



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

#26-0050

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: January 20, 2026

TITLE: Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor (Downtown, Retail Shops, Colee Hammock) Design Update - **(Commission District 4)**

City staff and representatives from WSP USA Inc. (WSP), the City's consultant, will provide the City Commission with an update on Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor design efforts. The western corridor spans from Andrews Avenue to SE 17 Avenue which includes three (3) character areas – Downtown, Retail Shops, and Colee Hammock.

In 2019, the City Commission began an initiative to develop a new vision for Las Olas Boulevard that would create a consistent feel from Andrews Avenue to the beach. The Las Olas Working Group (Working Group), whose mission was to provide input on the future vision for Las Olas Boulevard, was created and included members representing the neighborhood civic associations and business associations along Las Olas Boulevard.

The City engaged the Corradino Group in October 2019 to assist with the creation of the vision. The mission statement created by the Working Group for the vision plan was that Las Olas Boulevard will serve the role of "Connecting residents, businesses and visitors of Fort Lauderdale through the enhancement of this iconic boulevard representing our history and future." The process included the collection of data, analysis, concept design, and a significant amount of outreach with stakeholders along the corridor.

The Corradino Group attended more than ninety (90) meetings to gather input from Working Group members, neighborhood, and business associations. The input gathering process included in-person walks, virtual walking tours, attendance at neighborhood meetings, attendance at business association meetings, individual stakeholder meetings, a city-wide public survey, and regular Working Group meetings.

On June 15, 2021, the City Commission accepted the Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan – Western Corridor (CAM #21-0627, Resolution No. 21-120); and the Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan – Eastern Corridor (CAM #21-0617, Resolution No. 21-119) developed by the Corradino Group.

These two (2) vision plans identified improvements along Las Olas Boulevard from Andrews Avenue to State Road A1A and were broken into five (5)-character areas. The Western Corridor included the Downtown and the Retail Shops while the Eastern Corridor included Colee Hammock, Las Olas Isles, and the Beach.

As the project progressed, the City Commission requested that the character area segments be redefined to have the Eastern Corridor span from SE 17 Avenue to State Road A1A (Las Olas Isles and the Beach) and the Western Corridor span from SE 17 Avenue to Andrews Avenue (Coley Hammock, Retail Shops, and Downtown).

On May 7, 2024, the City Commission awarded a contract for Design Consulting Services for the Las Olas Corridor Mobility Project (Western Corridor) to WSP (CAM #24-0045), with the intent of advancing the Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan adopted in 2021 to sixty percent (60%) design plans.

The agreement with WSP includes the following deliverables:

- Downtown: Advance the cross sections identified in the accepted version of the 2021 Las Olas Mobility Vision Plan up to and including sixty percent (60%) design plans.
- Retail Shops: Advance the cross sections identified in the accepted version of the 2021 Las Olas Mobility Vision Plan to a preliminary design. In addition, WSP was tasked with developing the second preliminary design concept that retains the median, modifies the parking, and expands the sidewalk widths. The goal is for the City Commission to select a single preferred concept which will be advanced from preliminary design to sixty percent (60%) design plans.
- Colee Hammock: Advance the cross sections identified in the accepted version of the 2021 Las Olas Mobility Vision Plan up to and including sixty percent (60%) design plans.

Since the contract award last year, WSP completed a comprehensive evaluation of existing conditions along the corridor, including topographical surveys, subsurface utility exploration, collection of geotechnical soil samples, a flood risk analysis, an arborist report, and an existing trees risk assessment report.

Traffic Analysis

Traffic analysis was completed for the area bounded by Broward Boulevard to the north, Las Olas Boulevard to the south, SE 12 Avenue to the west, and SE 17 Avenue to the east to review three (3) scenarios:

- Scenario A: Closure of SE 17 Avenue at Las Olas Boulevard;
- Scenario B: Converting SE 16 Avenue between SE 2 Street and Las Olas

Boulevard to operate as southbound only; and

- Scenario C: Combining Scenarios A and B.

The analysis showed that traffic impacts resulting from the implementation of the different scenarios are minimal across the study intersections and that intersection Level of Service (LOS) remained unchanged. Additionally, an acceptable LOS was found at the SE 9 Avenue intersection with removal of the center turn lane, and at the SE 8 Avenue intersection with removal of the east and west-bound right turns. A signal warrant analysis at SE 9 Avenue indicated that the signal is not warranted. Therefore, removal of the existing signal is recommended.

Stormwater Model

The project team used the City's updated 2025 stormwater model to review flood risk for the current year (2025) as well as the 2040 and 2070 planning horizons. To simulate future conditions in 2040 and 2070, sea level rise, rainfall intensification, and groundwater conditions were incorporated. The data used were: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2017 intermediate-high sea level rise projection adopted by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact; rainfall change factor based on the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Environmental Resource Permit (ERP), and Broward County's Future Conditions Groundwater Elevation Map. The Downtown segment performed up to a ten (10)-year (8.5") twenty-four (24)-hour event before flooding. The Shops and Colee Hammock segment performed up to a 100-year (22") seventy-two (72)-hour event, which is the highest storm event simulated in the City's stormwater model. Each of the three (3) segments meets the City of Fort Lauderdale's Citywide Stormwater Level of Service (LOS) standard for a ten (10)-year event during a twenty-four (24)-hour period in 2025, 2040, and 2070. Therefore, additional stormwater capacity improvements are not proposed.

Arborist Assessment

The team, consisting of arborists with International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Arborists with Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) credentials, performed risk assessments for fifteen (15) black olive trees. The goal was to identify, analyze, and assess the current risk, to adjacent property and people, associated with the potential failure of an entire tree or a tree part. The risk assessment criteria were based on a Level Two (2) Risk Assessment conducted in accordance with the Best Management Practices for Tree Risk Assessment (2017). The assessments were based on a timeframe of two (2) years and normal weather conditions (i.e., typical, daily storm events with winds below fifty (50) miles per hour). The risk assessment identified a high likelihood of impact (i.e., structures); the potential consequences of trees impacting structures were determined to be significant. Risk scores varied based on the variable likelihood of failure (whole tree failure only) and are noted below:

- Two (2) trees with an *improbable* likelihood of failure received a final residual risk rating of *low*. One (1) of these trees had an initial risk rating of *moderate* that can be lowered to *low* with dead branch removal).
- Twelve (12) trees with a *possible* likelihood of failure received a final residual risk rating of *moderate*. Three (3) of these trees had an initial risk rating of *high* that can be lowered to *moderate* with dead branch removal.
- One (1) tree with a *probable* likelihood of failure received a final residual risk rating of *high* – mitigation measures (i.e., end weight reduction) could not reduce the risk level below *high* due to the continued presence of major decay at the base of the tree.

The risk evaluations were based on current conditions, which do not consider proposed roadway improvements (i.e., reconstruction of the roadway, medians, or utility infrastructure below the road surface). A Critical Root Zone (CRZ) is the area around a tree that is essential for its health, stability, and nutrient absorption, typically extending from the base of the trunk. The proposed project improvements will result in the cutting of roots well inside the CRZ of each tree, which will result in an immediate reduction in structural integrity/stability for each tree, as well as a decline in vigor due to root system losses. These impacts are ultimately anticipated to result in increased risk scores (or higher risk ratings) for all the impacted trees.

The project team discussed the preliminary design with various City departments to ensure the proposed improvements align with the city's level of service, engineering standards, and ensure infrastructure maintenance after construction.

Public Engagement

Over the last few months, the project team conducted public engagement and presented project updates to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Las Olas Company, the Broward Workshop, Downtown Homeowners Association, and the Colee Hammock Homeowners Association. Additionally, a public town hall meeting was held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at the Florida Atlantic University MetroLab (111 East Las Olas Boulevard) which included all above entities, along with the Council of Civic Associations and the Las Olas Association. The general feedback received from the recent public engagement efforts are summarized below:

- Sidewalks and Shared Use Path:
 - Large, well-lit and shaded sidewalks would bring more foot traffic from visitors and residents alike to support the retail Shops segment;
 - Consider a bike path (contrary to the approved 2021 Vision Plan), or provide signage for an alternative route for bicyclists per the approved 2021 Vision Plan for the Downtown and the Shops segments; and
 - Ensure that e-bike users are not allowed on the shared-use path, and

provide a safe bike transition after SE 17 Avenue, where the shared use path ends in the Colee Hammock segment.

- Tree Canopy:
 - Large tree canopy in the center median currently defines the corridor's unique identity;
 - Prioritize shade for the sidewalk rather than the center median; and
 - Canopy trees should include flowering trees, and new tree installations should prioritize large-canopy trees over the minimum code requirement.
- Seating and Lighting:
 - Retain the existing pedestrian lighting fixture design and provide accent festive lighting on the trees; and
 - Provide seating opportunities under shade to provide respite, particularly for older users.
- Permanent Metered On-Street Parking:
 - Eliminate all on-street parking along the Downtown segment to provide bike infrastructure (contrary to the approved 2021 Vision Plan); and
 - Prioritize wider sidewalks and use tree wells to ensure healthy canopy trees, which may further reduce the number of on-street parking spaces.
- Traffic Speed and Flow:
 - Curb extensions and raised mid-block crosswalks/intersections may reduce the response time for emergency services and hurricane evacuation.

The meeting minutes from these meetings are included as Exhibits 1 through 4. Additional comments focused on construction phasing and reducing construction impacts to adjacent businesses; funding for construction and maintenance of the improvements; and preserving the cultural character of Las Olas Boulevard with festivities and street activations.

The proposed tree placement focuses on providing continuous shade along the sidewalk. Most of the trees along the corridor would be replaced with large canopy trees at seventy-five percent (75%) maturity at the time of installation. This would result in high levels of shade from the time of installation with trees reaching their full maturity and maximum shade potential within five (5) to eight (8) years from the installation. Structural soil is proposed to be used to ensure the long-term health of the urban trees.

To improve operational safety and walkability, the preliminary design includes raised

intersection at Las Olas and SE 1 Avenue and new raised mid-block crossings on each of the three (3) segments with high-emphasis crosswalk markings and appropriate crossing treatments. Summary of proposed changes is included below:

Downtown:

- Three (3) times more canopy with flowering and shade trees are being proposed as compared to the current conditions;
- Traffic islands are proposed on the east side of Las Olas and Andrews Avenue to better channel turning vehicles;
- Sidewalk is widened along Huizenga Park and the NW corner of SE 1 Avenue;
- Raised mid-block crossing aligned with the proposed Huizenga Park entrance and NSU bus drop-off area (north-south);
- Raised intersection at SE 1 Avenue;
- Raised pedestrian crossing at SE 5 Avenue (north-south) as well as pedestrian crossing of SE 5 Avenue (east-west); and
- All existing traffic movements and on-street parking are maintained.

Retail Shops:

Common elements for both alternatives:

- Approximately two (2) times more canopy with flowering and shade trees compared to the current conditions;
- Remove the center turn lane at SE 9 Avenue and the east and west-bound right turns at SE 8 Avenue; and
- Raised mid-block crossing at each block with appropriate crosswalk treatments and high-emphasis crosswalk markings at intersections.

Retail Shops Alternative 1 – No Median

- Sidewalk widened to approximately ten feet (10') within the Right-of-Way (ROW) with varying private setback (gain of approximately five feet (5')); and
- Continuous on-street parking with seventy-four (74) on-street parking spaces, with an expected loss of twelve (12) on-street parking spaces compared to the current conditions.

Retail Shops Alternative 2 – With Median

- The median design concept includes parking on one (1) side of the roadway which provides for different potential outcomes for each side of the roadway:
 - Sidewalk widened to approximately seven feet (7') for the side with on-street parking, which is a gain of approximately two feet (2') within the ROW with varying private setbacks;
 - Sidewalk widened to approximately fourteen feet (14') for the side without on-street parking, which is a gain of approximately nine feet (9') within the ROW with varying private setbacks; and
- Alternating on-street parking with thirty-seven (37) on-street parking spaces, with a loss of forty-nine (49) on-street parking spaces compared to the current conditions.

Colee Hammock:

- Approximately nine (9) times more canopy with flowering and shade trees compared to the current conditions;
- Raised crosswalks near Tarpon Drive (north-south);
- Raised intersection at SE 13 Avenue;
- Sidewalk widened to over ten feet (10') for shared use path between SE 11 Avenue and SE 16 Avenue;
- Continuous on-street parking with thirty-six (36) on-street parking spaces maintained, with an expected loss of three (3) spaces compared to the existing conditions; and
- Traffic median with trees at SE 16 Avenue and SE 17 Avenue.

The December 16, 2025, City Commission Conference Meeting agenda included a Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor Design Update (CAM #25-0567) that was deferred to January 20, 2026. In addition, the December 16, 2026, City Commission Regular Meeting agenda included a Resolution Supporting the Preferred Conceptual Designs for the Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor (CAM #25-1214) which was also deferred. In advance of the December 16, 2025 City Commission meetings, the City received four (4) letters from organizations and community groups. As it relates to the Shops segment, the Broward Workshop and the Downtown Development Authority provided support for no median option, while Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association and Croissant Park Civic Association provided support for the option that retains the median. These letters are included as Exhibits 5 through 8.

The preliminary design and opinion of probable construction cost (OPCC) were developed for all three (3) segments of the corridor, including two (2) options for the Shops segment (no median and median options). At the current stage of preliminary design, the opinion of probable construction cost is:

Opinion of Probable Construction Cost			
Downtown	Retail Shops – Alt. 1 No Median	Retail Shops – Alt. 2 With Median	Colee Hammock
\$5,000,000	\$7,500,000	\$7,500,000	\$6,800,000

Feedback and Next Steps

Securing direction from the City Commission is crucial to advancing the preliminary design, keeping the design development on schedule, and keeping the project efforts within the allocated budget. Based on the current schedule, WSP would deliver sixty percent (60%) design plans by winter 2026. Once sixty percent (60%) design plans are developed, the intent is to issue a solicitation for design-build of this project in phases based on available funding.

In advance of a forthcoming resolution, tentatively scheduled for February 3, 2026, to determine next steps for the Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor, City staff are seeking the following City Commission feedback:

1. Direction to advance preliminary design to sixty percent (60%) design for the Downtown and Colee Hammock segments.
2. Direction on single alternative for the Shops segment (Alternative 1 - No Median or Alternative 2 - With Median) to advance from preliminary design to sixty percent (60%) design plans.

The adopted Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 - 2030 Community Investment Plan has \$1,000,000 allocated to this project in FY 2027. City staff were able to secure an additional \$1,000,000 from State of Florida appropriations for the Retail Shops segment and will seek additional funding through the FY 2027 budget development process, FY 2027 Surtax Grant Matching Program, Federal appropriations, and any other available grant opportunities.

The Eastern Corridor design is being developed by Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc., and an update on the Eastern Corridor is expected to be presented to the City Commission by mid-2026.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

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

- The Infrastructure & Resilience Focus Area: Goal 4 Facilitate an efficient, multimodal transportation network.

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

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

- The Infrastructure Enhancement Focus Area
- The Transportation and Mobility Element
- Goal 1: Ensure the equitable development of a Complete Network for transportation that prioritizes safety and emphasizes multimodal mobility and accessibility

Attachments

- Exhibit 1 – DDA Board and Property Owners Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 2 – Colee Hammock Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 3 – Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 4 – Public Townhall Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 5 – Broward Workshop Letter
- Exhibit 6 – Downtown Development Authority Letter
- Exhibit 7 – Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association Letter
- Exhibit 8 – Croissant Park Civic Association Letter
- Exhibit 9 – Presentation

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