



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

#26-0051

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: February 3, 2026

TITLE: Resolution Approving the Conceptual Design for Downtown, Retail Shops (Without the Median), and Colee Hammock Segments and Directing the City Manager to Advance the Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor Design Concept from Andrews Avenue to SE 17 Avenue to Sixty Percent (60%) Design Plans - (**Commission District 4**)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission adopt a resolution approving the conceptual design for Downtown, Retail Shops (without the median), and Colee hammock segments and directing the City Manager to advance the Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor design concept from Andrews Avenue to SE 17 Avenue to sixty percent (60%) design plans.

Background

On January 20, 2026, City staff and representatives from WSP provided an update on Las Olas Mobility Western Corridor design efforts at the City Commission Conference meeting on (CAM #26-0050). Design concepts presented to the City Commission included:

- Advancing the cross sections identified in the accepted version of the 2021 Las Olas Mobility Vision Plan for Downtown and Colee Hammock segments; and
- Two (2) alternatives for the Retail Shops segment of the plan:
 - Alternative 1 (without median) which advances the cross sections identified in the accepted version of the 2021 Las Olas Mobility Vision Plan; and
 - Alternative 2 (with median) which retains the median, modifies the parking, and expands the sidewalk widths.

After the presentation, the City Commission heard extensive feedback from the public, stakeholders, and property owners. During the discussion, the City Commission provided support for the Downtown and Colee Hammock segments as proposed. In addition, the City Commission selected Alternative 1 (without the median) for the Retail Shops

segment of the project and requested implementation of wider sidewalks, permanent bulb-outs, enhanced pedestrian safety features, retention of on-street parking on both sides, and additional tree canopy.

During the January 20, 2026, City Commission Conference Meeting discussion, the City Commission requested additional tree canopy coverage for all three (3) segments. Exhibits 5, 6, and 7 have been updated to include the City Commission feedback. A footnote was added to each page that was modified.

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.

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 Shops segment. On January 21, 2026, staff were notified of \$1,200,000 in funding for the Shops segment of the project through Federal earmarks FY 2026 pending final approval, which is expected in late January or early February 2026.

Staff 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 February 3, 2026, City Commission Regular Meeting Agenda includes a resolution supporting the submission of a grant application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program for the Las Olas Boulevard Mobility, Western Corridor (CAM #26-120).

Project History

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, 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-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 the contract for Design Consulting Services for the Las Olas Corridor Mobility Project (Western Corridor) to WSP USA Inc. (WSP) via CAM #24-0045, with the intent of advancing Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan adopted in 2021 into 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 is tasked with developing a second preliminary design concept that retains the median, modifies the parking, and expands the sidewalk widths. The goal is to select a single preferred concept which will be advanced from preliminary design to sixty percent (60%) design development; and
- 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.

Design Progress

Since the contract award last year, WSP has 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.

Furthermore, 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 and 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, the removal of the existing traffic signal is recommended.

The project team used the City's updated 2025 stormwater model to review flood risk for the current (2025) and 2040, 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.

The team, consisting of International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Arborists with Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) credentials, performed risk assessments for 15 black olive trees. The goal was to identify, analyze, and assess the current risk to adjacent property and people posed by the potential failure of an entire tree or a tree part. The risk assessment criteria were based on a Level 2 Risk Assessment conducted in accordance with the Best Management Practices for Tree Risk Assessment (2017). The assessments were based on a timeframe of (2) years and normal weather conditions (i.e., typical, daily storm events with winds below 50 MPH). 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.

- o 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).
- o 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).
- o 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). These proposed improvements will result in the cutting of roots well inside the Critical Root Zones 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.

Over the last few months, the project team conducted public engagement and presented the project updates to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Las Olas Company, 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 of the above referenced entities, along with the Council of Civic Associations and the Las Olas Association.

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. The summary of proposed changes is included below:

Downtown (Exhibit 5):

- Pursuant to City Commission direction on January 20, 2026, increase of approximately four (4) times in tree canopy coverage as compared to the current conditions (previously shown as three (3) times increase);
- Traffic islands are proposed on 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 unless further design development results in changes that may be warranted.

Retail Shops (Exhibit 6):

- Pursuant to City Commission direction on January 20, 2026, increase of approximately four (4) times in tree canopy coverage as compared to the current conditions (previously shown as two (2) times increase);
- Sidewalk widened to approximately ten feet (10') within (gain of approximately five feet (5')) the ROW with varying private setback;
- 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;
- 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.

Colee Hammock (Exhibit 7):

- Pursuant to City Commission direction on January 20, 2026, increase of approximately twelve (12) times in tree canopy coverage as compared to the current conditions (previously shown as nine (9) times increase);
- 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 preliminary design and opinion of probable construction cost (OPCC) were developed for all three (3) segments of the corridor prior to the landscape enhancements requested by the City Commission on January 20, 2026, as follows:

| Opinion of Probable Construction Cost (Being Updated) | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Downtown | Retail Shops (Without Median) | Colee Hammock |
| \$5,000,000 | \$7,500,000 | \$6,800,000 |

OPCC included in above table include:

- Civil, stormwater, landscape (prior to January 20, 2026, direction), lighting and utilities
- Pavement markings, signage, MOT and mobilization
- Record drawings and environmental protection
- Limited contingency

OPCC included in the memorandum does not include:

- Landscape improvements requested by the City Commission on January 20, 2026
- Wayfinding signage cost, and design-build contractor and Construction Engineering Inspection (CEI) fees

The OPCC will be revised as part of further design development.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action as the existing WSP agreement includes up to and including sixty percent (60%) design plans.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *2026 Commission Priority*, advancing the Transportation and Traffic initiative.

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 – Downtown Segment Conceptual Design

Exhibit 6 – Retail Shops Conceptual Design

Exhibit 7 – Colee Hammock Conceptual Design

Exhibit 8 – Resolution

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