



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
City Commission Agenda Memo  
REGULAR MEETING**

**#25-0532**

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

**FROM:** Rickelle Williams, City Manager

**DATE:** May 20, 2025

**TITLE:** Motion Authorizing the City Attorney's Office to File a Small Claims Action for the *City of Fort Lauderdale v. Luis Carlos Lopez* in the amount of \$6,837.23 in the County Court of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit in and for Broward County, Florida – **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

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**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Commission authorize the City Attorney's Office, as provided for by Sec. 4.12, Charter of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to file a Small Claims Action for *City of Fort Lauderdale v. Luis Carlos Lopez* in the amount of \$6,837.23 in the County Court of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit in and for Broward County, Florida.

**Background**

On May 23, 2023, a City employee was driving City vehicle number 6732 southbound on A1A/Sea Breeze Boulevard in the left thru lane approaching SE 5<sup>th</sup> Street when another driver was exiting a parking lot on the east side of the roadway, ran the stop sign and struck the driver's side of the City truck. The City vehicle is a 2013 Ford F350 Super Duty and is utilized as a Fire Rescue Response Truck. The other vehicle is a 2018 BMW 320I, owned and insured by Luis C. Lopez. The driver, Hassan A. Jaghbir, advised that while trying to come to a stop at the stop sign, his wet shoe slipped off the brake and onto the gas. No injuries were reported. Lopez's vehicle had to be towed from the scene as a result of the damages.

The driver of Lopez's vehicle, Jaghbir, was found at-fault for the collision and the City vehicle sustained damage totaling \$5,587.23. The City sent its subrogation demand to State National Insurance Company for the associated repair costs along with loss of use and a \$100 administrative fee. Loss of use is sought for 23 days at \$50/day in the amount of \$1,150.00, which results in a total claim value of \$6,837.23. In response to the City's demand, North American Risk Services (a 3<sup>rd</sup> party administrator for State National Insurance Company) denied coverage under the policy as the driver did not meet the minimum age requirement and stated that the insured violated the terms of its service agreement.

Subsequent to the insurance carrier's denial, demands were sent to the vehicle owner, Luis C. Lopez, who has been unresponsive.

Staff's evaluation is that securing a civil judgment against Mr. Lopez for the damage of \$6,837.23 best serves the interests of the City, based upon the two-year statute of limitations to pursue a claim.

### **Resource Impact**

There will be a fiscal impact to the City in the amount of \$370 for costs related to the filing fee, issuance on summons and service of the lawsuit.

<i>Funds available as of May 20, 2025</i>			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	COST CENTER NAME (Program)	CHARACTER/ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
10-543-9050-519-50-5104	Self-Insurance Claims	Non-Operating Expenses / Auto Liability Claims	\$370
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT ►</b>			<b>\$370</b>

### **Strategic Connections**

This item supports the Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029 Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- Guiding Principles, Fiscal Responsibility

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

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Internal Support Focus Area
- Implementation Element
- Goal 1: The Fort Lauderdale Comprehensive Plan shall accomplish the City's Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan regarding the City's future growth and the six Cylinders of Excellence and shall be the City's primary policy document to guide all of its activities and development.

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Prepared by: Ryan Blakeslee, Claims Adjuster, Human Resources  
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