



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CONFERENCE MEETING

#26-0382

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager
Shari McCartney, City Attorney

DATE: April 7, 2026

TITLE: Presentation – Charter Revision Board Recommendations & Updates – City
Attorney’s Office and City Manager’s Office (**Commission Districts 1, 2, 3
and 4**)

A presentation will be given to the City Commission by City Staff to provide an overview of the Charter Revision Board's (CRB) proposed Charter revisions and a roadmap for proceeding with amending the City Charter via referendum on the November 3, 2026 General Election ballot. The language provided in exhibit 2 was presented to the City Commission on October 7, 2025, and includes additional amendments requested by the City Commission with input from the CRB and the City Attorney’s Office. Staff is seeking direction on what Charter revision recommendations the City Commission would like to move forward to be on the November 2026 ballot.

Should the City Commission direct staff to move any of the recommended amendments forward, the following dates are critical to adopting proposed Charter amendment language on first and second reading and meeting deadlines associated with submission to the Broward County Supervisor of Elections (SOE).

- May 19, 2026 – Approve ballot language on first reading.
- June 2, 2026 – Adopt ballot language on second reading.
- June 8, 2026 – Transmit ballot language to the SOE by 5:00 p.m.

In addition to the information provided above, the following will outline the parameters and costs associated with a ballot initiative as well as considerations that should be discussed before providing final direction to City Staff:

- Ballot titles – Limited to fifteen (15) words.
- Ballot questions – Limited to seventy-five (75) words.
- Associated cost – Estimated at \$383,268.88.
- Payment due – Payment is due to the SOE in early 2027.
- Budget – The City Clerk’s office has requested a budget of \$385,000 for Fiscal Year 2027.

- Cost considerations – Based on the budget provided by the City Clerk’s Office, there would be a limit to the ultimate number of questions. Should the City Commission like to include questions above this limit, the cost would increase and additional funds would need to be allocated.
- Order of ballot questions – The most critical items should be placed first to ensure attention from the electors.
- Number of ballot questions – Consideration should be given to the number of questions, as a large amount may result in less engagement by the electors.

NOTE: The budget shown above is based on 124,032 electors in the City of Fort Lauderdale multiplied by \$2.79 with an additional two (2) pages (three (3) pages total) to accommodate the anticipated space needed for the ballot questions. A page typically includes the front and back and will also include the requirement for each question to be expressed in three (3) languages (English, Creole, and Spanish). With this format, up to eighteen (18) ballot questions may fit within three (3) pages.

The following will provide a list of communications to the City Commission relating to the recommendations from the CRB:

- May 21, 2024 – CRB/City Commission Joint Workshop (CAM #24-0535)
- September 17, 2024 – CRB/City Commission Joint Workshop (CAM #24-0887)
- August 8, 2025 – Commission Memorandum No. 25-138
- September 3, 2025 – Communication to the City Commission with open discussion between the chair / vice-chair of the CRB and the City Commission (CAM #25-0841)
- October 7, 2025 – City Commission Conference Item (CAM #25-0993)
- March 20, 2026 – Letter to Commission (LTC) No. 26-080 (attached as Exhibit 1)

Further, staff began public outreach through a presentation to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) on May 14, 2024. At this presentation a member of staff and a CRB board member presented the recommendations made at that point. The recommendations consisted of fourteen (14) amended sections contained in three (3) articles of the City’s Charter. At this meeting it became apparent to both staff and CFLCA leadership that another method for outreach would be needed as the material was too large and complicated to present at one time.

As a result, revised public outreach was developed in collaboration with the CRB and the City’s Strategic Communications Department with additional input from the public. This version of outreach would include an initial presentation to the public (through the CFLCA and various Homeowners Associations) that would introduce the City Charter, what it is, how it is changed, and some background on moving forward. In addition, a survey was developed by City staff, and additional presentations were anticipated to be developed based on input from the City Commission on the items it would like to see on the 2026 ballot. The intent was to segment the material into understandable topics while obtaining feedback on what the public is interested in seeing addressed on the 2026 ballot.

The initial presentation was provided to the CFLCA on May 13, 2025, which was well received. Staff did anticipate doing additional public outreach in person, but the volume of the material was still too large to manage for a large group of people. Since the various iterations of the Charter amendments were still under discussion, Staff did not move forward with the additional presentations due to concern that it would result in the same response received from the presentation made in May 2024.

At the October 7, 2025 City Commission Conference Meeting, the City Commission said they would like to have more information on the items discussed before determining what should or should not be considered for the 2026 ballot.

The current revisions proposed by the CRB are listed below and summarized in LTC No. 26-080 (attached as Exhibit 1):

1. Revisions on which there appeared to be City Commission consensus at the October 7, 2025, City Commission Conference Meeting;
2. Revisions on which the City Commission provided direction at the October 7, 2025, City Commission Conference Meeting for the CRB's further deliberation;
3. Human Resources-related revisions proposed by the City Manager;
4. Revision to repeal Section 10.03 regarding notice of public hearings; and
5. Sections subsumed by other proposed revisions and recommended for repeal.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – LTC No. 26-080

Exhibit 2 – Presentation

Prepared by: Anthony G. Fajardo, Development Services Department
Paul Bangel, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Gabrielle Bush, Assistant City Attorney

Charter Officers: Rickelle Williams, City Manager
Shari McCartney, City Attorney