

2023 | State Legislative Program



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

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CITY COMMISSION

DRAFT

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DRAFT

Introduction and Strategic Goals

The 2023 Legislative Priorities reflect the general position of the City Commission pertaining to upcoming legislation that would impact operations. Most importantly, this Program integrates the Commission's Strategic Goals: *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024*, which brings focus and coordination to what we do every day as we make this community a place to live, work, play, and invest. This framework enables our employees to collaborate and innovate together to achieve a set of aspirational goals, objectives, and initiatives over the next five years.

Infrastructure

GOAL 1: Build a sustainable and resilient community.

GOAL 2: Build a multi-modal and pedestrian friendly community.

Public Places

GOAL 3: Build a healthy and engaging community.

Neighborhood Enhancement

GOAL 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.

Business Development

GOAL 5: Build an attractive global and local economic community marketplace.

Public Safety

GOAL 6: Build a safe and well-prepared community.

Internal Support

GOAL 7: Build a values-based organization dedicated to developing and retaining qualified employees.

GOAL 8: Build a leading government organization that manages all resources wisely and sustainably.

Fundamental Principles

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Address homelessness and the creation of housing opportunities including evaluation of activities and initiatives that can address the root cause of homelessness while identifying ways to create additional housing opportunities in the City.

The Commission *supports* full funding for the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP); and other housing programs which aid income eligible residents, including individuals with disabilities.

FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

Support the Florida League of Cities (FLC) Legislative Priorities and Policy Statements, unless specific issues conflict with the City's approved Legislative Priorities.

SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY

Oppose legislative efforts to increase or eliminate the monetary limits on the waiver of sovereign immunity in current law.

TAXES AND FEES

Oppose legislation that modifies, restricts, or eliminates a municipality's ability to levy and collect or spend franchise fees, communications service taxes, local business taxes, or other revenues.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

Oppose legislation which shifts the financial burden from the state to local government, specifically municipalities.

WORKFORCE EDUCATION/EARLY LEARNING

Support funding for early learning education; and full funding for workforce readiness programs.

Commission Legislative Priorities

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATIONS

The Commission *supports* legislation:

- Allowing local government to regulate short-term rental properties, vacation rentals, and sober homes.
- That would change the date for the non-ad valorem assessment roll public hearing from September 15th to September 25th to avoid a special meeting of the City Commission regarding the budget.
- To amend Sec. 286.011, Florida Statutes allowing closed-door meetings on pre-suit liability claims.

FIREARM REGULATIONS

The Commission *opposes* the Legislature's attempt to prohibit local governments from implementing firearms regulations.

INFRASTRUCTURE, RESILIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Examine and address infrastructure needs related to water, wastewater, and stormwater. Integrate resilience in all decisions relating to current and future City operations, so that the city can effectively plan for, respond to, and quickly recover from disruptive events. Develop programs and implement strategies to improve traffic flow and evaluate new solutions that will alleviate congestion within the city.

The Commission *supports* legislation and funding for transportation enhancements focused on greenways, complete street initiatives, pedestrian safety, improving traffic flow, and mass transit development. The Commission further supports legislation that:

- Requires flood disclosures upon the sale of a property;
- Promotes energy conservation and alternative energy development; and
- Supports the inclusion of municipalities in the state environmental permitting process.

Plastic Bag & Styrofoam Bans

The Commission *supports* the repeal of state regulations prohibiting local governments from banning the use or sale of polystyrene products.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Commission *supports* initiatives that focus on a fair and equitable justice system, which can be achieved through statewide comprehensive criminal justice reform. The Commission further *supports* legislation that modifies the Law Enforcement Trust Fund's (LETF) evidentiary standard in a forfeiture proceeding and use of future forfeitures, which may result in an increase in amounts collected.

Blue Light Initiative

The Commission *supports* the expansion of blue emergency light use to fire rescue and EMS by amending s. 316.2397(2)(3), F.S.

Appropriation Requests

ARTS AND CULTURE

The Commission *supports* increased funding for historic preservation, and the restoration of full funding for the cultural arts. As a city known for its arts and culture, the Commission supports all efforts to restore state funding to pre-recession levels.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Commission *supports* funding for Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport capital projects, and the collaboration between the marine and aviation industries to promote economic development and tourism. Furthermore, the Commission *supports* VISIT Florida and the transfer of the spending authority of the Tourism Development Tax to municipalities based on tourism activity.

EDUCATION

Education Enrichment Program | \$705,000

Elevating its role in education, the city hosted learning pods while schools were shuttered and has continued to expand academic enrichment offerings through summer and afterschool programs since the pandemic. An academic summer program was piloted using CARES Act funding in the summers of 2021 and 2022, in which more than 1,600 children and youth benefited from the City's summer program, resulting in participants mastering three or more reading and math skills.

Funding will build on the success of the City's summer academic program and expand services to include afterschool enrichment, workforce exploration and citizenship development.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Court Program | TBD

The goal of the Community Court program is to reduce the daily jail population by addressing the needs of homeless, petty crime and municipal ordinance offenders. Community Court focuses on the root causes of each defendant's issues, applying appropriate therapeutic and community service-based punishments. Participants must choose to take an active role in their rehabilitation. Furthermore, funding will support the operational expenses of the weekly court sessions in the City of Fort Lauderdale's Commission Chambers.

The program will provide participants with access services specific to their needs including hygiene kits, bus passes, birth certificates, and state issued identification in addition to access to social service and treatment agencies. Supplies for court participants including hygiene kits, bus passes, birth certificates, and state issued identification. In addition to Court operating costs such as advertising, office equipment, office supplies, parking fees for services providers, etc.

Rapid Rehousing Program | TBD

For over five (5) years, the City of Fort Lauderdale received \$1.15 million leading to the success of the Rapid Rehousing program. Along with local resources, we provided housing to limited income individuals and families. We have provided move-in assistance, first and last month's rent, security deposits, temporary hotel stays, utility deposits, support services, step down rental assistance, and case management services.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Support full funding for parks infrastructure projects that fight sea level rise; fighting sea level rise, and funding existing infrastructure projects. Specifically, the Commission supports:

Carter Park Improvements | \$272,500

As a result of recent cost escalations, many much needed planned park improvements were either removed or deferred leading to a significant reduction in the community's expressed desired elements and park needs.

Funding will be used to resurface the Orange Bowl Football Field at Carter Park, which would result in an increase in usage by residents and visitors. Funding will also provide continued outdoor fitness opportunities in support of the city's initiative to encourage its residents to live a healthy lifestyle.

Hardy Park Improvements | \$555,000

Funding will be used for the installation of a new multi-purpose field at Hardy Park. A major benefit for taxpayers will be the conversion of the existing Bermuda grass fields at Hardy Park to artificial turf. This will greatly reduce maintenance demand, costs, and additional water usage. Today, water conservation is critical, thus, this improvement will promote the City's sustainability initiatives. The artificial turf field will also increase residential and visitor use – encouraging the community to live a healthy lifestyle.

RESILIENCE & INFRASTRUCTURE

Support full funding for infrastructure projects that fight sea level rise; fighting sea level rise, and funding existing infrastructure projects. Specifically, the Commission supports:

- The identification of adequate funding for water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure improvements.
- Legislation that requires flood disclosures upon the sale of a property.
- Legislation that promotes energy conservation and alternative energy development.
- Legislation that supports the inclusion of municipalities in the state environmental permitting process.
- Maintaining, at minimum, \$50 million recurring for beach re-nourishment, revitalization, and enhancement efforts.

Stormwater Pump Station Generators | \$700,000

During storms and power outages, the pump-station is not operational, causing massive flooding on downtown roads and abutting properties. Two gas generators will ensure that the station remains operational during power outages, increasing the resilience in the downtown area and significantly reduces flooding impacts.

Funding will add two generators to an existing stormwater pump-station located on the New River, which drains the downtown Fort Lauderdale area. During storms and power outages, the pump-station is no longer operational, causing massive flooding on downtown roads and abutting properties.

Sanitary Sewer System Rehabilitation of Basin B-14 | \$1,500,000

The rehabilitation and replacement of the sanitary sewer collection mains, manholes, and laterals is required to reduce inflow and infiltration, which can adversely impact system capacity to transmit and treat wastewater. The rehabilitation will increase the lifecycle of all assets and reduce such flows within PS B-14 Basin.

****pending information** Sidewalk Repairs | \$1,500,000**

The project will repair damaged sidewalks by constructing or reconstructing existing sidewalks within the City of Fort Lauderdale's right of way. The City of Fort Lauderdale has approximately 420 miles of sidewalk to maintain. Sidewalk repairs city wide are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The goal is to reduce pedestrian accidents caused by damaged sidewalks and provide ADA access.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation in any city is a critical component to stability and growth. The Commission *supports* full funding for all transportation projects within the FDOT Workplan.

Riverland Road Traffic Calming Project | \$1,000,000

The City of Fort Lauderdale identified the need to install traffic calming devices on Riverland Road to mitigate cut-through traffic and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety. The proposed project would install raised intersections and crosswalks to mitigate dangerous conditions.