for the overall fiscal management of the City's finances. The four (4) financial principles recommended for adoption include:

1. **Sound Budgeting Practices** - The City of Fort Lauderdale shall be committed to maintaining a structurally balanced budget to support high-quality service to our neighbors, consistent with the needs of the City.

2. **Prudent Fiscal Management** - The City of Fort Lauderdale shall commit to best practices in revenue collection, expenditure disbursements, asset maintenance, and record keeping for ensuring the optimal performance and integrity of public funds and resources.

3. **Cost Effective Operations** - The City of Fort Lauderdale shall be accountable to stakeholders through transparent and fiscally responsible decisions in order to deliver high-quality services in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

4. **Long-term Financial Planning** - The City of Fort Lauderdale shall be dedicated to investing in the future and enhancing the quality of life through public-private partnerships, cooperative decision-making, community engagement and smart strategic investments, while using debt in a responsible manner and striving for the highest level of government bond ratings available.

The 2026 update to the City's Financial Integrity Principles and Policies incorporates current best practices, stakeholder feedback, and guidelines for the Emergency Reserve Fund. They will support sound financial governance and long-term fiscal stability.

Resource Impact
This action will have no fiscal impact.

Strategic Connections
This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:
- Guiding Principle: Fiscal Responsibility

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan*:* We Are United.

Attachment
Exhibit 1 – City of Fort Lauderdale Financial Integrity Principles (2026 Update)

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