



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#25-0433

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: June 30, 2025

TITLE: Preliminary Rate Resolution for the Fire Assessment Establishing the
Estimated Fiscal Year 2026 Non-Ad Valorem Assessment Rate and
Authorizing a Public Hearing on September 12, 2025 - **(Commission
Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission adopt a preliminary rate resolution setting the Non-Ad Valorem Fire Assessment Fee at \$403 per residential dwelling and establish the date of September 12, 2025 at 5:01 P.M. to hold a public hearing at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts - Mary N. Porter Riverview Ballroom - 201 SW 5 Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312 to consider public comments.

Background

The City Commission authorized the creation of the Fire Assessment Program to fund the fire services, facilities, and/or programs that will benefit the City in its entirety, such as facility improvements, special equipment, and cost of fire suppression operations on June 15, 1999 (Ordinance C-99-49). Annually, the City establishes an assessment rate to fund continued fire services and operations for the upcoming year.

Consistent with the City's historic practice of conducting a fire assessment study every three (3) years and moving to full cost recovery, the fire assessment is scheduled to be adjusted from \$328 to \$403 which is an increase of \$75 per residential dwelling unit from last year. For FY 2026, the proposed assessment is \$64,381,117, which is estimated to generate \$61,616,864 in revenue to the General Fund. Based on historical information, staff projects a 96% collection rate.

The additional \$10.2 million in projected additional revenue will expand critical emergency services infrastructure and address growing service demands. The Proposed FY 2026 – FY 2030 Community Investment Plan (CIP) includes \$10.8 million in funding to support the construction of three (3) Fire Rescue facilities. These investments include \$7.1 million to complete the construction of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Substation #88 and the Heron Garage Substation -- both full-service stations are strategically located to

improve response times in high-demand areas and \$3.7 million to finish construction on the Fire Station 13 replacement, the final project under the City's Fire Rescue Bond.

These capital investments, along with an updated fire assessment study that aligns required staffing levels with the Effective Response Force (ERF) standards, underscore the need to increase the fire assessment fee. This adjustment allows the City to phase in the forementioned capital investments over a three-year period while sustaining current Fire Rescue operations.

In addition, based on direction provided by the City Commission at the June 17, 2025 Joint Workshop with the Budget Advisory Board, the Fire Assessment will include an exemption for service-connected honorably discharged veterans who have a total and permanent disability and an exemption for surviving spouses of veterans who died from service-connected causes while on active duty and based upon requirements outlined in the attached resolution.

The City Manager is required per Section 197.3632 (5)(a), Florida Statutes to certify the non-ad valorem assessment rate to the Broward County Tax Collector no later than September 15, 2025.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. The revenue estimate is included in the FY 2026 proposed budget.

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.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 - FY 2026 Fire Assessment Rate Schedule

Exhibit 2 - FY 2025 Comparable City Fire Assessment Rates

Exhibit 3 - Fire Updated Assessment Program Memorandum

Exhibit 4 - Resolution

Prepared by: Keith Farrell, Acting Assistant Budget Manager, Office of Management and Budget
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