



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

#25-1186

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: January 6, 2026

TITLE: Resolution Accepting the City's Urban Forestry Master Plan - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission accept the City of Fort Lauderdale Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) (Exhibit 1). The UFMP will be utilized to guide and support implementation strategies to increase the City's tree canopy.

Background

The City of Fort Lauderdale has long prioritized the importance of its urban forest and the associated benefits. The Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan sets a goal of increasing tree canopy to thirty-three percent (33%) by 2040. The creation, adoption, and implementation of an Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP) is essential to working toward these planning objectives and developing strategies to best manage the City's urban forest now and into the future.

Trees provide many benefits to the City including shade, beautification, carbon sequestration, energy savings, property value increases, and reduction of stormwater runoff. Historically, the City has faced significant challenges with maintaining, enhancing, and managing its urban forest in the face of environmental changes, storm events, pest/disease outbreaks, and accelerated development pressure.

The UFMP evaluates the status of the City's urban forest, provides a clear set of priorities and objectives, and provides a sustainable, strategic, and holistic framework for the management, maintenance, enhancement, and regulation of trees throughout the City. Recognizing the collective ecological, environmental, economic, cultural, and social contributions of the City's trees, the UFMP will benefit both the public and private aspects of the urban forest and the community at large by guiding appropriate tree planting, maintenance, preservation, and regulation of trees.

On February 6, 2024, following a competitive selection process, the City Commission awarded RES Florida Consulting, LLC (RES) a contract to prepare the City's Urban Forestry Master Plan (CAM #24-0090). In April 2024, the City began working with RES to

develop the Urban Forestry Master Plan. RES collected input through twelve (12) meetings with internal stakeholders, five (5) public meetings with the community, and a public survey which received nearly 800 responses. RES reviewed relevant City plans, ordinances, and processes relevant to the urban forest. RES also reviewed relevant regional plans, and available tree canopy and natural resource data.

On September 17, 2025, a draft of the UFMP was released for public comment for a twenty-eight (28)-day period. On September 30, 2025, RES presented the draft plan to the Sustainability Advisory Board. Comments received during the public input period were reviewed and revisions were made as appropriate to create the final Urban Forestry Master Plan.

The UFMP incorporates various strategy recommendations summarized into fourteen (14) Action Areas as follows:

- Action Area 1: Tree Preservation Measures
- Action Area 2: Permit Fees and Penalties
- Action Area 3: Replacement Standards
- Action Area 4: Tree Preservation Incentives for Developers
- Action Area 5: Homeowner Assistance
- Action Area 6: Staffing
- Action Area 7: Invasive Species, Tree Pests, and Diseases
- Action Area 8: Tree Planting
- Action Area 9: Mangroves
- Action Area 10: City Design Practices
- Action Area 11: Centralized Tree Databases
- Action Area 12: Community Engagement
- Action Area 13: Interagency Engagement
- Action Area 14: Revised Tree Palette

On November 18, 2025, RES, along with City staff, presented the findings and recommendations of the completed UFMP to the City Commission (CAM #25-0970). At that meeting, the City Commission also received a Communication from the Sustainability Advisory Board in support of adopting the UFMP by resolution (CAM #25-1115, Exhibit 2).

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. The UFMP provides recommendations that have fiscal impacts; however, each recommendation and its potential fiscal impact will be evaluated and considered prior to implementation.

Strategic Connections

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

- The Infrastructure Focus Area, Goal 3: Be a sustainable and resilient community

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Ready and We Are Here

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

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Conservation Element
- Goal 3: Conserve, protect, and appropriately utilize the City's terrestrial and marine habitats.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – City of Fort Lauderdale Urban Forestry Master Plan

Exhibit 2 – Communication from Sustainability Advisory Board

Exhibit 3 – Resolution

Prepared by: Laura Tooley, Urban Forester, Parks and Recreation
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Department Director: Carl Williams, Parks and Recreation