



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CONFERENCE MEETING

#26-0410

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

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: April 21, 2026

TITLE: Outdoor Event Ordinance Presentation - Parks and Recreation
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

City staff will present recommendations and seek City Commission feedback on potential amendments to the outdoor event ordinance.

On September 5, 2023, City staff presented at the City Commission Conference Meeting (CAM #23-0729) on outdoor events hosted by third parties. The presentation highlighted the City's existing fee structures, recommended fee structures, and other general policy recommendations. The presentation did not lead to the implementation of new fee structures.

During the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget process, the Budget Advisory Board (BAB) recommended that prior to the adoption of the upcoming fiscal year budget, an event ordinance for full cost recovery be adopted for third-party hosted events. In response to this request, City staff met with the Central Beach Alliance (CBA) on January 23, 2025, to discuss outdoor events and share the outdoor event impact fee matrix concept. The CBA was generally supportive of the outdoor event impact fee matrix.

On March 18, 2025, City staff presented recommendations (CAM #25-0155) to the City Commission for outdoor event ordinance amendments. The presentation included the introduction of an outdoor event impact fee matrix (Attachment 2) concept that takes public impacts into consideration when establishing the associated fee. The City Commission requested that City staff engage with the Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Advisory Board (PRBAB) and the Beach Business Improvement District (BBID) to get recommendations on the proposed outdoor event impact fee matrix, to consider a potential cap on the number of outdoor events annually, and to explore fee reductions for events that provide major economic impact.

On June 9, 2025, City staff presented to the BBID. The BBID was supportive of the proposed fee structure associated with the outdoor event impact fee matrix. The BBID suggested a cap on permit fees for events that provide an economic benefit to the City.

On June 25, 2025, the PRBAB confirmed that they were in favor of the outdoor event impact fee matrix, however, the board did not support adding a surcharge for ticketed events or reducing fees for large-scale events. Additionally, the PRBAB recommended not exceeding 400 outdoor permitted events annually. Note that 340 events were approved in 2025.

On August 19, 2025, City staff presented recommendations to the Outdoor Event Ordinance (CAM #25-0698) to the City Commission. The presentation included recommendations from the CBA and BBID. One (1) of the recommendations from the BBID was that events with an economic impact of \$6,000,000 (or more) should have the event fees capped at \$15,000. The City Commission requested that staff develop a stakeholder working group to coordinate with event promoters to further develop recommendations to create a balance between events and event impacts.

City staff invited local stakeholder representatives to develop recommendations for City Commission consideration. The stakeholders that participated in the meetings include:

- Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale
- Central Beach Alliance
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Development Authority
- Hilton
- Downtown Fort Lauderdale Civic Association

Three (3) meetings were held with stakeholders on the following dates:

- Wednesday, December 3, 2025;
- Tuesday, January 16, 2026; and
- Tuesday, January 27, 2026

In addition, a joint meeting with stakeholders and the event promoters was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026. The event promoters who participated in the meeting included those associated with the following events:

- Tortuga Music Festival
- Lauderdale Air Show
- Split Second Timing (Shamrock Run, Turkey Trot)
- Exclusive Sports (A1A Marathon)
- Igloo Cooler Festival

The outcome of the stakeholder and event promoter meetings includes the following recommendations:

1. Increase the application fee – increase the base application fee from \$200 to \$500 and create two (2) late fee categories.
 - \$1,500 Fee: The first category reflects applications submitted between sixty (60) and eighty-nine (89) days before the event with a late fee of \$1,000 for a total application fee of \$1,500.
 - \$2,000 Fee: The second category reflects applications submitted fifty-

nine (59) or less days before the event with a late fee of \$1,500 for a total application fee of \$2,000.

2. Implement the Outdoor Event Impact Fee Matrix – implement the outdoor event impact fee matrix, as proposed, to determine the cost of the event fees based on the event impacts.
3. Define Categories of Events – Establish two (2) categories to include “Signature” and “Legacy” events.
 - A Signature event is a distinct, recognizable event that is unique, held annually/seasonally, has strong branding, and has positive impacts (including economic development) to the City. Examples of signature events include Tortuga Music Festival, Lauderdale Air Show, and the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.
 - A Legacy event is a recurring event that has been held for at least five (5) consecutive years and is in good standing. Examples of legacy events include the A1A Marathon, Turkey Trot, Igloo Cooler Festival, Las Olas Art Fair, and Christmas on Las Olas.
4. Create a maximum event fee cap for Signature Events (\$25,000) and walk/run events (\$2,500).

On April 1, 2026, Letter to the Commission (LTC) No. 26-093, titled Outdoor Event Summary Matrix, was distributed to the City Commission. The LTC highlighted the application fees, deadlines, and late fees that other Florida coastal municipalities impose for outdoor special events (Exhibit 5).

City staff recommend an increase in the application fees, an outdoor event impact fee matrix, the development of “signature” and “legacy” event definitions, and a fee cap on events defined as signature events and for walk/run events.

Strategic Connections

This item supports the 2029 Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area, Goal 5: Build a beautiful and welcoming community.

This item advances the Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We are Here.

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

- The Public Places Focus Area
- The Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Area
- Goal 2: Be a community with high quality parks and recreational facilities that highlight the character of our city.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Presentation

Exhibit 2 – Impact Fee Matrix

Exhibit 3 – Parks, Recreation and Beaches Board Minutes, June 25, 2025

Exhibit 4 – Beach Business Improvement District Minutes, June 9, 2025

Exhibit 5 – Letter to the Commission No. 26-093 – Outdoor Event Summary Matrix

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